

Papers of Hugh Dalton:
Original Manuscript Diary

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12 x

DIARY1. 1. 43.

Go for a walk along the Wye with Ivor and his wife Joan, and lunch at a Guest House near the river. Here the stream is muddy and uninteresting, but there are pleasing low hills, almost Italian, in the foreground, and in the distance the line, almost hid by cloud, of the Black Mountains. This walk is very good for me, after the immobility of past weeks, and I feel quite self-consciously healthy this evening.

The arrival of the New Year makes everyone feel, perhaps, unduly optimistic. Everything seems so much better than twelve months ago, when the Japanese had only been in the war a few weeks and we felt quite over-mastered for the time being.

2. 1. 43.

A very lazy day. I don't go round the Bulmer Cider Factory, as invited. I hate going round factories, except when duty calls me there officially.

Drive over in the afternoon, with Mrs Bulmer and Joan (Ivor having left early this morning for a round of speeches in South Wales), to Mrs Nicholls at Mordiford, where I am to spend the night. Nigel is very happy, has put on weight, and has quite enjoyed his first term at Cheltenham. He has a taste for engineering, and knows quite a lot about aircraft.

3. 1. 43.

I am encouraged to ~~stay~~ in bed in the morning, and don't get up till mid-day.

I am also encouraged to dose after lunch, and finally catch a 5.30 p.m. train from Hereford, getting back to the Board at 10.30 p.m. I have been reading lumps of Ehrenburg's "Fall of Paris". Very long, and printed on war economy paper, but a remarkable and convincing picture of France from the middle of the Thirties onwards. Bitter class divisions, political indecision, general incompetence and lack of will to prevent war by coldly facing its risks. A long patch on Spain, the International Brigades, etc., which reads strangely now. For we can now observe

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that Franco's victory has hitherto done no harm, except inside Spain, and, in view of the collapse of France in 1940, it is doubtful whether a victory for the Spanish Republic would have done any good outside Spain. Spain remains much more outside Europe than either Russia or North Africa.

4. 1. 43.

Home Front Ministers' Meeting, at which Woolton makes a rather glum speech about our food prospects. Taking everything into consideration, the months from April to August are likely to be difficult, and it may be necessary, he says, both to ration bread and to stop the production of beer. Supplies of bacon are now down to only 3½ weeks' supply, and of edible fats 12 weeks. Submarine sinkings are still very high, and may go higher, and much shipping may be required for other purposes, some of which, as J.A. says, "kindle the imagination of the fighting men". Portal, who gives the impression of having had an extra good lunch, says "Don't take all this too seriously. Woolton is only trying to blackmail the supply departments. We have heard all this sort of thing before." He also keeps on saying, in a loudish voice, that these meetings are a great waste of time and he has a lot of work to do. With this I sympathise.

It now appears that some arms factories may be suddenly closed down in the near future, on the ground that we have now got sufficiently large stocks of certain kinds of munitions to meet all possible contingencies, particularly of munitions which are now no longer any use! This will be liable seriously to dislocate our labour arrangements, especially in Scarlet areas. Thus, it is rumoured that some arms factories in Luton may soon be closing down!

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Try to square J.A. - I think I have - on the desirability of bringing the Commercial Policy Report before his Committee rather than Jowitt's, so as to cut out I.E.P. J.A. agrees that, when the Report is ready - I hope within a week - it shall go, in the first instance, to the small group of Ministers immediately concerned, and that we shall then decide the next steps.

Later I see my three representatives on the Committee, O., L. and M., and hear from them the atmosphere at the last meeting, when H.H. produced a minority report, basing himself entirely on the balance of payments, and seeking to prove that the

Dexter, L. Osby & Meade

/proposals

H. Henderson

proposals of the majority would inconveniently stimulate our imports, strike out of our hands all financial measures for restricting them, and do little to expand our exports. His minority report, which I found awaiting me last night on my return, is, as usual with him, dangerously plausible and completely negative. But he was quite isolated at the last meeting. Waley went with the majority, and so did all the others, including Ronald, about whom we had had some doubts. Keynes, moreover, in a note, declares his approval of the "general layout", though raising various points, some of them important, on details, and fearing lest our report, if it "saw the light", might not do damage to the administration in the U.S.A. Many of his points can easily be met and, on procedure, there is no reason why our proposals should "see the light" until a much later stage, since they could be communicated, as a confidential Aide Memoire, to the S.D., with no reference either to Congress, or the press, or the H. of C.

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DIARY

5. 1. 43.

H. Hopkins

H.J. to see me on (1) Foreign Service and (2) Commercial Policy. On (1) he is now prepared to agree about the Appointments Board (see later note on meeting of Cab. Cttee.) but doesn't like subsequent consultation by Ministers. I said that, therefore, we would tell the Committee that we were agreed on the first point, and state separately our views on the second. In fact, I should be prepared to let the second go if I could get the first. On (2) H.J. will be a good foil, for he thinks that we don't go nearly far enough in the direction of Free Trade.

K.W.

War Cab. on Relief Stocks. One hour and 40 minutes on this item alone! A most futile and irritating discussion in which all Ministers, except the P.M. and K.W., are in favour of proceeding on the broad lines suggested by Woolton and supported by me. At a certain stage I become too bored to go on, since no arguments make any impression. But C.R.A., A.E. and W. are all very angry, especially with K.W., who, along with Cherwell - now promoted, as Paymaster General, to sit at the Cab. table - have been putting "a lot of crude rubbish", as C.R.A. said afterwards to me, at the P.M., who naturally has not had time to study the thing properly. It is left that the P.M. shall communicate with the President, through H. Hopkins, to ask whether a joint declaration on future rationing, etc., would be agreeable to him, and to say that this country will not be behind any other in self-sacrifice and charity towards our neighbours, when the time comes. My sole point in the discussion is on non-food stocks, which, I point out, will be considerable - wool, cotton, medical supplies, lorries, Army clothing, coal and ships. A.E. says to me afterwards, outside, that he is going to write to K.W. and tell him that if we are all starving at the end of the war, it will be K.W.'s fault.

I get C.R.A. to dine with me to-night, in order to work off our indignation at this morning's meeting and because I have not had much talk with him for some time. He says that the P.M. has struck a very bad patch lately. He has again become very conscious of the burden of the war, of the slow progress in North Africa, and of the shipping losses. Also he still lets Cherwell run to him at any time. C.R.A. says that, now that Cherwell is a Minister, he should take his place with other Ministers and not be allowed always to get in first. There must be, if necessary, a show-down over the Beveridge Report, but he thinks that the P.M. will be in favour of this. C.R.A. tried to get Listowel into the Government as Under-

/Secretary

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Secretary either for Colonies or India in the last re-shuffle, but could not manage it. The P.M. said, quite truly, that the Labour Party had done very well in recent appointments. (I am quite glad that he didn't get in this poor little whisp of a Peer, for he would have been very little use and it would have roused great jealousies elsewhere.) I say that I should like J.W. to get an Under-Secretaryship soon, and C.R.A., most amiable, says that he quite agrees, and if O.L. had consulted him, he would have recommended J.W. as his Under-Secretary instead of Garro Jones, whom O.L. took without consulting anyone. C.R.A. thinks that we have now reached a stage when some of the P.P.S. should get promotion. He says that Devonshire, who has now been made Under-Secretary to Stanley, has a great contempt for the latter. When Derby once said that "the Stanleys never run away", Devonshire was heard to remark "They have been running ever since Bosworth." And some historian added "No, ever since Bloors Hill" (which, I understand, was an engagement a few years earlier!) (I hear from G.J. a few days later that Stanley strikes him as being very wet in discussions on the future of Europe. He doubts whether "it would be wise, and would not be too great a strain on our resources, "to attempt any occupation of Germany".)

C.R.A. says that he doesn't know what the Russians will want in Europe after the war. Possibly they will wish to absorb all the Slav States. I said that this might well be, though hitherto Stalin had expressly disclaimed such intentions. I should not like, however, them to try to absorb Germany as well, as a Soviet Socialist Republic, or we might find the Germans running Russia as well as Germany. This is the greatest of all dangers in the background. C.R.A. said that this time we must make no mistake in rendering Germany unable to repeat her aggressions. We had, he said, been too tender to her last time, though he admitted that he did not think so then, but we could not afford to do this twice.

6. 1. 43.

Mr Howling comes to thank for his Honour. I think that he is genuinely very pleased and he says that he has received a flood of congratulations from Chambers of Trade all over the country.

Weir and Percival to discuss the Potteries visit. These two will come with me.

Meeting of Labour Ministers summoned on the Trades Union Act. E.B., always pretty fertile of ideas, thinks that we might

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get the Tories to agree to the two demands on which the G.C. are still pressing - the Civil Service Unions and the Local Authorities' right to require their staff to belong to a Union - if we tied it up in the same Bill with the provision for continuing the present wage arbitration arrangements after the war. Agreed that C.R.A. and E.B. should see A.E. and K.W. on this.

Discuss with Watkinson and H.G. our post-war work. The latter should turn more and more to this now.

7. 1. 43.

Spend the morning at St Ermin's talking with representatives of the Allied Socialists and a few of our N.E. members, about Relief. They are much concerned because "nothing has been done". I have explained that there are large stocks, of wheat, coffee, wool, cotton, etc., but these are overseas and the problem will be to find the shipping to fetch them. Several Allies attach importance to actual purchase of overseas stocks by the United Nations, though admitting the strong case for pooling, as against stocks in the separate ownership of separate nations. Laski asks to what sort of Governments we propose to entrust the administration of liberated countries, and what guarantee we have that the weapon of relief will not be used against the parties of the Left, or against revolutions from the Left against Fascist Governments. I find this a bit much, and tick him off in front of the foreigners, which, I think, will have been no bad thing. I say that, so long as Labour Ministers are in the Government, by the will of the Labour Party Conference, that should be sufficient guarantee that the democratic process shall operate in all liberated territories. On the other hand, I tell him frankly that Ministers have not been sitting round discussing hypothetical political situations in liberated countries. But we are fighting this war, I remind him, against Nazism and Fascism, and I, as President of the Board of Trade and the Minister principally responsible for relief, or any of my colleagues, should not be likely to use Relief as a means of bolstering up Fascism in any part of Europe. He says that it is most unfair to suggest that this is what he meant. I said "Then why try to be clever?" And we pass on.

At lunch afterwards André Philip sat himself down beside me - he is, anyhow, a very pushing fellow - and explained in a self-confident manner how, when he was in Washington, he had put President Roosevelt in his place. He had told him that he knew nothing of Europe, and less than nothing of France, and that his action in

/recognising

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recognising Darlan had ruined all prospects of French resistance. He had also stated, earlier in the morning, that there would be no food problem in France, since their production, and also their herds, were well maintained. I said I doubted this very much. I was not impressed at all by this Socialist Protestant Professor.

*Communist
Diplomats*

At Cab.Cttee. on the Foreign Service this afternoon, I have a little fun. The minutes of the last meeting recorded that, on appointments to the more important C.D. posts, Eden should redraft the para. in accordance with my proposals, but that H.J. should have an opportunity of attending the next meeting and stating his view. (My proposals had been (1) that B. of T. and D.O.T. should be represented on the Appointments Board when these posts were under consideration, and (2) that F.S. should make these appointments after consultation with the P.B.T.) These minutes had been altered by the F.O., without consultation with me, to read that A.E. said that he would be glad to accept any arrangement which was agreed between me and H.J. This was both slick, discourteous and inaccurate, but he was counting on a disagreement between me and H.J. This afternoon, however, when this point was reached, I said, in my most mellifluous manner, that I much appreciated the attitude of A.E. and was glad to say that, on my first point, H.J. and I, having discussed the matter, were in complete agreement, and that he supported me. I added that, on my second point, we were not agreed. A.E.'s face fell, and he said that he was most surprised that H.J. felt able to accept my proposal. Hudson also argued, as an ex-Secretary of the D.O.T., that it would be enough for the D.O.T., and not the B.T. also, to be represented on this Board. But H.J., sticking most honestly to his agreement with me, said that, on further consideration, he had thought my proposal "not unreasonable". It was, therefore, agreed that it should be adopted, A.E. being bunkered by his own minute-faking. I then said that, the first point having been got, I was willing to waive the second, since, in fact, consultation would, no doubt, in all important cases, take place. H.M. said "This seems to be a deal", and it was agreed to accept it and pass on. The W.P. is now substantially agreed by all.

8. 1. 43.

L.P.Cttee. on cost of living. All are agreed that, whatever is done about food prices - and on this there is disagreement - my Utility clothing prices should not be interfered with. The intention is to publish the cost of living index no longer every /month

month, which is disturbing to wage adjustments, etc., but only every quarter, or, if the Unions and employers agree, only every six months.

Mr. Raiton
 Julian Amery comes to see me, to ask me whom he should approach to get in touch with Englishmen who fought in Spain with the International Brigade. Some of these, he says, would be most useful in impending (S) Operations in Juggery. I turn him on to Ellen Wilkinson, failing whom, Phil Baker, but advise him not to say where they will be acting. Bailey, he tells me, is now with General M., who, however, is now in loose association with the Italians and meanwhile fighting against the Partisans. But he is said also to be suborning and penetrating the Jug Quisling organisations, including Nedic's staff, and he is still, after the last shift in the Jug Government in London, their Minister of War! This last shift has, at any rate, got rid of Nincic. This is all to the good, though old Papa Slobadan is becoming more and more of an absurdity, and now purporting to be Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior.

Lunch with Mrs P. and a number of the staff of the American Embassy. Sit next Freeman Mathews, now Chargé d'Affaires, who was till recently in Vichy. Pleasant, but not very intelligent, I thought. We spoke of André Philip, who, I said, had made a bad impression on me. F.M. said that while in Washington A.P. had shown no sign whatever of any gratitude for the American action in North Africa. He was, body and soul and cheque-book, in the pocket of de Gaulle.

Jowitt to see me, at my request, when I succeed in getting his agreement to the C.U. paper going to the I.P.'s Cttee. I suggest to him that, as regards Reconstruction, Ministers should take more on themselves and leave less to officials, and I tell him how sorry I am that he was ever saddled with Hurst. He says "He has been doing a little better lately". But he agrees to my proposal on C.U., since, as I point out, it relates to "current policy". I draw his attention to the fact that there were no fewer than 28 officials recorded as having been present at the last meeting, when agricultural policy was discussed at a joint meeting of I.E.P. and U.S.E. Many of these had no locus at all, or only the faintest, and many were simply wasting their time. W.J. seems in a very collapsed physical and mental condition, and says that he has had a bout of 'flu.

9. 1. 43.

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9. 1. 43.

Stay in till evening and then go out to dine at an Italian Restaurant called "Nicola" with M.W.T. He says he had quite a good talk with George Shepherd the other day about candidatures. An attractive and energetic young man, but I notice a certain tendency to bluff on subjects of which he knows little. He was even rather hazy as to whether President Roosevelt was a Democrat or a Republican!

10. 1. 43. (Sunday)

Sleep late and read Ehrenburg in bed.

G.J. to lunch, after which I inspect his suite on the top floor at the F.O. Much better quarters than many senior officials have, and he has got an Under-Secretarial carpet which looks very handsome! He shows me some Minutes which he and others have been writing about Anglo-American relations, but I tell him that much of this minuting in the F.O. seems to me to be only beating the air. He does not disagree. We go over the Minutes, made by him with some care, of the last meeting of the C.R.E.S. That Woman Keynes has now veered round to favouring, on grounds of Economic Security, the division of Germany into a number of small and semi-independent States, in preference to the cutting off from a Unitary Germany of such extremities as East Prussia, Upper Silesia, and the Saar, particularly on the ground that the latter arrangement would leave disgruntled German minorities just outside the German frontiers. I say that this must be looked at very carefully, or we shall be landed with a Germany still unitary and still possessed of these debateable extremities. My own view has been that the German population in the areas to be transferred should retire within the new German frontiers. In the case of industrial Upper Silesia, i.e., the old Plebiscite area, the Germans were, even in 1919, admittedly in a minority. (I have already noted that, but for L.G. and Keynes, the Poles would have got the whole thing then, which would have been much better both for Poland and for the prospects of peace.) G. says that the P.M. recently sent A.E. a Minute asking for his observations on the proposal to detach East Prussia from Germany, and suggesting that this would be in breach of the Atlantic Charter. G. had put up a Minute to the S. of S. giving reasons to the contrary, both under Art.2 and Art.6 of the A.C. In Art.2, "the peoples concerned" must surely include the Poles as well as the Germans, and, under Art.6, the Poles could surely strongly argue /that

that they could never hope to "live in peace within their boundaries", or whatever the exact phrase is, if they were still encircled by the Germans and practically cut off from the sea, as in the inter-war period. But this is a sign that someone has been inciting the P.M. against the transfer.

I explain to G. my plan for blowing up the I.E.P. and, generally, of putting officials in their place, i.e., as subordinate to Ministers. We both agree that it is important for me to conciliate Hudson, and G. thinks that I could win him over to my general thesis. I say that I am quite favourable to substantial subsidies to post-war British agriculture, but think that Hudson's plan is not the best, nor the most easily defended, since it does not put nutrition sufficiently in the foreground. I am told by Meade that at the Ministry of Agriculture they refer to dairy farming, most contemptuously, as "mere cow keeping". They are completely sold on mystical "mixed farming". Meade said the other day that, as he saw it, there were four possible objects of an agricultural policy: to keep the consumers happy, to keep the producers happy, to keep the animals happy, or to keep the land happy. The M. of A. were wholly devoted to the fourth alternative.

G. says that he gets on well with Owen, who is much more sensible than his master, Cripps. They have been trying to fuse a rather "waffly" paper by the S. of S. with a series of dogmatic points made in a paper by Cripps, while he was still a member of the War Cabinet. The ~~more absurd~~ ^{more} of these, postulating in unreal detail the future Government of the world in five major groupings, at least two of which are absurd, are likely to be withdrawn. Meanwhile, G. hopes that Clark Kerr, who is returning to Moscow at the end of this month, will be authorised to talk detail with the Russians on the future of Europe. It is high time this began. So long as we refuse, their suspicions of our intentions are most natural. C.K. has been meeting Crossman and Ritchie Calder and others, so as to acquaint himself with the views of some of the Young Left. I tell G. that I have heard from a Czech source that Fierlinger from Moscow has been discouraging Polish-Czech rapprochement, and that old Bechyne, now, indeed, out of office, had said that the Czechs would do much better in the Soviet Union than in a Polish-Czech Union. G. says that he knew the Russians had been discouraging the Czechs from getting too close to the Poles, fearing another cordon sanitaire. He also said that the Poles were strongly against having Austria in any United States of Middle Europe, though he thought the Czechs might agree. He also

/said

said that their experts advised them again that an independent Austria would be "viable", on condition that there was reasonable freedom of trade and sensible planning in Central Europe. All this may well be true. Both Beveridge and Layton said so in the inter-war period. G. tells me that Gubbins has at last made been made a Major General - just a fortnight ago.

Later this evening, having dictated a lump, I read up Pottery papers for to-morrow, and then switch back to Ehrenburg.

DIARY11. 1. 43.

Leave for the Potteries in the afternoon with Sir C. Weir and Percival. The latter has made a separate note of my visit, which was, I think, a great success and much appreciated. No P.B.T. had been to the Potteries since 1923, when Sir P. Lloyd Graeme as he was then labelled, went, but only for an official luncheon, and did not stay the night. No P.B.T. has ever been in order to look at the industry on the spot and hold serious consultations with its leaders.

13. 1. 43.

Return from the Potteries in the afternoon, having spent a specially useful one and a half hours this morning looking at Blythe Bridge, now an M.A.P. factory, ~~with a view to their post-war use~~ and Swynnerton, now a M.S. factory, with a view to their post-war use. It is quite clear that the former is admirably adapted for some new, modernised, labour-saving and smoke-saving potteries. All services - electricity, gas and water - are laid on, and there is no housing problem, since it is within fifteen minutes by bus of the Meir Estate on the outskirts of the city, and many of those who live there now are travelling at least five miles to work in the opposite direction. New potteries here would replace many of the filthy old rat traps, now closed under concentration, and would enable the main street through the city to be widened and amenities generally to be improved. Dodd, Secretary of the Employers' Federation, and Mrs Walleit, Hollins' right-hand woman, came with us to this site, and both were delighted with it. Neither, it seems, had ever been there before!

Swynnerton, on the other hand, is much further out, and not suitable for potteries. It has, however, a considerably larger acreage of publicly-owned land and a lot of buildings of sorts; also, most important, seven hostels nearby. Clearly there should be set up here a residential school linked with some technical college or other educational institution. Neither at B.B. nor at S. is there any newly constructed housing close at hand, though at S. a few houses have been built some miles away for key workers.

Ruth dines with me and J.W. at the Acropolis and likes her pilaf! They had been rung up from my office to ask them to keep a table for three, and, as we were leaving, the little Cypriot waiter asked J.W. "In what Government is the gentleman a Minister?"

/J.W.

J.W. replied "In the British Government, in Mr Churchill's Government". "Oh my!" said the astonished waiter.

14. 1. 43.

Do my periodical duty, with J.W., to John Garvell and Haydn Davies at lunch, but they have not much to say.

Arrange provisionally with Behrens, Herbert Hey's successor, who is brought in by Cecil Weir, to pay a visit to Bradford and Leeds about the middle of March.

Preside at a Labour Party Post-War Finance Committee, which is attended by all our tribe of experts, including, for the first time, Mrs Joan Robinson, the best living, or dead, woman economist, but not, I am amused to find, by either Shinwell or Laski or any other of the outside elements. I have been a good deal bothered by the lack of progress in the work of this committee, and, with the aid of J.W., have been stimulating the production of papers. We have to-day quite a bunch, one by Chris Mayhew, written sometime ago, on Foreign Exchange Control, another by Durbin on Post-War Monetary Policy, and a third by Jay on Post-War Financial Problems. After quite a useful discussion, we ask some of those present to go further into all this and prepare a single draft.

Dine with Frank Platt, who seems to have been making contact to-day and yesterday with most of H.M.'s Ministers - Lyttelton, Portal, Duncan, Tomlinson, and now me! He is a most active man and I like him. He is really most delighted to be on the point of becoming Sir Frank. Now he will boss the show in Manchester more than ever, and those who hated him before will hate him more still.

15. 1. 43.

Platt brings Higgin, President of the Liverpool Cotton Association, to see me. He tries to persuade me that he and his associates perform a useful function. I say I want them all to work out post-war plans and send them in. He asks what is the Government attitude. I say that he may take it for granted that we shall do our best to even out the wild fluctuations in the price of raw cotton. These, I tell him bluntly, are "just too bloody silly". He is inclined to argue that this is impossible, except

/perhaps

perhaps by international agreement. I agree that we must have the latter, but hint, without revealing anything of recent official papers, that buffer stocks will do the rest. Nickson, Higgin's lieutenant, is inclined to think that, with a stable price of raw cotton, they will all be left with nothing to do! I had, in fact, suspected this, but don't rub it in to-day. I merely ask them to advise (a) on how to keep the price stable, and (b) on the consequences of success in this.

Send for Goodfellow, of Ever-Ready, and tell him that his output of torch batteries is most unsatisfactory. We have a slightly acid and disagreeable interview, in which Pares participates, and Mr G. leaves looking rather disgruntled. I did not conceal my dissatisfaction both with his performances and his excuses. The trouble here, as elsewhere, is that the B. of T. are not sufficiently in on planning the total allocation, and that the Services, to whom Mr G. says that he always gives an absolute priority, put in vast demands without consultation with us or consideration for the civilian population.

Rob Hudson to lunch with me, in order that I may seek to do a deal with him on my Commercial and his Agricultural policy, and also on future procedure. I am delighted to find that he is as hot, or even hotter, against the undue activities of officials, as distinct from Ministers, in policy making. (Attached a copy of a letter which I send him after lunch.) He will back me in blowing up I.E.P. I talk to him nicely about his agricultural policy, which I say seems to me to be very moderate, involving, as it does, only a 10% reduction in our pre-war imports, and thus a great retreat from the high levels of production and acreage reached during the war. He expounds his ideas in quite an interesting way, explaining that he wants to produce practically no bacon, butter or eggs in this country, and is quite prepared to go a lot further with liquid milk. I say that he will find, I think, more prospect of durability in his agricultural policy if he links his programme more closely with nutrition - he says he is quite prepared to do this - and if he does not alienate a section of the farmers by cutting down the imports of feeding stuffs. But I am deliberately friendly to his general line. I expound, very broadly, the lines of my Commercial Policy report, and promise to send him a copy this afternoon, Overton also to send a copy to Fergusson. He will, however, I fear, be rather awkward on some of the proposals, since he thinks it a great mistake to take any initiative with the Americans and shows a strong tendency towards bilateral bargains in the immediate post-war period. But he is, for many purposes,

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an ally, though it is once more most clear to me that, as G.J. said of him some time ago, he never knows what is going on outside his own office. "He never has any scouts out."

Go with P.L. and H.G. to a film "One of our Aircraft is Missing". Quite a party from the B. of T. there. It is a good film, with wonderfully fine photography, some moving incidents, quite a lot of fun, and some rather wild escape adventures.

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Mr. Dalton

SECRET AND PERSONAL

[Another copy
with correspondence]

15th January, 1943.

My Dear Bob

Following our talk over lunch, I am sending you a copy of the Report of the committee on Post-war Commercial Policy and of a note by myself which I have sent to John Anderson. Mr. Overton is also sending a copy to Fergusson.

I shall be very much interested to have your considered views on the proposals made in the Report. You may be interested to compare this Report with my original paper in appendix "A". You will see from my covering note how I envisage these proposals being used in the talks with the Americans.

I was not prepared, as I told you to-day, that my views on this question, for the handling of which I, as President of the Board of Trade, am primarily responsible, should be projected by my own officials into a jumble of other Ministers' officials in an irresponsible sub-ministerial underworld. I regard the Hurst Committee as an indefensible excrecence on the British constitution. I, therefore, taking full responsibility for my own paper, sent it, in the first instance, to a small number of my colleagues, who agreed to my proposal for the setting up of an ad hoc committee of our own officials to study the question in the light of my paper.

When sending this Report and my covering note to the Ministers represented on the committee, I suggested that the Report should next go to the Lord President's Committee, where all other interested Ministers should be able to take part in the

/discussion.

The Rt. Hon. R. S. Hudson, M.P.,
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries,
55, Whitehall, S.W. 1

Dalton I 28 (17)

SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL

discussion. Bill Jowitt has agreed to this.

I am strongly and clearly of the opinion that, from now on, on post-war problems, as on current problems coming before the War Cabinet or the Lord President's Committee, Ministers should deal direct with Ministers and that officials should advise their own Ministers in their own Departments as required, and should also meet, from time to time, in ad hoc inter-Departmental groups to examine, with Ministerial guidance, particular problems of detail. On the other hand, standing committees of officials - there were no fewer than twenty-eight in the room when your agricultural policy was being set upon by the Harist Committee! - to deliberate on questions of policy, appear to me to be wholly inappropriate.

It is unfair to the officials themselves to make them take part in such proceedings, which are also intolerable from the stand-point of Ministers.

John A. Hugh

P.S. I find that the Private Secretary, of whom you thought well when you were at the D.O.T., is called Blaker. He is now in Cairo on the staff of the Minister of State.

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

DIARY16. 1. 43 - 18. 1. 43.

Catch early train to W.L., where I spend my first weekend since the end of November. Much rain, but go for a quick walk on the Sunday afternoon, having sat up till 2 a.m. finishing Ehrenburg's "Fall of Paris". This is a great book, very dramatic and well sustained, with much good characterisation, and Communist propoganda not too obtrusive. The French Coms. are shown as the most attractive and well-meaning of the characters, but as ineffective as all the rest. In smaller compass, and without the philosophical reflections, this is not unlike Tolstoi's "War and Peace".

18. 1. 43.

Nothing much.

19. 1. 43.

A bunch of P.Q.s goes over surprisingly well, though I had expected some difficulties.

Greet my Accountant Area Managers.

A very bad Ministers' meeting this afternoon on Commercial Policy. I propose that the Report should now go to the Lord President's Cttee., other interested Ministers being summoned, and having had time to get briefed by their officials. I say that it is high time that H.M.G. made up their own minds, since at any moment the Americans may wish to begin to talk, and, after we have made up our minds, we shall have to consult the Doms. before talking to the U.S.A. K.W., as usual - this is becoming just too bloody monotonous for words! - argues that there is ~~xxxxxx~~ not really much hurry, and that he understands the American Treasury have taken over all the discussions. (This, I believe, is a complete lie. I am sure old man Hull wouldn't hand over commercial policy to Morgenthau. But the Treasury here are trying, as ever, to get all the strings into their own hands.) He, therefore, proposes that the paper should be referred to the Hurst Committee. C.R.A., again as usual, backs me up but doesn't stay the pace.

/W.J.

W.J., looking more collapsed, mentally and physically, than ever, goes back on his word to me the other day, having evidently been worked on in the interval by K.W. and his own third-rate officials, and says that he is quite willing for any alternative to be adopted, but thinks, on the whole, that it might perhaps be best if the Hurst Committee now had a go at the Report. I say that I don't know what the P.M. would say if, with his well-known views on Committees, he knew that at the last meeting of the H.Cttee. there were 28 officials in the room! W.J. says hurriedly, "It is not generally like that." H.J. makes an unobserved protest against the H.Cttee., and J.A. then says that he has received protests "from several Ministers", including Hudson - I am afraid I didn't get him as far at lunch the other day as I had hoped - who think they ought to have been in on the ground floor. He, therefore, suggests not that the Report should go to the Hurst Cttee. but that Hurst should be asked to "collate" the views of other Departments on the Report. A.E., who has hitherto said nothing but has clearly been looking for some diplomatic hole in the wall, brightens up at this and says that this is just the sort of compromise of which he was thinking. I show, I confess, some vexation and ask what the officials who have made this Report are expected to do. Are they just to go along "and join the crowd"? J.A. suggests that they need not do this, unless they wish.

References are made to Henderson's Minority Report. K.W. says that this has placed him in an awkward situation, since the Treasury was divided, but he is now trying to get some accord within the Treasury. Several Ministers say that Henderson has not played the game, and J.A. says that his conduct is quite contrary to all the principles accepted on Royal Commissions. He adds that he has received a very trenchant reply by Robbins. I say that I also have the notes of a reply by the B. of T. W.J. says afterwards that he was very much impressed by the Minority Report, and thought that it was a very formidable document. He is the weakest, wishy-washiest of all my colleagues, a pure gift, with his Labour label, for K.W. and the reactionaries and obstructionists everywhere.

I return home very angry. I forget my indignation, for an hour or two, at Major Braithwaite's party, where his two sons, one in our Air Force - seen at Christmas - and the other in the American Air Force, are both present, along with Van's brother (General Motors and once for a short while with me at M.E.W.), Tom Williams, M.P., and other oddments.

20. 1. 43.

Tell O., L. and M. of yesterday's proceedings over Commercial Policy, and see them again later in the day, when I tell them of talks I have had with W.J. (on the Bench), J.A. and C.R.A. To W.J. I said "I hope you feel better to-day than you looked yesterday." He replied "Yes, thank you" and hurriedly added "I have told Hurst to call on Overton and discuss with him what arrangements he would like best for dealing with the Report." I said "It is quite impossible for Overton to attend a meeting on Commercial Policy where Hurst is in the Chair." W.J. said "Of course". I said "What I am concerned about is that some day, some how, somewhere, we should reach some decision on something. Otherwise we Ministers shall soon be, deservedly, a collective laughing stock." He said "I quite agree." What can one do with such a pillow-case? I then talked alone with J.A. I said that I had been much embarrassed in telling my officials what had happened yesterday. I then made the same point about Overton and Hurst which I had made to W.J. J.A. also said that he quite agreed with me on this, and that very likely Hurst would not need, he thought, to summon a meeting of the Committee at all. He could see officials of other Departments separately, and "collate" their views and present these to Ministers. To him too I said that it was high time that we reached a decision. Nor did he disagree with this, adding that he understood that even K.W. now thought that we should decide soon. I asked what he proposed to do with Robbins' note. I said that I was having a note made by the P. of T. and if he liked we could swap papers, or alternatively, circulate them both. I added that there should be a B. of T. rejoinder to Henderson, since I was the Minister primarily concerned with Commercial Policy. He irritated me a good deal by humming and hawing over this simple proposition. Finally, he suggested that there should be a collective rejoinder by all the signatories to the Majority Report. I agreed to this, and so later informed my officials. (I arranged that Meade should conspire with Robbins and that our rejoinder should be "trenchant", trenchancy not being sacrificed to any need to conciliate any of the signatories. We thought it likely that Waley might not wish to sign, and they thought that Ronald was also doubtful. Later in the evening G.J. rang me up, and I told him to hot up Ronald. He said he would, but did not think this was necessary, adding that he himself had put in a minute to A.E. on Henderson's Report, arguing that the policy proposed was completely contrary to our public undertakings to the U.S. I told P.L. to tell Clutterbuck of the attitude of C.R.A. and so stiffen him up.) C.R.A., whom I saw just after lunch, again,

as usual, said he entirely agreed with me. He was a little sticky at the idea of the collective rejoinder to Handerson, thinking that I should myself send in a Ministerial rejoinder. I felt sure that this was wrong, and finally persuaded him "as an exceptional measure", since "Henderson had not played the game." I said that W.J. was no more use than a sick headache, and his officials less use still. I also said that J.A. had irritated me by his failure to agree, without hesitation, that this was primarily my concern. We then spoke of the Ministerial Committee on Reconstruction, and I said that I thought I should be a member of this for all purposes, since my mind was moving more and more on to post-war problems. He once more agreed with this and said that he would take steps to bring it about. I spoke with brutal frankness, and in a loud voice, about our colleagues and procedures, and about my standing in the Labour Party. My purpose was to make him feel that I should make a worse row still next time this sort of incident occurred. Now we will see how much he will do. He undertook to speak to J.A. now, and to the P.M. on his return, in the sense desired by me. He said that he had already defeated a proposal of K.W. that the Beveridge Report should be sent back to the officials for a further study, and had had the official report - a long string of niggles, which I read last night with great distaste - referred to a small committee of Ministers.

Dine in a private room on the ground floor of 55, Park Lane, as a guest of H.M., along with other members of our International Sub., to meet Maisky and discuss the project of a Labour Party mission to the Soviet Union. What emerged was that (1) there would be great political difficulty, and troublesome questions in Parliament, about sending a single-Party delegation to Russia; (2) that it would be easily possible to send a three-Party Parliamentary delegation to Russia; and (3) that it would be difficult for Ministers to join this delegation. There have been discussions in the Cab. about this problem. Our general conclusion was that we should go first for a Parliamentary delegation, which very likely could not include Ministers, but a suggestion might be made that Eden might head it and that a Labour Minister might also go. The question of a Labour Party delegation, including non-Parliamentarians, could then be left over for a later occasion, when the war was nearer its conclusion and transport and other difficulties might be easier. H.M. handled the situation very well.

DIARY21. 1. 43

Sir Muhammad Zaffrullah Khan makes a remarkable speech to the E.P.A. He has been representing India at Chungking. He says that India has always looked west and not east, till now. All her invaders, "including you", and all her ideas have come from the west. But now, it seems, thoughtful Indians are inclined to be a bit scared of China. The pressure of her population towards India is formidable, e.g., in Malaya. The Chinese remain Chinese, however long they are absent from their mother country. They use up material which the Indian would never use, and therefore they can live on even less than he. There is a great potential danger of Chinese imperialism. They are also most corrupt. Only 10% of the supplies sent along the Burma Road made any contribution to the Chinese war effort. This is, indeed, a gloomy picture painted by an impressive man. What with Chinese imperialism in Asia, and Russian imperialism in Europe, and American imperialism in America, the next phase of the world's history, as seen by some, will be simple but not entirely agreeable.

At lunch before this meeting I sit next to R. Assheton, whom, as yet, I don't quite focus, though he is said to be both intelligent and upright. He also has some sense of humour. He says, when I remark on our slowness to confront post-war problems, that the justification of this is that we thereby postpone Party strife, but I don't think that an occasional decision need be quite so fatal.

Insist, with A.O., that there must be some much better procedure for forecasting shortages and warning Ministers in good time. I make a minute on this, asking C.W. to be primarily responsible, and insisting that all Principals shall watch both stocks and current supplies of their commodities and report at once when trouble threatens.

Give a very pleasant little party, by way of return of Christmas hospitality, to five airmen, including, for this purpose, F.N., as well as Grant, Tyrrell, Stevens and Bellew, the rest of the party being J.W., M.W.T. and G.P. I think they all enjoy themselves.

-2-

22. 1. 43.

I ask Tewson and Woodcock to come and see me on post-war talks and how to relate the T.U.C. with them. As usual, very sensible and co-operative. I say that I am quite prepared to see either the full G.C. or any sub-committee they may appoint. I also agree with T. and W. the insertion of a sentence in our stock letter to Trade Associations saying that "no important decisions will be taken without consultation with the Trade Unions concerned", and that it may, therefore, be convenient if the questions we ask are first considered through the medium of any joint machinery existing in the industry.

Spend the afternoon receiving officials, including little Roberts, whom I pep up on radio valves (he has to fight against the Services and the manufacturers on the Allocation Committee, and I think is gradually warming up), and Barlow, who has been having more trouble with the Russians over their clothing, and is a bit vexed at Sir C. Weir for butting in to the arrangements for my visit to Leeds in March.

23. 1. 43.

Saturday. Stay in London. Take Overton to lunch at the Etoile, whence we go on to a Board of Trade social gathering at Grosvenor House. Here we are entertained by a B. of T. "Song Group" and then by a "Free German Choir", who, however, are all Communists and sing Russian songs. We then have tea and a few speeches.

At lunch A.O. told me that he and P.L. had had a great row with Hurst. "The fur really did fly", he said. They told H. that he knew nothing about trade and that, when he interviewed representatives of other Departments, P.L. must be present to correct misunderstandings. They think he finally agreed to this. He was allowed to remain behind, while A.O. and P.L. talked to Fergusson in A.O.'s room.

I hear that that silly fool Hudson is going about abusing our Majority Report, although I made it quite clear to him that I was prepared to do a deal with him, backing his agriculture if he would back my commerce. But it is surprising how few of one's colleagues, even in politics, take easily to the idea of such deals!

-3-

24. 1. 43.

Sleep late and then go for a quick walk before lunch. A thick, warm, smoky fog blows away about 1 o'clock. Go to the film "Casablanca" with M.W.T., one of his brother officers, and a Mrs Waller, with whom afterwards I talk in great detail about Australia, where she lived for a number of years. This film is full of North African atmosphere during the German occupation. Wartime scenes, dramatic situations, Left-wing politics, and Ingrid Boerman, thought by our party to be just as good as Greta Garbo.

25. 1. 43.

Have a word with K.W. on next week's debate on post-war finance and trade policy. He is to speak on the first day and I on the second. He gives me a note of what he intends to say, much of which is surprisingly good.

At I.P.'s Cttee. we decide to unsubsidise cotton for export, while keeping on the subsidy both for Services and domestic home consumption.

26. 1. 43.

This afternoon a joint meeting of the International and Organisation Subs. to discuss the Communist affiliation. It takes a long time to reach a few simple decisions, and old Dobbs is terribly slow in the Chair. Finally we do, and they are endorsed next day by the N.E.

Durbin and Bob Fraser to dine. I had not seen the latter for a long time. They are both a bit afraid of Russia. What would be our attitude if there was a Communist Germany? Would not an overwhelmingly strong Russia conflict with our traditional policy of the balance of power in Europe? I do not take all this so seriously as these two, but they influence me to the point of realising, more acutely than usual, that the future is most thickly veiled. Bob now wants to be active in politics after the war, and is thinking of a London constituency. For some while it seemed that he was dropping out of politics altogether. He is being very successful at the M. of I., editing and organising their series of illustrated war books, Bomber Command, Coastal Command, etc.

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27. 1. 43.

Morning at L.P.N.E. A slight wobble over the attitude to be adopted towards the Communist request for affiliation, but finally the recommendations of our Joint Committee for (1) a flat refusal, (2) the issue of a reasoned statement why, to be prepared by a small drafting committee, (3) the office to be given full powers to influence votes on this subject at the next Annual Conference, are carried by 15 to 4 - Laski, Shinwell, B. Gould and Sam Watson, who was very pro-Communist in his earlier days.

Laski is in a minority of one in objecting to the postponement, for the time being, of our proposed delegation to the U.S.S.R. H.M. makes a very good statement on this, and adds that Maisky told him yesterday in confidence that, the state of the war being what it was and our Second Front not yet having been opened, he thought it would cause embarrassment, and perhaps unpleasantness, if a "goodwill mission" from this country came just at present. Ellen chides Laski with not seeing the point when the man he wants to visit very politely informs him that he is not wanted. W. Arnold Forster is unanimously appointed Temporary Assistant to Morgan Phillips. He has been through a very tragic time, and I hope he will like this and fit in.

Receive in the afternoon the Association of British Chambers of Commerce. This is the first of my series of confabs on post-war problems with "national organisations". The real value of these talks will emerge from particular industries. Discussions on a national plane lead only to vague generalities. But to-day's meeting is quite long!

So is the meeting of Ministers on Post-war Agricultural Policy, when Hudson and T.J. vainly strive to pilot the Committee to a decision on four general principles. Almost everyone finds difficulty somewhere. This all-Party Government is becoming more and more frightful in its indecision on everything non-operational.

28. 1. 43.

Receive four dreary blokes from the F.B.I. this morning to talk about post-war. "British industry" at the top is profoundly unimpressive. They seem to have got wind of preliminary discussions on Article VII, and sent me yesterday a long letter full of, as yet, unanswerable questions.

/This

This afternoon the Catering Trades appear, and bore on for one and a half hours on their need for tea-towels and crockery. Neither is this an impressive deputation.

Later, I visit my dentist and then dine with Streat, talking chiefly about the relations of cotton and rayon.

29. 1. 43.

See Sir Charles Innes for the first time. Ex-Governor of Burma and ex-trade member of Indian Government. Rather gloomy about exports, but talks sense on Liquidation of War Contracts - on which it appeared that he submitted a paper to I.E.P. in June last on which no action has yet been taken, pending "the preparation of another interim report by the Board of Trade"! - and on Disposal of War Stocks. He is helping the Business Members in our talks with industries on their post-war difficulties.

I also invite A.G. Tomkins, Secretary of the National Furnishing Trades Association, to come and see me. He has been very helpful over utility furniture and, in particular, made a very good statement to Reynolds two weeks ago. A sensible, practical Trade Union official, a great contrast with old Gossip, to whom he once makes an oblique and rather contemptuous reference. He speaks most highly of Binney and the other officials he has dealt with, also of Lebus and Welsford. He is very well satisfied with what we have done, but would like to have some closer personal association with the work. I ask if he would like to join my Advisory Committee. He thinks he would prefer to be my "Labour Adviser". I think some relationship of this kind will be useful, and write a minute accordingly.

Lunch, together with my principal officials, with some leading figures in the rival worlds of cotton and rayon. Streat is in the Chair. We have a general discussion, from which it emerges that the rayon people are determined to form their own Rayon Federation, though they protest their willingness to work amicably with Cotton. Cotton, on the other hand, is distinctly suspicious. After a good deal of manoeuvring, it is agreed, on my suggestion, that there should be some talks between a few leading people on both sides, "pari passu" with the preparations now being rapidly completed for the Rayon Federation. I am inclined to think that S. would like to be Controller of rayon as well, and that the Rayon people suspect this. The latter, on the other hand, are not a very pleasant-looking lot, apart from Courtauld, Carmichael and Addison.

Collect a lot of material for my speech next week, to take down to W.L.

DIARY30/31. 1. 43.

At W.L. Terrific gale which smashes some promising shoots of my Ceanothus, which should have joined up with the balcony. Very wet, so make a circular road walk, passing by the old Pig Palace on the Sky Line. This is now full of boxes of spam, etc.

Finish John Scott's "Behind the Urals". A most vivid, impressive and objective story, which makes a special appeal to me, remembering my two days at Magnitogorsk in 1932. J.S. worked at this place for five years, and speaks also of Sverdlovsk, which likewise I remember very well. In their rushed industrialisation in the Urals and Western Siberia, the Russians, he says, were "making up for several centuries of lost time." Stalin told them in 1931 that "the backward countries always go under" and that, unless, within ten years, they put themselves on the same level of industrial power as the states of Western Europe, they would be destroyed. A pretty good shot! What sticks out of Scott's book is -

- (1) the straight fact that they did build up, starting from nothing, a most formidable modern and, on the whole, efficient heavy industry,
- (2) that, while doing this, with the aid of masses of utterly unskilled labour power - I saw them myself at M. in 1932, Bashkirs, Kirghizi, and other Asiatic nomads - they were quite indifferent to the loss of life and physical hardship involved, which was very great - this, however, is the traditional Russian way with the masses,
- (3) that the man and woman power concerned was incredibly tough, in the most literal sense, a typical instance being the lady who had had six children, all of them at night, without doctor or midwife, and even without

/disturbing

disturbing the rest of the household, and each next morning proceeded to work as though nothing had happened,

- (4) that the OGPU, later the N.K.V.D., exercised a hard pressure even out there, and that there was nothing you could call political liberty; instead, indeed, the risk of being picked up and whisked off at any moment, to your great surprise, and never seen or heard of again.
- (5) the fact that the Trade Unions, though formally maintained counted for nothing. Scott adds that, having come away under a slight cloud, at a moment when all foreigners were suspect, this is a Russian show, resulting from a Russian revolution, and no foreigner - at least from the West - can ever hope really to be part of it. He married, however, a Russian wife, whom also, after much difficulty, he fished out and took with him to New York.

Very insensitive, very near to animals, very different from the much-too-talkative, much too temperamental Russians of the old pre-Revolution literature. Postan told H.G. that there had been a complete change in the last 25 years in the "national character" of Russia, so complete as to throw fresh doubt on the very idea of "national character". All the new lot, he thinks, have become like Americans, only more so, - machine-minded and with the disposition of gangsters.

1. 2. 43

Nothing much till evening, when I go to a very good film, "Nine Men", which gives a picture of life and war against Italians in the Western Desert. Dust storms and no water.

2. 2. 43.

First of two days' Parliamentary debate on Post-War Financial and Economic Policy. A placid House, and K.W.,
/who

who speaks fairly early, full of most advanced ideas! Controls of all sorts must be continued after the war, and, in particular, control of new capital issues and of raw materials. It may well be that there will be a number of public enterprises, "as recently suggested by the Home Secretary". I tell M. Webb afterwards to put in the D.H. that K.W.'s advanced views are the result of successful pressure by Labour Ministers, and that I shall dot his i's and cross his t's next day.

3. 2. 43.

And so I do when winding up the debate. I also give an account of what I am doing, for post-war studies, at the B. of T. My speech is well received by the House generally. The contributions of private members have, however, been quite deplorable. Hardly a fact is cited, nor a single fresh thought thrown up. Even Schuster, who begs me to remain into the luncheon interval to hear him, and tells me in advance that he thinks he has something important to say, is really very feeble.

J.W. and H.G. to dine afterwards, and I am told that my local references, to Lancashire, Potteries, West Cumberland, and West Riding, are much liked by the provincial press, many of whom have now a local high spot of their own.

4. 2. 43.

A string of delayed callers, everybody having been put off for the last two days, during which my tail has been pinned to the Treasury Bench.

Harrod - I am glad I got Meade instead, a much more direct character - wants to know whether he should take a job "as a unit of man power" in P.I.D., or hang on, between Oxford and Lord Cherwell, on the chance of being used by the

/Government

Government, e.g., as part of a team to discuss with the Americans the complex problems of post-war currency and commerce. I encourage him to do this and tell him, in reply to his enquiry whether some one person should take over the whole thing, that this is one of the standing problems of Government, and that it is no good giving any one Minister more than he can effectively handle. Otherwise, only the officials, or no-one at all, take charge of large pieces of policy. I also tell him that the real trouble is the collective failure of Ministers to take any really important decisions outside the field of military operations and immediate war effort problems. This is partly, but only partly, due to the all-Party character of the Government.

After this most academic don, I pass to tea-cloths for pubs, and swabs for pub counters, and give some assurance to Evelyn Walkden, who is competent and friendly, though he talks too much, that a few months hence, when there are more towels and tea-cloths, the pubs shall have their share.

Lunch with Raczynski, who has collected a mixed, mostly Socialist, party, including Greenwood, the Henderson brothers, Huysmans, Albarca and several Poles. R. says that the Poles are very much concerned because the Russians are so "bad tempered" towards their efforts to make a post-war union with the Czechs. The latter, he says, are "servile" and "frightened" towards the Russians, and, the latter having imposed a veto, have entirely withdrawn into their little shell. R., wishing to make at least one move forward, proposed to Masaryk that Poland and Czechoslovakia should begin by concluding a post-war military alliance against Germany. But when the Czechs asked the Russians whether they objected to this, the Russians said yes. So nothing has happened. (I told R. that, speaking recently with a Czech - it was Kallina, but I did not name him - I had gathered that it was being said in their circles that all the Poles, except Sikorski himself and Stanczyk, were anti-Russian, whereas the Czechs were pro-Russian, and therefore they could not come together. Also that this

/Czech

Czech was still very sore about Teschen, though I had said to him that if they scratched out the front between Poland and C.S., this question would lose all real importance, and that I had heard it suggested that the town of Teschen should be the federal capital of the new Union.) I told R. that I had heard of a message from Fierlinger from Moscow conveying Russian disapproval. R. said that, when Molotov had been over here, he had begun by speaking very roughly and brutally about the Poles, but that the P.M. and Eden had said this would not do, and he had withdrawn his more extreme propositions. But, R. added, the Russians had refused to include in the Anglo-Soviet Treaty a clause, proposed by Eden, in favour of federal associations of small states in Europe. We spoke a little, also, about frontiers, Greenwood having acquired the general idea that in return for East Prussia, Poland should accept the Curzon Line. R. made many objections on this last point, the strongest of which was that the Curzon Line stopped short at both ends, thus determining the future neither of Vilna nor of Lwow. I pressed him, taking an extreme case, to say whether it would not be a very good bargain for Poland to get East Prussia, Danzig and Upper Silesia, in return for the cession to the Russians of, say, the Marshes of Pinsk, where I understood there were no Poles, nor any other inhabitants, but only a lot of wild duck. Had he said yes, I would have gone on to argue that there would still be a considerable balance of Polish advantage, even if they gave up a good deal more in the East than the Marshes of Pinsk. But he would not start down this slippery slope, but insisted that the Marshes of Pinsk were of special value to Poland, because only there, in the whole length of her pre-war Eastern frontier, was there anything approaching a natural defensive frontier.

Hurry back from all this to receive Sir P. Mannon and the N.U.M. An agreeable talk on sheer generalities. Thus do we build the post-war world!

Then Mr MacGovern to complain because some Glasgow Jews have not been designated to make Utility furniture. I warn those in my Private Office to be prepared for Mr MacGovern to offer them money, in order that they might influence my

/judgment

judgment. But he didn't! Willie Leonard says that he never does anything except for pay. They say the same of Sir Herbert Williams, who is alleged, no doubt quite falsely, to charge £5 for every Parliamentary Question and 50/- for every Supplementary.

Then Mr Evershed, to complain that some Assistant Secretary in the Board of Trade - whom he refuses to name - has been saying that he left us to become a Coal Controller only because this meant an additional £500 a year in salary. He goes on to say that he recently refused the offer of Lord Chief Justice of India! (I wonder whether this is true.) He next produces a copy of a letter, written in somewhat strenuous language, from Helmore to Craven Griffiths, who has made the double mistake of writing a letter to Evershed, alleging that, in a recent case, "the nigger in the woodpile was one Small of the Board of Trade", and then allowing this letter to get into a file which has found its way back to our H.Q. Evershed wonders whether he should go and see Helmore, but I discourage this, or any other action, except that he should suggest to Craven Griffiths to write a somewhat apologetic letter, since he has clearly put himself in the wrong.

Then Simmonds and Pares on the eternal question of batteries. And so, after much varied company, to bed!

5. 2. 43.

Colonel Reitz, new South African High Commissioner, comes to pay his respects. Old, simple-minded and rather over-awed by Government Offices in London. He says he knows that, compared to us, his country is doing very little, and that they are very small beer, and that we have treated them very well so far. This doesn't sound as though he will give much trouble.

Try to get a final settlement this afternoon, with C.W. and a number of officials, of the long-dragging question of rubber boots. The plan now is to dish out quite quickly

/permits

permits for another underwritten 50,000 or thereabouts, and to give notice to retailers that, as from, say, the end of March, all remaining supplies must be returned to wholesalers, and in future permits will be met by presentation to a retailer who will order direct from wholesalers.

More fuss about cycle batteries, which are, even worse than usual, the subject of much fuss in the press. H.J., with a most numerous committee of low-powered officials, has put in a report to the War Cab. - without consulting me - on the whole question of blackout regulations, torches, etc. This report contains a statement that "We have asked the Board of Trade to arrange a Press Conference at an early date." This infuriates me, since clearly a press conference should have been held long ago without needing this prod, and I later decide to hold one on Monday afternoon, before the report comes on at the Cab., particularly as the latest figures on production are good, the January output of cycle batteries being 1,900,000 as against 1,560,000 in December. Important contributory causes of the trouble are (1) the supine manner in which B. of T. officials have hitherto acquiesced in the Services getting whatever they choose to order, and the civilians taking the leavings. This is now to be corrected by the setting up of an allocation committee of which Pares shall be Chairman; (2) enormous military demands for North Africa, where it appears that no American had a torch at all; (3) hoarding of these batteries by civilians, though this is not only unpatriotic but not sensible, since the damned things soon deteriorate; (4) the use by civilians of cycle batteries in ordinary torches; (5) the great increase in bicycle riding, since M.W.T. took a lot of buses off the roads. But in dealing with this headache, time is on our side, as the nights shorten.

Misty War Time!

DIARY7. 2. 43 (Sunday)

Sleep, laze, and see no-one. What a pleasant change!

8. 2. 43.

Clark-Kerr to see me. I begin, desiring to avoid all excuse for F.O. jealousy at my having summoned their Ambassador, by raising with him (1) post-war commercial policy, and (2) Relief, with both of which I am primarily concerned, on the first of which we may at any time wish to sound the Russians, and on the second of which there have already been discussions, both with Litvinov in Washington and Maisky here, and communications to both from Moscow. I find that C.K. knows nothing whatever about either, has received no telegrams on either subject, and has heard nothing about either at the F.O.! I, therefore, write down for him one or two principal papers which he should take back with him to Moscow.

Having thus played my departmental gambit, we speak more generally. He says that, on his return, he will demand as much liberty to see people in Moscow as Maisky enjoys here. Personal contacts are still practically nil in Moscow. He has seen Stalin a few times, and Molotov more often. Stalin doesn't argue, he thinks aloud, without any reserves, and he laughs from his stomach. Thus he will say "Don't you think that chap over there is bloody ugly?" Molotov they call "Stone-bottom". In fact, he is made of stone from top to toe. He never laughs at all, and the utmost response C.K. has ever got from him to his best cracks is that M. takes off his exceedingly thick glasses, wipes them and puts them on again. He is a frightful niggler in negotiation.

-2-

Our official relations are not really good. The P.M.'s visit was well worth while and he and Stalin - particularly after the "man to man" talk, which C.K. says he insisted was essential - have feelings of mutual respect, though not of personal liking, for each other. But the Russians want from us one thing and one thing only now, namely, large-scale military operations on the Continent of Europe. They want us and the Americans to die too. There is just no substitute for this. If and when such operations succeed, there is no real reason why our relationships should not become first-class. He often feels that it requires only a little turn of the wrist to make a wonderful Anglo-Soviet honeymoon. He is convinced that, if once they trust us, they will be tremendously keen to play with us on everything. But at present they don't trust us, and still think we are playing politics. The delay in starting our European offensive feeds this powerfully. Further, they attach quite undue importance to small things said and published here. Stalin, for instance, referred to the publications of de Courcy, Lord Phillimore, etc. When told by C.K. that they were of no importance whatever, he did not believe it. When assured that H.M.G. had no responsibility for them, and did not agree with them, he still thought that some Department of H.M.G. must be behind them. "Which of your Departments", he asked, "is encouraging them?" C.K. thinks that the Russians trust him, and Eden, but not "the Foreign Office", the officials of which they think are still living in the 1880's. Maisky and his wife still don't understand much of English ways and of who counts how much. But they have their own developed, and effective, technique for poking people up, by constantly shooting in complaints about everything.

I ask whether he thinks there is any danger of Stalin making a separate peace. He says he would not rule this out, if we continue to seem to them to be doing nothing to help them. The Russians, for more than a year now, have been stretched to the utmost, like a piece of elastic on the point of breaking. They might well say, when they have

/cleared

cleared the Soviet territories, "Now we will pause, and build up reserves, and re-equip, and let the British and Americans begin to do their share of the fighting." Hitler, moreover, must always have the faint chance of a negotiation, so long as he can say that he realises he did wrong to attack Russia but he is willing to make ample amends, and that the real enemies to both of them are the Anglo-Saxons.

Even if none of this happens, it will still be pretty disastrous to our prestige in Europe if the Russians arrive in Berlin in their tanks and we travel peacefully to meet them by train. In the same way, our prestige in the East will be ruined if we let it seem that the United States, without much help from us, have defeated Japan.

The Poles in Moscow have been very foolish, and Ambassador Kot was a disaster. There is no doubt that many who were distributing parcels among their compatriots were simply spying. And they were all talking much too much. When Kot came away, a fat and cheerful Pole who acted as Chargé d'Affaires, said to C.K. "You can never stop a Pole talking, any more than you can stop a woman talking."

C.K. found the officials at the Foreign Office completely out of touch, and out of understanding, with realities in Russia. He has now arranged for a regular exchange between young men from the Northern Department of the F.O. and the Embassy at Moscow.

I am quite sure that, when I spotted this particular diplomat long ago, as one of the very best of the bunch, ~~that~~ I was right. He could not be improved upon for this particular job, which I told him was by far the most potentially important in the world to-day.

Meet C.W.S. and S.C.W.S., at my invitation, to talk post-war. They say they want to do much more export than in the past, direct with their opposite numbers abroad. I say that this will suit me fine.

/Press

On E.B.'s Catering Bill, 116 Tories vote against, 285 being in favour, of whom 137 are Labour. This is the largest single rebellion so far, and I am very glad it is a Tory rebellion, since this levels up sectional disloyalties to H.M.G.

Robin Brook to dine. He says that General M. is now in North Africa. H.W. at H.Q. is more and more obviously a failure. The Czechs are completely broken, but there is good progress and possibilities in other directions, e.g., in Corsica. Italy is still very difficult.

10. 2. 43.

Privy Council, along with Anderson, Sankey (who is, as his habit is, very flattering and talks as though he was very advanced, but has not yet been absorbed into the group of Labour Peers, in spite of agreement by the N.E. some time ago), and Womersley. The King refers to Colville's coupons (separate correspondence on this) and says that he was told by someone at the B. of T. that there was no exact precedent for his case - Governor of Bombay - but that the nearest approach they had was that of an Assam tea-planter. However, I am thought to have put it all quite right!

Will Davis to supper. Everything very satisfactory and well kept as usual. He has hopes that Middlewood will be displaced by Jack Bell as President of the D.L.P. next time. The latter, he thinks, may move from being check-weighman at Evenwood to a supervisor job with Lewins. He says that, though people aren't clamouring, they are beginning to ask when I am next coming to the constituency, and we therefore fix March 4 - 7, to include an official visit to Aycliffe and Spennymoor arms factories.

11. 2. 43.

Lunch with Kwapinski, Stanczyk and Szapiro. K. wants "a really intimate talk" with Leith-Ross, which I

/undertake

undertake to arrange. They all talk a good deal of Polish-Russian relations, and one of them complains that the Russians are now saying that they ought to have East Prussia after the war to safeguard their own security. They have also heard that Greenwood, at a recent lunch with Raczynski, referred with approval to the Curzon Line. This has upset them all very much. I tell them just what passed, including my own hypothetical suggestion about the Marshes of Pinsk. They all think this would be a very good bargain! They have been having a row between the Right and the Left in the Polish Cabinet this morning, so that the two Ministers arrive rather late and flushed.

Return to the rather different company of the B.E.C., including my brother-in-law. I have asked them too to talk post-war. They have very little to say, and it is clear that their relations with the F.B.I. are somewhat jealous. But they are clearly glad to have been invited.

Ministerial Committee on Reconstruction actually takes three decisions this afternoon!!! Buffer Stocks paper reappears, after six months underground, and it is agreed that W.A.J. shall put up a submission to the War Cab. for these ideas to be put, in a tentative and exploratory fashion, to suitable people in the U.S. Govt. and at other suitable moments to other suitable people in Russia, China and everywhere else. The general tone of Ministers is defeatist. They even ask me whether it would not be well to prepare alternative plans on post-war trade, etc., on the assumption that the Americans won't play with us at all. I discourage this and urge that we should, at long last, try and see. This paralysis of purpose among my colleagues is quite frightful. Amery thinks we should "begin with a national plan", but I tell him that, when I saw the F.B.I., the first thing they asked me was what exports markets they were going to have, and what about Article VII and Imperial Preference. K.W. is now going about blackening the Americans and saying that nothing will ever be done unless the P.M. makes a direct approach to the President. But the fact remains that we have not yet tried the proper line of approach through the State Department.

12. 2. 43.

A deplorable Party Meeting, not very well attended, to discuss the Beveridge Report. It was to run for three hours, from 10 to 1, but the first two were taken up with yowling because A.G. had put his name to an all-Party resolution on which the debate was to be hitched, he opening it, whereas a number of other resolutions had been put upon the paper, including one by some Liberals, in stronger terms demanding early legislation. In fact, I guess that none of these others will be called, but I don't think the Administrative Cttee. have handled the business very well. As usual, many of the speakers show a complete lack of any sense either of proportion or trust in elected leaders.

Receive Lyle and others and make a concession on men's shirts, which are in future to be classed as "outerwear" and not as "underwear", thus entitling them to the higher of two retail margins, both for utility and non-utility. My relations with Lyle are very good.

Thence proceed to my dentist and have a tooth out. Though it is not exactly the sort of amusement one chooses, it is not really so bad in fact as in anticipation. I should like injections, producing numbness of the nerves, on many other occasions than in the dental chair!

13. 2. 43.

Leith-Ross says that Noel Hall is to come back, and that Selborne will probably offer him to me. He has fallen out with many in Washington.

L.R. also wonders whether we should not take over Relief through the blockade. Lehman is doing this for the Americans. L.R. says that, as no doubt I know, Eden and Selborne are now in favour of sending relief, e.g., to Belgium, but that the P.M. is still against it. I say "And so am I". I add that I hear that the P.M., when E. and S.

/said

said that they agreed with one another, looked sternly at S. and said "The Cabinet are not accustomed to hear such arguments from the Minister of Economic Warfare. Your predecessor would never have taken such a line." In any case, I don't think this would fit in well with the rest of L.R.'s work, and I much discourage such an idea. Possibly Drogheda, who no doubt is anxious also to get rid of N.H., put this into L.R.'s head.

Ask Tomkins to join my Advisory Committee on utility furniture. He is very pleased.

Preston
Walk very quickly with G.P. to lunch at the Acropolis, where we find long queues of Greeks waiting to sit down. The table which we have booked has not been reserved. Everything is somewhat confused on a Saturday morning. But, in the end, the food is quite good.

DIARY14. 2. 43 (Sunday)

My only engagement to-day is with Miss Ivens, who produces some odds and ends in the afternoon. The rest is dozing.

15. 2. 43.

Discuss with *Watahoose* *Overta* C.W. and A.O. whether newly commissioned officers should get their kit through Ordnance or the shops. C.W. thinks through the shops; A.O. through the Ordnance. I suggest further discussion and a compromise on the list. Boots and shoes certainly through the Ordnance, since civilians are so short; some of the rest still through the shops. A.O. in the Private Office shows great vexation and says "We are ruled by small shopkeepers."

Conference with industrial press correspondents. This comes out quite well next day in most of the papers. Suggested that this should happen once a month.

Cab. on lighting restrictions and torch and cycle lamp batteries. All goes through amicably in a couple of minutes. The P.M. has a very heavy cold and is not going out to-day.

H.G. to dine. Does not think we could use Noel Hall, who may soon be available. His personal attributes would make frightful jealousies and upsets all around him.

16. 2. 43

Beveridge debate begins, and J.A. speaks for the Govt. in the afternoon. He pulls out no loud stops and

/emphasises

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emphasises nothing. A most miserable and inept presentation. I don't think he did it on purpose, but, as someone said, if Lloyd George at his best had had to speak on that brief, he would have made everyone believe that we were arriving in Paradise to-morrow. H.M. says that the P.M. was very obstinate in the Cab. yesterday on the question of timing. He said that we could not introduce the Beveridge scheme until after an election. H.M. said "Does that mean a khaki election? This is the first we have heard of it. If so, we had better begin to prepare for it now."

Dudley Ward starts for North Africa, to make contact with the Americans administering Relief.

Rather a confused meeting of Ministers - O.L., E.B. and myself, Duncan being sick - on Concentration. Ince comes to support E.B., but is in a bad temper and doesn't know the details. Watkinson, as usual, is very resourceful in discussion. It is agreed that I will talk to Duncan about immediately outstanding industries - wool, light leather, paint, and some other.

17. 2. 43.

*Admin. with
W.C.*

Party Meeting, at which the amendment expressing dissatisfaction with the Government's declared policy, put down late last night after a scratch meeting of the A.C., is discussed. Final decision is left till to-morrow's meeting. C.R.A. and H.M. both speak, but without much success. Here once again, we have a nauseating example of collective Ministerial incapacity to decide anything. H.M. tells me that he saw the P.M. late last night. He was "not too bad", but has been much influenced by K.W., in particular, against any financial commitments now.

Take Nemeč and Kalina out to lunch. They are interested in my account of our crisis.

/With

With J.W. to dine with Leith-Ross. I don't really want to go, being pretty tired.

Bracken

J.W. told me that M.W. tells him that B.B. at a press conference this afternoon said "The Government is going to get tough with its critics", and added, "We don't care if Mr Maurice Webb writes five columns every day in the "Daily Herald" instead of two." It is also reported that K.W. has had a spectacular success on the Cabinet, and that H.M. was beaten. Whiteley tells me next day that C.R.A. "fought like a tiger" against the P.M. in the Cab., but without success.

K.W. spoke in the House to-day and only made things worse than yesterday.

18. 2. 43.

Third day of Beveridge debate. Meeting of Administrative Cttee. at 9.30 and of Parliamentary Party at 10. The A.C. proposes that the Party shall support its own amendment, if called, but not anybody else's amendment. Bevin speaks at the Party meeting and makes a mess of it. He begins quite well by pointing out that there are many things in Beveridge which are not acceptable to the T.U.s, or on which consultation with T.U.s will be necessary. Therefore, they should not swallow Beveridge whole. So far so good, but he then begins to shout, protest and threaten, which he is always too much apt to do, and which undoes it all. He says the Party amendment is a vote of censure on him, that they never gave him an opportunity of speaking before it was put down, that this is not the kind of treatment he has been accustomed to, that this is not the way they do things in the Unions, and that, if this is the way things are to be done, he will refuse to go on. (It is not clear what this means. It was thought at first that he meant that he would resign from the Government. Later, it was thought that he meant that he would resign from the Labour Party. In any case, he was going about late that evening saying that he was "through with it all".) Barnes

/makes

makes a good speech immediately afterwards and turns them all against E.B., saying that if anyone threatens to resign because they are unwilling to accept the view of the majority, that resignation should be accepted. This is loudly cheered by an excited meeting. He then goes on to make a most sensible suggestion, namely, that the Party should only press its amendment to a division if H.M., who is to wind up to-day, does not put a different aspect on the case from the two earlier Government spokesmen. But A.G., in the Chair, whether through general weakness or design, does not take this point, and the Party finally votes, practically unanimously, to divide on its own amendment. This is illogical, since the amendment expresses dissatisfaction at the policy of the Government, and this policy may or may not be modified in H.M.'s final speech. There is a vague reference this morning to "consultations on the Front Bench" after H.M.'s speech, but in practice this is quite an unworkable procedure.

Retain D. Th. Lab. Drafted' toward of Trade.

I have to come back to the Board to receive a deputation of R.D.A. and D.C.T. on their margins, and whether these should be fixed cum tax or ex tax. I then return to the House and hear most of the rest of the debate.

H.M., winding up for the Government, makes a grand speech. I am quite sure that if this had been made on the first day, there would have been no crisis at all. But it is by now much too late to retrieve the ground lost by J.A. and K.W., or to stop most of the Party voting for their amendment against the Government. J.W. and certain others have been lobbying to secure abstentions, and have a certain measure of success. At least 24 of our members, who remain in the House till the end, don't vote. I advise J.W. to abstain rather than to vote with the Government, since abstention is permissible under the Standing Orders, and I don't wish him to make himself unduly vulnerable. The minority vote, 119, is nearly the same as that in the Tory revolt against the Catering Bill, 116. Of the 119, 98 are Labour members, the rest being Liberals and other oddments, but no Tories.

/I return

I return a little weary to the B. of T. We cannot have many more such incidents. This one has been incredibly mishandled by all concerned from start to finish, except by H.M. But what a lot of our members don't see is that they run a risk of the P.M. appealing to the country, on the ground that he must know where he stands, with the result that the Labour Party would be scrubbed out as completely as in 1931. As J.W. and I agree, many of our colleagues are complete innocents, while a small minority is fixedly set on breaking up the Government. Master Shinwell to-day has been rushing about with a maniacal glint in his eye. He reminds me of the chap who was determined to set fire to the house and burn it down for his own delight. Greenwood cuts a very sorry figure, rising just before the division to say that he intended now to vote for the amendment.

I put the scrub-out point to M. Webb, who rang me up on the telephone later. It would not, I said, be very clever, from any point of view, to install in 1943 an overwhelmingly Conservative majority which need not again go to the country till 1948.

19. 2. 43.

Talk about Relief and Rehabilitation to small L.P. Sub-Committee. No serious criticism.

Mayhew

C.M. to dine with me. He has just had his one-week-in-three-months leave. He comes back afterwards and helps me to concoct my advance for my speech in B'ham to-morrow. He is going to help to run his father's East Anglian papers after the war. I quite approve of this.

20. 2. 43.

To Birmingham for Red Army Day. To-day and to-morrow no fewer than 15 Ministers are haranguing crowds in all our principal cities under the shadow of the Hammer

/and

and Sickle. Most of these meetings are to-morrow (Sunday), but mine is one of the few to-day, so that I shall get in first on the wireless and Sunday papers.

I am met at the station at Birmingham by the M.O.I. representative, several B. of T. representatives, and several local political organisers, including Harry Wickham. We go to the Queen's Hotel for a drink, where we are joined by two official Russians, a little man called Valkov from the Embassy in London, and a Major Lebedev, a heavy, stolid man, in uniform. He is from their Tank Corps. I tell them that I want to say a few words of Russian at the end of my speech, and we discuss what. First I ask what is the Russian for "I salute the Red Army", but "salute" turns out to be a frightful word, which I won't face. But "victory" is much easier, and I decide on that. But Lebedev protests against my finishing on "Victory for the Red Army", for that, he says, would suggest that they are to do all the fighting and we none. So we agree to add "and its allies". My last words, therefore, are to be "Za pobiedu Krasnoi armiyi i sohsnikov!"

y/h
Then to lunch with the Lord Mayor, Councillor Lewis, an official of the E.T.U. He is one of those who made application for extra coupons to enable him to clothe himself worthily of his office. He had represented to the B. of T. that otherwise he would have to appear on important function in his working clothes. I had refused the application and said that in the fourth year of the war working clothes would win respect. To-day he is most respectably garbed in a morning coat; hired, lent by a friend, or bought with coupons somehow! He and the Lady Mayoress and I and the two Russians stand in a row and receive a stream of guests, including a large number of neighbouring mayors of boroughs, all in their gold chains. At lunch the Lord Mayor gives the toast of "the King", and then "the President of the U.S.S.R." These are all. After lunch Lebedev asks me "Why did they drink the toast of your King and President Roosevelt, and nothing about us?" I hope he believed my explanation, but here is evidently another possibility of misunderstanding!

We then march out, with many other local dignitaries, to the Salute Base, a covered stand, in Victoria Square. We only arrive just in time to take the salute as the head of the procession appears. It is very well done, as are the arrangements afterwards in the Central Hall. I make a very good speech, which lasts just 30 minutes, the scheduled time. (Version attached, along with programme of proceedings.) At the end, just as people are beginning to leave, there are cries for a speech from Lebedev, and I drag him reluctantly to the microphone. He then produces a prepared typescript in English - a very good example of far-sighted planning, in the spirit of Stalin, as I tell him - and reads it out, just intelligibly. He is going on to another meeting at Manchester to-morrow. I think he will have been impressed. But, as Clark-Kerr so obviously pointed out, there is just nothing one can do to make any real improvement in Anglo-Soviet feelings until we have set going large military operations on the Continent of Europe.

Back in London to-night.

21. 2. 43.

Stay in all day, don't shave - since I have sent away all my staff for the day - and read funny old Pethick's autobiography. He has no sense of humour, as we knew, and succeeds in making everything seem very flat. But he has had quite an interesting life, of a sort, and is clearly very fond of his wife. At points quite blush-making, including the Song of Spring at the beginning, wherein he and the flowers in his garden burble to each other and send messages to her in South Africa.

Hear Eden at the Albert Hall on the wireless. Not bad, but not quite so good as it might have been. Too much, in a not very long speech, about Hitler and the "Bolshevik bogey" and how it won't work now. This theme has been overdone a good deal lately. I am sure it cannot please the Russians.

The Right Honourable Hugh Dalton, M.P.,
President of the Board of Trade, speaking at Birmingham
on Saturday, 20th February, 1943, said:-

"I am very proud to stand here to-day, in this great meeting, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, to salute the Red Army, and I am sure that we are all very proud to have with us two of our Russian comrades, Mr Valkov of the Soviet Embassy in London, and Major Lebedev, in uniform, an Officer of the Tank Corps of the Red Army.

The Red Army has saved, and by its heroic deeds from day to day is still saving, the civilisation of Europe and our hopes for a better world, when victory over the Hitlerite hordes has been won. The superb courage and endurance of our Russian allies is an immortal chapter in the history of mankind.

In the present phase of the war the Red Army is bearing the brunt. But there have been earlier phases, and there will be later phases. This year the war moves to its climax.

The time is coming soon - our Prime Minister and the President of the United States have promised us - when the armed forces of Britain and America will pass to the offensive, not only in North Africa, but at more than one point upon the Continent. Mr Churchill has told us that "everything in human power is being done and will be done to bring the British and American forces into action against the enemy with the utmost speed and energy and on the largest scale". Germany is still an immensely formidable foe. The end of the war is not yet in sight. We have still a long, hard, bloody road to tread. The Germans will fight most fiercely when driven back to the frontiers of their own country.

The heart of the British people goes out in admiration and comradeship to our Russian allies. How small have been our sacrifices, how trifling our discomforts, how trumpery the shortages of which some complain, compared to

the dark Calvary through which Russia has been passing since June 1941!

We should long ago have made a close Anglo-Soviet alliance against the growing threat, visible to all except a few blind men, of German aggression. In the inter-war years we and Russia stood apart. Now Hitler has thrown us together. We shall not fall apart again. One of the greatest achievements of the British Government has been the Anglo-Soviet Treaty signed in May 1942, whereby we pledged ourselves to make no separate peace or armistice with Germany or her associates in crime; to take all measures in our power to make impossible a repetition of these crimes; to wage war together till victory and to work together in close alliance after the re-establishment of peace; to organise security and economic prosperity in Europe and to stand together for a term of 20 years.

This is the best treaty any British Foreign Secretary has signed in our lifetime. This Anglo-Russian comradeship shall be a foundation stone of the post-war world. Both Britain and Russia have shown an undying example to the world of free men, but Russia's tribulations have, so far, been much greater than ours.

We have written afresh in these last years the British name upon the pages of history. We in the Battle of Britain, when the boys of our Fighter Squadrons destroyed the myth of the invincibility of the German Air Force; we in the Battle of the Atlantic, which is raging still, against the U-boats, Hitler's last resource, where the boys of the Royal Navy and of the Merchant Service are bringing through, by day and by night, precious supplies of men and arms and food and war materials of all kinds; we in the Battle of the Convoys, including the convoys through the Arctic waters, carrying supplies to Russia; we in the Battle of the Desert, where the boys of the British Eighth Army have joined with the Red Army to destroy the myth of the invincibility of the German land forces; we in the Battle of the Blitz, when countless men and women, old and

young, faced together, with a wonderful fortitude and endurance, the worst that the German bombers could do.

In the summer of 1940 we in this island were all prepared to face invasion. As our Prime Minister said, we would have fought on the beaches, we would have fought in the streets, we would have fought in the fields, we would have fought on the hills, we would have gone out fighting, military and civilians alike. We would have done it; the Russians have done it.

Russia teaches us these great lessons; the value in war of national unity and a sense of common purpose, inspiring all her people; the value, for war as well as peace, of a planned economic life, unhindered by sectional interests; the immense moral strength of a society undivided by class differences.

Eleven years ago I stood in Stalingrad and saw the amazing growth, even then, of this great and beautiful city on the Volga.

And I saw too the beginnings of that far-sighted socialist industrialisation of the Urals, where Stalin was already building up the massive heavy industry, far beyond the reach of Germans from the West or Japanese from the East, ready to be turned either to great constructive purposes in peace, or to the defence of the Soviet Motherland in war.

These achievements are among the miracles of this century.

Historical necessity has thrown the Russians and ourselves into a comradeship which must long outlast our common victory in this war. We must be together at the peace, and after the peace, we two and the United States and all the United Nations. The pattern of the post-war world must be quite different from the chaos, mass unemployment, economic insecurity and social jealousy which we knew before the war. It is assuredly not yet too soon to plan,
/the

the shape of things to come. But all our planning will lead nowhere, unless first we bring our enemies to unconditional surrender.

Let us then, following the Russian example, put aside all personal interests and go forward fearlessly to the struggles and the victories that lie ahead.

In the name of His Majesty's Government; in the name of the people of Britain; in the name of this great meeting; I salute the Red Army, both the living and the dead who have died in order that we all may live.

If I may speak a few words in Russian, I say 'Za pobiedu krasnoi armiyi i sousnikov!' which means 'Victory for the Red Army and for its allies!', of whom we are proud to be one."

(4)
SOYUSNIKOV

DIARY22. 2. 43.

I ask Retinger to call, to feel my way for my talk with Sikorski on Wednesday - day after to-morrow. I say that this is the worst possible moment for Poles to quarrel, either publicly or privately, with Russians, since there is a great wave of pro-Russian feeling here, in view of their victories, while we seem to be doing so little. I say that I hear that Polish claims to a frontier on the Black Sea and the Dnieper, and to include Kief, after the war, are floating about. This is disastrous folly. He says that S. wholly agrees with me and that no official or authorised person had ever made such suggestions for post-war frontiers. He adds that the Russians are treating the Poles in Russia very badly and have decreed that all Polish citizens picked up east of the line to which the Russians advanced in 1939 are to be treated as Soviet citizens, even if they came from West Poland, in retreat before the German advance.

Take C.R.A. out to lunch in view of to-night's Labour Ministers meeting. He does not seem very worried about it, and most of our talk is on other things. He says that he is satisfied that the estimate of 5,000,000 Germans out of the war - killed, prisoner or severely wounded - is not too high; also that Alexander in Tunisia is writing a book, "How Green is My Ally". The Americans seem to have lost a large number of their Sherman tanks, quite intact.

Labour Ministers meet later in the afternoon. Many of them seem very thin-skinned, and to feel that their position has been rendered very difficult by last week's vote. E.B. - about whose intentions many press rumours are circulating, it being said that his intention is to resign, not from the Govt. but from the Labour Party - is very indignant with the Parliamentary Labour Party, but not so violent as the press suggests. C.R.A., he and H.M. have to go to a War Cab., and I take the Chair. I had previously

/said

said that, in my view, most of those who voted against the Govt. did not realise what they were doing, but that it was clear that this sort of incident could not often be repeated. We were, however, in the Govt., not by any decision of the P.L.P., but by the will of the Annual Conference, which alone had the right to bring us out. Between conferences the N.E. exercised the powers of the Conferences, but not the power to reverse a Conference decision. I said bluntly that, if this sort of thing went on, and if, for example, the electoral truce was broken up, there would be a General Election in which the Labour Party would be "scrubbed out", worse than in 1931. When I was in the Chair, a number seized upon the point about the Annual Conference, and some wanted to pass a resolution to be conveyed to the National Executive. I discouraged this, since the meeting had no constitutional status, but undertook to report to the N.E. on Wednesday that some had expressed the view that there should be a special conference summoned forthwith, and others that the N.E. should "protect" Ministers. Some of these little fish suffer from haemophilia.

Bill Nield, now a Flight Lieutenant in the Canadian Air Force, comes to dine with me. He seems to be doing very well. He is an Intelligence Officer, and feels that he is doing good work for the air crews, who, he says, are quite movingly grateful to those who they think are helping them. The idea that none of them care whether they die or not is, of course, just fudge. He has flown a good deal, though he was never allowed to become a pilot, because in his tests in Canada he used to black out. But he has since had his appendix removed, and, after that, did not black out any more. But the first tests had to stand.

23. 2. 43.

Administrative Committee in the morning.
Desultory talk, mostly by Shinwell.

Successful talk with Duncan in the afternoon on

/"contraction"

"contraction", as superior to "concentration", in certain remaining industries. Watkinson, who comes with me, is to talk to one of Duncan's and one of Bevin's officials.

Red Army Day Reception at Soviet Embassy. An immense crowd. Maiskaya very forthcoming and expressing thanks for all I have done about clothing, etc. (I must tell this to the poor, long-suffering Barlow). I ask "Where is Major Lebedev?" Maisky has heard from him that our Birmingham trip was a great success. I. then appears, very friendly, and asking whether I have had any vodka. I say no. He then elbows through the crowd to the buffet, but returns most indignant. All the vodka has been drunk. He seizes upon a little Russian woman who seems to have some official role and returns a few minutes later with two very large glasses filled to the brim. I. says that we had better not drink both these in one gulp - "bottoms up", as he puts it, and, indeed, I applaud his caution, being less unsusceptible to vodka than to most other forms of alcohol. After we have drunk a little, he says that he thinks we should talk to some of the other people, and, carrying my still nearly full glass, I meet Albarda. I ask if he has had any vodka. He says no. I say "If you will get a glass, I will give you some of this." Not quite understanding, he takes my glass from me and empties it. The Dutch are good drinkers.

G.J. to dine. He says that A.E. is going quite soon to the U.S., accompanied by Cadogan, Strang and himself. It has been put off, for the moment, owing to the P.M.'s illness. The principal discussion will be political, and A.E. will press that we should now talk detail on the Peace Settlement, both with the Americans and the Russians. He does not think A.E. will be led into any detailed talk on economics, either on the Treasury or E. of T. side. We agree that Phillips is a frightful old woman. *He* says that his telegrams read like cautionary letters from a very third-rate solicitor. He agrees that it would be very useful if P.L. were there at the same time, to counter-balance the Treasury if necessary, but thinks it

/would

would be difficult to include him in A.E.'s personal party, since there would be jealous outcry from a number of other Departments. He suggests that I might arrange for P.L. to be in Washington, independently, at the same time. He says that they two like each other and are in close touch. He insists, in reply to my usual scepticism, that he is quite popular and well dug in at the F.O. He is not one of A.E.'s intimates, and he thinks he never will be, but he is allowed to see all papers and his own suggestions are generally well received. He thinks that his relations with A.C. are also still quite good, and that the latter was misled by Ismay and Morton into believing, when the change came at M.E.W., that G.J. was much more unpopular with the Services than he ever really was.

He thought J.A.'s speech on Beveridge was ludicrously inept, and that, whereas the Govt. were expected by all to say, and were really trying to say, that they thought the B.Report was a jolly good thing and that they were going to act on most of it, they succeeded in creating the impression that they were both shifty and hostile. He has met, by request, H.M.'s Mr Leslie, and thinks him very intelligent. H.M. has submitted a draft on his next speech, which is largely on foreign affairs, and, G.J. thinks, very good. So good, indeed, that it has not aroused much enthusiasm in A.E. The latter, he says, "does not reason out a problem, as you or I do", but gets there by a queer process of his own. He is very sensitive to atmosphere, and, if you choose to use the word in this sense, very feminine.

24. 2. 43.

Another Administrative Committee this morning, at 9.30. A speech by Shinwell, but no decision. Then a Party meeting. Desultory talk, much by Shinwell. There is no longer a Chairman in the Chair. A.G. gives no guidance, controls nothing, and seems mostly paralysed, though I suspect an occasional touch of malice against Ministers.

/H.M.

H.M. at the Party meeting gives them a very good pie-jaw, telling them that the Labour Party seems often to want to be a Suicide Club, and that there is much too much talk about "safe seats", no matter how grave the blunders committed. On this the point is that we can never get power unless we win, and hold, a very large number of the weaker seats. A. Bevan makes a long, rambling address, obviously in a state of great pique because, in spite of the Beveridge Report fuss, which was perfectly timed to help her, Jennie Lee lost the North Bristol election, though her successful opponent absolutely refused to commit herself for or against the Beveridge Report. This result casts some doubt on the readily accepted allegation that the whole country is starving and thirsting after Beveridge.

At 11 go from Party meeting to National Executive and find them quacking away about the Communist affiliation. Several, including Jim Griffiths, who, as J.W. and I agree, has got a very spongy under-belly, are wobbling towards measures of compromise, e.g., entering into discussions with the Communists, believing that the vote may go against us at the Conference. Fred Burrows says that the N.U.R. is quite firm and that there is no reason to suppose that we cannot defeat the Communists, provided that the necessary preparatory work is done and people don't get cold feet. We don't get on to "the crisis" until afternoon, and once more we have no lead from the Chair. Poor old Dobbs sits there looking worried and puzzled and letting anyone say what he likes. At 1.20 I make a brief report on what was said by Ministers on Monday's meeting, adding that, in my view, for the future there must be much more contact and mutual confidence between Ministers and the Party, and that in this year, when the war will reach its climax, and great casualties are likely, it is not to be thought of that we should leave our posts. Shortly after, I leave the meeting, already getting rather thin, the Chairman telling me that he thinks there will be nothing much more.

(Next day there is a great fuss at another

/Ministers'

Ministers' meeting because there is something more.)

Sikorski, Retinger and J.W. lunch with me, and I apologise for arriving half an hour late, on the ground that I have been making a speech! I confront S. with the various rumours, some mentioned to R. on Monday, now circulating to the disadvantage of Poland, and he admits that some unauthorised persons have been spreading such tales - eight Polish civilians in Scotland, connected with the unofficial journal "Walka", and a Polish "madman" in the Middle East, with whom is closely connected Colonel Hulse, British Liaison Officer with the Poles. It is from this latter source that the Kiev claim is sprung. S. has demanded that the eight Poles in Scotland shall be interned in the Isle of Man. - H.M. was not very responsive to a similar request once before - and that Hulse shall be replaced. As to Polish agents being arrested by the Russians for "Intelligence" in Moscow, he says he does not know what they may have been ~~working~~ doing. They may have been working for our own Colonel Hill, but they have no instructions from their own Govt. to act thus.

T.U.C. this afternoon pass unanimously a vote of confidence in Labour Ministers, and were restrained only with difficulty from adding a vote of condemnation on the Parliamentary Labour Party. Speeches in this sense were also made at the N.C.L. yesterday.

Discuss Honours with Overton. There seem to be very few "State Servants" to put up this time, and no P.A.S. is suggested.

H.C. to dine, and we discuss the incredible crudeness and stupidity of the Labour Party, which now tends to over-shadow the indecisive ineptitude of the Government. I try to poke up the work on post-war financial policy which H.C. and others have been doing, but it seems very difficult to get any sense out of a "drafting committee", even of bright people. Better soon to give out tasks one to each, and for me to go through them when they come in.

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I thought this morning "the crisis" was petering out. To-night I am not so sure.

25. 2. 43.

Liesching Hodge Meade

P.L., E.H. and J.E.M. to discuss Reparations. Keynes is still turning catherine wheels, but some sense seems to be emerging. Meade thinks that the formula should be the extent to which the capital wealth of each United Nation has been diminished as a result of the war. This would have the effect of giving U.S.A. practically no claim, ourselves only a small claim, and the largest claims to those countries which had been most devastated. Each country would, of course, be entitled to distribute its share as it chose among its own nationals. I like this, but it will be difficult to put over, particularly because it takes no account of the loss of "human capital". This is hard to value, but might, none the less, be worked in. One of Keynes' outrageous first suggestions was that British property in enemy countries should be a charge against reparations, but in occupied allied countries a charge against the Treasury of that country, so those British capitalists who invested in Germany would do much better than those who invested in Juggery or Poland. I say that what I want is some plausible formula which will turn most of the reparation moneys eastward from Germany, rather than westward. But, of course, there may be great devastation in the west before the war ends, and this would alter the whole picture.

Lunch, along with Leith-Ross, with Frihagen, Norwegian Minister of Supply and Relief, who is accompanied by Ording and Smith. Quite a sensible talk. The North African Relief operations show that, if we have supplies and ships, we can put them in, and this is the whole thing. The Norwegians say that, when the Finns came recently to Stockholm, the Swedes advised them to make a separate peace. But they are leaving this disastrously late. They say that Tanner still spoke of "St. Petersburg", and this is typical of his, and other Finns', state of mind towards the Russians.

/Another

Another meeting of Labour Ministers at No.11 Downing Street to-night. There has been a fantastic number of meetings this week on the Beveridge fuss. This evening it emerges that, at the tail end of the National Executive yesterday, after 2 p.m., it was proposed by Walker, and seconded by Ridley, that a vote of confidence in the Labour Ministers should be passed, as at the T.U.C. Against this it seems, from a letter from Middleton to Attlee - notably, I daresay, Griffiths and Shinwell - that this would be equivalent to censuring the Parliamentary Labour Party. Since, however, the mover and seconder would not withdraw, this, as an amendment to a resolution merely reaffirming the earlier resolution of the N.C.L., in favour of the principles, though not necessarily of all the details, of the Beveridge Report, was defeated by 13 votes to 4. Most clumsy! E.B. and others make a great to-do over this, and declare that it is equivalent to a vote of no confidence in the Labour Ministers. But it is really not quite this. They suggest a further meeting of the N.E. to be called, from which such a vote of confidence should be demanded, failing which a special conference to be called, at which a vote of no confidence in the Executive should be proposed, etc., etc. E.B., very full of peasant suspicions, especially against Maurice Webb, and other persons unnamed, - possibly H.M. - declares that there is a double conspiracy going on, partly to break up the Govt. and partly to change the leadership of the Labour Party. As usual, much abuse of "the political side", which is taken to include the National Executive. But I have to point out that this last body abounds in Trade Union representatives. None the less, I am more than half inclined to support the proposal for a special N.E., but it is finally left, H.M. weighing in against stirring the whole thing up any further, that, unless reports appear in the press suggesting that the N.E. has expressed lack of confidence in Ministers, we should do no more for the present. If, however, such rumours circulate, then C.R.A. should have a free hand to demand a special meeting. All this has become the most frightful bore. As Simmonds says to me later this evening, when I ask him for his frank opinion, at the beginning the Government came out of it much worse than the Labour Party,

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but, with the passage of days and the constant stirring up of crisis mud, the Labour Party has now come out of it much worse than the Government. Ground which had lately been gained has been lost again, and many intelligent people are now saying that the Labour Party is N.B.G. I fear this is quite true, though it may soon pass.

E.B. says that he went straight to the T.U.C. to-night, since it was at their request that he first entered the Government. They are a strong and sensible, though slightly wooden element in all this flotsam and jetsam.

I say to-night to the two Cazalets, whom I meet dining with Lady Colefax, referring to Scott's "Behind the Urals", that the Russians are completely indifferent to human suffering, whereas the Germans cultivate it like a fine flower. It is thought that this is a very bright remark, as indeed it is!

26. 2. 43.

L.P.Cttee. on Films. Paper by K.W. and me in favour of no action on Films Commission is accepted, but there is much general quack and I only just succeed in preventing the establishment of a Committee of Ministers to look at post-war film arrangements. I agree, however, that P.L. should make a survey, in consultation with other Departments, of all the Departmental bits and pieces which will need to be "co-ordinated", and I undertake to put in a paper on this later on.

The rest of the day is spent on towels, Honours, a visit to my dentist, and "The Silver Fleet", an admirable Dutch war propaganda film.

DIARY27 & 28. 2. 43.

At W.L. for the first time for a month. Work in the garden till 7.30 p.m. I notice the lengthening evenings more because my mind has been on the cycle battery shortage.

1. 3. 43.

Home Front Ministers' Meeting. Butler is still negotiating with the Churches, and reports that the R.C.s think Hinsley has not been tough enough with the Government and had, even before his illness, pushed Downey of Liverpool to the front. A general jaw on next steps regarding the Beveridge Report. Jowitt is to "co-ordinate" the various enquiries of different Departments, and to have, for this purpose, a small high-powered staff of officials. Brown and T.J. are to discuss the "unified medical service" with the doctors, etc., - Brown said to me that he thought it would take fifteen months, in which case there will be another row before long - E.B. is to examine necessary changes in unemployment benefit and assistance, and so forth. Someone has said "Never has any Government got so little credit for doing so much so quickly." But neither Anderson nor K.W., both of whom are at to-day's meeting, seem to be oppressed by any sense of guilt or wasted opportunities.

Talk to Banks and other Canadians about their cotton supplies. They are a very decent lot of people, and their contribution to the war effort is immense.

A "directive" was recently issued, relating primarily to research work closely connected with the war effort. It indicated that we should proceed on the assumption that the war in Europe would be finished before

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the end of 1944, and the war against Japan before the end of 1946, the latter being likely to require from us "quite a considerable effort."

2. 3. 43.

At Question time there is further evidence of the agitation of the Forty Thieves against my Orders. A Mr Delaney, a small bespoke tailor in Manchester, has been complaining through the Manchester Tailors' Guild that one of my officers "forcibly entered" his premises and "sought to search" them. Three M.P.s have put down questions on this man, who has also written to Sir H. Williams, and no doubt many others. A report from my Inspector states that the premises consist of a single room, 12 ft. by 6, entered by a swing door. He walked into this as he would into any other shop, found Mr D. engaged, and said he would come back in the afternoon. This he did, and found Mr D. alone. He asked him how he was getting on, with his coupon banking, etc., and whether he kept a duplicate book. Mr D. then "dived in off the deep end" and in the course of an abusive harangue, said "Is this the democracy we are fighting for? I belong to a Party which could bring the Army and the Air Force to a standstill in a week. I was a Major in the last war, but if I could get to Lisbon I would join the German Army now. I know all about your Regulation 18B and I am quite prepared to go to prison for my principles." I was prepared in the House to-day, if pressed hard, to read this out, but think I scored by not doing so but only hinting that there were things that I could say which would not do Mr D. any good. I also counter-attacked Sir H. Williams by saying that he is constantly seeking to sow ill will between the Board of Trade and the trading community, but that in this he is singularly unsuccessful and that most of the visits of my officers are welcomed. This comes out quite well in the press. The Daily Express has had two articles by Trevor Evans attacking my Orders, and me by name, and I learn that these have been written on the direct instructions of the Beaver. They

/are

are not very damaging.

Lunch with Mrs P., along with C.R.A. and H.M., to meet Massigli, whom I had not seen for about ten years. He talks very pro-de Gaulle and anti-American. He is, of course, much against the French personalities in North Africa. Algeria, he says, has always been much worse even than Vichy. Giraud is a nice old gentleman with good military record, who understands nothing whatever about politics and still has a sneaking sense of personal responsibility to Petain. It will be, Massigli says, a disaster if the Americans are allowed to invade France from the South, for their idea will be to use the existing men of Vichy in each locality to distribute supplies, etc. On the other hand, the de Caullistes have a complete list of reliable men who should take over local power. There is every danger of a French civil war in the wake of an American invasion. More than once during this lunch I am inclined to remind M. of the famous saying of Clemenceau that war is much too serious a matter to be left to Generals. I do say that I am very glad that he has come and that he has walked almost into an empty room. We discuss the possibility of other French civilians of value being brought out, but he is not very optimistic about this. Herriot, and also my friend Pierre Viénot, are "confined" at Evian, but he understands that they are not ill treated. Delbos, of whom I speak well, he dismisses as quite unimportant. He is living quietly in his constituency in the Dordogne. Grumbach is in prison and in a state of great wretchedness, his family having nothing to live on. Reynaud and Mandel have been carried off to Germany, where, Massigli thinks, they are being kept as hostages against the time when the Allies will demand the handing over of Nazi war ~~criminals~~ criminals. Daladier, Blum, Camelin and Guy La Chambre are still at Riom, but he does not think that they will go any further with the farce of that trial. The Germans might, of course, at any time move them too to Germany.

From lunch to a press conference on towels. "Please bring your own towel", a neat little poster, to be exhibited in hotels and hairdressers' shops, takes very well.

I have announced to-day some special allowances for factory workers and for doctors, dentists, midwives, masseuses, chiropedists and vets, which goes over quite acceptably, and, at the press conference, I say that housewives must fight back against their men folk and billetees and tell them, "No coupons, no towels". I also remind them that in Stalingrad and Kharkov there will be very few towels.

L.P.'s Cttee. has at last before it an agreed paper, initialled by O.L., E.B. and myself, on Concentration and Transfer of Production. This is the final outcome of prolonged official, and occasional Ministerial, confabulations, and is quite acceptable to us. (Separate copy attached.)

Dine at G.W.Hotel, the party being organised by Carvell and Haydn Davies, and including J.W., Harvie Watt - whom I don't see much of, but with whom I judge that my relations are very good - Cranfield, the Editor of the Star, who does not impress me at all - I hear that he has been demoted in Fleet Street, having once edited the Daily Mail; he has an old-fashioned Liberal outlook, desiring to abolish the House of Lords but, on the other hand, to do nothing to enforce any orders or regulations, any efforts to do this being described as "snooping" - Desmond Morton, whom I seldom see now but still regard as one of the slimiest snakes and a close friend of some of my worst enemies, and other less obtrusive persons.

3. 3. 43.

Fitzmaurice

The Speaker died to-day. He had only been ill, with bronchitis, for a week, but he was 73 and had been giving an impression, for some time, of losing his grip. He succeeded Whitley in 1928, in my first Parliament, and it is interesting to recall that it was the Labour Party who made him Speaker. He had been Chairman of Ways and Means for several years and had given an impression of slow-witted impartiality. Hope, now Lord Rankeillour, the Deputy

/Speaker

Speaker, was completely unacceptable to the Labour Party. He was a complete contrast to Fitzroy and oozed quick-witted bias. We had gone to the length of putting down a motion on paper ~~demanding~~ condemning his partiality in the Chair. Baldwin, then P.M., and other leading lights in the Tory Party, realising that Hope was impossible, wanted Inskip. But the Labour Party were against this candidature, since he too seemed to us a partisan and had often made pompous and not very benevolent debating points against us. We therefore encouraged J.R.M. to tell Baldwin that we would support Fitzroy, but would vote against Inskip. It being much desired to avoid a vote, Fitzroy got it, and Inskip became less friendly than ever towards the Labour Party.

He did.

I myself should like to see Clifton Brown, the Deputy Speaker, succeed to the Chair. But there will be a great intrigue to get it for Gwilym Lloyd George.

Tewson to see me. I say that I should like to put in George Woodcock for an Honour, but T. thinks that this might cause ill feeling among his seniors, and I agree to defer it. He speaks ill, as usual, of Madame Maisky and all the trouble over clothes to Russia. He expresses great sympathy for Barlow. The Russians, he says, are very arrogant, as well as being difficult on details, and Dubonossov said the other day, quite contemptuously, "The Red Army has captured more arms from the Germans in one month than the British and the Americans have sent them in nearly two years."

Dine with Sir A.M. Livingstone and sit beside Harriman, who, as usual, gives an impression of being very pro-British. He says that most Americans believe that we are so damned clever that we have already got all our post-war plans worked out to the last dot, and intend to inveigle the Americans into accepting them to their own great disadvantage. In view of our chronic indecisions, this is really frightfully funny, but I only tell H. that decisions come even more slowly in a Coalition than in a one-Party Government. H. says that he is afraid that the U.S. are

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falling down on their promises of food and other supplies for us. Their price control and rationing has begun with tremendous muddles, and so have their man-power arrangements. We have the great advantage in food rationing in so far as we import the bulk of our supplies, but it is administratively impossible to control everything that happens on the farm. The Republicans in Congress are feeling the ground for a fight with the President, but they have not found solid enough ground yet. In particular, they will be very chary of doing anything which can be construed as an attack on the war effort. H. does not think much of Sumner Welles, or his last speech in which he said that discussions on post-war problems with the Allies were over-due. H. thinks that the President may now be feeling that the war may end sooner than he expected a little while ago, that he cannot run again on the New Deal, the domestic electoral trend being Conservative, and that, therefore, he must be prepared to run, partially at least, on pleasing post-war plans.

DIARY4. 3. 43.

Lunch over Simpsons in Piccadilly and propose the health of Poland. Barnby, in the Chair, says he is very glad that the Board of Trade is in the hands of an Old Etonian. This gives him great confidence for the future! A mixed party, not very distinguished, containing a number of Poles in uniform, as well as British miscellaneous. But I make rather a good speech, saying, "in part", that some have strength of character and some have charm of character, but that the characteristic of the Poles is that so high a proportion of them have both. I also work off the familiar crack about the war memorial to the daughters of Scotland, which is well received; ("To all the daughters of Scotland who fell for the Poles.") and my hope that there will be much coming and going between our two countries after the war, and a constant renewal of our personal contacts. I make, as my habit with Slavs is, my short finale in their own language, rehearsed with Retinger on the telephone: "Niech zije Polska, pierwsza stanelo do boju!" ("Long live Poland, who was the first to stand up and fight.")

Thence to Bishop Auckland for three and a half days. Train arrives an hour and a half late at Darlington, but I am met by W.D. and Kalkstein, given supper in Darlington, and thence to St Helens.

5. 3. 43.

Visit Spennymoor and Aycliffe R.O.F.s, accompanied by Webber, Warter's deputy in the N.E., Lumley, of the Ministry of Supply, and Sir Albert Wilkin, a rather collapsed old gentleman, who, I understand, makes toffee in Newcastle and advises the Board of Trade on factory problems. Pick up Jimmy Murray at S. This is a more impressive place than I had expected, with quite a lot of engineering gear. They make small arms ammunition which

is among that filled at Aycliffe. The latter is very much larger, and I spend two hours going round only part of it. It would do well as a Trading Estate after the war, being conveniently divided into eight or nine sections, with good common services, canteens, surgery, etc., in addition to power, light, etc.

Visit the Brown Jug in the evening. They still have some supplies.

6. 3. 43.

Sleep in, visit the Trading Estate across the road, and hear plans of Ernest & Henry for turning over from making aeroplane parts to making button-making machinery after the war. They have much enterprise.

Afternoon, receive constituents at Lightfoot Institute for three hours, then for tea with Ernest Proud, and return to two and a half hours' private meeting of delegates.

I find the latter discussing, rather vaguely, the reform of Local Government, but after three quarters of an hour of this, I am invited to speak, and do so at some length. I begin with the war, the coming climax, the U-boats, the Russians, etc., and then go on to post-war problems, saying a good deal about Beveridge, but sandwiching it in among my visit to state factories, Bevin and Hicks' Charter for the post-war building trade, and my own contribution to the Miners' Charter last June. I tell them frankly that I have never known any case so mishandled, both pro and con the Government, as this Beveridge scheme. I say that I was not in on this, and that, perhaps, if I had been, the mess might have been less. I say that I know Beveridge better than most people, having served both under and over him; that he is not "one of us" and has no first-hand knowledge of industrial conditions; that there are a number of things in his Report to which we could not subscribe, e.g., the penalising of miners and railway workers because
/their

their jobs are inherently more risky than a carpenter's, and the proposal to take 20 years to reach the appropriate rate of old age pension. Both of these criticisms are well received, as I knew they would be, by my audience. I then add that, none the less, the Beveridge Report is a fine and stimulating document and that, out of 23 suggested changes, the Government has set only one aside, has referred 6 to further consideration, and accepted the remaining 16, together with the three "assumptions", child allowances, comprehensive health services, and full employment. I then blow my own trumpet over child allowances, and recall that I only just succeeded last year in persuading the Labour Party to get in in front of the Government. I ^{also} ~~press~~ H.M., saying that he is about the only person who came with any credit out of the three days' debate in the House of Commons. I remind them that Beveridge did not himself propose that his scheme of benefits should begin to operate till 1945, so we have plenty of time, even on that basis, to work out plans and take account of finance. I tell them, more than once in different connections, that they may take it from me that Labour Ministers in the Government are exercising no small influence, and that, were we not there, the result would be much less satisfactory. All this goes over very well, and, when questions are invited, very few are asked, and none of them hostile. One man gets up and says that he was present this afternoon in Durham at a conference on the Beveridge Report, and that he is sorry to say that several of the speakers had shown lack of confidence in the Labour members of the War Cabinet. This news is greeted with evident disapproval by the delegates. Blenkinsop then gets up and says he does not know whether "our Member would like a vote of confidence". I say "Yes, please", and he then moves it, and it is seconded and carried unanimously. They are a grand lot! But, as I often tell my weaker brethren, every M.P. gets out of his constituency what he puts into it.

He tells me of a man from N. Devon, he from N. Devon, & kept him in touch. At 1
 Thence to dine with the Lewins, with whom Vogel is staying. He and I discuss Central Europe after dinner, and he seems to have little liking for any of the "oppressed minorities" of that region. He says that neither the

/Slovaks

He tells me of a man from N. Devon, he from N. Devon, & kept him in touch. At 1
the war

Slovaks nor the Hungarians have any sense, and the Slovaks no literature either.

7. 3. 43. (Sunday)

Sleep late and, after lunch, address a public meeting in the Eden Theatre. A pretty good attendance and no signs of hostility anywhere. I speak rather heavily for an hour and a quarter, as last night, though more discreetly. The only question I have afterwards on the Beveridge Report is whether it would not put up the cost of our exports, as compared with those from sweated countries! One miner from the gallery says that an industrial supplement of 10 coupons is too little. To him I say that I have done, and will do, my best, in consultation with the T.U.C. and the miners' leaders, but that in this war, there can be no equality of sacrifice, and that some meet death and wounds, while others only have to wear their old clothes a bit longer. This is well taken by the audience, who give me a unanimous vote of confidence.

To-night some of us visit the Sun Inn, where the proprietor is an international soccer player and tea-totaller who now works as a blacksmith at the Randolph Colliery at Evenwood. A bunch of my Evenwood constituents are here, and all is very friendly and quite sober.

8. 3. 43.

Catch the 8.52 a.m. from Darlington and land back for a late lunch. The Speaker's funeral is to-day.

Back, after this short break, to valves, Make Do and Mend Exhibitions, and the old headache of shortage of footwear. On this last some of my officials are now afraid that we shall overdo the switch from adults to children. Durston, in whom my confidence is rather intermittent, is going to tackle firms one by one to see what they can do. I really don't know why he didn't start to

do this months ago!

9. 3. 43.

Cliff Brown
Elect the new Speaker. It takes a damned long time, but I think he will do all right.

Lunch with the Belgian Ambassador and go on to open a Make Do and Mend Exhibition at Charing Cross. There I make an impromptu vow not to buy a new suit till the end of the war!

The evening papers report remarks by Mr Langley, Stipendiary Magistrate at Old Street, in a prosecution for evasion of regulations against turn-ups. He seems to have let off four defendants, who pleaded guilty, very lightly, and then said that he had purposely imposed only nominal penalties, in order to encourage representations to secure a change in the law. We have had trouble with this Magistrate before, and I write to H.M., enclosing a cutting from the Star.

10. 3. 43.

Hunting Mr Langley! I get reports from both the Prosecuting Officer and the Inspector, which tally pretty well, and send them to H.M. in the afternoon. Meanwhile, I have a word with him at lunch - we are both guests of Benes - and he shows me a minute by Maxwell, made this morning, on my letter of yesterday. This is quite satisfactory from my point of view, and H.M. says he will send for Langley and give him a talking to; also that the Stipendiaries are a very poor lot and that no Home Secretary has ever taken any real trouble about these appointments.

Dr B. is shortly going to Washington, and thence to Moscow. He is, I think, just a little apprehensive about the Russians. I say my usual piece about the importance of Poles and Czechs getting together, and he says

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that he agrees, but adds that he told Sikorski that there were aristocratic elements in Poland with whom it was very difficult for the Czechs to co-operate. Of Sikorski himself, and of Kwapinski, and Stanczyk, he speaks well. But he said, as many years ago, that one of the worst obstacles to unity and concord in Middle Europe was an undemocratic Hungary. This little man does not change much.

Sir Lynden Macassey brings a deputation from the internal combustion machine makers to see me. He is a bit of a pompous bore. Some of the others look sheer crooks.

11. 3. 43.

Answer an arranged P.O. to-day on clothing coupons and announce the extension of the present rationing period from the end of July to the end of August. That means a rate of 48 coupons a year during these 15 months. I go on to urge the continuance of all possible economy, and promise that the present coupons shall continue valid at least till the end of this year.

In the afternoon - after a Drapers' Lunch and Court - I take a press conference on clothing. (Separate statement attached.) This, I think, is rather good. (It got reasonable publicity next day.)

Hurst's homework has now been done again, and, I hear, sent to J.A. in better shape! We have lost some time, but perhaps it does not matter much. The Americans are characteristically plunging about in all directions at once, and the latest idea is to summon next month in the U.S. a conference of all the United Nations "on a technical and expert basis" to consider a large and vague programme of post-war food problems, which, however, are to be "entirely divorced from Relief". (Whether this last phrase means that Lehman, who is to come over here soon, has been pushed aside by the other policy makers, or has pushed them aside, is not clear.) It does not look as though "trade barriers"

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will come on yet awhile. The President, as already recorded in my talk with Harriman, seems to be trying to fuse in his own support the materialism of the farm block and the idealism of "good men everywhere". Leith-Ross takes a gloomy view of this last development, both because the change entirely misses the problem of starving Europe which is likely to confront us very soon, unless we make better provision than we have done till now, as soon as we begin to drive the Germans out, and also because he fears that, if the Wheat discussions are any guide, several Ministers here will be very sticky and difficult about any positive proposals, and will upset the Americans by insisting on complete freedom to grow whatever we like in this country. I think he may be too gloomy. It is important that the Americans should at last be beginning to discuss definite post-war problems, even though they may seem to take them in the wrong order and in an atmosphere of hustling muddle. They have, incidentally, just upset the Canadians, not unnaturally, by announcing, without any notice to Canada, that a conference on refugee problems should meet in Ottawa. This has made the Canadians say that they will no longer accept the compromise on the constitution of the Relief Organisation, which, after much travail, had emerged, namely, that the Council should consist of the Big Four, who should be joined by the Chairman of the Supplies Committee, it being understood that we would all push a Canadian for this Chairmanship.

Dudley Ward, who has just come back from a fortnight in North Africa, says that everything out there is also in a frightful state of confusion and ill will. The American military seem, at first, to have taken charge of everything, and told Lehman's people to go to hell. They were at first inclined to work through the French local authorities, but then handed it all over to the American Red Cross, whose agents are said to be making themselves very unpopular with the natives, both French and Arab, by their high-hat methods, and not to be distributing the stuff at all well, large areas of the Atlas being left practically without supplies. Meanwhile, a certain quantity of stores

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intended for the civilian population is being casually picked up by American - and, I understand, British - detachments, who just march down to the ports and carry off what they want.

12. 3. 43.

Confer with S. Courtauld and the Rayon gang on their levy, now amounting to 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ million pounds, which the Treasury is anxious to pick up, under the Head of E.P.T., but which S.C. and Co. think should be left intact for research and post-war export subsidies. I undertake to have a word with K.W., but rather on the basis that he should leave a part only of the fund intact for these purposes, and take the remainder. I also suggest to Courtauld that he should talk to Keynes and Catto, both of whom he knows well.

Maillaud to lunch with me. I have not seen him for a long while, but I have recently written to him praising his little book on France. I find him, as I used to do, very clear-headed and sensible. He was in N. Africa for a month, including the time when Darlan was shot. He had a long talk with Giraud, and would much prefer to live under his "liberté humaine" than under de Gaulle's "liberté démocratique". Giraud, he says, is a typical old General, with Conservative tendencies but no clear political ideas or ambitions. He would never wish, differing here from de G., to be the head of a French Government. He wants only to fight and beat the Germans. He said to Maillaud, "Yes, I too would have gone to England, had I been able, in the summer of 1940. But I would not then have indulged either in politics or in slander." He also said that undoubtedly some of the Jews had behaved very badly, but so had "many of my own middle glass", both having enriched themselves at the expense of France. M. said that the de Gaullistes in France were now being urged, from their Headquarters in London, to show the maximum of activity. But this, he said, only means that a number of brave men died, and suffered, to no good purpose. It would be much

/better

better to hold themselves in until sabotage and other acts could really help our invasion of the Continent. But in this tactic, he said, de G. was both playing up to the Russians, who also always favoured it, and staking out further claims for himself. M. thought that there was a real risk of civil war in France between the de Gaullistes, who were everywhere being organised, even though in small numbers, and various other factions, some of whom would follow Giraud, some the Communists, some the leaders who had remained in France. He also feared that, in order to emphasise themselves on the morrow of liberation, de G. and his adherents would adopt an anti-British line. Nor, he thought, should we lose sight of the possibility that, particularly if Anglo-Russian relations were not very close, the Russians would have an interest in making France both Communist and, in some measure, anti-British. On the other hand, he himself believed that Britain, France and Russia could be good friends and, between them, provide sufficient power to keep Europe at peace for a long while. M. said that he had seen too much of Generals - his father having been one - to be much impressed by them. Returning to France, he said, he would "feel very humble" in the presence of those who had stuck it out. He is still running his post-Havas agency and is quite independent of de Gaulle or any other French faction. He spoke highly of Massigli, who, he said, stood for the best, though not the universal, tradition of the French Civil Service, good brains and honesty of purpose. Leger, he said, was in the U.S.A., likewise independent of all factions.

DIARY13 and 14. 3. 43.

At W.L. Sit in a deck chair on the terrace after lunch on Sunday and go to sleep in the sun for one and a half hours! I am feeling rather fretful about P.Q.s which, it is clear, are being organised by that little boulder H. Williams in order to snipe and embarrass me. There is also a P.Q. for next Tuesday to the P.M. by another Tory prize twerp, Simmonds, trying to make trouble about my reference at Bishop Auckland to retaining State factories after the war. I had sent a note, on P.S. level, to the P.M. before leaving London, but he has only just got back and will have been out of touch with everything, and I am afraid they may trip him up on Supplementaries. But I forget all this for a while in fixing wires from the balcony to sustain the new growth of the ceanothus. None the less, I write to R. that down here I feel more inclined to resign and write some scabrous memoirs than to return to boredom at the Board of Trade! I suppose "they" will try to use the Official Secrets Act to prevent the publication of all the most interesting things which one day I shall wish to say.

15. 3. 43.

To make as sure as possible that there is no side-slip to-morrow, I send the P.M. a minute on State factories. (Copy attached.)

Thence to meeting of the International Sub of the Labour Party. How we do love to pick out one or two corpses from the mass and make great song and dance around them! To-day it is Alter and Ehrlich, the two leaders of the Polish Bund, or Jewish Socialist Party, who now, according to a note from Molotov to Litvinov for transmission to some American enquirer, were first imprisoned by the Soviet authorities, then released, and later re-arrested and

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executed. Molotov alleges that they were first acting as spies for the Polish Government and, in the second case, were appealing to the Russian workers to make peace with Hitler. The "Group of International Friends" have prepared a long and obscure statement, in which they say they don't believe that either A. or E. did any wrong and that their memories will live, and that they were against Hitler, etc. But the statement does not explicitly assert that they were killed by the Russians. This rather queer concoction has been signed by C. Huysmans and the rest, and also by a few of our N.E., and it is a question what to do next with it. The blunder-heads, George Dallas and Jimmie Walker, are all for sticking a National Executive stamp on it, but Harold Clay and I and Laski and Phil Baker, and finally H.M. - and here surely is a great mass of mixed wisdom - are against, though we see no objection to the thing going forth as it is, without committing the N.E. I recall that Ehrlich, whom I used to meet at the Second International, never mixed with the other Poles, but adopted a sort of I.L.P., or, if you like the word, "Trotskyite" attitude.

Thence to the question of the Labour delegation to Russia. It is by now quite clear that this mission is, for the present, quite impossible. The most important of several reasons is that the Russians won't want to talk to anyone about anything except the Second Front in Europe. I cite Clark Kerr as having said that they would always suspect our sincerity, no matter whom we sent, or what we said, or promised, until, in fact, British and American troops were fighting in large numbers on the Continent. It was finally felt by all, including Laski who is always difficult on these matters, that it should be frankly told to the Conference that the present military situation made this mission inopportune.

I contrast these two items on our agenda. Our Russian allies are undoubtedly very tough and brutal people. It is not easy to be close friends ~~at~~ the time with those who have an aptitude to shock one's sensibilities pretty often.

Cynthia Jeff

C.J. to dine with me. She thought that I rang up the other day to make sure whether or not G. had actually left with Eden for Washington. She amuses me by much feline gossip against Clark Kerr, I having told her that he is undoubtedly much the best of our diplomats, and that I had so informed all members of the Labour Party, and that Phil Baker said that he agreed with me. She thought this last point alone was fatal, since Phil had notoriously the worst of judgments regarding people. She added that C.K. dyed his hair, mis-stated his age in Who's Who, - representing himself to have been two years younger than he was, and, when this was discovered, having removed the date of his birth entirely from this work of reference - that although he wore a kilt and talked about his "place" in Scotland, he was really an Australian and his "place" only a bungalow by the roadside. She also made malicious allegations about his intimate life and the unfortunate little Chilean whom he married when in South America but had been separated from for a number of years. But I told her at the end that, even though all this and more were true, I stood by my opinion that he was the best of our diplomats. So much the worse for all the rest! Anyhow, he is 61 now, though he doesn't look it, and he will, no doubt, retire after another year or so. I hope he will be able to pull off some big success, with the aid of some external factors, at Moscow before he goes.

16. 3. 43.*George Preston*

. Start on an official visit to the West Riding, accompanied by Barlow, Weir, Warter and G.P. I spend the first two nights in Bradford and the next two in Leeds. (Separate, semi-official Diary attached.) It was a bit exhausting, rather like electioneering, rushing from place to place and group to group, showing all the time affability and interest, making too many speeches, public and private, being friendly to the press but not telling them much, and being a little too much entertained.

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At Bradford I stay with Bailey, my Wool Adviser. He has a Swedish wife, who has spent much of her time in Finland, and a very Swedish-looking daughter. She is not very interesting, but is a very good hostess. On Tuesday (16th) the Baileys ask about 12 people to dine, and on Wednesday (17th) I dine with Behrens and some 30 people at the Union Club. Here I make a rather successful impromptu, seated, reminiscent speech, about Queen Victoria, and my father (they lap this up), and King George V, and how odd, yet potent, the British Crown is, like the British people - illustrated by some old chestnuts about the General Strike and the football behind the German lines on April 1st, 1915 - and then, in effect, a summary of Chapter I of P.S.B., and the old pussycat's remark to my mother about my "having gone the same way as poor Arthur Ponsonby". And so I end by saying that we find in many of our national habits and attitudes "the rational root of our patriotic self-esteem". Is it really very shocking to humbug all these poor people like this? Several come and thank me warmly after ~~was~~. Behrens said that I had done more to bring them together by this speech than he could have thought possible.

I made two visits at Bradford to Works, the first to Salts at Saltaire, built as a model village 90 years ago, and still standing like a slab of smoke-grimed granite. Next day the Works at Batley of ~~Thomas~~ Taylor. This old gentleman is 92 - born two years before Saltaire was built - and retired from Parliament in 1918. He appeared to-day and gave a most vigorous address and afterwards walked round the Works with me. He even allowed sherry and other intoxicants to be served in a back room of his office at the end of the tour, on which, as at Saltaire, I was accompanied, among others, by a number of Trade Union officials, led by George Bagnall, most stylishly dressed, wearing a black coat, striped trousers and a stiff winged collar. None of those present had ever seen him thus attired before. He also made a most sensible speech at a joint meeting, which I held on Wednesday of employer and Trade Union leaders. Old Taylor had the reputation of asking visitors to his house whether they would like a drink,

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and when they said yes, he rang the bell and the maid appeared with two glasses and two jugs on a tray. Mr Taylor then asked whether his guest would prefer a glass of hot water or a glass of cold water. But the old chap is evidently mellowing in his 93rd year!

In addition to meeting (1) employers and Trade Union leaders jointly, (2) some 50 employers' representatives, where long speeches were made by Behrens and Haig, and I added a few words and asked a few questions, and (3) a group of leading people from the Bradford Labour Party, a gathering which began stickily but ended well and, I think, did a good deal of good, I also (4) addressed a public meeting in the Mechanics Hall, rather a poor building but not a bad audience, (5) gave a tea party to all the representatives of the Board of Trade in and around Bradford, and (6) lunched with the Lord Mayor, a very hearty Yorkshireman and a Trade Union leader from the Dyers, and sat up gossiping late both nights at the Baileys.

Thence to Leeds on -

18. 3. 43..

- where we stay at the Queens Hotel and feel that we are really in the heart of a city and not merely a rather squalid mess, as at Bradford. Here too I visit two factories, Price's and Marlbeck, make a public speech at lunch with the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, meet 100 clothiers at tea, and shake hands and say a few bright words to each, meet some 30, mostly clothiers, at dinner, where nearly everyone makes speeches - Boyd in the Chair, myself, Barlow ("breaking some good news" about further labour releases), Miss Loughlin, Weir, Kaye (the organiser of all this and a most remarkable man), Conley (recently back from America and very outspokenly friendly to me), J.W., Milner (now Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, but a bit of a prophet without honour in his own city), Warter, and a few more. I also look at the Research Institute, where many useful things are being discovered, but, as usual, I always

/doubt

doubt how quickly the results of research seep through to industrial practice. I also meet at Leeds, as at Bradford, a small group of leading Labour people. Len Williams, who was here as at Bradford, is a most sensible fellow and doing very well. Naylor, Warter's deputy here, also makes a good impression on me. I cannot say the same of Mr Lemkin, the Semitic character who is working for the Wool Control. But I should note that at Bradford I got on very well with the Wool Controller, Sir Harry Shackleton, of whom I said at one of the gatherings that he was not known by sight at the Board of Trade.

In the train on the way home I sleep nearly all the time.

21. 3. 43.

Don't get up till a quarter to one, having slept, with brief intermissions, right round the clock. I find that the P.M. handled Simmonds' question last Tuesday, which I could not stay to hear or I might have missed my train, quite admirably and was not put off by any Supplementaries.

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PRIME MINISTER.

Mr. Simmonds' P.Q. to-morrow.

I sent you a note and suggested Answer on Saturday. The relevant passage in my speech on February 3rd was well received, and caused no criticism in any part of the House or in the Press. My remarks at Bishop Auckland were only a resumé of this.

I did not in either speech argue that State factories should be retained only as State factories. I did not pre-judge how any such factory should be owned or run after the war. My argument was that some of these factories would still be required to make arms, and that the rest should, whenever possible, be used for some peace-time purpose - production, training, research, etc.

In my talks with industry, I have found a good deal of interest in this. The pottery people, for instance, both manufacturers and Trade Unionists, are very anxious to use the M.A.P. factory at Blythe Bridge to rehouse and modernise some of the older potteries in the Five Towns.

I am having reports made on each locality, so as to furnish material for decisions at a later date.

15th March, 1943.

DIARY22. 3. 43

See H.M., at his request, this afternoon, when we discuss the P.M.'s broadcast, and procedure for the Whitsun Conference. H.M. is now inclined to treat me very much as a close ally, which is all to the good. He says that he succeeded in improving some passages in the P.M.'s speech, and in particular in getting him to say that there was an increasing field for State ownership, particularly as regards monopolies. For the post-war election, I suggested, not for the first time, that we might have Government candidates, Conservative, Labour and Liberal, fighting each other in the same constituency, varying their emphasis upon one common programme. Ministers should have unopposed returns and abstain from speaking! I said that in the final jam something like this might be the only way out. He thought perhaps it might. I said it was essential we should have no redistribution of seats this side of the next election. He said that this was his own view and he was so advising the War Cab.

Williams Thompson, on embarkation leave, dines with me. His Light A.A. Battery will land with the first party. He thinks that he will either be a Labour M.P. before he is 30, or "have a wooden cross in Sicily". He is vigorous, ambitious and mentally mature, particularly since he has had practically no education, and might, if the chance ever came to him, do very well in politics. He has a sense of social justice and of democratic relationships.

23. 3. 43.

I have great fun at Question time and seem to score all round the wicket. This is a pleasant surprise, for I was much irritated at the long list of questions nearly all complaining of shortages of one sort or another.

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Talk with K.W., who will make some more P.T. concessions on utility textiles. This follows talks he has had with Pethick and others. He agrees that I have not pressed him for anything further, since he untaxed utility furniture. He asks what I think will happen about the electoral truce at our Whitsun Conference. I say I think it will probably be continued. (The P.M.'s speech has probably indirectly made this certain, and we hear next day from G.R.S. that the defeat of Communist affiliation is also now quite certain, since 1,388,000 T.U. votes are now pledged against it, leaving only 800,000 T.U. votes to divide between fors and doubtfuls, while the majority of D.L.P. votes will certainly be against.) I then speak with K.W. on Commercial Policy, to a Ministerial meeting of which we go on from our talk. His last paper is a great advance on his previous attitude. He now favours our taking the initiative with the Americans, and a multilateral approach, though he is still very sticky on quantitative restriction. He says to me that "they" all say we must keep full power over this, but that, if the Conference went well, he might feel able to make some concession here at the right moment.

At the Ministerial meeting, with J.A. in the Chair, and the Ministers indirectly affected also present - J.A. had asked me to come and have a word with him this morning on the procedure to be followed, and he and I agreed on this - J.A. opened and said he wished to concentrate on essentials. The first of these was the manner of approach - should we put up ideas to the Americans or wait for them? - the second was the multilateral treaty; the third was quantitative regulation of imports. On the approach, most were for our taking the initiative - J.A., C.R.A., K.W., Law, H.J., W.J. and myself. O.L., who showed signs of having been squared by R.S.H., who said remarkably little and sat in a corner with a silly grin on his face, was surprisingly wrong-headed on this. He said we should allow ourselves to be wooed, since we offered the most wonderful market in the world to foreigners. Lord W. thought we had taken enough initiatives already and should leave this to the Americans. So, of course, did Amery, who is rapidly becoming a mere

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"turn". He did not accept the view that it was to our advantage that tariffs in the world should be low, nor did he favour any multilateral agreement. Of the rest, however, none spoke against the multilateral. On import restrictions, there was a confused and intellectually discreditable debate. Someone said we should not go as suppliants to Washington. W.J. said that we must have import quotas on food, but not perhaps on industrial products. I said our export industries were still most export-minded; that without a substantial increase of exports we could not have full employment in the export trades; that foreigners should give up import quotas; and that it was worth while to promise ourselves to do the same, if they did. Finally, it was agreed, on J.A.'s motion, that I should make a paper for the War Cab. "bringing out" the essential points of difference which had arisen. There was a side slip on procedure through C.R.A., who said as we were going in that he was going to support me, proposing that before the paper went to the War Cab. we should consult the Doms., but this, though not all clearly saw it at the moment, would mean sending them all a balanced telegram, saying that we have not yet made up our minds. In a later discussion with H.J. and P.L., we agree that, when this telegram has been drafted, I should suggest to C.R.A. and J.A. that it looks so frightful, and invites so much rebuff, that it would be much better first to form our own views in the War Cab., at least provisionally, and then ask for the comments of the Doms.

What a struggle it is ever to move half an inch onward!

24. 3. 43.

All morning at L.P. National Executive. As might have been expected, they soon drift on to the P.M.'s broadcast and, in particular, the post-war election passages. But, quite amazingly, nearly everyone agrees that it is undesirable to make any public pronouncement or pass any

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public resolution at this stage. Shinwell says little; it appears later that he has been sickening for 'flu, and H.M. makes a quite sensible speech which carries a good deal of support.

At Simmonds' suggestion, I take him and Stewart Campbell, Editor of the Sunday Pictorial, out to lunch. The latter is a frightful man, gibbering political rubbish which I find most irritating. He thinks the two most striking public men to-day are Acland and Shinwell; also that it is a great pity Franco has not declared war on us, so that we could upset him in Spain; also that the Trade Union racket is responsible for most of our political ills. After a very bad first half, we gradually pull out and do better, and towards the end he is inclined to be helpful and, after I have worked fairly hard with indiscretions of various kinds about my Labour colleagues, to be quite impressed with my knowledge and judgment. I find it rather impudent that he did not start at this point, for after all he is a sheer political ignoramus. Possibly this meal was just, but only just, worth while.

Sait's Bell
J.W., who, with H.C., dines with me to-night, says that at the Party meeting this morning C.R.A. gave quite a good reply to some critics of the P.M.'s broadcast, and that there was very little violent feeling or speaking against it in the Party. My own view is that it may have done good in bringing some of these purveyors of "nagging negatives" up against realities. What they find hard to see is how completely, now and till after victory, the P.M. personally dominates the scene, so that any attempt to fight him at elections, or any conduct likely to provoke him to fight them, would mean that they would be blown away like feathers in a tempest.

25. 3. 43.

Cab. on the impending Food Conference in the
U.S.A. P.M. is always very expansive on food! He is

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above all anxious that we in this island should have enough to eat and that food production should nowhere be restricted. "Thou shalt not grow thy daily bread" had been his version of the meaning of the first Wheat Conference proposals. My colleagues generally are apt to take a gloomy view of this, as of most other American initiatives just now. And indeed, the U.S. Government are most unsystematic and unpredictable. In this case MacDougall of Australia had raced out from London to Washington and fascinated the President with some "wild ideas" about a "nutritional optimum". So much so that the Americans had even suggested to us that we should send our Sir John Orr and some similar expert to represent H.M.G. Fears were expressed that the Conference, to which between 40 and 50 nations were to be summoned, next month, so that there was little time left for any preparation, would result either in complete disorder and ill will, or would spread over into other fields, e.g., the regulation of other commodity prices, e.g., cotton, - which might be very awkward for us, since a rise in raw cotton prices would be sheer loss to us but would be balanced by gain in all countries which both grew and manufactured, e.g., U.S.A., Brazil and India - or commercial policy generally, for which we were at the moment quite unprepared. H.M. and I both said that this last danger showed the need for us to make our minds up soon on our commercial policy, and I mentioned that I had been asked to put up a paper for the War Cab. on this point. The P.M. thought that our commercial policy should be to sell as large a quantity of exports as we could, at the best price and profit obtainable, and in exchange to import as much food ~~xxxxxxx~~ and raw material as we could, at the lowest prices possible. He thought that this was all. I said that I agreed broadly, but that there were one or two other points which had arisen, e.g., import quotas. Here J.A. took alarm and said that he thought we should not go into all this to-day. The P.M. said the danger was, not that we in this country would starve, if the U-boats went on sinking our ships, but that "the war would grow more feeble". We should certainly import what food we needed, but then the ships could not do other things.

Labour Party Financial Cttee. meets this afternoon and does some more good work. They are an outstanding lot, though most of the men don't like Mrs Robinson, who, however, seems to me to be extremely able and to have the right approach, though naturally to be a bit out of touch with London minds.

Fulton takes me to dine at the Reform Club, where there is hardly any food and the service very slow. How different - dingy, socially uninteresting and replete with mediocrities - these London Clubs look to a Minister of the Crown at 55 as compared with an eager, young, unknown idealist at 25! This Club seemed like a great lions' den in those days. Great authors, great editors, great Parliamentarians, swarming everywhere. And to-night not even Sir W. Beveridge is here, but only Clem Davies and Sir J. Monk, who tells the foreign diplomats where to put their feet - I am surprised that he comes to this relatively plebian social centre - and little Gilbert Ponsonby, still looking very childlike, though he is now the father of three children, the eldest of whom is 10. Fulton is treating his war experience at Fuel and Power as raw material for post-war University lectures on "political science". He is a nice character, but is not really very clever.

26. 3. 43.

Forres calls to say that the National Merchant Exports Group have, without his knowledge, asked Burgin to look after their interests and suggested that he should attend a meeting at which Forres is in the Chair. F. has quite properly objected to this, and we agree that we should tell these blokes that they must choose between having direct access to me and to the B. of T. through F., or being treated as outsiders, without F., but with B. instead. I said I was sure that B. was taking a fee.

Receive Industrial Correspondents and tell them quite a good story about progress with utility furniture. The Daily Telegraph has an amazing para saying that I am

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compelling the clothing industry to release 500,000 workers; also that I was much disappointed with what I found on my recent tour of "Yorkshire and Lancashire". The D.T. man is much embarrassed, not being responsible for this yarn, which was put in late last night when he was not in the office. I ask him whether he knew the size of the total labour force in the clothing industry. It was considerably less than 300,000, and the release required by us was 60,000 as from July, 1942, so that half had probably gone already. Further, everything was being done voluntarily and nothing by Government order. Further, far from being "much disappointed", I had been much impressed by the grit and competence and war-mindedness of the Yorkshire people, and by the splendid way in which all sections were pulling together.

Lobby lunch, with Herbert Morrison as the guest. He went on rather too long and was not quite at his best. He gave special character sketches of the P.M., Anderson, and Beaverbrook, praising all three. It will have been noted that he omitted all his Labour colleagues from this list. He will have seemed, I think, to the audience, to have taken a certain pleasure in being the Minister responsible for hangings, though I am sure it was not his intention to convey this. He said that the P.M.'s reference in his recent broadcast to post-war affairs would have set "all the politicians chattering" and so it had. It was difficult to foresee the political set-up immediately after the war, but he would do his best to "prevent the Labour Party from committing suicide", which it had sometimes tried to do before, "not quite unsuccessfully". But if he failed, and it insisted on committing suicide, he would commit suicide with it, for his whole political life was bound up with it, and he owed it everything. Other points were a vivid account of his first days at the Ministry of Supply, when we had no arms, and a laudatory account of the Home Office, "quite unlike any continental Ministry of the Interior", combining police and prisons with social and welfare services, and thus maintaining a balance of interests and opportunities for officials to move from one interest to another. Good passages, but rather a disappointing whole.

/Sir

Sir W. Jowitt spends three-quarters of an hour with me, discussing Company Law reform, patents, unification of the Accountants profession, and the next meeting of his silly old Advisory Council. On this last, all his other colleagues head him off from promising topics. He would like to have discussed at the meeting next week the post-war future of (1) electricity, but Kingsley Wood said that it would be premature, or (2) transport, but Leathers said that this was not the moment, or (3) industrial training, but Bevin said that he already had a Committee sitting on this, or (4) industrial research - this had been suggested to him by me - but Anderson said that this was not a post-war problem. So now he came back to me with (5) post-war exports, etc., which had been suggested by the F.B.I. I said that I was most eager to help him and that H.J. would come and speak to his Council about these things. But I told him that I was having a correspondence with the F.B.I. and firmly resisting their claim to anything more than the right to send me their ideas. They were claiming also that they should be "consulted" by H.M.G. on commercial policy, after H.M.G. had taken preliminary decisions, but before they had put these up to other Governments. W.J. agreed that this was quite impossible.

DIARY29. 3. 43.

Return from W.L. and, as the day goes on, find that I have not killed the cold which began in the middle of last week. Therefore I start going to bed early and drinking night-caps of hot milk and rum.

Kalina comes with his usual tale of woe about Czech squabbles and the edging out of the Socialists in general, and himself in particular. He attributes much of it to Ripka. Now there are no Socialists in the Government except Nemec and Bechko, but the latter speaks no word of English and is a complete dud. Someone said of him "Why don't you bring me an ox with four legs?".

30. 3. 43.

T.U.C. Reconstruction Sub. - Gibson, Deakin, Chester, Brown and Citrine, with Woodcock and O'Donnell in attendance, - come, after a long delay, to discuss post-war plans. All very easy and amicable.

I invite Captain Peter, who is said to have done very good work for us in the South-west region, not to have very much to do now, and to know a good deal about the engineering industry, to become one of my Business Members and help with approaches to industry. He goes off to see Beale, and I think will accept. We want a few more good men on this job.

31. 3. 43.

Address the weekly Parliamentary Party Meeting on post-war plans at the Board of Trade. My voice is very unpleasant, owing to a cold, but I seem to succeed in pleasing

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the Party, while not telling them anything very new, beyond what I said in the House on February 3rd. But I stress the extent to which I am consulting Trade Unions, both nationally and for each industry, and my contacts with the Co-ops. Also plans for pre-war Distressed Areas. J.W. tells me that he heard a number of favourable comments afterwards, and there were no criticisms at the meeting. On the other hand, some of the worst bellyachers were absent. They take no interest in hearing what Labour Ministers are doing.

Go, very unwillingly, to an afternoon party at Buckingham Palace. It is, I suppose, as near an approach as we have in war time to a "royal command". Hundreds of male eminences, in the Government, the higher reaches of the Civil Service and of the Fighting Services, and in the world of foreign diplomats in London, - I think of Trilussa's "Lega Indipendente dei Samari Residenti a Roma" - together with their mostly-not-very-eminent-looking wives. Tramp in Indian file past the King, Queen and the two Princesses, and then stand tightly jammed in the Gallery for longer than I like. I look at Princess Elizabeth and wonder what sort of trouble she would give, as Queen Elizabeth II, to the President of the Board of Trade of that future day. But they both look quite nice little girls, and seem to enjoy being shaken hands with by everybody. I think these functions are a frightful bore, in this respect also holding unwaveringly to an opinion first fixed many decades ago.

R., who is on a brief visit from the North, where she has been having great fun with Lloyd George's brother, William George, over a hostel case near Abersoch - she says that W.G. gives her a real insight into his brother origins - wanted me to procure an intelligent Frenchman to dine with us this evening. Maillaud admirably fills this bill. I had heard most of it before, but he says it all very well.

1. 4. 43.

Decide to stay in till I have killed my cold.
(This I do in three or four days.)

Lord Dudley Gordon, soon to give up the Presidency of F.B.I., and a very poor stick anyhow, comes at my request to have explained to him why I cannot agree to tell his lot what proposals H.M.G. intend to put up to Dominion and foreign Governments before we put them up. I took the precaution to mobilise K.W. on this, and he quite agrees that it is an impossible demand, but suggests that it might go easier if I had this cretin to see me, rather than if I just wrote a necessarily rather stiff refusal. He seems to see the point, and I tell him, not only that K.W. agrees with me, and that I am sure A.E. will also agree, but that it has been difficult to get anything started with the Americans, and that the whole thing is very delicate and will need most careful handling and timing and the strictest secrecy, so that it would be ~~impossible~~ most dangerous if many people over here knew, since this might result in a leakage.

Mr H. Rogers, of John Wallis, comes at his own request to see me on tailoring problems. He is extremely sensible, and says that many of the Bespoke Tailors have no sense of patriotism at all, nor have many of their customers. He realises that restrictions, designed to save cloth, are most necessary in the interests of the war effort and our own seamen. Nor would he for one moment deny that large savings have been made by these restrictions. The only one which he thinks we might now reconsider is that on pockets. Might we not say that a man could have 10 pockets on his suit and have them where he likes? But he does not press even this at all hard. He says that Hillier is a scamp; not a tailor at all but only a chartered accountant. He is the self-appointed secretary of his new Guild and they have never published a balance-sheet. But they seem to have plenty of money and have had four meetings at Brown's Hotel and another at the Piccadilly Hotel. They have been in touch with Sir R. Williams,

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of whom both Mr Rogers and I speak contemptuously, and he has been haranguing them and telling them that they should not treat the Board of Trade as their master but as their servant. Mr R. says that if trousers are cut not quite straight but hollowed to a depth of three-quarters of an inch over the shoe, they could not be turned up without being made to look ridiculous. He thinks we should insist on this, and is much keener on stricter regulation and firmer enforcement by us than on a reversal of present arrangements. When I refer to the present Foreign Secretary as a slightly better dressed man than Sir H. Williams, Mr R. said "Why, of course, I have made his clothes for years, and he" (A.E.) "has always told me never to give him turn-ups on any of his trousers." On the other hand, a certain Peer, whom Mr R. does not wish to name, came into his shop the other day and demanded that he should have a suit made in the old fashion, and, when Mr R. said this could not be done, he left the shop in a rage, saying he would never go there any more. One of Mr R.'s neighbours, and competitors, has stated that he never pays any attention to the regulations. Mr R. thinks that the B. of T. should drop on this man.

The longer I hold on on all this, the more inclined I am to go on holding on.

2. 4. 43.

C.R.A. to see me, since I am not "going out" to-day, to discuss Commercial Policy and the War Cab. He is sure that the very long draft telegram, prepared by his blokes and mine, would not be read by the P.M., who would ~~wixk~~ seize upon one small point and monologue on about it, so that we should get nowhere. Or else he would have some silly note prepared by the Prof, who is nearly always wrong-headed. (I said I thought in this case he might be better than usual, having been briefed by Meade.) P.L. was with me just before C.R.A. arrived, and I told him to go out and deliberately cross his track. I suggest to C.R.A., after a little, that he should return. We then

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talk à trois, and it is agreed that P.L.'s amendment to our Joint Memorandum should be adopted, making us propose that the Doms should be asked to send chaps here, "within, say, four weeks", to discuss the whole thing; also that I shall make a note summarising the three Views and the three Main Issues, the long telegram going into an appendix.

C.R.A. then goes away, but apparently says nothing to his officials, who are thrown into a state of extreme excitement, confusion and jealousy, feeling that P.L. is having it both ways, and, in their absence, is advising both C.R.A. and me. He has to do his best to make it all clear on the telephone, but they will all be running round in rings when they get the revised papers, and still more when C.R.A. returns from the country on Monday morning.

This afternoon I see -

(1) Mr Hewitt, Secretary of the Merchant Tailors' Federation, a very decent man who has been harried by many of his own people, and especially by Hillier with his breakaway "Bespoke Tailors' Guild", who alleges that Hewitt is a mere Board of Trade stooge and probably in our pay; Hewitt's chief desire is, not that we should revise the clothing regulations - except perhaps the waistcoat pockets - but that we should enforce them more strictly.

(2) Evan Durbin, who brings, at my request, a rough note he has made for shortening the draft telegram on C.P.; it is useful as far as it goes, and he says he has been working very hard on C.R.A. to bring him round to View A, and thinks he has now done so.

(3) Monier-Williams, to stimulate his thought of action on the subject of razor blades; he says that he has arranged to cut exports by 25%, which is a good beginning, and our Miss Poole is meeting all the manufacturers in Sheffield next Tuesday; it seems quite clear that the Services are getting too much, and the civilians too little, of whatever supplies there are; but it is still not at all clear what supplies there are.

3. 4. 43.

Work on note for War Cab., summarising Views A. B. and C on Commercial Policy. Meade, who had tried his hand, was much too wordy and indefinite.

H.G. says that, when he gets into the House, he will propose that only junior Ministers should answer letters from M.P.s. He thinks, and I quite agree, that it is a shocking waste of my time that I should have to spend so long on this. But, especially in a Coalition Government, it is not so easy, because (a) one has to be so damned nice to everyone, and (b) Labour M.P.s writing to me would not be content with a refusal from C.W., and similarly in other cases.

4. 4. 43.

Walk to Battersea Park and see R.'s shapely tea-house sitting, a little grimmer than it was and rather disconsolate, between the boating pond and the deer pen. Still too many evergreens and not enough flowering trees in this park.

Read chunks of the Iliad and keep clear of shop.

Double Summer Time began this morning. A very clever invention!

DIARY5. 4. 43.

With C.R.A. putting final touches to War Cab. papers on Commercial Policy. Machtig and Clutterbuck are with him, and P.L., of whom I think they are jealous now, with me. Clutterbuck keeps on talking about Henderson and whether my View C accurately represents his views. I say "Henderson has now been sublimated in the Ministerial discussions", and "you must not assume that the discussion among Ministers is on as high an intellectual level as that which has been taking place among officials". Finally we get agreement.

Meeting of Home Front Ministers hears a harangue by W.S. Morrison, who is obviously very delighted to be a proper Minister again, and not just Postmaster General. He says that in location of industry he is working closely with the Board of Trade, and that he has "a geographer, an economist and a statistician" working on this for him, though he does not know yet any of their names.

There was a reference on the agenda to "Ministers' speeches on reconstruction". I thought that this was to be a text for grumbles, because Ministers had been saying too much. On the contrary, the complaint is that not enough Ministers have been speaking on reconstruction, and that those who have, have had too little publicity!

6. 4. 43.

Receive this afternoon Hillier, of the Bespoke Tailors' Guild, a breakaway organisation, with two of his colleagues. Not at all a pleasant little man. He quite spoils his case by exaggeration. In effect, he wants all the austerity rules done away with, and Purchase Tax re-imposed on utility clothing. But our discussion, though lengthy, is quite courteous and I undertake to consider all

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*Minister
Treasurer
to make
planning*

that he has said. He abuses all the other organisations purporting to cater for bespoke tailors.

P.M. talks to No.1 Ministers. He has not held one of these general talks for sometime. He says that the great battle in North Africa will begin this week. We have a superiority in men of more than 2 to 1, in guns and aircraft of a good deal more. He thinks it will be a Stalingrad. Hitler has been constantly pouring in reinforcements and supplies by sea and air. We have sunk and destroyed much, but much has kept on coming in. This is Hitler's usual obstinacy. But we need not regret it. Hitler is, moreover, playing for time, and we have reason to know that he hopes we shall not start any new large land operations till July 1st. This probably means that he will by then have trained and ready the last 2,000,000 men whom he has scraped and squeezed out of German reserves of man power. He is still immensely powerful; particularly if the Russians slow down, he could easily detach some 30 Divisions from the Eastern Front for other duties. He may still either push down ~~Spain~~/Spain or attack Turkey. If we must choose, we should prefer the former. Much thought has been given to our next move after clearing North Africa. There are practically no German troops in Italy or in the islands. The P.M. has been carrying on a double flirtation with Roosevelt and Stalin. The former has gone pretty easily. His relations with the President are most intimate and friendly. He does not want to use the direct approach on routine questions, but on questions of outstanding importance he is always pretty confident that it will work. Stalin is more difficult. But he has received two telegrams from him lately. One is thanking for the film "Desert Victory". This has clearly been much appreciated. It is being shown in many parts of Russia. It demonstrates, says Stalin, how bravely and how skilfully the British are fighting. It disposes of the stories put about by those miscreants who allege that the British are not seriously in the war. The second telegram is in reply to a discouraging message about convoys. He takes the news very well, though not, of course, with pleasure. Further, Stalin always telegraphs congratulations whenever we raid Berlin.

W. [unclear]

*No more for
six weeks to month
K. [unclear]*

/He

He evidently takes very great satisfaction in this. And no wonder!

The P.M. says that we often look back to May, 1940, but we may also look back with great satisfaction now to twelve months ago. Then he was frightened, yes, very frightened, that the great pincer movement would come off, and that the Japanese would march through India and the Germans across the Caucasus and both meet in Persia. But neither happened. It was at this moment that Gandhi told us to quit India and leave her, in his own words, "to God, that is to say, to Anarchy". Then followed a superb philippic against Gandhi, and the utter humbug of his so-called fast. First we were told that the fourth day would be the critical day; then it was to be the seventh, then the eleventh. All the time, quite clearly, he was really taking nourishment. He had no doubt counted, a year ago, on two Japanese Army corps being made available to him to enable Congress to rule over the rest of India.

Giraud and de Gaulle. The latter, though he has undeniable qualities, is a great fool and very anti-British. At Casablanca the P.M. could have got him 50-50: "les deux grands chefs militaires". But, though Giraud came at once when invited, de G. stood on his dignity and argued and delayed four days. Meanwhile, Giraud, with all his decorations and wound stripes, and his story of how, at the age of 62, he had slid down a wire rope, smuggled into the prison by his wife, and so escaped, had become the hero of all the Americans, civilian and military. So, when de G. at last arrived, Giraud was quite on top, and had been promised by the Americans equipment for seven French Divisions in North Africa, which will be incomparably the strongest French armed force anywhere. And so it was no longer possible to get for de Gaulle even 25-75! If ever the latter comes to power in France, he will try to build up his popularity by being anti-British. If he were to come out now to Algiers, ~~orxxxx~~ he might fly off to Brazzaville or Syria and do much harm in either.

The P.M. says that the U-boats cannot win the war for Germany, nor starve us out. But what they can do is to spin out the war, to delay the movements of troops and supplies, to wear out our civilian reserves and wear down our standards of living. The Americans had planned to have 30 Divisions in England by now. But in fact they only have 1, and in North Africa 7½. This is due to the U-boats.

In domestic politics, says the P.M., "everything I say and everything I do has only one object, to keep the forces together." He thinks this can be done. No-one can see far ahead, but he sees no reason why for the next year or 18 months at least, we should not all go on together. He makes a specially friendly reference here to "our colleagues of the Labour Party" (in fact only I, Jowitt and Whiteley are present).

7. 4. 43.

At Party Meeting C.R.A. does much better than usual and reads out a prepared statement, which he is giving to the press, to the effect that we entered the Government in order to win the war, that this is still our first objective, that, however, the situation is so far improved that we can now begin to think about post-war plans, that Labour Ministers are taking their share in making these, that no-one can tell when or in what circumstances the war will end, or a general election take place, that, as the P.M. himself has said, the question of what Government shall be in office then will depend upon the decisions taken by the various Parties, including the Labour Party, that we shall take our own decision at the appropriate time, that, meanwhile, the Party is not committed, nor are the Labour Ministers, to any particular line, and that the Labour Ministers all remain, as hitherto, faithful to the policy and decisions of the Party.

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This goes down very well, and the storms that have been brewing for some time are wholly stilled.

Long and rather boring lunch and speeches at Drapers' Chamber of Trade. Mathias seems very pleased with himself. I quote two testimonials to Board of Trade officials from business men.

This morning the P.M. announced that the Eighth Army has broken through again, and that our men are now out in the open country pursuing the enemy. (Was Khanit)

This lunch and speeches last so long that I miss a meeting of the Election Sub, called in order to discuss the electoral truce. All Ministers on the N.E., plus Bevin, are invited. Dobbs and J.S.M. had both been very wobbly about the truce, but all the rest had come out strongly in support of it, and a para is now to be included in this sense in the Executive Report.

Hodgson thinks that Clauson would be a very fine name as Chairman of our Companies Committee, and prefers him to Monckton. But C. may be no longer mentally receptive. He is 73 and has been a Lord Justice of Appeal for five years. Before that he was a Chancery Judge for 12 years.

H.G. to dine. We are both rather tired, but he promises over Easter to think out a scheme whereby I may stimulate selected sectors of the Home Front, as I did with Commercial Union.

8. 4. 43.

Somervell to see me. He is on a short visit from the U.S.A. He gives the usual picture of excessive British establishments - apart from my own very modest little Board of Trade Department, which is the smallest of them all - at Washington, and of the jealousies and jockeying for position which form the daily round. I doubt

/whether

whether he has been over-worked, but he thinks that he won't have enough to do much longer. I say, having agreed this yesterday with Overton, that I think we had better not jump to conclusions about this, but that he had better go back and see how things work out. I told O. yesterday that, whatever happened, I wasn't going to have either Liesching or Watkinson disturbed, and that if there was no place for Somervell at Washington, there was none at the B. of T. He quite accepted this. I should then have to offer this high-powered Civil Servant to one of my colleagues.

Constitution

Longworth leads a deputation from the "Cotton Industry Conference" to bring me their report. This is only on the ~~situation~~ [✓] of the Cotton Board, and it has taken them since last September to make it. It recommends (1) that the C.B. and also the C. Control should continue unchanged in present circumstances, and (2) that a single co-ordinating body such as the C.B. should continue after the war. So far so good, and I welcome these declarations warmly and congratulate the Conference. The rest of their suggestions are, in fact, unacceptable. They relate to the composition of the C.B. They want (a) all members to be elected by their own organisations, (b) a large increase in the numbers representing all sections except the operatives, who will then have 3 out of 20 instead of 3 out of 12 as now, and (c) the Chairman of the C.B. to be chosen by the P.B.T., from a list of names submitted by the industry. I say I note these points, but they are debatable and they cannot be implemented without legislation. I tell them that the P.M. and H.M.G. are anxious to minimise controversial legislation just now. We don't want too much, either of Catering Bills or Beveridge Debates. This rather appeals to them! I tell them that I will ask Streat to get the C.B. now on to other Reconstruction problems, and will suggest to him that the C.B. co-opts or otherwise makes use of some outside its number for this purpose. This pleases them very much. They leave highly gratified.

Fri 11/28/49
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War Cab. Two and a half hours on post-war commercial policy. I open the discussion, which at some stages seems to be going very badly. But, after much meandering and trite talk, the P.M. puts to the vote the question who is in favour of "View A as amended by Lord Cherwell". (The latter merely suggested that we should reserve the right to use quantitative import restrictions when our balance of payments was in danger, and not when some international authority declared that it was in danger.) Both K.W. and I said that this quite met our view. The vote was 15 or so to 2 (it was a largely attended Cab.). The 2 were Duncan and Amery. The former, however, who had hitherto remained quite silent, but who tends, when not coached beforehand, to take the opposite line from me, had very little to say when asked by the P.M. to explain himself. And Amery was quite satisfied when I told him that I was as much opposed to M.F.N. as he was. "Nothing for nothing" was my motto, I told him. He said that in that case he had no further objection to View A. Then after further rambling, it was decided that a Committee should prepare a more precise version of View A as amended, with suggestions for procedure (the P.M. thought that we should not bring in the Dominions; it was a bad plan that "no-one may talk, unless all talk at once"; he would prefer "bilateral conversations with the U.S.A. for the conclusion of a multilateral convention"). Further, the Committee should work out the relation of all this to the "bancor" and should have thrown in as well the plan for Buffer Stocks ("I thought you said Butter Scotch", said the P.M. ^L after a technical discussion on this matter had been proceeding for some minutes, "I am getting very hard of hearing").

AJ
The Cab. Committee, - "We must put all the cleverest people on it", said the P.M. - is to be, going round the table, Lyttelton, Cherwell, Cripps, myself, Stanley, H. Johnstone and K.W. Jowitt is to be summoned when Butter Scotch is in question.

All this looks like a remarkable success. But I don't quite understand where a lot of the opposition went to in the last round. For Lyttelton and Hudson had both

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grumbled heavily against View A, yet finally voted for it as amended. The deus ex machina was Lord C. He had clearly briefed the P.M. right, having himself been briefed by Meade. H.J. afterwards said that he was sure the P.M. had made up his mind from the start what was to happen, and had deliberately given the impression of rambling about in order to mislead and entrap those who took the opposite view. He had said, e.g., to K.W., that these quantitative restrictions would mean the riveting on our economy of state trading as absolute and as arbitrary as that of Russia. "They ~~would~~ have one multi-millionaire, controlling in one hand the movements of 180,000,000 human microbes." The P.M. constantly apologised for being rusty about these trade matters, but revived his memories of years ago and the "beautiful precision" with which Free Trade and the Gold Standard had worked "not in this disastrous century but in the last." He still thought that we should correct our balance of payments by raising the bank rate. But no-one supported him on this. He asked me a number of questions on quotas, and who imposed them, and when they began, and whether they were really much worse than tariffs. He was most anxious that, whatever we said, we should "use the right language". We should make our approach in terms of the freest possible exchange of goods and services, freedom rather than restriction, abundance and not scarcity. This would be in line with the declarations of President Roosevelt that "All the men in all the lands shall live out their lives in freedom from want." He said that he had spent 40 years of his life opposing Imperial Preference. He believed that it had done nothing but harm. He was very furious with O.L., who said that we were no longer a creditor, but a debtor, nation. The P.M. vehemently denied that we should owe anybody anything at the end of the war. On the contrary, we should send in a bill to the whole world for having defended them. We should begin with India. He would be for whole-hearted repudiation of any debts alleged to be owed by us when we were seated on the pinnacle of victory. But he had rebuked Sumner Welles, in the presence of the President, for having said that he was out "to break Ottawa" and that the U.S. had favoured freedom of trade for many generations. The

/P.M.

P.M., though he admitted that he had forgotten the dates and the names of the authors of the latest and most monstrous American tariffs, had told S.W. that it was all the fault of the United States that trade had been restricted and that the "Joe Chamberlain movement" had sprung up in the early years of this century. "This man was certainly abashed by what I said", said the P.M.

After the Cabinet, both Anderson and Jowitt say that they think that I have every reason to be pleased with to-day's doings.

DIARY9. 4. 43.

Ellen Wilkinson to lunch. She would like more show at the next L.P.Conference, and would also like, in which I encourage her, to be the next Vice-Chairman. On seniority she is entitled to this. The alternative is little Laski, which might be deplorably ill-timed.

L.P.Policy Cttee. in the afternoon, when we provisionally allot a number of the speakers for the Conference. I can't work Ellen in anywhere, but there are some gaps left open. Shinwell, Laski and B.Could are early in attendance, trying to corner good places for themselves.

Leave for W.L. by the 6 p.m. train, the first time for many months, the result of Double Summer Time.

10. & 11.4.43.

At W.L., sleeping and digging in the garden. I plan to make four or five vast holes, to be filled with this season's grass. The Bastard Service tree is leading the Spring, and there are hundreds of White Ladies out, and rosemary, and the earlier berberis.

12. 4. 43.

Lehman is brought by L.R. to pay an official call this morning. I shall be seeing quite a lot of him in the next few days, but begin by expressing regret that I had to be out of London during the weekend after his arrival.

Conferences on razor blades, books and other commodities in the supply of which I am interested.

Dine with Victor Cazalet, the others being Peter, King of the Jugs (who seems to me less and less interesting

/every

every time I meet him), and a Frenchman just returned from "underground" activities in France. He says that what should be done is to bring out Lebrun from France, and that this could easily be arranged, who would then take precedence of both the Generals. But de Gaulle will fight to the end against this. The mentality of the exiled French, he says, is deplorable. They are most averse to any reinforcement from France, fearing that each newcomer will do one of them out of his job.

13. 4. 43.

E.F.A. lunch to meet Fred Jones, New Zealand Minister of Defence. There is quite distinctly a N.Z. type, both of speech, of features, and of character. F.J. makes quite a good speech afterwards in a Committee Room upstairs, and I propose a vote of thanks to him.

Invite Sir W. Monckton to call and offer him the Chairmanship of my Committee on the Companies Acts. I tell him that K.W. and W.J. both think that he would be the ideal Chairman. He says he knows nothing about Company Law, and I say that this is one of his qualifications. He shall have experts on the Committee to assist him. He takes away some papers and will let me know in a few days. I think he will bite.

Lieut Ross

Entertain Lehman, Jackson, his P.A., and L.R. to dinner. A good, honest, competent man, though very slow as most Americans are, and not over-blessed with a sense of humour.

Woolton is being a bit of a nuisance, egged on by his don, John Maude. He has suddenly discovered that telegrams have been passing with Washington regarding the constitution of the U.N.R.R.A., and thinks that the whole matter should again be reviewed by Ministers. I take some rather active counter-measures, including the incitement to jealousy of A.E. and C.R.A., to neither of whom has Woolton sent a copy of his foolish letter, arguing as above, to J.A.

We have now reached a point when the Canadians will accept the proposal that they should have the Chair at the Supplies Committee, in return for agreeing to Four, as against Seven, members of the Policy Committee. Also it is to be recorded that the limitation to Four is not to be regarded as a precedent in other post-war consultations. I write vigorously to J.A. - and canvass on the Bench in support of my thesis, A.E., C.R.A. and K.W., all of whom agree with me - that it is unthinkable that after all this persistent ~~for~~ we should now do other than wire at once to Halifax saying we accept this latest American-Canadian accord. "It is not the work, it's the bumble bees that tire one out". I recall this saying of Sir R.Lindsay at the F.O. in 1929.

14. 4. 43.

Doris and Nigel Nicholls call on me at 10.15 and are taken to the House, where they see the Speaker's procession, are then deposited in the Gallery for two hours, and afterwards taken by me to lunch at Josephs, and then deposited, respectively, at a hat shop and at Victoria Station. I think they enjoyed themselves. N.N. is both very bright and very healthy and seems to be doing quite well at Cheltenham, where he has just completed his second term.

In the morning negotiate with Bevin on labour releases. He offers me all I want on footwear, but only one-third of what I want on worsted spinning for under-clothing. I close with this, however, thinking footwear more important than undies, and also being half assured that if we must put more worsted and less cotton and rayon into civilian undies, the balance may be adjusted by giving the Army correspondingly more cotton and rayon and less worsted for their undies. Portal will arrange this, he says.

Visit two furniture factories in the East End, where utility is being produced. Take with me Lebus,

/Tomkins

Tomkins, Simmonds and Binney. Both visits are a considerable success. At the first - Messrs Lock & Co. - bedroom suites are being produced. The work seems to me to be excellent and I harangue the workers, assuring them that their work is not less essential to the war effort than that of munition makers. This factory looks out across the canal on to Victoria Park. Quite a rural scene. But all around is the result of the blitz. Everything is devastated except the factory itself. Similarly at the other, Baveystocks, where they are making nursery furniture. Tomkins is much elevated by the trip, and I speak well of him in front of both employers and workers. I shall have made many friends for life in the furniture industry.

Dine with Ambassador Biddle, who has invited some 40 people, mostly representatives of exiled Governments, to meet Lehman. The latter sits between Varvaressos and Gutt, but has no opportunity of talking to any of the others. Nor does Biddle arrange for him to make even an informal speech, nor does he shuffle people round. And so, after several hours, the Party breaks up, some 35 out of the 40 having had no opportunity to exchange a word with the guest of the evening, from whom, no doubt, they are expecting vast American largesse. I am reminded of the Diary of Ambassador Dodd, and his comments on the inanity of diplomatic dinners. I am the only British Minister present.

Lehman is learning as he goes along, and is already inclined to tell the foreigners that they will get much less than they expect. There will be a shortage, from now on, not only of ships, which we always knew, but also of food, clothing, etc.

15. 4. 43.

Reconstruction Cttee. "Finance for Relief", a paper agreed, so I am told, by the officials of all the Departments concerned, saying very little, has been put up

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with a short covering note by me. But a number of Ministers, including C.R.A., dislike the report. Apparently I am the only Minister who knows what his Civil Servants are up to! After some grizzle, it is agreed that C.R.A., K.W. and I should jointly meet the Dominion representatives and ask them what they think about all this. Meanwhile, Portal will ask "the Supply Ministers" whether they have any more observations. P. explains that this means only the Minister of Production. He says contemptuously of the Ministry of Supply, "They have no standing in all this."

Act as host at Government lunch to Lehman, which goes off quite well. A.E., K.W., W.J., and Woolton, with L.R. and various officials and four Americans - Winant, Lehman, Steyne and Jackson. I get Lehman to talk seated, which he does pretty well, and then others add a few observations. Woolton asked L.R. why "the President of the Board of Trade is presiding". L.R. said it was because I was the Minister primarily responsible for Relief. Woolton expressed great surprise at this!

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War Cab. for one and a half hours on Agricultural Policy. R.S.H. and T.J. have been labouring away on this since the earliest days of the Churchill Government. As recorded earlier, R.S.H. is very jealous of me because he has had to go "under the harrow" of the Hurst Committee, whereas I short-circuited them on Commercial Policy with my own ad hoc committee. And last week I did pretty well with my stuff. But to-day he has no luck and it is decided to send back his blessed paper, the result of nearly three years labour, to yet another official examination by the Reconstruction Committee, the conclusions of which should be reported to the War Cabinet, and, if agreed by them, should then go to the Reconstruction Priorities Committee, to be lined up, as a charge on the Budget, with Beveridge, Education, etc. The discussion was deliberately desultory, and I suspect that the P.M. skilfully encouraged all this irrelevance. "Why should we be rushed?" The war may still last two years or more. The P.M. deprecates a

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"continuous buzz of ardent discussion" on all these questions, and feels sure that R.S.H. would only get into difficulties if, as he wished, he got "into conference with a number of enthusiastic farmers", who would open their mouths very wide and, whatever was given to them, show no gratitude but ask for more next day. Moreover, the P.M. said, the discussion revealed grave difference of opinion, not indeed between political Parties, but among the members of the Cabinet. I sit quite silent throughout, having only a watching brief, to make sure that nothing is agreed in agricultural policy which would cut across my own commercial policy, especially as regards quantitative import restrictions.

And so to dine with Sir Frank Platt. He will have a word with Naesmith next week to be sure that the cotton Trade Unions, who have hitherto sent me no proposals, are kept sweet.

Earlier to-day I saw Maxwell on his departure for the U.S. to arrange about further supplies of tobacco, (1) for our civilians, to be paid for in dollars, and (2) for "the military", to be furnished under Lend-Lease. He must determine the proportions of (1) and (2).

DIARY16. 4. 43.

To Newcastle, and stay with David Adams. I like his son, Ronnie, who is running four small factories on the Team Valley Estate, and for whom Ernest and Henry are ~~specialllyxxcontractingxx~~ sub-contracting. D.A. and his wife are both looking pretty ancient. He really ought to resign, but I am not sure whether he has yet made up his mind to do so. But they have a comfortable house.

17. 4. 43.

Talk, without the press, to our Northern Regional Conference and tell them that Labour Ministers are doing a lot of good work and that it is ^{not} possible to go on in the Government and scrap the electoral truce. A very sensible response from the delegates, though one or two are, naturally rather wistful about by-elections.

18. 4. 43. (Sunday)

Speak at Ashington, all about clothing coupons and the background of shortage. This also is well taken. Back in London to-night.

19. 4. 43.

Somervell to say good-bye on return to U.S.A. He is really very little use!

Joint cocktail party with Lehman (who turns up rather late after most of the guests have already arrived) for quantities of persons interested, in various capacities, in Relief, - foreign and British experts and officials from

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many Departments.

Take G.J. to dine afterwards and hear of his recent visit with A.E. to U.S.A. It seems to have been a great success, many useful personal relations having been established. Even Berle, he thinks, was charmed and softened a bit. He speaks well of MacGowan and thinks we should do well to let him more and more take charge of B. of T. business in Washington, though Opie, he thinks, also has his uses and is, in fact, very keen on our post-war commercial policy. Halifax, he says, has no mass appeal but is quite good at handling a party of 16 or so. Several of these were arranged for A.E. while he was there, and Hfax. guided the talk quite skilfully, bringing in all the Senators and other Americans by their Christian names. G.J. related that one night at the Embassy Sol Bloom, the 78-year-old Chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, who dyes his hair black and is, of course a Jew, held forth as follows: "When your Ambassador first came over here, we didn't care for him one little bit. We felt he was aristocratic and quite high-hat. But now, after he has been with us a little while, he has become quite democratic, quite one of the common men." And then, calling across the room to Hfax., he cried "Hi, Mr Ambassador! I was telling our young friend here that when you first came over you were quite aristocratic, but now you aren't aristocratic any more, are you? You have become quite democratic, haven't you? Now you are quite a common man, aren't you?" Whereat Hfax. smiled rather wanly. G.J. says that the new Government buildings in Washington are very good indeed, both as architecture and for practical uses. But the British Embassy is quite frightful, most inconvenient in every way. Sir A. Salter lives in a comparatively small house. I explain that this was his wife's, and that she had fallen in love with him when acting as an American Geneva hostess when he was one of the League lions. G.J. said that he was asked to go and see Salter, and arrived at this house and was shown into a room where ~~the~~ S. was also sitting. I asked "Was she knitting all the time?" And he said yes, and that it was most

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embarrassing, because Sir A.S. began to ask questions on most secret official matters, and he did not know how much he could say in front of this lady. I said that the only time I had lunched with him at the Connaught Hotel, Mrs S. had likewise been knitting and immovable. I told him that it was just the same as going to see Sir S. Cripps, except that Lady Cripps didn't knit.

There was an earlier precedent, I recall, in the case of Stephen Walsh, when Secretary of State for War in the first Labour Government. He used to drink a good deal, and Mrs W., in order to help keep him away from the bottle, used to sit with him all day in his room in the W.O. Cavan, then C.I.G.S., was much embarrassed by her presence when he brought in important papers for the S. of S. But the latter used to say "Never mind mother. She's always here." It is also related that Mrs W. was heard to say, when leaving the Royal Garden Party, "My shoes are tight, and my stays are tight, and Stephen's tight, and I want to get home." The first day that S.W. took office, he assembled all the Generals and said "Now, gentlemen, there's one thing I want to say to you at the outset. We must all be loyal to the King." Then, having dismissed them all except the C.I.G.S., he said "And there's one question I want to ask you. Is the Suez Canal quite safe?" He could also quote Shakespeare by the yard. One day at a Parliamentary Party Meeting when there was some criticism of his Army Estimates, he said "Well, you have just got to make up your minds. Do you want a bloody Army or don't you?" (I only told G.J. the first of these stories, but set the others down for reference.)

20. 4. 43.

Afternoon meeting of War Cab. Sub on Commercial Policy. K.W. in the Chair is as good as gold and accepts at once - in spite of forebodings of A.C. and P.L. - my statement that paras. 37 and 38 of the Clearing Union paper indicate an automatic test for quantitative import restrictions

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in the event of our balance of payments being in danger. O. Stanley makes the bright suggestion that we should have "another document prepared" as the basis of our communication to Hfax., but no-one supports this. O.I. still talks a little about the duty of creditors, but ceases to resist the policy of "View A as amended" and the chief debate is over procedure with the Dominions. On this C.R.A. is very obstinate, rather like a terrier who has got his teeth into something and won't give up. He finally gets his way, though I and H.J. and the Prof. are reluctant, that we should ~~hand~~ not only send, as all are agreed, to the Dominion Governments copies of the telegrams to Hfax., but that we should invite them to send over experts at once to discuss with us. It may be that this will cause the least commotion, but the danger is that we may be dragged down prematurely into detail.

Robbins is with Bridges at this meeting, and I therefore urge that the Secretaries should be left to draft the telegrams. Our Sub-Comtee. is to meet and see these to-morrow and put our conclusions to the War Cab. the day after.

Dine with Ivor Thomas and his Cider Queen at their rather pleasant house in Edwardes Square. I tell him not to get unduly excited about his Sunday opening. Miss Violet Markham, whom I rather like, is also there. Her sister was the first wife of Raczynski and died in childbirth. She said that R.'s conduct throughout was quite perfect, although her family made things very difficult. She says that R. also has spoken very warmly to her of me. This, no doubt, is quite genuine, since I ~~xxxxxx~~ do not think I have ever talked to her before.

21. 4. 43.

Argue, along with Thorpe, with Retail Distributors as to whether a Mr Morgan, a trader, who is a member of the South Wales L.P.R.C., should be required to resign because

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his firm have been convicted and fined for a price offence. I am rather vexed and bored at the fuss these people make, since it is clear that, if public confidence is to be maintained, the man should go. They almost threaten that, if I insist on this, all their members on the 17 L.P.R.C.s will resign as a protest. Thorpe, thereupon, accuses them of "threatening the President" and asks whether they really think that, in reaching my decision, I should take any account of such statements. After some slightly acid exchanges, in the course of which I show no sign of shifting my ground, I tell them that there is great danger of a P.Q. being asked, which will not do them any good. I say it is a great pity that Mr Morgan has not resigned quietly, instead of causing all this fuss. Then little Barber says that he has a letter of resignation from Morgan, on grounds of health, in his pocket, and I finally suggest to them that, if Morgan now resigns, I will undertake that, if any similar case should occur again, I will discuss it with them before deciding whether or not to insist on a resignation. Thorpe adds, and they accept, that in all such cases there is a prime facie ground for requiring resignation. This is accepted and they retire, not, I think, ill-pleased.

Meeting at the House on Beveridge, attended by members of the A.C., some members of the E.C., and various "Ministers concerned". E.B. makes a very good statement, explaining how defective Beveridge is in many points, and saying that he has got some very much better plans, especially as regards unemployment insurance, which he is putting up to his colleagues in the Cabinet. There is not room for "crisis" here, and I think that a speech by E.B. at the Conference will settle the whole matter.

Thence to War Cab. Sub on Post-war Commercial Policy, where we finally pass the texts of the four necessary telegrams.

Go with P.L. and H.G. to see a film of Max Milder's and then to a meal with him. He produces Eric Fletcher, a solicitor in partnership with Burgin, who is also a Labour member of the I.C.C. I think this, and one or two
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other features of the talk, are for my especial benefit, but H.G. thinks he had some useful words with M.M., who is "Warner Brothers", - now the principal competitor with Rank in the film world.

Thence to No.11, where C.R.A. and P.J.N.B. have a little Frenchman, who has just come over from France and is returning soon. He is in charge of one of what used to be my organisations. He is very pro-de G. and, when questioned by me as to what he means by saying that "All France is Gaulliste", he replies that they are in favour of de G. because they believe he is a symbol both of resistance and democracy! He also brings various stories designed to show that most Germans are not Nazis and are now "looking to Britain and America to free them from Hitler". I must say I thought that this fairly took the bun! But dear old Phil, who is also very pro de G., thought that it was grand. I asked the little Frenchman what was thought of Giraud, and he replied that "all France" thought he was a Fascist and still in touch with Petain. I wonder how long this crew around de G. will go on calling themselves "the Fighting French", when all the real fighting is being done by Giraud's troops, equipped by the Americans, in North Africa. The little man also said that Blum had only not escaped to England because he was not sure, as a result of a direct correspondence which he had had with our P.M., whether he would really be welcome. Both C.R.A. and I repudiate this. We knew that efforts had been made to get him out, but that this had become impossible, partly because he had hesitated, but also because he had been in prison. I say the same had been true of Jouhaux, and the little man did not deny this. Rather discouraging.

22. 4. 43.

War Cab. passes Commercial Policy telegrams to Hfax. and the Doms. Quite astonishing! Then a tiresome wrangle, with one of those monologues by the P.M. to which we are becoming very accustomed, about instructions to our delegates at the Food Conference. Should they be allowed

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to say that we were prepared to continue rationing after the war? The old, old story. The P.M. says only if the Americans undertake that they will continue rationing, and then we can say that we will do not less than they. Otherwise, we may "find ourselves all melted up with the Chinese and the Indians". He says that Woolton wants to keep on his 40,000 bureaucrats after the war, restricting people's freedom, and that is why he presses this. W., becoming quite vehement, urges the P.M. to "face realities". Then a long yarn on what happened at the end of the last war. The P.M. says that he, at that time, was not a member of the War Cabinet but "only a functionary", "only looking after the Army, and dealing with mutinies." But he gives great praise to L.G., and says that his insight and judgment at that time were quite wonderful. He was in his prime, only in his fifties, and it is quite wrong to say that in 1918/19 great errors were committed. On the contrary, the Government of those days did very well. But everybody "misbehaved" and within a week of the Armistice the political Parties were at one another's throats. There were also many riots, and armed troops marching on Whitehall demanding to be demobilised. He hopes that those of us who will be in charge this time will do as well as L.G.'s Government did. K.W. then adds that the only bright feature of this period was a most satisfactory General Election! H.M., sitting beside me, takes all this very ill, and says afterwards, when we go off to lunch with Sikorski and Retinger, that it is "very wearing" to have to listen so often to all this stuff. He adds that it is all very well for us in the Labour Party to be talking as though we might perhaps graciously consent to remain in an all-Party Government after the war, when it is quite on the cards that the Conservatives will pass a resolution, at their Annual Conference or elsewhere, demanding that this all-Party Government should be ended.

Sikorski had specially asked me to arrange for him to meet H.M. again. But he wanted only to talk about the difficulty of Polish-Russian relations. He was very full, quite naturally, of the massacre of 10,000 Polish officers,

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and is quite convinced, despite the Russian denial, that it was the Russians and not the Germans who murdered them. He says the Germans have only now proclaimed this fact, because they are beating up the anti-Red bogey and are trying to win over the Poles to this thesis. He hears from Poland that the German repression has sensibly abated in the last few weeks. Also a rumour that Maisky may soon succeed Molotov. He is not sure that the former would not prefer to stay in London, where life is better and safer. He relates that when he dined at the Kremlin, the menu covered both sides of the card, and at a certain point, when they had only got about half way down the first page, he told Stalin that he could not eat any more. Whereat, Stalin stopped the meal, and all went into another room and drank instead. Many of the Russians present were much disappointed to miss so much food. Sikorski is leaving in a few days' time for the Middle East. He will not go on to Moscow, but counts on the impending Anglo-American approach to secure the release from Russia of all the Polish citizens who are still alive, including 65,000 orphaned children. This, he says, is what he now asks, in view of the massacre of the 10,000 officers. H.M. said to me afterwards "That was very noble. I thought he was going to demand some monetary compensation". S. also says that his communications, by air and wireless, with Poland from this country, are now extremely good. Likewise with the Poles in France. These want to fight the Germans, but most of the French don't want to fight. His Polish Division is soon moving down from Scotland to Salisbury Plain to complete its training. It is now well equipped and almost at full strength, but they have no reserves to make good casualties. He hopes, however, that if they fight in France, they will make good their losses from liberated Poles in France who will join them.

(Molotov, almost into Red Army, this was the Polish Mission)

A Ministers' Meeting on Relief and Rehabilitation. "How will it work?" A flood of jealousies and suspicions of the U.N.R.R.A. is unloosed. What about the Combined Boards? etc." J.A.'s office is to make a paper on this.

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I am to dine to-night with Mrs P. to meet some Frenchmen. I hear to-day that Pierre Viennot is to be among them. This is a great and delightful surprise.

DIARY22. 4. 43 (contd.)

And there, sure enough, was Viènot! He was looking rather ill and tired and, when asked whether he could now speak English - he used hardly to have a word, though he knew German well - he said that he had tried to learn English in prison with the aid of a Linguaphone, but his English was painfully laboured and spoken with a most unreal accent, and we soon went back into French. He arrived only yesterday, by plane. I shall hear much more of his adventures when I get him alone. But it seems that he did not have a very bad time, having been let out of prison after four months, though sentenced by the Tribunal to eight years for "desertion" from Vichy, and had since been living under police surveillance, though not, apparently, very strict. His wife is still in France. He says that Heriot is physically in a bad way, in a clinic, and "weeping all the time". Jouhaux also is taking captivity very ill. On the other hand, he had seen, he said, (though I don't quite understand how) both Blum and Reynaud fairly recently. The former, he said, was evidently suffering from the effects of a long period of solitude, but the latter was comparatively lively and writing a good deal. V. was inclined to defend de G., though he had not yet had an interview with him. I said, however, that his regime here was a purely personal dictatorship. V. may be a very useful influence, if he is physically fit enough to have any influence at all. I would have carried him off to W.L., in spite of all obvious difficulties of food, etc., but he said he had a number of engagements in London in the next few days.

With him were poor old Queuille, a Radical Socialist senator, who was a Minister for ten years, first for Agriculture, and then for Food, from 1930 to 1940, and was thought of as a possible President of the Republic in 1938. A possible civilian figure head, I suppose, but very
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faint and ancient. Much brighter and younger was General Cochet, of the French Air Force, who had escaped from a German prison. C.R.A. said to me that this was much the best bunch of Frenchmen who had yet been got out from France.

23. 4. 43

By early morning train to W.L., where I stay until the 29th. The south-west wind blows hard nearly all the time, but lots of lovely things are hastening out in the garden, and, while I am here, I see the Whitebeams actually breaking, and many of the Service Trees and the beginning of the white lilacs.

Read Herodotus, the Father of History, as recommended by Peter Lucas, and refresh my memories of Croesus, Cyrus, etc., and also Van's "Lessons of My Life", all, of course, on the one theme - the wickedness of Germans - but, though tending to tediousness through repetition, very full of bright phrases. The style of Oscar Wilde and other bright young writers of the 1890's has much influenced Van.

E.D. stays two nights (27th and 28th), and we go for a walk on the 28th, to Marlborough, round a circle in Savernake Forest, happily losing our way, and back again through Marlborough. Eighteen or nineteen miles, I suppose, and a healthy good blister on my left heel!

He has written a memorandum on foreign policy, much of which is very good sense, but he fears the Russians in the future and thinks the Germans should be kept just strong enough to help us to resist them. I say that this is much too delicate an operation for this ~~country~~ world and looks needlessly far into the future. He also thinks that we should get an agreement on foreign policy between all Parties in this country, our weakness in the inter-war years being largely due to Party divisions on this. He, therefore, proposed that there should be early inter-Party

/discussions

discussions. But I think I persuade him that this would not work. That we should be more united after the war than before on foreign policy is most desirable, and we may be able to achieve this, but talks now, at any rate outside the Government, would be no good. He is feeling, he says, the effects of his "too long apprenticeship", and I greatly sympathise. But it is largely this damned war, though the difficulty of getting young and able Labour candidates adopted and elected to Parliament is a very serious one. We agree that it is amazing how few people, outside their own circle, are known to leading people in D.L.P.s. E.D. says that Transport House have worked very hard for him, even, clearly, to the extent of canvassing Chairmen of D.L.P.s beforehand. He thinks that the best way to help some of the younger people would be for the Herald to run a series of personal puffs of them. We discuss the future of the Secretaryship of the L.P. He had not thought before of Maurice Webb, and rather likes this possibility. But his favourite is inclined to be Creech Jones. I say that I find the latter more and more long-winded, but admit that he has points. M.W., on the other hand, we both agree would have to give himself very much to organisation, as distinct from public appearances, and there might also be an uncomfortable gap between the income he would get as Secretary and what he gets now from the D.H., with prospects of further increase.

29. 4. 43.

Back to London with E.D. and take up the question, on which my holiday was broken by telephone messages and written communications, of the functions of U.N.R.R.A. This is all a great bore, and the trouble is principally caused, I think, by officials of the Ministry of Food, particularly Maude, running round behind the scenes and trying to nobble everybody. Leith-Ross, though a majestic figure, is less good at this sort of thing. I put in a paper to J.A.'s Cttee. for a meeting next week.

Noel Hall to dine. He claims to have been

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running all the U.N.R.R.A. negotiations for Halifax in Washington and is sure that it is a Ministry of Food intrigue which has caused the trouble. He blames both Twentyman and Brand (senior). He says they have a special series of telegrams, which no-body else sees, - he calls it the Clam-Oyster Series - between the M. of F. here and the Food Mission in Washington. I say that Hfax. seems, none the less, by his latest telegram, to have squared all missions on the other side. N.H. would like to come to the Ministers' meeting next week, to represent Hfax.! This might be no bad thing. He says Lehman not only lunched with the P.M., but also with the King and Queen, quite alone, and was greatly impressed.

30. 4. 43.

To Durham with Masaryk.

DIARY1. 5. 43.

J.M. and I address a meeting of delegates from all Lodges of D.M.A. in Miners' Hall at Durham. Lawther is in the Chair and Watson moves a vote of thanks. Various notabilities, including the wife of the Dean of Durham, sit in the gallery. (This visit follows those of Winant and Benes, and I hear that D.M.A. are now much run after by local notabilities for seats on these occasions.) J.M. is a first-class speaker to such an audience. He gives an impression of complete sincerity and is, in addition, very good both at humour and pathos. There are tears in many eyes, including those of some of the most hard-bitten pitmen, while he is speaking. He tells them that his mother held Card No.1 in the Prague Co-operative Society, and used always to march in May Day processions with the Prague workers. Now the Germans are rounding up all his relatives in Concentration camps, because he speaks in Czech on the wireless. They have just put in a c.c. his grand-daughter aged 11 months.

My own stock stands pretty high in Durham mining circles at the moment, and reference is again made to the part I played in getting them their National Wages Board. This is always spoken of ~~by~~ as by far the most important of all the changes achieved in the mining industry under the present Government.

Before this meeting, we made a tour, with W.L. and S.W., visiting East Hetton - colliery offices, pit-head baths and canteen and workmen's club. Here we drink beer and J.M. and I make brief speeches to some 50 men in the bar. There is a Union Jack flying here at the pit-head, to signify that they have beaten their weekly output target. This is the symbol of such achievement all over the county. We then visited some Aged Miners' Homes and shouted at some smiling, deaf old folks, who are said to be between 80 and 90 years of age.

All the members of the D.M.A. Executive come to tea at the County, and later J.M. and I, with W.L. and Ned Moore, spend at least four hours sitting and yarning, a quatre, in the bar.

2. 5. 43.

From Durham to Evenwood, picking up Bill Jordan on the way - he was staying with Will Davis, having opened the Bishop Auckland Wings for Victory Week the day before - and held "a most historic meeting", as everyone agrees, in the little cinema in this little mining village. Jack Bell is in the Chair and makes an excellent opening speech. Then they have J.M. and Jordan, and Lawther moves, and I second, a vote of thanks. Never, they all say, have they ever before had such a platform in Evenwood: three United Nations, and C.S. and N.Z. in any case two of the most popular with our people.

Thence, dropping Old Bill at St Helens, to Brancepeth Castle, the ancestral home of the Boynes, whose proper name is Hamilton Russell, but now used as the H.Q. of the D.L.I. Here we lunch and are shown round, and I tell the Colonel that he ought to cultivate much closer relations with the miners' leaders in the county.

Thence, at high speed, back to Durham, where J.M. and I just catch the train to London. It has been a moving and very worth-while week-end. J.M. says he is quite willing to do a good deal of this sort of thing.

DIARY3. 5. 43.

Magowan to see me. He is not quite my kind, but everyone speaks well of him and I have no doubt that he is a competent and judicious person. He is to be my delegate at the Food Conference, assisted by old Miss Schufeldt as "technical adviser". I find that rumours have been put about, and have reached J.A., who mentioned them to me, to the effect that she is an "extreme restrictionist". She is said to be a great authority on sugar, and a good member of the Labour Party, but I suspect that, in addition, she is a bit of a bore and takes herself rather more seriously than I do.

Lord Bennett and Mrs Watts to talk about Merchant Navy Comforts. They want to go on distributing these and not to allow M.W.T. to take them over. I have no clear view on this and encourage them to go and talk to Leathers. Mrs Watts is the wife of the rather tiresome shipowner who gave me some trouble at M.E.W.

Make an appointment to see J.A. about to-morrow's meeting on U.N.R.R.A. He says that he had no intention of restricting U.N.R.R.A.'s powers or going back on the draft agreement, or on the results of the prolonged negotiations at Washington and Ottawa. I think he really doesn't know much about the subject, but has been got at through his horrid little man Gorell Barnes, who, in turn, has been got at by Master Maude of the Ministry of Food.

4. 5. 43.

P.Q.s. I am asked about all-wool underwear and explain that, owing to shortage of wool yarn, this is only being supplied in sizes for children up to 4 and "in styles suitable for elderly persons." Asked "What is an elderly

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person", I reply that, for this purpose, it means one who likes old-fashioned combinations or long-sleeved vests and long-legged woollen pants. I add that most of us do not care for these styles. This sally goes down very well.

War Cab. Butter Scotch goes through at last on the recommendation of K.W. as Chairman of our Post-War Commercial Policy Cttee.

Sheppard Lunch at Drapers' and attend a meeting of Governors of Queen Mary College. Our new Governor, the Provost of King's, attends for the first time. I have not seen him for many years. I threaten to go and stay with him, after due warning, for a week-end. And I think I shall. *(But I never did.)*

Thence to Ministerial meeting on U.N.R.R.A. I take Leith-Ross with me this time, and Noel Hall also attends - representing our Ambassador at Washington! The results of the meeting are not too bad. It is agreed that Hfax. shall send to Acheson a letter which he says he has agreed with all our Missions in Washington, in which it is suggested that the relations between U.N.R.R.A. and the Combined Boards will be settled later on by practical experience and not by premature theorising. It is also agreed, as I wished, that no attempt be made now to define "relief" beyond what is said in the draft agreement. On the other hand, it is admitted that the Combined Boards must be the "adjudicators" as between U.N.R.R.A. and other claimants, though it is also admitted that these Boards may need to be strengthened and reinforced, since at present they are only Anglo-American committees.

5. 5. 43.

L.P.National Executive from 10 to 1.15 and from 2 to 4.30. A pretty good day. Shinwell is out-manoeuvred and defeated on almost all points, and, on several, receives

/surprisingly

surprisingly little support. We decide that the N.E. shall flat-footedly recommend the continuance of the Electoral Truce. The voting on this is 17 to 7. The minority are Shinwell, Laski, Griffiths, Openshaw, the only Trade Union representative in the minority, two women - Gould and Bacon - and the old fool of a Chairman, Dobbs. It is also decided that H.M.'s draft of a general statement on post-war policy shall be moved by C.R.A. and wound up by H.M. Shinwell is very vexed at this, and Laski faintly vexed, since they are now left with only a few questions to answer on the progress of the Reconstruction Committee. S. says that if C.R.A. and H.M. are the speakers, "It will become a Government document". He also complains that he will have no show at the Conference. I reply that members of the Executive, who are also members of the Government, have the same rights as their colleagues, and are equally elected by the Conference. I add that my only public part at the Conference is to reply to a debate on Relief, but that I am not complaining that I have too little publicity. Phil then adds that, in view of the importance of this statement, it should be made by "leaders of the Party"; otherwise, it will be thought to be an anti-Government move. Shinwell, passing me outside the meeting, says "I have never seen such a fine body of goal-keepers in my life." He later tells someone that he has been in a minority all day and fighting like the devil. The man is, in fact, becoming a complete bore. On the Treasurership I hear that H.M. will have the votes of the General Workers and the Cotton Unions. I hope that Ellen will be able to get him the vote of the N.U.D.A.W., and that Burrows will get him the N.U.R., some leading members of which are said, however, to be for A.G. The miners' vote will be left on a sandbank, in support of Willie Hall, who told J.W. that he would be willing to retire if he thought that this would help H.M. But the latter is not sure that it would, since the miners are awkward people to handle. Best, therefore, leave them as they are. I suspect that the Transport Workers may support A.G., partly because of E.B.'s hatred of H.M., and partly because some of their underlings are in the A.G. orbit. But, on the whole, I think that H.M.'s chances are pretty good.

/Thence

Thence to meeting at the House, accompanied only by J.W. and by no officials, with Welsh Labour M.P.s. A long, rambling discussion as a result of which I ask them to put up positive proposals for new light industries in Wales. They all say that Brunning is not suitable as my representative in S.Wales. I think they are probably right, and tell Overton that I would like a change. The difficulty is to find a Welshman whom the M.P.s will like but who will be objective in his reports.

Dine with Nathan, who would like to be a Director of the U.K.C.C.

6. 5. 43.

A long series of interviews, the most interesting of which is with Lord Clauson, whom I invite to become Chairman of my Companies Act Committee. He confesses he is 73 and that fifteen years ago he knew a good deal about the subject but is rather out of touch now. He will have to speak to Simon. I write to the latter asking him to encourage Clauson to take it on.

Viénot to dine. He gives a long and interesting account of his doings in France; he went, on Reynaud's instructions, to N.Africa immediately before the Armistice and remained for three weeks in Morocco, when he was arrested by orders of Vichy as a "deserter" and brought back to France and imprisoned for four months under very bad conditions. He was then tried and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment on this most fantastic political charge, but was immediately released. He then lived for some time near Grasse in comparative freedom, but was then arrested again, and imprisoned, with other politicians and Generals, first at Vals and then at Evaux. He was then released on grounds of health and went to a Sanatorium in Savoy, near Chamonix. Here he assumed the leadership of the secret society "Liberation", and was then brought over, through the agency of S.O.E., to England by an aeroplane

/from

from somewhere in Angouleme. From Savoy to Angouleme he made his way by train, being passed on from point to point by trusted men. The aeroplane, piloted by a most cheerful young Englishman, arrived with the greatest precision at the appointed hour and place. We have a long talk about de Gaulle and Giraud. He is most definitely in favour of the former, of whose deficiencies I, however, speak very frankly. I hope that V. and others may do something to civilise and moderate de G. He speaks very highly of the spirit of resistance in France as a whole.

7. 5. 43.

Sir George Nelson, the new President of the F.B.I., in succession to the half-wit, Lord Dudley Gordon, calls and makes an excellent expression on me. He is English Electric, and has electrified various things in Europe, including the suburban railways of Warsaw. So I crack up electricity, quite sincerely, and we get on a good footing, agreeing that many distributors in this country - he hastens to say Local Authorities even more than private companies - are half asleep. He has seen my correspondence with his predecessor about trade negotiations and says that he quite understands that I cannot agree to the earlier F.B.I. proposal. He says that at a meeting of his "grand council" some demanded that they should "press for a more definite reply" from me, but he had told them that this was no good and that he was himself coming to see me and hoped to arrange for direct personal contact between him and me. I said that I should welcome this, and we agreed that either might approach the other at any time. He said that he saw great possibilities for export of electrical and other machinery to Russia. I liked him.

L.P.Cttee. on my paper on Combined Planning and Lend-Lease. There is general agreement that something must be done, both to prevent further immediate transfer of export markets to the Americans (who, in fact, were often unable to supply, in spite of their glib assurances*) and to protect our post-war export possibilities. A committee

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of officials is to make a draft despatch to Hfax. on this.

Four Co-operators call to protest against proposed requisition, for an extension of Rovers in Birmingham, of their bicycle and pram factory. They say the Co-ops are getting a very raw deal, partly because there is prejudice against them, and partly because they have such first-class factories. I must decide on this next week, when the full facts are before me.

Sam Beale leads in all his Business Members, whom I receive, backed by C.W., H.J. and some half dozen officials Old S.B. talks about Lease-Lend (I tell them in confidence that only to-day I have been discussing this with colleagues), Ministers' Speeches, some of which he says have been frightening the business world (I tell them not to take too much notice of Ministers' speeches!), Ministerial and public talk about "monopoly", which they find rather disturbing and unjustified, and the old tale about Trade Associations, and the desire of "industry" to know more of the Government's intentions. The other Business Members generally support him and we discuss, very tentatively, how far those who want tighter Trade Associations would also agree to some measure of Government control, to prevent undesirable price-fixing and restrictive practices. Several say they think that business is prepared for this, Cecil Weir being very emphatically of this opinion. I am a bit doubtful, but give a half promise to try my hand at a statement which I might then discuss with colleagues. The whole thing is politically very delicate, and I am not anxious to bring it to an issue. H.J. says afterwards that "Old Beale is quite past it."

To W.L., where R. has been since the day before yesterday. She has already done a lot of useful jobs in the garden.

8. & 9. 5. 43.

What a week-end! "Tunis and Bizerta have been
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occupied" and everything has gone with a wonderfully perfect rush. It is the "Blitzkrieg" over again, and exactly as in France in May, 1940, with the roles reversed. We have crushing superiority in the air, in tanks, and in numbers, and race through Tunisia, as the Huns raced through to Paris, leaving large sections of their Army cut off and hopelessly disrupted and demoralised behind our forward rush. So this method is no German patent. It only requires intelligent use of emphatically superior means of modern war.

High winds blow all the week-end, blowing away, symbolically, the dreams and the defences of the enemy.

I read a most interesting Report giving "reliable" estimates of German shortages in flak, mechanical transport and locomotives, and also figures showing the decline in numbers, by some 10%, of the G.A.F. between February '42 and February '43, with the prospect of further declines to come. A most encouraging paper!

Our military, when asked how large they estimated would be the civilian populations in Europe requiring "relief", (a) by the end of this year, (b) by next spring, and (c) by the end of next year, have replied (a) 25% of the population of occupied Europe, (b) 50%, and (c) 100%. They may, of course, have been giving large margins of safety in each case. But evidence seems to be accumulating that we are further, and more firmly, on towards victory than I had recently supposed.

10. 5. 43.

Back with R. to London. To-night she has Vienot to dine with her. I tell her to tell him not to run his pro de Gaulle line too hard (he has a rather excessive article in the Spectator this week.)

I, meanwhile, am much taken up with civilian footwear, and have various conferences with officials, making a paper for the L.P.Cttee. I sit up dictating this

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between midnight and 1 a.m., the officials having, as usual, failed to produce anything that can properly be called a draft!

Lunch with Old Bill and other New Zealanders to greet their two M.P.s - Lowry (Labour) and Endean (anti-Lab.) - who are over on an E.P.A. mission. All very hearty and "straightforward".

DIARY11. 5. 43.

Another fuss brewing over Old Age Pensions. The Government have been rash enough to propose to introduce another Bill, giving more money to some. This has produced the usual complaint that still more money is not being given to many others. I don't know the details, but I smell the prospect of another row, which will be exploited by the disruptionists and bellyachers.

Meet boot manufacturers and T.U. representatives, who are naturally much concerned at the prospect of a great shortage of leather in the next few months. They are very conservative about wooden-soled shoes, and don't really want to make them, and say they are afraid they won't sell them, but I assure them that all sorts of footwear will sell without difficulty. I undertake, at the right moment, to help this by a boost. But the prospect for supplies is not good.

Dine with the Jebbs at their flat to meet Harold Butler, who is on leave from U.S.A., where he is supposed to be directing British propaganda, but is said to spend all his time sitting down and observing "trends of American opinion". He thinks that the President will run again next time and be elected; also that the Germans, ~~will~~ before they finally collapse, will probably massacre all the French prisoners in their hands. They have already publicly threatened to massacre all the Czechs before evacuating the "Protectorate". He also says that Mr Hull only became anti-de Gaulle when the latter seized, without permission, the Islands of St Pierre et Miquelon. H. then spoke angrily of "the so-called Free French Movement", whereat American sympathisers with de G. began to refer to "the so-called Secretary of State." He had never been so insulted before, and this has hardened his prejudices. On

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the other hand, there was great delight in Washington when Henri Haye, the Vichy Ambassador, was publicly carried off to an internment camp, and Chautemps, though he has tried to stage a come-back, is viewed with general contempt.

12. 5. 43.

I go down to the House determined to do my duty and sit in and listen to K.W. expounding the Clearing Union. But he is so frightfully dull that I come out after ten minutes.

Lunch with Dunbar - I have dodged this several times, but he is very persistent - and am urged by him to make a "simple speech", consisting apparently of an assertion that "international co-operation will be essential after the war". He thinks that such a speech, especially by me, would be most important. This deaf man is a damned fool! He says that Southwood is over 70 and cannot understand anything that is said to him, but is most anxious to do well in the House of Lords and to speak from time to time, and Dunbar, therefore, has elaborate briefs prepared for him, which he reads out word for word.

Press conference with industrial correspondents, to whom I give many facts and figures on Concentration. The brief seemed to me very dull, but I gather that the Correspondents rather liked it.

Portal comes to see me on the post-war disposal of stocks of furniture now in the hands of the military and civilian departments. He has the hell of a lot. My officials are concerned that we should have one scheme of distribution and not two, and I think that this can be arranged.

Molly Hamilton, whom I have not seen for a long time, to dine. She has been in America and now has returned to Jowitt's office. This she regards as quite

/deplorable

deplorable. She is now quite anti-German, in contrast to her attitude in the last war.

13. 5. 43.

Sir T. Barlow tells me that some in the clothing industry are complaining that too much favour is being given to the West Auckland Clothing Company. Sir T.B. has been telling them that I have had nothing to do with this, but I give him some background of the history and useful doings of this firm, and thank him for warning me of these rumours and grumbles. It is not unnatural, I daresay, having regard to all the facts, including their nationality and my politics, and their location and the cuts imposed on output and labour force in other parts of the country, that these growls should be heard.

Lunch with N.C.T. and afterwards address their Annual Conference. I am very warmly received, but delayed by the length of speeches of thanks, and get back to find Goodhart waiting for me. I have tried to get him at short notice to sound him as to whether he would like to be Chairman of my Companies Act Committee. He clearly would like this very much, and is not at present very hard worked, since Oxford is fading out. I have written to K.W. saying that, after my two refusals, I don't want either to ask Simon for a Judge or to offer the Chair, as distinct ~~from~~ from a place on the Committee, which would mean much less work, to a leading Chancery Silk. I am therefore led, I tell K.W., towards Goodhart.

Dominions High Commissioners listen with attention and good will to an outline of the exposition of our plans for post-war relief, on which Eady and Leith-Ross expatiate and answer questions.

14. 5. 43.

My paper on civilian footwear before the L.P.Cttee

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I feel that both Lyttelton and Duncan are somewhat defensive, especially the latter, who tries to make out that it is the fault of the B. of T. that no proper allocation has yet been arranged as between the Services and the civilians. Portal will, however, convene a meeting of the Parties concerned, with special reference to wood and reclaimed rubber. Several of my colleagues seek to create the general impression that things are not quite so bad as they seem, and there is a vague acceptance of most of my suggestions. But this is really rather a bad mess, and neither I nor other Ministers have, in my view, been well served by our staffs. They should have precipitated discussion and action much earlier. This thing will want very close watching. It is much the most serious prospective shortage of them all.

I sound Jowitt on Goodhart. He begins by saying that G. knows nothing whatever about the subject, but ends up, as I desire, by saying that he thinks I could not do better than ask him.

Paul Winterton, on leave from Moscow, and his wife to dine. He has developed very well and his present experience in Russia results from my having urged him to go out there with his Acland Scholarship, and to learn Russian, a number of years ago. He looks very fit and is very interesting, "objective", as he himself claims, and intelligent. He says that the Russians are struggling along on a very low standard of life indeed. The civilians' rations are extremely poor. So is their clothing, etc. They are simple-minded people and they are just hanging on and will go on doing so. But the idea of a second front in Europe is now an obsession with them. He does not think they will want to do much outside their frontiers when the war is over, but he thinks that they will insist on exterminating all the top layers of the German Army, S.S., etc. He says that their atrocities on the Russians are quite beyond belief, and that they often give him nightmares. (He appeared to be very steady and well balanced, and to retain a considerable cheerfulness and sense of humour, so

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that this last remark means more than if he were in a nervy condition.) He saw one letter to a German soldier from his wife asking the former to send her some children's underclothes and bedding. "It doesn't matter if they are blood-stained, for I can wash them". He saw at Rzhev women and children lying about dead and mutilated, and houses where the Germans had carried out a senseless destruction, not only of human beings but of all the poor little articles of household furniture and equipment. And he has related already in the News Chronicle a story of the Russian woman in the streets of Kharkov who told him that when she was passing down the street, she was seized by a German officer who told her that she had now got to witness a hanging, and held her by the arm, compelling her to watch while some Russians were flung out over the balcony across the street with ropes tied round their necks. He also had much first-hand evidence at Kharkov of the total massacre of all the Jews in that city, who were driven out to a barbed-wire encampment outside the city, kept there without food or shelter for several days, and then simply mown down by machine guns to the number of many thousands. He says, without waiting for me to say it, that there is no other nation in Europe who would behave in this continuously and unfailingly atrocious fashion to foreigners whose lands they had invaded. He says that the Russians have quite made up their minds what they will do about this, and that it is therefore most likely that the Germans will try, at a certain point, while holding the Eastern Front, to let the Western Front give way, thinking themselves likely to be better off with us and the Americans than with the Russians.

He shares my high opinion of Clark Kerr and says that he is very accessible, unconventional and intelligent, and is just beginning to get on very well with Stalin. It is most important, in his view, that we and the Russians should maintain a close co-operation for many years after the war. This, he thinks, will be pretty difficult and will need great patience and forbearance on both sides. They are fantastically ignorant of us, and of everything outside their own country. Also it is most important that

we should be "objective" and frank about their points of weakness, as well as their points of strength. We should never talk as though Russia was, or was likely soon to become, any sort of earthly Paradise, where living standards must, particularly after the interruption and devastation of war, remain very low for a long time to come. He was very sympathetic towards the Poles, and was sure that the Russians had destroyed great numbers of them in captivity. On the other hand, it was only realistic to admit that Poland had no chance whatever of independent survival, unless she got on good terms with Russia. Otherwise, there would soon be merely a Polish Soviet Socialist Republic. He asked me a good deal about Poles and others and evidently enjoyed meeting me again. He is an almost, though not quite, first-class young man, and I am very glad that I ~~supported him~~ started him on his Russian road. He may well have some political role to play after the war.

DIARY

15. & 16. 5. 43.

At W.L. Windless sun. One sees the trees growing while one watches.

17. 5. 43.

Nothing to note.

18. 5. 43.

National Executive. I succeed in getting rid of the rather embarrassing pamphlet on Relief by W.A.F. I tell them, quite truly, that next month it may be possible to say something on the U.N.R.R.A. constitution; that the mere fact of agreement between us, the Americans, Russians and Chinese is a remarkable achievement and a good beginning for later arrangements; also that the idea of a pool for relief is now being widened into that of a pool for all purposes. Having squared Walker, Laski and Dallas beforehand, and the attendance being still thin, I get this through. But J.S.M. says that I should see W.A.F. and explain. This I will do.

This week I see four film bosses. (Records of conversations separately.) I begin to-day with Mr Rank.

Meeting of Labour Ministers in C.R.A.'s room to discuss fuss over Pensions Bill. My own view is that the Government should say they will withdraw the Bill if the Party does not accept it, without a fuss and a vote.

19. 5. 43.

Party Meeting. Long wrangle over Pensions Bill. Finally decided by 48 votes to 43 that we will accept the recommendation of the Administrative Committee to support the second reading against any reasoned amendment. A.G. in the Chair is a little less flabby than usual. After the vote, there is a scene with Shinbad shouting that he will not honour the decision, and Fred Montagu and others shouting back. "Quite a bear garden!" says A.G. from the Chair. It really is hardly worth while to bring in these piecemeal Bills, which always lead to these fusses. But no-one seems to feel much political crisis in the air just now.

Kwapinski and Szapiro to lunch. The former is just back from Stockholm, bringing messages, to me in particular, from Swedish Socialist leaders. Poles and Swedes both share a certain disapprobation of Russia, but K. will be sensible enough not to show this publicly. He agrees that his Government made a great mistake in invoking the International Red Cross; this was done while he was away.

See W.A.F. and talk to him semi-confidentially on the progress of the U.N.R.R.A. negotiations. He is not very pleased that his pamphlet has been scrapped for the moment, but takes it on the whole very well.

Talk to-day with A.G.Allen, Film Boss No.2.

J.W. and I to dine with Douglas and Peggy Jay in Hampstead. They are both in very good form and seem to be getting on better than they used to. They have two children, no help, and a tall, thin house, five stories high. D.J. tells some good stories about the impression made on our seamen at Archangel by the Russians. Some who were Communists thought they had been hoaxed, and that this could not be Russia at all, because the conditions were so primitive and uncomfortable. They thought that an Imperialist Government had landed them in backward Finland

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instead. Others were shocked because the Soviet Police used to hit people, including women, over the head with clubs and leave them lying in the road, if they crossed the streets at points other than those indicated for pedestrians. A tale was also told of a Russian naval officer who came on board a British ship and got very drunk. Next day some other Russian officers came, in reply to an invitation, accompanied by a political Commissar. The latter began by apologising for the misconduct of the officer yesterday, and said "He has been shot." The Englishman said "Oh, I hope he is not seriously injured." Whereat the Commissar replied "Yes, he is dead. Our officers are not allowed to get drunk on allied ships." Another Russian was reported to have been shot for adding up some figures wrong, when making some nautical calculations, and so "attempting to commit sabotage by giving false information."

20. 5. 43.

Film Boss No.3. Lord Catto.

Lunch at Drapers and attend a Court.

See O.L., who has been trying to put across a fast one, or rather has been put up to it by some of his officials - some think by David Eccles - in the form of a paper for L.P.'s Cttee. to-morrow, suggesting the formation of an inter-departmental committee under Portal, drawn from F.O., M.W.T., M.S., D.O.T., and God knows who, as well as the B.T., to "advise" on practically every matter relating to supplies for the civilian population. I say that this is the most frightful poaching, and I cannot agree. O.L. says that his intention was to help the civilians to get a proper allocation at an early stage. I say that, there having been no consultation either between him or me, or between officials, before he bunged this in, it should not be pressed to-morrow, but discussed by his officials and mine, with no others. He agrees.

Thence to see Simon and ask for a Judge, either

/Cohen

Dalton I 28 (45)

Cohen or Gavin Simmons, to sit in the Chair of my Companies Act Committee. He won't definitely promise, but will let me hear next week.

Second reading of Pensions Bill carried by 236 to 61. Of Labour members, 68 vote for, and 54 against. Many members of all Parties seem to have abstained.

21. 5. 43.

L.P.Cttee. We get agreed two despatches to Hfax. on (1) Lend-Lease, and (2) our future trade in Latin America. It is then agreed that O.L. shall withdraw his paper and that I shall initiate discussion of officials, primarily with his, but also with D.O. and C.O., both of whom should be on the committee, if any. I am more concerned about the terms of reference than about the position.

Lunch with Norwegian Chamber of Commerce and am told that I lectured to them exactly 20 years ago on "Labour and Capital" and that a most animated discussion ensued. I say that I then was an innocent University teacher. They are not difficult to talk to. I cannot go beyond generalities on post-war trade, but I think they are fairly satisfied with these. I say that the volume of international exchanges must greatly extend, that we must buy their fish and forest products (i.e., mainly wood pulp) and they our coal, textiles, etc.

Film Boss No.4, Stephen Courtauld, almost mute, accompanied by a most talkative Major Baker.

MR RANK

Dalton

I 28

(146)

I saw Mr. Rank this afternoon. The tone of the talk was friendly. I spoke broadly on the lines of Mr. Gaitkell's brief.

Mr. Rank thought our post-war film prospects were good. He felt sure we could produce good non-war films. He was all out to give a chance to talented young actors, authors and scenario writers, particularly on their return from the Services to civil life.

He himself hoped to produce 25 pictures a year after the war, 8 for the Empire and 17 for the World, including the U.S.A. The Empire pictures would portray our British history and our "way of life." e.g. Henry V, The Life of Bunyan and The Six Men of Dorset. He had promised Sir W. Citrine to finish the latter next year. I said I thought that some of these would appeal to Americans too.

He wanted to establish, after the war, a selling organisation of his own on the Continent. As regards the U.S.A. he had now made a reciprocal arrangement with Paramount, whereby they shared the cost of making films to be shown in the U.S., and Paramount guaranteed him that on the first two pictures so shown he should get his costs back. He was starting with two pictures, under this arrangement, next year. *He would likewise help Paramount here.*

He was also co-operating with Paramount in producing an Anglo-American air film, showing jointly the exploits of the Eighth American Army Air Corps and the R.A.F.

He said he attached very great importance to pushing our film exports to the U.S., both on national economic and national prestige grounds.

voting
He went into some detail over Gaumont British and I understood him to say that there were 10,000 floating shares in Metropolis and Bradford (British) of which one of his Companies (General Cinema Finance Corporation) held the beneficial interest in 5,100. Thus they exercised control. These had been bought from Ostrer Brothers in October, 1941, but there was a long story, which I did not follow very closely, about a transatlantic telephone conversation with some magnate who was dying of heart disease, so that the deal was not fully consummated. Foxes and M.G.M. held the rest.

Mr. Rank himself raised the question of allegations of "monopoly", referring to a note in today's Daily Telegraph, and to the representations to be made to me, as he understood, by the Films Council. I again spoke, fairly faithfully, to my brief. I said that he was widely known as a man of high moral, and even of deeply religious, purpose, but what might happen if he died, or even lost interest in films? He said that "If I should be blitzed tonight, everything would go to my wife. I have discussed everything most carefully with her and Mr. Farrow." He had made it clear that his interests must not be sold to U.S. and that whoever bought them "must be of high character." He did not think there was anything more which he could do to safeguard the future. He had already refused an offer of big American money. If he made 18 more pictures, there would be 18 less to be made by the Americans. He asked whether I agreed with his refusal to sell to the Americans. I said "Most certainly." The Americans were great people; and they were wonderful allies, great partners, but we could not suffer them to become our masters.

Mr. Rank said that he now had two million pounds sunk in the film industry. It cost him a great deal of thought and trouble. He would be glad to get out at any time, if any English person would care to take over his interest. But he did not want to lose his money.

He said he only controlled 600 cinemas out of 4,000. He was trying to build up independent producers, but these needed a central organisation behind them. Creative work, however, should not be cramped by such central control.

/Questioned

Questioned by me as to the proportion of studio space he controlled, he said that he could make 5 pictures at a time and his competitors between them 4 at a time. The Prudential had a 50 per cent interest in D. and P. He wanted to buy them out. Without much incitement, he spoke well of the officials here and I said that I and they desired to keep in touch with him.

H.D.

18th May, 1943.

He himself hoped to produce 25 pictures a year after the war, 8 for the Empire and 17 for the U.S.A. The Empire pictures would go to the U.S.A. and the U.S.A. pictures would go to the Empire. He had promised the life of Henry and the life of the latter next year. I said I thought that some of these would appeal to Americans too.

He wanted to establish, after the war, a selling organization of his own on the Continent. As regards the U.S.A. he had now made a reciprocal arrangement with Paramount, whereby they shared the cost of making films to be shown in the U.S., and Paramount guaranteed him that on the first two pictures so shown he should get his costs back. He was starting with two pictures under this arrangement, next year.

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Mr. Rank himself raised the question of allegations of "monopoly", referring to a note in today's Daily Telegraph, and to the representations to be made to me, as he understood, by the Films Council. I again spoke fairly tactfully, to my friend. I said that he was widely known as a man of high moral, and even of deeply religious purpose, but what might happen if he died, or even lost interest in films? He said that "I should be pleased tonight, everything would go to my wife. I have discussed everything most carefully with her and Mr. Tarlow". He had made it clear that his interest must not be sold to U.S. and that whoever bought them "must be of high character". He did not think there was anything in which he could do to safeguard the future. He had already refused an offer of six American money. If he made 18 more pictures, there would be 18 less to be made by the Americans. He said whether I agreed with his refusal to sell to the Americans, I said "I am certainly". The Americans were great people; and they were wonderful allies, great partners, but we could not allow them to become our masters.

Mr. Rank said that he now had two million pounds sunk in the film industry. It cost him a great deal of thought and trouble. He would be glad to get out at any time, if any English person would care to take over his interest. But he did not want to lose his money.

He said he only controlled 600 shares out of 1,000. He was trying to build up independent producers, but these needed a central organization behind them. Creative work, however, should not be cramped by such central control.

I saw Mr. Allen today. He was more deferential, and more reserved at the beginning - though he thawed out later on - than Mr. Rank. He said that A.B.P.C. owned 436 cinemas in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, plus a few in Aire. This he said was less than Gaumont British plus Odeon, which, between them, owned 650. In reply to a question by me, he said that it would be quite contrary to the policy of his company to merge with Mr. Rank.

"We have a high conception of our duty", he said, and regarded the functions of exhibition as providing healthy entertainment, maintaining morale and giving war news. I had asked whether he regarded the box office as the sole test, and he said "certainly not".

As regards production, it was their desire "to play a part, but not a grandiose part, after the war". They had a studio at Welwyn, and also at Elstree, but this was now occupied by the Government, and would need a good deal of tidying up before it could be used again. I asked whether they planned to export films to the United States, and he said "certainly, through the medium of Warner Brothers", but only "worthy" pictures "would have any chance over there".

He explained that Warner Brothers held 25% of the ^{equity} ~~quota~~ in A.B.P.C. There were £10½ million of share and loan capital, of which the "British public" held £9½ million. There were £2 million of Ordinary Capital, in the form of 8 million 5/- Shares. Warner's and Maxwell's between them held just over half of these. Mr. Allen at this point began to unboosom himself. He said that he thought he no longer represented Mrs. Maxwell. Three days ago he had had to tell her that she was attempting to interfere in "certain essential matters of control". She and her family still tended to think of the concern as "Daddy's Company". The late John Maxwell had been a most dominating personality. All his assets were in A.B.P.C. and he had left considerable debts as well as having to meet heavy death duties. He had left six daughters and two sons, the elder of whom was a half-wit. He did not think Mrs. Maxwell wanted to sell her shares at present, but he had no doubt that Warner's would like to buy them. He had heard that I knew Max Milder, and thought it would be well if I could convey to the latter an intimation that American acquisition of Mrs. Maxwell's shares would not be favourably viewed by me. Milder, he said, relied much on Fletcher, which, in Mr. Allen's view, was a good influence.

I spoke of the Wedgwood episode, and Mr. Allen said that Wedgwood "just didn't get on", particularly with Warner Brothers' Directors. Mr. Allen had had great difficulty in getting the latter to agree to Wedgwood's remuneration. He did not himself favour the idea of another Government Director, since he felt that this would add to the complexity of personal relationships of the Board, and a Government nominee would not be free, he supposed, to take a decision without referring back "to his principals". I said that I had taken no decision regarding the appointment of another Government Director, but that there was some apprehension in many quarters regarding both the tendency to American control of our film industry and also towards the growth of monopoly. I mentioned my impending visit from the Films Council.

On the first point Mr. Allen repeated his assurance that he was strongly opposed to A.B.P.C. falling into American hands, and went on to argue that Rank was more in American hands than he admitted. He gave a lot of figures regarding Gaumont British and the Metropolis & Bradford Trust "only nominally" he said, a British company, in which 4,900 out of 10,000 A shares were

held by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Fox's, and 5,100 by Rank, who had recently acquired them from Ostrer Brothers, while A.B.P.C. had sold to Rank 250,000 B. Shares, the remaining 670,000 B Shares also being held, I understood by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Fox's.

On the question of monopoly I asked Mr. Allen whether, although he did not want to merge with Rank, he had any inclination to merge with Courtauld or Catto. He replied that three days ago he had been approached by Courtauld, and that he thought, from the point of view of production and export, it might be advantageous to unite forces with him. I warned him that any further merges might be unfavourable and advised him not to commit himself without further discussion with me or my officials. I told him that I had seen Rank and was seeing Courtauld and Catto in the next few days.

I ended by warning him of the possibility, particularly in view of the attitude of the Films Council, of awkward Parliamentary Questions and Press comments. He said, and I think sincerely, that he appreciated this.

19th May, 1943

LORD CATTO.

I saw Lord Catto this morning. After some talk about Clearing Union etc. we spoke on films. He began by assuring me that he had no financial interest whatever, direct or indirect, in these, he was Lady Yule's adviser on this, as on a great many other matters.

The British National Picture Corporation had been founded by her in association with Arthur Rank and the late Jack Courtauld. They had all lost a good deal of money on it in the early stages, and the two men had pressed for a greater share of control. She had then bought them both out and was now the sole proprietor. To clean up the financial muddle, Catto had given her, from his own business, G. W. Parish, a very able man, who was now Managing Director of B.N.P.C. From that time on the finances began to come right, and it was now quite a prosperous concern. It has recently acquired a studio at Elstree.

B.N.P.C. owns no cinemas, and Lady Yule would not, he thinks, be interested in doing so. She is very keen on the production of "really fine films", and takes much personal interest in the details of production. So long as the concern is making some profit, she is quite satisfied. She is now 70 years old, though young for her age. On her death all her fortune will be inherited by her only child, an unmarried daughter aged about 40 who, Catto thinks, would like to carry on the film business.

He said that he had great influence with them both, and was regarded as their trusted adviser. He often impressed upon them that "the Yule name" must not be tarnished. At first he had not at all liked Lady Yule going into films, in view of the bad reputation which many of those associated with the industry then had. He thinks that there has since been much improvement.

He said that he was confident he could give me an assurance that there would be no sale of the Yule interests to Americans. Neither Lady Yule nor her daughter, he said, would be interested in any profit they could make by selling out. They had plenty of money already. As regards further merges, I said that I would also like to be assured that nothing would even be contemplated without prior reference to me. He said that he could also give this assurance, and that he had no reason to think Lady Yule desired to share control with anyone else. He said that, without mentioning me, he would speak to Lady Yule on both these points, and would keep in touch with me.

20th May, 1943.

Ordn. I 28 157

These two came today. The former seemed at first quite mute, but later broke, just now and then, into brief spasms of speech. The latter talked like a flood. They have an anti-Rank obsession. "The Octopus" they called him, and said his tentacles were rapidly spreading, especially in the last twelve months. Farrow had approached them and asked "Why don't you come in under our umbrella?" They had said, No. But, if they were to remain outside the umbrella, they must take steps, they felt, to safeguard their position. They admitted, without prompting by me, that they were in touch with Allen, but, they said, not for a financial merger, but "to co-ordinate production". Allen, they said, didn't really produce. His primary interest was in the control of Cinemas, though he controlled less than Rank. I fenced a bit with Baker over these talks, and we left it that they would keep us informed of what was going on, and take no final decision without giving us warning. I think Baker is much bitten with the idea of combining with Allen against Rank, and that Courtauld wants this too. Even if they agreed to co-ordinate", it would take, they said, eighteen months to make any new films under this arrangement. They claimed that, outside the United States, their films were showing more and collecting more exchange than anyone else, including Rank's. In the United States they had hitherto used United Artists, but did not feel that they had been sincerely or honestly treated by them, and were now looking for something better. They were attracted, I think, by the idea that Warner's might help them here.

They thought that there was a leaning towards Rank in some parts of Whitehall, but quite absolved the Board of Trade from this. I gathered that they suspected that both the W.O. and H.C.I. were guilty. Rank, they said, was amazingly successful in getting key-men back out of the Services. They also spoke ill of del Guidice, referring to him as an alien enemy and an ex-internee who was now "living lavishly at the Grosvenor and entertaining on a most conspicuous scale". They thought Rank was pursuing an inflationist policy in manufacture. Courtauld, in one of his loquacious breaks, said that he would not in any circumstances "go in with Rank", but that, "if squeezed", he might have to sell out. They said that their Mr. Balcon was very "het up" about it all, and was regularly "bursting blood vessels". I said that I expected he would be coming with the deputation from the Filma Council next week.

They showed no interest in, and some professional contempt, for Lady Yule. They did not think she counted at all.

I asked them to keep in touch with me and my officials, and Baker spoke well both of Mr. Liesching and Mr. Geitskell. Courtauld had apparently met neither of these two eminent men, and I dropped a hint to Baker that he should arrange a meeting.

21st May, 1943.

DIARY22. 5. 43.

E. Wallach calls to ask me to move Portal to make a Nuffield loan to help them to start making button machinery after the war. I am all for this, both on grounds of constituency employment and balance of payments. Before, we used to import it all from Germany!

Production of U. furniture is much below schedule. Some firms have been very slow off the mark. Demand has grown, stimulated by exhibitions, and the contented talk of those who have got U.F. Lebus is to run round stimulating sluggards, and we must designate a few more firms. This is such a good show that it would be a shame if some snails spoil the record.

, Open "Wings for Victory" Week at Bexleyheath, at request of Jennie Adamson. This woman has developed beyond all expectations. She no longer yowls, as of old. She has settled into a condition of active contentment, being not only an M.P. and a member of our National Executive, but also inside, as P.P.S. in the Ministry of Pensions. She looks the part, her hairdresser helping, and is one of my most loyal aides. She defended me magnificently at the Labour Women's Conference last week, saying that everything possible was being done, on children's shoes, towels, stockings, and all the other headaches; that I had told her this was so, and that she had complete confidence in me, and that I knew the facts and they did not. Her speech was drowned in cat-calls of dissent, but, when the vote was taken, she and I won hands down.

This afternoon all is well staged. They have a public Park of some 200 acres, wherein Armed Forces, Girl Guides, Police, etc., inspired by the R.A. and R.A.F. bands, gather, surrounded by thousands of civilian onlookers. There is an impressive procession, Borough banner, Mayor and Town Clerk, Jennie and I, Chaplain and Councillors, followed by appropriate speeches and music. I tell them

/that

that, compared with what our airmen risk and suffer for our sake, our civilian privations and inconveniences are trumpery. "Never", I tell them, "have so many sacrificed so little for the sake of so much." (My Parliamentary Secretary tells me, two days later, that he heard this dictum with sheer surprise and deep depression on the midnight News, just as he was going to bed - no doubt after quite a good dinner. "Hell", he said.) I said, ending my speech, "They shall mount up as eagles, and shall take with them our pride, our gratitude for what they have done, our confidence in what they will do, our prayers, our love."

And so back to read "The Boomerang" by Ion Idriss

23. 5. 43 (Sunday)

I stay in bed till lunch, and laze all day, finishing "The Boomerang", a thrilling book of death and daring in the Desert, and of how, by some great but essentially simple engineering works, the waters which fall on the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range could be turned back, before wasting themselves into the sea, to fill once more the headwaters of the rivers west of the Range, Cooper, Diamantina and Georgina, and so flow on into what is now the Dead Heart of Australia, bringing back fertility to half a million square miles of sand, re-building a long chain of freshwater lakes, making the clouds to rise and thunder-storms to break, adding a new, rich State to Australia, and reversing the currents of history. A grand book, whether the plan is possible or not! And surely a much better scheme, though there is more labour and materials in it, than the alternative plans of digging a ditch from the Spencer Gulf into Lake Torrens, to flood the old lakes with saltwater. This would, no doubt, be much easier, and would do much to make evaporation and rainfall. But the Idriss plan is a much grander secular conception.

24. 5. 43.

Durston to be conciliated. This damned slow-coach is offended, so I hear, by the decision of A.D. and me to make Weir a high-level co-ordinator. The officials are afraid that I shall bite off Durston's head, and send me a quite extravagant eulogy of him. I gather that he leaves me reasonably contented, I having told him that he still has my confidence, is not to blame for the shocking shortage of leather, and retains, subject to Weir's co-ordination, all his present functions.

Jules Moch calls, attired in French naval officer's uniform. He was "Minister for Co-ordination" in Blum's first Government. He is an intelligent, and not at all unpleasant, French Socialist Jew. For Blum he fears the worst already. The Germans, carrying him off along with Gamelin and others into Germany, refused his request that he should be accompanied by any woman relative. This, admittedly, because he was a Jew! Gamelin was allowed to take his wife.

J.M. is very anti-Giraud, who, he says, is a Fascist, and so are practically all his entourage, both military and civilian. Sensing, perhaps, that I am not enamoured of de Gaulle, J.M. admits his weaknesses, but says that, all through France, he is a symbol of resistance. J.M. fears that, if the agreement now being negotiated between the two Generals (A.E. tells me 2 days later that "everything is now settled", on the day when de Gaulle leaves for Algiers) comes off, de G. may easily be trapped. He will take two men with him, one of whom is Massigli, who might easily desert to Giraud; Giraud will have with him two men, both of whom will stick to him. Therefore, at the critical moment, de G. may be in a minority of 4 to 2. I dwell, as always, discreetly with the French, on de G.'s defects, his tendency to personal dictatorship, his poor civilian entourage - so far, his vanity, his ignorance of politics. I tell J.M. how he missed his chance at Casablanca.

/Harvie

Harvie Watt to dine. A most interesting evening. He is not keen on A.E. His is, he says, "purely a press-made reputation". If he had been at a "business Department", e.g., the Treasury, or the Board of Trade, he would have made a mess of it. At the F.O. it is quite easy. Mere platitudes and amiable generalities. But, H.W. thinks, A.E. has been improving his position and is probably now the only possible successor to the P.M. as Tory leader. H.W.'s own favourite is Oliver Stanley. K.W., he says, is working his way back, and is well liked by the P.M., who thinks he has his ear to the ground. But K.W. "has no prospects". In the H. of C. both O.L. and S.C. are complete failures. O.L. was thought of, at one time, as a possible Tory leader. But not now, by anyone. Therefore, he might well like the idea of going to India as Viceroy. This job has been hawked round a lot, and at least eight Ministers have now refused it. S.C. is a complete prig. (Who told me that, when, in the presence of the P.M., S.C. asked to be excused to answer the telephone, the P.M. said, when he was gone, "There, but for the grace of God, goes God himself!") H.W. says that A.S. cuts no ice now, either with his Party or with mine. We speak of younger people, and he thinks that, on our side, only J.W. and Arthur Woodburn are first-class. I tell him that I hear the P.M. thinks J.W. a pacifist who, by his victory at Fulham, postponed our own rearmament. I say this is quite false, or I, who led, often by the scruff of the neck, the Labour Party to support rearmament, would have no truck with him. H.W. says that there is nothing in this. If true, this is most satisfactory. H.W. says that, of Labour Ministers, only H.M., E.B. and I have been increasing our reputations. None of the others count. He adds, for me especially, that the P.M. likes Ministers whom he can leave alone to do their jobs, without interference. Thence we turn to the post-war election. I ask him what he thinks the P.M. has in mind. I say that it would be most hard, if not impossible, to persuade our Party to accept an election in which the strength of Parties, as in 1935, was stabilised. He at once agrees ~~with~~ that this would be quite wrong, and a demand which

By Hella
Cliff's

See also

/nobody

nobody would make of us. He is sure the P.M. had not this in mind. The P.M. used to say there should be no general election for two or three years after the war. But Beaverbrook has worked assiduously on him, and has made him feel that it would be wrong to continue this effete Parliament any longer than was necessary. On the other hand, the P.M. has said that he wishes the National Government to go on, not only till the war is won, but also to make the Peace and shape the first post-war years. But at other times he has heard him say, "If the Socialists won't co-operate, then I should like to lead the Conservative Party to victory in an election." He thinks the P.M. has not really thought the thing out.

I hint, going into no detail, at the possibility that we might have an election, on a common programme, with more than one Government candidate in a constituency. He thinks that this might have the effect of letting a number of Independents in. But I am sure he has not really thought it out. Nor, I daresay, has the P.M.

He says that Tories don't much take to H.M. He sends the P.M. accounts of Parliamentary proceedings every few days. He regrets that C.R.A. has made difficulties about political Honours in war time. It would be much easier to bring young men on, if we could make old men Baronets or Peers, especially those who, as Under-Secretaries, could not "make the grade" of No.1 Ministers. I said that I had no objection, in principle, to such arrangements. He asked me to use my influence with C.R.A. to get him to modify some Minute he had written on this subject.

25. 5. 43.

L.P. Administrative Committee. A long wrangle on last week's vote on Old Age Pensions. A.G., as Chairman, is most indignant at the lack of discipline among the members of the A.C. itself. The A.C. recommended to the

/Party

-6-

Party Meeting, and it was carried by a small majority, that there should be no vote against the second reading of the Bill. Two members of the A.C. - Shinwell and Daggar - spoke, without authority, from the Front Bench in the opposite sense, and, of those members of the A.C. who were not Ministers, 4 voted with him for the Government, and 5 against. Members of the Party, other than members of the Government, voted 51 with him and 49 against. This is sheer anarchy, and will utterly discredit the Party, and its leadership.

P.Q.s include one on children's shoes, on which there is now much press rumble. I give a long reply, citing the loss of rubber supplies and the sinkings of hides by U-boats, but observing that some 30 million pairs of children's leather shoes a year, more than 3 pairs per child, are being produced.

Lunch with Kulski, Legal Adviser to the Polish Embassy, and a Pole recently come out from Poland, through Germany, France and Spain, who is most interesting on their underground movement. How wide a gulf between these heroes of the underworld and us, living so easily and safely!

Young comes to tell me, quite irregularly, what a mess the Ministry of Fuel and Power is, how the Minister knows nothing of what is going on, how many of the Regional Controllers are useless, how the men won't work (he says the harrassed Managers have to leave the pits to go round to the ~~homes~~ men's homes in the mornings and ask them to go to work at night!), how the coal-cutting machines and mechanical loaders which he asked for a year ago have not arrived, how at Harton, between the coal-face and the surface, there are seven different modes of transport, and seven breaks in the chain, and how the output in every coal field is now falling. A gloomy picture!

/My

My economists and other officials confer with me on Full Employment, in the light of a paper on this subject for the Reconstruction Priorities Committee. I shall make a paper emphasising the Distressed Areas, and the need to push new industries into them. To-night, however, I am making a paper, for the L.P.'s Committee on Friday, shouting against Hudson, in favour of hides against phosphates.

I have a report on Weir's first conference on footwear, which suggests that some activity is being shown.

26. 5. 43.

Party Meeting, at which Shinwell, Bevan and other miscreants are noticeably absent. Pi-jaws from A.G. in the Chair, and from C.R.A., on last week's indiscipline. It all leads nowhere! Too large a section of the Party has been allowed to get both sour and out of hand. But, just now, no-one senses a Governmental crisis. The war is going too well, and most men's minds are elsewhere.

Winterton and I lunch at the House. This is a long-standing engagement, made at his suggestion. He starts off at once, discussing post-war politics. He is much against an early return to Party politics. No doubt, he says, if the P.M. led the Tories into battle, he would sweep the country. But this would not last long. There would be a reaction, and we should come in. And then, in view of the great difficulties confronting any Party, another reaction, out of which Mosley, or Acland, or some other criminal or lunatic, might emerge triumphant. No matter who won, the first, or the second, post-war election, national interests would suffer. Therefore, he favours a post-war agreement between the Parties. He does not think this should be impossible. He, with Hogg and Hinchinbrooke and others, have formed a Conservative Reform Party Committee. They organised motions and speeches and clagues and counter-clagues at the Conservative Party Conference last week. They were very successful. They

/are

are determined to hold in check the reactionary elements in their Party. They would be quite prepared for a continuance of controls, for much state action and some state ownership, if we would agree to a strong defence and Empire development policy. I said I thought there would be little difficulty on these last. We, particularly the Trade Union leaders, were most firm now upon defence. We were, I thought, more sympathetic, and more closely in touch, with the Dominions, two of which have Labour Governments, than were the Tories. (W. said that he was afraid that this was so.) As for the Colonies - W. had praised Creech Jones for his persistent advocacy of Colonial development - I said we were less keen, but not at all antagonistic. I then say that the difficulty of a post-war election would be, if it was demanded of us to accept the stabilisation of Party strengths in 1935. W. said that he agreed that this was quite out of the question. At the same time, he was most eager for an early election. Many M.P.s, both in his Party and ours, were too old and no use. "This is a most discreditable House of Commons", he said. Not showing my own hand, I asked him how he thought an election could be worked. He said he saw no reason why, the leaders having put out a common programme - he supposed we must still admit the right of these wretched Liberals to a place, though they now represented nothing, and would be ground out of existence in any genuine election - and the P.M. having drafted some appealing statement, in favour of great social advance, but no return, as yet, to Party warfare, and suggesting to the electors that they should support a Government candidate, several Government candidates should not run in any one constituency. Tory and Socialist candidates would all support the Government, but the Tories would chide the Socialists with having voted against arms before the war, and Socialists would chide Tories as having been Men of Munich. But what would all this matter, this probing of the ghosts of long ago? I said that this was a most interesting idea, and that I should like to think further about it. W. said that he still saw the P.M. sometimes, and he would suggest it to him. I said I hoped he would.

/This

-9-

This, surely, was a most interesting conversation. If he carries as much weight as he thinks, it may also have been most important.

H.Walt
Nearly all Labour Ministers and a few others are invited to a sherry party at the Great Western Hotel. H.W. again tackles J.W. on political Honours, and C.R.A., joining in the conversation, says he never objected to these for M.P.s, but only for outsiders who "came crowding in". H.W. asks J.W. to ask me to try to do something further to clear up this point with C.R.A. I should be quite willing to do so.

I have at last my Chairman for my Committee on the Reform of the Companies Acts. Simon writes to-day that he has put it to Cohen, who would like to do it. I shall see him next week, and at last get a move on.

27. 5. 43.

In the office all day, seeing a stream of people and preventing, I am told, my staff from getting down to any real work.

Dine out with Australian and New Zealand M.P.s now over here with E.P.A. delegation. A dull, badly arranged party in the restaurant at Grosvenor House. Drummond Shiels, who looks more like a death's head than ever, is not a great dab at this sort of thing. I make friends with the two Australian Labour members of the delegation, Senators Jack Armstrong and Dave Watkins, both of N.S.W. I arrange that they shall spend an evening with me the week after next, and urge them to stay on for the Labour Party Conference. Also in the party is Alec Wilson, the Victorian Country Party member, who represents Mildura and a large surrounding area. He is responsible both for putting the Labour Government into office, and keeping it there, since it has a majority of only 2, when he, as he

/does

does on all critical divisions, gives it his support. Australian politicians, as compared with our own, are much shrewder and more to the point. Troy, the nice old deaf Agent General for Western Australia, is also with us, and very pleased to be taken notice of by me. Some day I shall call at his office and ask about the supplies of Western Australian wine.

DIARY28. 5. 43.

Special L.P. Executive to consider latest situation resulting from Stalin's dissolution of the Comintern. All but unanimously, we are for no change. Shinwell and Laski, alone, are for refusing affiliation at the Annual Conference but offering to enter into conversations with the C.P. Watson, loyal to the M.F.G.B. decision, puts up his hand, all alone, in favour of accepting C.P. affiliation on condition that they agree to our constitution. Jim Griffiths for once is in the majority on both issues. Afterwards he tells me that the Communists are losing much ground in South Wales by abusing absentee miners and denouncing them as "criminals", for not doing their utmost for the S.U. He says Lawther is only backing C.P. affiliation because he fears that otherwise Horner will beat him for the Presidency of the M.F.G.B.

L.P.'s Cttee. Hudson, always greedy and pretty unpopular with most of his colleagues, has put in a paper demanding first priority for phosphates, and complaining that some ships have been diverted from loading phosphates in N. Africa to loading hides from the Plate. I have made a spirited rejoinder, repeating the figures of the shortfall of hides in the first months of this year, and clamouring against any priority for phosphates over hides. The general view is that Hudson has troubled the Committee needlessly, that the existing machinery for priorities is working well, and that it should not be disturbed. He assures me that he has no designs against my hides, but I tell him that I would be still better pleased if he would kill off some more cattle and so increase my stocks. He says he would like to do this and "clean up the herds". I ask how much. He says up to 300,000 beasts over the next six months. I gather that Woolton, not he, is the obstacle to be got over. (You would never think how mean Ministers are to one another! When one gets into trouble, all the rest sit back and laugh and laugh and laugh, like Little

/Audrey

Audrey. Now it is Woolton's turn. He has got off too easily so far, with his soft-soapy humbugging wireless exhortations and self-congratulations, which have made the housewives think him a "dear old gentleman" and their husbands "a good old cock". He has made a complete mess-up of the distribution of the new food ration books, within which are enclosed the new clothing ration books and new identity cards. There are riots in the villages, and in the towns women fainting in long queues! He turned up to-day, uninvited and irrelevant to any item on the agenda, at the L.P.'s Cttee, and said, in his most soft-soapish tones, "I hope my colleagues aren't feeling disturbed about this question of the distribution of the new ration books.")

Films Council depute to me about "incipient monopoly", with special reference to Rank and, in a lesser degree, the A.B.P.C.-Warner combine. They say there should be an enquiry. I am most sympathetic and say I think there should, but how and by whom I must consider. (I am inclined to ask three non-trade members of the Council - Citrine, Plant and Thelma Cazalet, for choice - to make the enquiry. But first, since this is a wide question, I sound K.W. He is reputed to be friendly to Rank, partly because, some say, the latter would play ball, in a political crisis, with the Tory Party. Winterton is one of the Directors of Gaumont British, and Margesson has recently joined some other Board of Rank's. K.W. to-day says, quite sensibly, that, before appointing a committee of enquiry, I should look a move ahead and think what I should do if they report that it is all most scandalous and dangerous. I say that, if I don't order an enquiry, they may say that all the facts are really known, and attack me not less, but more, vigorously, for doing nothing about it. He will think the tactics over and advise me in a few days' time.)

To W.L., where -

29 & 30. 5. 43.

I sleep and dig and build up a chalk bank to break the wind behind the Lonicera hedge at the west end of the top terrace.

31. 5. 43.

Reconstruction Priorities Committee have before them a paper on Full Employment, along with my paper on Distressed Areas and other departmental papers from the Treasury and Board of Trade on post-war controls. A much better general discussion than usual. I elaborate on why West Cumberland is an exception, namely because a wide variety of new industries have definitely been brought in as the result of the energy and intelligence of some local people, notably John Adams. E.B. says, with satisfaction, "He is one of my members". Various speakers emphasise the importance of rates, electricity, and transport charges, - O.L. says "We must cheat a little", in order to enable light industries far from a market to be put on the same footing as those nearer. It is agreed that J.A. shall allot the parts between Ministers for further enquiries. E.B. says that one of the biggest factors in "mobility" is whether or not there are houses for people to move to, decent houses which they can rent. He is a great believer in the large-scale production of modern gadgets - flat irons, refrigerators, etc., - at a cheap price, so that we can also export large quantities of these to backward areas.

Weir on footwear, to report progress, and a push on P.N.B. and one of his officials to find the ships to fetch the hides.

Late to-night dictate a long letter to J.A. on Location of Industry and what I am doing about it.

1. 6. 43.

A.C., at which Shinbad is trying to argue that, because they all recognise that, whatever the Parliamentary Party decision, Labour Ministers must vote with the Government, so long as we are in it, it follows that Ministers should not have the right to vote, either at the A.C. or at the Party Meeting, when it is being decided how the Party shall vote in the House. This impudent attempt gets no

/support

support, but, as usual, wastes time.

Only three P.Q.s, of which only one is asked. This is a good index of the easy passage I am having, for the moment, in the House.

Lunch with Frihagen of Norway and Beaton of the S.C.W.S. Both want to fix up large-scale post-war trade.

Interview an unusually intelligent woman journalist from Reynolds. (It came out like this.)

Dine with E.D. at the White Tower. The Greek food is good, but I prefer the Acropolis. We discuss - many intelligent people are discussing this now - how we all felt in the summer of 1940. The sense is very deep now that the tide has turned right round, so that 1940 is now quite distant and detached history. He liked very much my paper on Distressed Areas. He says some of my comments showed that I knew the original paper was mainly by Robbins, Meade having relatively little to do with it.

2. 6. 43.

See E.B., primarily on wool. He is as anti-Shackleton as ever, and says the latter is making excuses against parting with the 2,000 worsted spinners which E.B. and I agreed some months ago he should hand over. E.B. wants to be sure that I am still agreed on this. He says that, as he himself has experienced sometimes, when Ministers agree, officials run about without their knowledge, trying to whittle down the agreement. I say that this is quite firm, provided he wants no more. He says he is content with this. He adds that the wool trade is, according to evidence he heard last week, in a bad way, and not preparing for the future. Wages and conditions are still most unsatisfactory - Arthur Shaw killed himself trying to improve them - and there are no big men coming up in the industry. He was much impressed by a Miss Cox, Chairman of the Deferment Board in Bradford, and advises me to see her.

/Lunch

16/6

Sec 116/43

Mr. DALTON IS NOT WORRIED CLOTHES and the ALLIED OFFENSIVE

CONSIDERING the amount of restriction it involves, I think clothes rationing is a wonderful success, and a great tribute to the people of this country, particularly working people. It has been well organised and well accepted."

President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Hugh Dalton, gave me this birthday greeting in an exclusive interview on the second anniversary of clothes rationing.

Then, swinging round in his chair, so that I had a view of his neatly pressed suit, "And we are still very well dressed, you know, perhaps a little shiny in places," he observed smilingly, "but I'm very glad to see that you don't wear stockings."

I asked Mr. Dalton to comment on employers who try to enforce regulations whereby their women employees must not come stockingless to work. He spoke up in no uncertain terms for the bare-legged brigade, describing the employers' attitude as showing "a complete lack of realism."

Indeed, I wish those who still regard these matters as of major importance could have been with me and heard the President's resonant voice, raised in sarcastic tones, echoing in his big office overlooking the Thames, as he said, "When I read about them making all this fuss, I think, 'Don't they know there's a war on?'"

He pointed out that it was more than two years since Whitehall had issued a notice saying that it was quite in order for women workers to come stockingless and in slacks if they wished. "So it is very odd that it should be considered impossible for West End shops."

I asked Mr. Dalton whether he agreed with an executive of a very large distributive organisation that too often "ridiculously low" fines are imposed for deliberate attempts to evade clothes rationing regulations. "It is not for me to criticise sentences imposed by Magistrates," he replied, "but," he added, looking thoughtful, "I noticed with satisfaction that a London Magistrate the other day said that if this sort of thing went on there would have to be imprisonment."

As for "tricks of the trade" adopted to beat the scheme, such as deeper hems on girls' garments which can be let down for wear by women, excessive leg measurements for trousers to evade the turn-up regulations and asking for wide inlets in leg seams and side seams, which could be let out to escape the width regulations, Mr. Dalton states that he is considering with his legal advisers better enforcement of the regulations. "But," he added, "don't let us get this out of focus. It is only a small, mean-spirited, unpatriotic minority dodging the law and wasting material."

He believes, too, that trading in coupons is on a negligible scale.

We are better clothed, says Mr. Dalton, than the Germans and, hence, of course, than any of the occupied countries.

"The Germans have been promised two pairs of shoes per child a year, and not even that promise is fulfilled," he says. "We are giving our children more than three pairs per year. No one in Germany can get an over-

coat without a permit, and without surrendering his old coat. Here you have coupons, and with them you can obtain your overcoat or what a most need.

"No German can get a new suit of clothing or new furniture unless he has been bombed out. We are making utility furniture not only for those who have been bombed out, but for the newly married. The contrast with the occupied countries is still more striking."



Comparing conditions with the last war, Mr. Dalton points out that our people, as a whole, are better clothed because of rationing. "Because there was little or no control in the last war, people could make fortunes, and the rich could buy as much as they wanted. Now the principle of clothing is distribution according to need. There are two rightly privileged classes in this matter, growing children and those in the heavy industries." He pointed out that certain pits and factories had coupon pools, which were administered by committees on which the workers, and sometimes the management, were represented.

I asked him for his views on one point which is a subject of complaint—traffic in clothes parcels from overseas to people who have friends or relatives in North America.

Traffic in parcels overseas is controlled, he maintains.

"There have been cases where I have stopped it because I found that certain individuals were receiving a series. It does not amount to a big total, and I think it would be a little hard to stop all parcels, don't you?" queried Mr. Dalton. I replied that I thought it was a matter on which he might very well make a definite rule, and be "a little hard."

There are, says Mr. Dalton quite definitely, to be NO concessions in the way of additional coupons for ANY class, and he included professional workers, who, although their clothing is part of their stock-in-trade, are, he says, lucky not to have the wear and tear of manual workers. He could not even hold out hopes of extra coupons for expectant mothers (who, of course, now receive 60 special coupons), nor for the first baby.

"Five million yards of cloth have been saved by the restrictions regarding turn-ups, pockets, pleats, and so forth. When there was an outcry about the turn-ups restrictions, the wholesale clothing manufacturers, including the Co-op, urged me to stand firm."

"I would like to think that one pilot had been able to bale out and his life had been saved because 162 women had gone without silk stockings, and I am very glad to have been able to send a quantity of clothing and reconditioned boots to Russia and cloth to make up in their own workshops."

"In the country retaken from the Germans, Russian men, women and children have been found homeless, starving and naked—literally."

If this statement is appreciated, surely there will be no more grumbles at lack of turn-ups, no more directorial commands to cover bare legs, or even complaints that Mr. Dalton can prophesy only a minimum of 36 coupons or a maximum of 48 for the next rationing year when it starts on September 1.

by
MONICA PEARSON

Lunch, along with J.W. and Willie Hall, with Isidore Ostrer, a most curious, half-genius, half-lunatic, looking, as J.W. says, like a Buddhist monk. He rose to great wealth and influence in films and other enterprises from being a Jewish street urchin in the East End. He says that Rank is in league with the Tory Party, and will use his film influence politically at a chosen moment. Ostrer is now more interested in the theory of money than anything else, and is writing, in deep solitude, what he thinks is a most important book.

Meet Colvin, the able Secretary, together with Newton and Bott, the not-at-all impressive President and Vice-President, of the Footwear Federation. I see them first alone and get them to talk freely about persons. (See separate note.) Then we have in Overton, Weir and Durston, and discuss things generally. The deputation are reassured by hearing that we are trying to get finished leather from the U.S.A. But shall we get it?

"We Dive at Dawn" at the Curzon, by invitation of Mr Rank. Pretty good, but I have seen better.

5. 6. 43.

C.W.S. deputation to continue the argument on their pram and bicycle manufactory at Birmingham, demanded to be requisitioned for an extension of Rovers tank engine factory just across the road. I am supported by an excellent man named Brown from the M. of S. and Warter. Brown states the case very well, and I tell them that many young co-operators will be glad of these tanks. When they repeat the old tale of "unfair treatment" by comparison with the private trade, and a half threat to "raise the matter" somewhere or other, I tell them that I am satisfied that there is no unfairness, nor would I continue in employment any Regional Controller who showed prejudice against the Co-ops, and that they would be on a very bad wicket if they tried to prove that "this/President of the

/Board

Board of Trade" was lacking in sympathy for them. Finally they leave, reasonably mollified, with undertakings for consultations as to time of evacuating their present premises and help in making alternative arrangements.

Lunch, along with C.R.A., H.M. and P.N.B., with a bunch of French Deputies and Senators in exile. This bunch is growing. Gouin is in the Chair and I am put between old Queuille, who looks much more recovered than when I first saw him on the morrow of his arrival, and Grenier, the only Communist of their number. I don't know what all this lot will do now, unless they can migrate en masse to North Africa and set up there the nucleus of a French Parliament.

Alexandre, a friend of Jules Moch, comes to give me a first-hand story of events in North Africa at the time of the landings. He claims that he and others planned the organised cessation of resistance to the landings. Only at Casablanca, he says, did their plans break down, because one of their agents was caught. In Algiers, he says, they were in complete control. The American General Mark Clark had asked them to hold up all resistance in Algiers for six critical hours. They did much better than this and held it up for ten, at the end of which period the British and Americans had arrived and were in control. It was never necessary, he says, for the landing forces to take any notice of Darlan or any of his crowd. I suspect that he a little over-tells his story. I ask him to send me a private note on all this.

Mr Justice Cohen, looking, to a contemporary, no more impressive than of old - and I daresay I look the same to him - comes to talk over the Company Law Committee. He is most co-operative, helpful and adaptable. He swallows the terms of reference whole, expresses great satisfaction at practically all my nominees, including the two M.P.s and the Trade Unionist - remembering, without prompting, that J.W. before the war was connected with the Shareholders' Protection Association - and suggests a younger man, named Gedge, of whom my officials have not heard, in place of

/Cecil

Cecil Turner, who, he says, is 68 and too old. He jumps at having Goodhart on the Committee and tells me that they are very close friends. He thinks it would be wise to have a Scot as well. He would like to write the Report in the long vacation of next year, and not to meet too often now. He will get in touch with Hodgson at once, and will even come and see him at the Board! No protocol of rooms here!

Peggy Jay to dine with me. She thinks Douglas would like to go into politics after the war. I say that he should be better at telling people what he wants. She says that at Winchester they never learnt to do that. He was pressed very hard at the M. of S. not to come to me, when I was angling for him, but, since, for reasons which she quite understands, I am no longer angling for him, his superiors at the M. of S. have lost much interest in him! I think that she and he would like to come for a weekend to W.L.

4. 6. 43.

L.P.'s Cttee. on "Review of War Legislation", proposing to set up a committee of officials to plan how, in "the transitional period", controls should be kept or got rid of. All I have to say is that, "in my considered judgment", all the B. of T. controls, within significant exceptions, will have to be maintained if the stabilisation policy is to succeed. No-one contradicts me. But, in order to say this, I have to waste a whole morning listening to long-winded debate on how extortionate rents in Scotland are to be prevented, given that the Scots Judges, as distinct from British lay magistrates, are unable to define such words as "extortionate". Typical waste of collective Ministerial time!

Nathan gives one of his old N.D.P.I.C. lunches to the Australian and New Zealand Parliamentary Delegations. Speeches by David Watkins and Edean. The visitors seem pleased with their reception.

/Afternoon

Afternoon meeting with my post-warriors to discuss Location of Industry. I am anxious quickly to put in a wide-reaching paper, but we seem to be entangled in a mass of commitments to inter-departmental consultations. I make a Minute on one of their papers, "But this Heath Robinson (inter-departmental) construction must quicken up. Or we shall miss a number of important buses."

To W.L.

5 & 6. 6. 43.

Mostly sunshine; much digging, carting and embanking; a goat gets loose in the gloaming and has to be re-shackled before it can devour the young leaves on my trees.

DIARY7. 6. 43.

A very Departmental day. Control of cosmetics; reinforcement of ~~Embix~~ Patent Office staff; dates of release, here and in Washington, of U.N.R.R.A. draft agreement; tactics over films.

8. 6. 43.

Meeting of our Three National Bodies on latest development of Trade Disputes Act and proposed affiliations of U.P.W., etc. Citrine makes a very long speech and, just after he finishes, I have to leave for P.Q.s in the House. There is a good deal of feeling in the meeting that "The G.C. have put us in the cart" by precipitate and indefensible illegal action.

The workers in the film industry come on deputation, led by George Elvin, to complain against Rank's monopoly. They say their members are making very good money now, but they are most apprehensive of what will happen later.

Alan/ Thence, with P.L. and H.G., to the Treasury to talk to K.W. about this same subject. He is accompanied by Barlow, who makes the most incredibly extreme pro-Rank and anti-everybody else, oration. This is, however, not supported at all by K.W., who is even more emphatic than we are that an approach to monopoly by any one man cannot be ~~supported~~ tolerated. He likes the idea that we should get from Rank an undertaking not to expand any more, and seek to build up two or three strong and independent British-controlled concerns in this country. He would also be glad if we could give Korda a chance. All quite satisfactory, and he is very glad that I should say to Rank that this is a matter on which he and I are entirely agreed.

With J.W. to dine with Bowles, Winster, and M. Webb. Not a very satisfactory evening. The Noble Lord has been drinking something at the Chinese Embassy and is

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quite out of everything from the start. Bowles is, J.W. and I agree, a very great disappointment. He does not seem to use his brains at all and his whole approach to all political questions is cock-eyed. He is alleged to have been canvassing in the bar for Greenwood for the Treasurer-ship of the Party, and complains against H.M. because, in his last speech, he used the phrase "We who have to govern the country". Bowles thought this a most unfortunate expression. We said that members of the Government were, by definition, people who governed the country. But he went grousing on. M.W., on the other hand, is very sound and pro-H.M. They print next morning quite a good summary of an address given by H.M. to the Fabian Society. But many, said M.W., who had previously been complaining that there was no "leadership" or "real post-war planning" in the Labour Party, now, when they got a spot of both, complained that H.M. was only "thinking of his own publicity". They did not discuss at all whether what he said was sense or not. J.W. and I decide that we shall not bother any more about Bowles.

9. 6. 43.

Citrine to see me on a T.U. member for my Company Law Committee - I say I should prefer John Brown, who, he says, does not attend G.C. meetings very regularly, his Head Office being out at High Wycombe - and also on Film developments. I tell him what I have in mind, and he takes this quite well. He does not press, as we thought he might, for an enquiry, with himself prominently associated with it. He is quite willing to believe that we now know all the facts. He thinks that the Films Council, and the public, would be quite reassured by a public statement that Rank has given the undertakings desired. I then lead him on to the question of the T.U. Act and the fuss over the proposed affiliation of the postmen. He makes many complaints - especially against C.R.A. and E.B. - for their lack of attention to his representations, and their failure to take this grave question seriously. (I do not say, though I think, that hardly any postman's heart is palpitating anywhere over the

/prospect

prospect of affiliating his Union to the T.U.C.) Citrine says that, to gain time, the G.C. have postponed the issue till September, since, although they have power to accept forthwith an application for affiliation, they have decided in this case only to recommend the Congress in September to accept it. He says he thinks that the postmen and others will be affiliated, and that nothing will happen! If action is taken in the Courts to restrain the payment by the Union of affiliation fees to the T.U.C., the G.C. have the power to remit affiliation fees altogether, or to make a payment from their own funds on behalf of any Union. Unless, therefore, he says, the Government wants to make a first-class row of this, there is no need for any fuss at all. Anyhow, my own view is that the thing is intrinsically piffle, and there are nearly three months to go before it becomes actual. By then, much may have changed.

Lunch at the Spanish Embassy, where Alba says how great an improvement the war shows since we last met. I say that I remember he told me then, in great confidence, that Spain would come into the war against us if we lost Cairo. Can he tell me now what the Germans and Italians must lose in order that Spain shall come into the war on our side? He has no answer to this, but says that Franco has a very limited military mind and has told the Germans that, after Tunisia, they cannot win, which has irritated them a good deal, but he still says to Alba that he does not see how we can win. Alba says he realises that recent Spanish pronouncements against bombing (by us now) are making a very bad impression here and causing much irritation. He is very apologetic for Franco. His Counsellor, whose name I miss, says, in perfect English, that he has never been in Russia, because - this rather proudly - Spain has had no diplomatic relations with the Russians for more than 25 years.

Miss Cox, from the West Riding, comes to tell me a sad story of backwardness and narrow outlook among employers in the woollen industry. She says they ought to have a Wool Board, like the Cotton Board. I ask her to

/send

send me a note on all this.

Weir brings Christmas Moeller to see me. This typical-looking Dane is feeling rather out of it, since Denmark is not a United Nation. He came over, through my agency more than two years ago, and I tried to get at the same time Hedtoft Hansen, a Socialist to balance a Conservative. H.H., however, did not feel able to come, principally owing to his loyalty to old Stauning. I talk nicely to C.M. and promise him a quiet quack with Leith-Ross.

Devote the evening, with J.W., to our two Australian Labour visitors, Senator John Armstrong and David Watkins. They are nice chaps, but with few ideas outside politics. We sign and send off postcards to Joe Arthur, with whom I well remember a most admirable game of tennis in the grounds of the State Parliament Building at Sydney, and to others of "the boys" in N.S.W. The evening drags a bit towards the end and we take our guests round from one place to another, not getting home till after 1 a.m. But they will remember, and talk of, this evening for a long, long time.

10. 6. 43.

Warter and Fletcher to see me on behalf of A.B.P.C. and Warners. H.G. is present. I want from them an undertaking not to sell, without prior consultation ~~with~~ and agreement with the Board of Trade, either Mrs Maxwell's shares - her own or inside the family trust, of which Warter is the senior trustee - or any of the Warner shares, either to Rank or to any third party, since such third party might sell to Rank. It looks as though they would agree to this, after consideration, though Warter has a long story of his duty as a trustee and the danger of family money all being locked up in films, and of how the death duties would be paid if Mrs Maxwell died. I then ask them to agree, further, neither to sell or buy, without consultation and agreement with me, any of their assets, e.g., cinemas. They think this much more difficult. They

/will

will think it over and see me again. I press them as hard as I do, because it seems to us that Rank may ask what undertakings others are giving.

I see Rank later in the morning. (Separate note of talk attached.) He seems surprisingly forthcoming, not only seeming willing to give the undertaking I ask, but not suggesting that anyone else should be required to give any undertakings. We are to meet again in 10 days' time with a precise form of words as a basis of discussion.

The announcement about the U.N.R.R.A. has been made by the President in Washington. The press references here this morning are, however, very meagre. Leith-Ross is now to take a Press Conference of diplomatic correspondents this afternoon, and I shall have something to talk about at our Conference next week. Meanwhile, I tell M. Webb to crack the thing up in the Herald to-morrow, and to mention my name in connection with it. (This is done, though not with any great élan.)

A.O. sees me again on Weir's persistent request for a change in organisation for production of footwear, in effect putting the whole thing under Stratton of the M.S. I send a reply to Weir which is most conciliatory in tone but unyielding on the main point. I insist that the real problem is shortage of materials and not mal-organisation of production. I hope he will now cease to fidget about this particular matter.

Attend the premiere of Rank's new film, "The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp!" The P.M. turns up, and there are quite a number of Ministers and other notorious people in the Dress Circle. I take G.P. The film is much too long, more than two and a half hours, and I don't like at all the pro-German sentimentality of Blimp. It does not have a very enthusiastic reception, and many will dislike it for other reasons, e.g., the Daily Mail next morning, because foreigners will not understand our self-caricature. Another criticism is that this Blimp is not Low's immortal creation, but a much inferior, flabby creature, with no sharp outline.

Mr. Rank came to see me to-day at my request. The Parliamentary Secretary joined us during the latter part of the talk.

I began by saying that I was looking forward to seeing "Colonel Blimp" this evening, and I added that I wished Mr. Rank to realize that I much appreciated the work which he had done for the British Film Industry. He had undoubtedly rendered a great service in building up a large and financially sound British enterprise. None the less, as he knew, there was considerable public concern regarding present tendencies in the industry, and the Films Council had recently sent a strong deputation to see me, consisting both of their trade and non-trade members, who had told me that they were greatly disturbed at the growth of an "incipient monopoly" under Mr. Rank's control. I had recently discussed the matter with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he and I were entirely in agreement on this subject. He would be very glad himself to see Mr. Rank and discuss with him the public interest involved. The two principal aspects of these were, first, that we could not allow American domination of our film industry, and second, that there must be no monopoly or near approach to monopoly, even if the control was wholly British. The Chancellor and I both felt that the public quite rightly would not tolerate either of these developments. We did not wish, and I was sure Mr. Rank agreed with us on this, that public controversy and criticism should develop, either in Parliament or in the Press, and it was our duty to take steps to prevent this.

I then took Mr. Rank through the points summarized in Mr. Gaitskell's brief, in order, as I told him, to enable me to check up on the statements of the Films Council. Most of the statements made he admitted to be quite true, except in the following particulars :-

- (1) Gaumont-British and Odeon between them covered not more than 650 cinemas.
- (2) Mr. Rank and Mr. Farrow are Directors of both, but Mr. Woodham Smith only of Gaumont-British.
- (3) A.B.P.C. owned, he thought, some 400 cinemas, so that he and A.B.P.C. together owned just over 1,000.
- (4) He said that 30 million people per week went to the pictures, of whom 3 million to Odeon and 2½ million to Gaumont-British; in London Odeon and Gaumont-British between them have about 50% of the total.
- (5) He owned or controlled only four studios not five as alleged by the Films Council. He had sold Elstree to the Prudential and now had no interest in it at all. Nor had he any other interests in studios, nor any intention to acquire more. On the contrary he would like to sell Gaumont-British studios after the war.
- (6) He co-operated with A.B.P.C. only to the extent of taking steps to prevent the Americans putting their prices up. Max Hilder was not very enthusiastic about this.
- (7) He was quite prepared to let space in his studios, and at the present moment the Columbia people were making a film at Islington.

- (8) After the war he would like to keep Gainsborough, Denham and Pinewood.
- (9) Post-war productive capacity would be 25 to 30 films a year at Denham and Pinewood, 6 at Shepherd's Bush and 5 at Islington. Since he only aimed at producing 25 films himself, this would leave space which he could lease to others.
- (10) It was not his intention, as a condition of letting his studios, that he should secure the distribution rights for any films made there. He did not desire to extend his control in the sphere of production. As to Ealing and British National, he was anxious that they should develop and grow strong there and said he had no desire to absorb them. He was not quite explicit as to whether he had ever approached them in the past.
- (11) He would like to give Korda a show and was already discussing this with him.
- (12) He admitted that he had made an arrangement with A.B.P.C. to acquire the Regal at Marble Arch when the present lease ran out two years hence, also Mears' circuit containing, he said, some six cinemas, and he admitted that he was negotiating for the Metropole at Victoria. I asked whether he was negotiating for any others. He said he was, for a few more, including two at Nottingham and two at Dover, perhaps about 40 more in all.
- (13) I then told him that it was my desire, and the Chancellor's, that he should give me an undertaking that he would acquire no more interests without consulting with me and securing my agreement. I told him that we thought that he was quite large enough. He said at once that he saw no difficulty in giving such an undertaking. He would like to think over the exact form which this should take. We agreed that we should have a further talk on this in about ten days time. Meanwhile, he would undertake not to enter on any fresh negotiations. The Parliamentary Secretary then raised the point as to whether negotiations which had already begun should not be discontinued. Mr. Rank said that in some cases he had already bid a price, but that in others he had only put out feelers. It was agreed that he should send me a full list of the cinemas affected by these negotiations, with an indication of the stage reached in each case. Where he had actually made an offer I would not insist on the negotiations being called off, but where this had not been reached he would not ~~renew~~ renew the negotiations for the time being, nor would he start up any new negotiations.
- (14) He said he had no intention whatever of combining with A.B.P.C., but he did not raise the point, nor did either of us, of my seeking any undertakings of any kind from any of the other concerns. He repeated several times that was determined to keep the Americans out of control. I did not enter into any discussion on this.

On the surface all this conversation went well and smoothly. I should now be glad if further consideration could be given to the exact wording of the undertaking which I should now put to Mr. Rank. I said that I should wish our discussion to end in an exchange of letters and in a statement which I could make public in reply to a Parliamentary Question.

10th June, 1943.

11. 6. 43.

N.E. all morning, preparing for Annual Conference. George Oliver attends for the Conference Arrangements Committee and, as usual, does very well; practical, experienced, good-tempered and witty. As the programme now stands, the votes for Executive, etc., will be taken - as I suggested they should be - on Monday, between 12 noon and 5 p.m. After the usual preliminaries, the first real business is the pronouncement of the Labour Party and the Future. C.R.A. will move this, and H.M. wind up, just before lunch. This will give him a pull with whatever votes are still free for the Treasurership. No other Executive candidate will have much chance of getting in. Shinwell starts an attempt to work himself in with a "Progress Report" for the Reconstruction Committee, and I pass a note to H.M. saying that so long as we hold the Monday morning programme and the Monday vote, it does not matter if Shinwell gets a bit more of a show than had been intended some other day.

Go to lunch at the Cock with George Ridley, Sam Watson and Morgan Phillips. The rumours are that the Transport Workers and the N.U.D.A.W. are both voting for Greenwood, the former because he is nominally one of their members, the latter through the machinations of Luke Hogan and Billy Robinson. There are also fears that the General Workers may go the same way. On the other hand, the N.U.R. and the Cotton Unions are thought to be probably for H.M., who should also pick up a large quantity of small pieces. Will Hall has not only the Miners, but the Iron and Steel Workers and a few more. Although we could have got his withdrawal a month ago, when J.W. canvassed him, but it seemed both to H.M. and me that he had better stay put, since the Miners' vote, we then thought, could not be relied on, it is said that now his ambition has been fired and he quite believes he may win. M.P. says that he will get the support of practically all the constituency party agents, who think he has done very well for them over their superannuation scheme. S.W. says that he thinks if Hall were to withdraw before the Miners' delegate meeting on

/Sunday

Sunday morning, it would be possible for Will Lawther, just as the meeting was breaking up, to say, quite casually, that since their first choice had withdrawn, he took it that their vote would now go to H.M. - who had, in fact, received a good deal of support when the original nomination was being discussed, A.G. not having been in the running at all. On the other hand, there is a danger that this manoeuvre might miscarry, through the intervention of Ebby Edwards, who tends to oppose everything proposed from Durham, and G.R. thinks that, if it were announced at the last moment in the Conference that Hall had withdrawn, there would be a suspicion among the delegates that there had been a wangle. On the whole, therefore, we decide that it is not wise or worth-while to make any further approach to Hall. I suggest, however, that we might leave open the possibility, when we know more about where the big votes are going, of getting someone to raise in the Conference, before the vote is taken, the question of a second vote between the first and second candidates if the first has not a clear majority. This would do H.M. no good if he was only third, and, until we know more, it is not clear that it would help anyhow.

G.R. is very conscious of the responsibilities and possibilities of next year, and we discuss the possibility of a meeting of "the hard core" of the Executive at regular intervals, especially before monthly meetings.

DIARY11. 6. 43. (contd.)

From now on, I go into political purdah for a week, and, except for meals and sleep, shake off the earthly trammels of the Board of Trade.

12. 6. 43.*Dallas*

Attend various Group Meetings with G.D., to whom I explain that it is useful electioneering to meet a large number of delegates, and to treat them kindly, making clear that, at this stage, we don't argue the merits of any resolution, nor is the Executive pledged on any of them, but that our sole aim is to tidy up the agenda.

13. 6. 43.

N.E. in afternoon to take account of Group Meetings and resulting Composites. On "Post-war treatment of enemy peoples" Stokes and others have a composite attacking Fight for Freedom Group and declaring generally that Germans are good chaps and that no-one should hate them, to which the Iron and Steel Trades have an amendment declaring that they don't want to exterminate anybody, but that most Germans are to blame for what is going on, and that Germany must be completely disarmed, as laid down in Atlantic Charter, and "re-educated" so as to give her a chance of becoming a decent member of future international society.

whole/ On this there is a row next week at the Conference. To-night we decide, by 10 to 7, I voting in the majority, against the Fighters for Freedom, that it would be best to get this ~~old~~ discussion called off and both amendment and resolution withdrawn. As it turns out, the stupidity and misdirected pugnacity of Stokes & Co. make this impossible, and they come a bump in the Conference. This is their own silly fault.

/After

After the N.E., I bring back George Ridley, Sam Watson and Morgan Phillips to my room, and we check up the prospective votes for the Treasurership. All the big Unions have now taken their decisions, several of them this morning.

Of the Big Six, Greenwood has got the Transport Workers, the N.U.R. and the N.U.D.A.W.; Morrison the General Workers and the Cotton Textiles; Hall the Miners. There have been some close shaves, Burrows being broken-hearted because he only just failed to pull the N.U.R. for Morrison because a number of his delegates "were grumbling about fire-watching", and Morrison having got Cotton only by the casting vote of the Chairman of the delegation.

Of the middle-sized Unions, Greenwood has the A.E.U. and the E.T.U.; Morrison the R.C.A. and the N.A.T.S.O.P.A.; Hall has Iron and Steel.

These votes add up as follows:

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|-----------|-----|
| Greenwood | 974 |
| Morrison | 491 |
| Hall | 470 |

Therefore, so far, Greenwood has a clear majority over both the others. There remain the smaller Unions, the Constituency Parties and other oddments. Of Constituency Parties, we anticipate a total vote of 400,000, of which Morrison should certainly get a very substantial majority. Provisionally, we give him 300,000, Greenwood 100,000, and Hall nothing. This brings the vote to:

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| Greenwood | 1,074 |
| Morrison | 791 |
| Hall | 470 |

It is, therefore, clear (1) that if the first vote settles it, Greenwood is in and the Miners have thrown away their vote of 413,000, and (2) that if there is a second vote between Greenwood and Morrison, and the Miners swing over to the latter, he is in.

S.W. is pretty sure he can get the Miners' vote for Morrison, Lawther and Bowman being also very keen to do it. On the other hand, there is a certain amount of anti-Morrison feeling among the Miners, including some in South Wales, and also Yorkshire, who are very pro-Greenwood. It is agreed that some delegate should ask, at the opening of the Conference on Monday morning, before the votes are taken, that, if the first candidate has no clear majority, there should be a second vote. G.R. gets on the telephone to Watkins and, I thought, fixed this definitely. S.W. will do his best to make sure that the Miners' second vote goes as desired.

14. 6. 43.

(Fwd)

Old Dobbs makes a much better Chairman's speech - and throughout the week a much better Chairman - than I had expected. Just after he had finished his oration this morning, I am told that Watkins won't raise the point as arranged yesterday, since the R.C.A. have had a delegate meeting this morning and have felt that it would be invidious for them to raise it, since they have nominated H.M. I, therefore, incite various people to run about the hall and try to get someone else to raise it. J.W. succeeds in doing this, getting hold of Mrs Bamford, who in fact is voting for Greenwood, and asking her to raise the question, and not to argue or to ask him why. She does so, but rather ineffectually, and George Oliver, as Chairman of the Conference Arrangements Committee, merely says that this is not a matter for him. But Greenwood's supporters will have been put on their guard. Most inept!

Returning to the Conference after luncheon, I am mounting the stairs with M. Phillips when Lawther meets us. I take him aside and ask whether he does not think there should be a second vote. He says yes certainly, and he thinks he can put the Miners' vote on to Morrison. I ask whether he will authorise me to tell the Chairman that Lawther has approached me and say that, as a matter of principle, he thinks there should be a second vote. He

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to
 agrees. I, therefore, write notes both/the Chairman and to J.S.M., proposing that a special E.C. should be held to decide this question, in view of Lawther's approach to me. This is done at the close of the day's sitting. The Greenwoodites, however, are in full force and full cry. Robinson, Walker and Dallas sit together in the front row and try to shout everyone else down. They say that there is no precedent for a second vote, and that, if we agree to this, we shall have to recast our whole method of election, including that in each of the panels of the N.E. Shinwell also swells the hubbub, characteristically, by insinuating that persons and organisations unnamed are trying to do a wangle on behalf of some candidate unnamed. None the less, it is moved and seconded that we should recommend the Conference to-morrow, before the vote is announced, that there should be a second vote if no clear majority. This is supported by G.R., S.W., Laski, Phil Baker, Burrows (though rather hesitatingly), and myself. It gets 11 votes to 10, J.S.M. being in a state of great dither and trying to make sure that he counts every adverse vote. Then someone says to the Chairman "But you have got a vote too". The Chairman says he gives his vote against the recommendation, so that it is not carried. Another close thing, just the wrong way!

I talk further with S.W., who will tell Lawther what has happened and consider with him whether, as a last resort, the Miners should not raise this question themselves to-morrow at the opening of business, before the votes are announced. He is inclined to think that this is all too late. Afterwards I do some telephoning to H.M., Ellen Wilkinson, and then to Lawther at the Strand Palace. Since he is likely to be sitting in a crowd having drinks, I arrange that Miss Lowndes should try to get through first without mentioning ~~the~~ name, and if pressed should give her own (He has a number of lady friends). This works, and he comes on to the 'phone not knowing who wishes to speak to him. He says there has been a buzz since this afternoon among the Greenwoodites, who know, of course, of our manoeuvres and of the special E.C. He thinks that if the Miners did raise it to-morrow, it would only create a strong

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/pro-Greenwood

pro-Greenwood reaction and he is not dead sure of his delegation. It might be that they would insist that the Miners' vote should be broken up into coalfields, in which case Yorkshire, and probably South Wales, would go for Greenwood, though Durham and some others would go for Morrison, but not enough to change the first vote. We leave it that he will think it over and talk to some of his friends before to-morrow morning.

H.M., on the telephone, is, very naturally, very indignant. "This is the third time", he says, that they have turned him down, for the Leadership in 1935, for the Secretaryship, through imposing the ban on its being held by an M.P., and now this. "They know quite well what they are doing", he says. He would rather like a row to-morrow, if it can still be arranged, and would be prepared to say that he would ask for a second vote if he were on top without a clear majority.

I am afraid it is now too late.

15. 6. 43.

The voting is announced. No-one raises the question of a second vote. (All figures on separate sheet.) H.M. does better than I expected on his vote, and evidently swept nearly all the board of Constituency Parties. There were 450,000 of these. The total vote of the Conference is unusually high, being over 2,600,000. The only other changes on the E.C. are that Collick comes on in the T.U. section in place of Boulton, who doesn't run again, and that John Parker takes the place vacated by H.M. I get a very solid vote of 300,000, and Phil falls down below me, as I forecast would be the case when he became a Minister. But the top five, down to and including Phil, all have a clear majority of the total Constituency Party vote. Dallas and Parker, who bring up the rear, are a long way behind, but both comfortably in front of the runner-up. Ridley will be Chairman and Ellen Vice-Chairman next year.

*I could have lost half my vote if
Sr. H got on. /The*

The public will not take well the election of Greenwood and the defeat of Morrison. It will strengthen the view that we are bad judges of ability in the Labour Party, or that our judgments are clouded by jealousy. Of Greenwood it used to be said in Whitehall, when he was a Minister, that "the poor old chap couldn't even sign his name after mid-day." In fact, out of Ministerial office, he is not quite so bad as they think. None the less, the thing is most unfortunate. H.M. is saying that he won't run again for the E.C. for several years, but I expect he will change his mind 12 months hence. Some of the press say that he has now got the asset of personal sympathy for the first time in his career. I am now the only Minister of Cabinet rank left on the Executive, apart from C.R.A. I can foresee that I shall have to spend even more time on Party business next year, and to take a larger share in next year's Conference. Speaking in public at Party gatherings while a Minister in this mixed Government is, I find, a very tiresome and unsatisfactory business. But much may change, and things seem very different, 12 months hence. The vote for Greenwood was largely a "testimonial vote". People thought he had had a raw deal; he was a decent chap, a good old croney, he had done a lot of work for the Party, etc. Rather pathetic!

The Conference, apart from this incident, went very well and reached a series of very good decisions. It flatly reaffirmed the electoral truce by 6 to 1; it flatly turned down Communist affiliation by 3 to 1 (the Miners voted in the minority and it is clear that the great majority of the Constituency Parties voted in the majority); it beat off an attack on Labour Ministers for their votes and speeches on the Beveridge Report by nearly 2 to 1; it carried, without a vote, the Previous Question on a resolution which tried to commit us to leave the Government as soon as hostilities with Germany were ended, following an undertaking by C,R.A. that the Party Conference should decide the matter when the time came (which anyone would have assumed would be the case in any event); it carried by nearly 2 to 1 the Iron and Steel amendment to the Stokes' resolution referred to above.

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This last event occurred on the morning of Thursday, 17th. Till then I had been most assiduously in attendance, but then I returned to the Board of Trade.

That afternoon and evening I had a series of Conferences, including one on Footwear. Weir has been very busy and, if we can get our requisition for American finished leather agreed by O.L.L.A., we shall not have very much gap after all. Meanwhile, there has been a certain amount of silly publicity on prospective shoe shortage, started by some damned fool of a boot repairer at some Trade Conference. But it is quite clear that, in any event, we can maintain the present level of production for the two great privileged classes, children and industrial workers. The rest of the adults may have to take a cut in the production of the next quarter, but this should not exceed 50% at the very worst, so I am advised to-night. There are also considerable stocks with wholesalers and retailers at present.

DIARY18. 6. 43

I should add to my diary of the Conference that I made only ^{one} speaking appearance from the platform. This was a short statement, late in the day on Wednesday, the press being absorbed by Communist Affiliation, in explanation of the U.N.R.R.A. draft agreement. This was well received by all who still had some capacity for attention, particularly when I said that this was a much wider project than the supply of food alone, that it was a germ of post-war international co-operation from which much might grow, and that it was most significant that, for the first time for such a post-war enterprise, we, the Russians, the Americans and the Chinese, had reached agreement. I added that, if we, the four Greatest Powers on Earth, were able to march forward together, firmly linked arm in arm, into the future, it would surely be well with the world. But, if we fell apart, the future would become dark and confused. I also let them know that I was, as had been said by G.D. and others, the Minister primarily responsible for all this up to this stage.

On the Monday morning, just before the vote was taken, Lawther, speaking on the Electoral Truce, said that E.B. and I were entitled to the thanks of the Miners for what we two had done for them. This was a useful tribute, which I was glad to have made publicly once more. It soon grew in echoes by other speakers, e.g., that E.B. and I had done more for the Miners than any previous Government, including the two Labour Governments.

Returning to Thursday, I lunch, together with Leith-Ross, with Kerstens, the Dutch Minister of Commerce, and Lamping. These are cheerful, companionable people very like ourselves. (L.R. is, of course, half a Dutchman himself.) Kerstens is a little inclined to make difficulties about the U.N.R.R.A. draft, but L.R. and I keep on repeating that they must accept it without delay and get the new administration set up. K. says that they will wish to be on the Supplies Committee, in virtue of the Dutch East

/Indies

Indies. He is a bit concerned at the Chinese being counted as one of the Big Four. He says they tried to send an Inspector to Java to inspect Dutch schools for Chinese children.

To W.L. this evening.

19 & 20. 6. 43.

Stay in bed each morning, and after lunch work in the garden till 11 p.m., with short breaks for tea. Finish at last my very large excavation north of the drive, into which great quantities of grass and weeds are to be flung. Eat my first raspberries of the year, plucked from amid a frightful tangle in the fruit garden. Where I have best weeded, there have the weeds since thriven best! So it is always in life. Read Braunthal's "Need Germany Survive?" and am at first greatly infuriated. But, as I read on, I become more tolerant. The fact remains, however, that this man wants a united and integrated Europe, leaving out Britain and Russia, which means under German domination. Clearly I must produce some logical and limpid lucubration on all this, suitable, with minor variations, for a Labour Party declaration on the Peace at our next Annual Conference. We must cease to move on the flat plain of abstraction regarding "aggressors", etc. The point is that Germans are much more dangerous than, e.g., Poles, Serbs, Italians, Spaniards, or other candidates for reprobation. Other potential "aggressors" are of local interest only; the Germans of, at least, European interest. If we keep friends with Americans and Russians, no-one else can seriously threaten British peace for at least a generation. The wind, the sun and the moon are better companions than some of my colleagues or supposed collaborators. All the wild roses are out, led by the deep red Moyes.

planned

21. 6. 43.

Talk with pram-makers, who ask for more metal. The supply of babies, and even of first births, is running ahead of the supply of prams. I say that I will do my best, and I hear later that pressure on the M. of S. has been effective.

It is most remarkable, most time-absorbing, and sometimes most irritating, that I should be regarded as a sort of universal provider for the civilian population. And so, apart from being expected to produce more prams, more razor blades, more alarm clocks, more tea-cloths for pubs, more children's shoes, (and to prevent the prices of any of these things being excessive, and, on the other hand, not to issue too many Orders, and not to have too many officials to enforce them, or to inspect anything or anybody, lest this should appear to be "Gestapo"), I receive also letters from M.P.s, replies to which I must, if the writers are not to be grossly offended, sign and vet myself, reporting that, e.g., some lady has tried in eight different shops to get an outsize corset and will I please do something about it, or again that a lady has lost her clothing coupons in a tram, and will I please replace them, or again that someone wants to publish a most important book and the publishers can't get the paper, and will I please provide it. It is a little difficult to prevent this mass of urgent, short-term detail from blocking the vistas towards the brave new post-war world.

Szapiro, making hay with Retinger's grass, while Sikorski is away, and purporting to represent not only Kwapinski but also Raczynski, comes to talk about the U.N.R.R.A. I say that Strasberger has already written to Leith-Ross about it. Szapiro says that this is very wrong, and not his business. The Poles would have liked everything to be different, a Committee of Receivers as well as a Committee of Suppliers, and the "democratic election" of the members of the Central Committee. I tell ~~them~~ him that it is quite impossible to change, in any important particular,

/the

the draft agreement. If too much fuss and objection is raised, there is a grave risk that the Americans will tell all Europe, including the Poles, to go to Hell, and there will be neither relief organisation nor relief. It has taken a long time, and much labour, to get this Anglo-American-Russian-Chinese accord, and these four Powers will stand by it. I, therefore, strongly advise that the Poles should accept it, but I suggest that, in doing so, they might say that they take for granted that this Plan is not to be regarded as a precedent for other post-war international organisations.

22. 6. 43.

To my great surprise there are no P.Q.s on Footwear shortage. Sir C. Weir, by his prompt reply in the press to the Boot Repairer, Pickering, seems to have killed the agitation dead.

Lunch with Stationers, who are linked up with N.C.T. and seem well disposed.

Go to a Reception organised by the Czechs to celebrate the return of Benes from the U.S.A. He looks rubicund and well. He tells me that the American attitude towards his country is much better than a year ago, and that he himself hopes for a close Soviet-Czechoslovak-Polish alliance after the war. But, he says, in all the countries of Middle Europe the old ruling classes must be swept away, "including Czechoslovakia". I say "You know that I am pan-Slav." He says that the Americans are more and more fed up with all the French, the rest as well as de Gaulle, and that it is felt in the State Department and elsewhere that France, on present showings, has no future as a Great Power. He regrets this American state of mind, but we agree that it is most understandable.

23. 6. 43.

Smith
 Labour Party N.E. in the morning. Ridley does very well for the first time in the Chair. Shinwell shows welcome signs of wanting to throw up his Chairmanship of the Reconstruction Committee. Even more welcome signs appear that he is becoming isolated in the N.E. Several propose that the R.Cttee. should now be abolished, and all go to the Policy Committee. Laski says to me that Shinwell has exploited his position as Chairman of the R.Cttee. during the past two years and he would like to see him out, and me to continue as Chairman of the Policy Committee and take general charge. The Policy Committee are to consider and report on this to the next N.E.

The question of the Postmen is up again. It is thought that the T.U.C. are a little sore that we have not come out into the open in support of them. Shinwell, of course, wishing to make trouble, wants us to issue a flat-footed declaration supporting them on all counts. This, however, is not the general view, and several, including Laski, say how fantastic it will be if this sort of issue is made into a crisis in September when, we may anticipate, some of the greatest battles of the war may be taking place in Europe. Finally, it is decided to issue a statement, but not to put too much in it. This is done and the net result is, I think, harmless and even faintly useful.

See L.R., before seeing A.E., on future arrangements for Relief. L.R. would like to be the Chairman of the European Committee.

My talk with A.E. is very friendly. (Note attached.) He says he isn't at all anxious now to have a second Parliamentary Under-Secretary, though he was thinking of it some months ago. If he did, he thinks the new Minister should be from the Labour Party, and probably a Trade Unionist. He would wish to consult C.R.A. and me on who would do. He does not think Phil

/would

-6-

would fit in, and that he is doing very good work where he is now. I say that I agree that it is much better for him to be off foreign affairs for the moment. I suggest no name, but think a bit. Creech-Jones, we mention, made a very good and sensible speech on the Foreign Service Bill. He would evidently be a possible. Could he learn, however, to be less long-winded?

I tell A.E. that I like the various post-war F.O. papers he has been putting out. He says it is most difficult to get the Cabinet ever to consider these. He is getting very tired of the P.M.'s regular joke, when these come up, "I suppose it is thought that the war is now going so well that we needn't trouble about it any more, and can amuse ourselves this afternoon."

Following this talk I tell the substance to L.R. and write to A.E. confirming. (Copy attached.)

I act as host at a Cocktail Party for the Dominions officials confabulating on Post-War Commercial Policy. They are a pretty good lot. Various of my colleagues, and the officials of a number of Departments, also turn up. I tell Law and Ronald of the upshot of my talk this afternoon with A.E.

24. 6. 43.

Receive, for one and a half hours, three Australian editors and spend most of the time talking to them about Australia. They are very complimentary of what has been done here.

Lunch at Drapers', Crown Prince Olav of Norway being the guest. Old Colban is hobbling in attendance, with a Norwegian colonel with a face like one of the most handsome of the Saints. These people are very like ourselves.

/Receive

Waterhouse

Receive Rank, C.W. also being present. I read over and hand to him a copy of the letter which I should propose to send him, asking him to agree not to expand any further without my consent. He will give a reply in two days' time. I think, possibly with some slight boggles and suggested amendments, he will agree. He is to see K.W. to-morrow. I ask C.W. to tell K.W. what has happened. Both these Conservatives seem to be entirely in agreement with me; indeed, C.W. proposed an amendment, which I accepted, to the draft letter, making it even stiffer as regards Rank's negotiations for the acquisition of cinemas now in progress.

Presentation Dinner to P.C.Hoffman. Rather long-drawn-out. I sit between Hoffman and Maurice Hann, who is much more intelligent than many T.U.leaders, and, I think, not inclined, if taken a little notice of, to be troublesome. Beyond him is H.G.Wells, who has come to-night in the role of the totally unsuccessful draper's assistant. He says all this quite well, as in his Autobiography. Much talk to-night is of the old living-in system and the efforts needed to abolish it.

J.W. tells me that he lunched yesterday with Dunbar, who was a little less frightful than usual, speaking well of H.M. and me, and very ill, for the first time, of Shinwell and Laski. Of the former he said that all his activities have now become "purely mischievous", and of the latter that "during these last four years he has done absolutely nothing."

25. 6. 43.

There has been some leakage about my Committee on Company Law. Einzig had a paragraph yesterday, naming Catterns and Wilkinson as members of the Committee, in addition to Cohen as Chairman. This morning various papers have copied A.O. is rather upset about this - excessively so, I tell him, - particularly as the closest

/secrecy

secrecy has been maintained "in the Department". He tries to put it into my head that the indiscretion is due to J.W., whom I have long known that he does not like at all. I say that, having thought over the Einzig paragraph, I am completely clear that the leakage came through the Conservative Party Head Office. This is because these two particular names - Catterns and Wilkinson - were picked out from the rest and mentioned by me, orally to Harvey Watt, and on the telephone to Mitchell. I mentioned these two as being particularly busy men, in order to break down Mitchell's reluctance to serve, lest it should take up too much time. (There is no reason why, if J.W. had been indiscreet, he should have mentioned these two names rather than any of the other 11.) On the other hand, C.W. had told me that Dugdale was very anxious that Mitchell should decline, and was apparently a little discontented already that he had not done more work since being appointed Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Party Organisation. H.Watt and I have both been bullying Mitchell into acceptance, which I finally extracted from him in a conversation on the telephone, wherein I mentioned these two names. It needs little intelligence to imagine that either he or H.W. had mentioned them also to Dugdale or some other denizens of the Tory Head Office, or Whips' Office. Moreover, Einzig's paper, being the property of Bracken, has always close relations with the Tory machine.

Preston
Catterns, apparently, was much upset at the "revelation" and rang up G.P. to grumble. He said he had been denying to enquiring journalists, his appointment to this Committee. I remarked on this that all that had happened was that he had been convicted of lying, not next Tuesday, when I shall be making a statement in the House, but this Thursday!

Much ado about nothing!

I next see Hodgson and urge him to be audacious, revolutionary and Bolshevik, in his approach to this whole question. I think he is enjoying it a good deal.

/Thorpe

Thorpe to see me, and to praise once more his C.P.R.C. He says ~~they~~ all love each other dearly. He agrees to my intention to add Lyle to this happy family.

Lunch with Hambleden (W.H.Smiths), who wanted to interest me in his labour difficulties.

Another headache soon will be civilian laundries. The prospect of an ever-rising flood of American soldiers into this country means that I must ask from E.B. a substantial increase of laundry labour, and that, even so, we may have to lengthen the permitted interval between successive "sendings to the wash" to a fortnight. I refuse to contemplate this last as yet.

See Low and Helmore, who are to conduct an enquiry into recent events at Columbia House, originating from suspicions that some of those there, including typists, were black-marketing. There is a good deal of fun on this file, and I think the two enquirers will enjoy themselves.

G.J. to dine. He has been very busy with post-war plans and many of these have found shape in the various F.O. papers. But these are never properly discussed in the Cab., but either accepted perfunctorily - as with "Armistice and related problems", or postponed indefinitely. He is most anxious to get joint political planning, probably in London, with Americans and Russians of sufficient authority, both military and civilian, sitting in with us. The Americans, he thinks, still regard Europe as a lump of undifferentiated putty, which can be "moulded" this way or that, without much reference either to history or nationality. The P.M. came back from Washington somewhat imbued with these same ideas, and influenced also by Cripps's crackpot notion of dividing Europe arbitrarily into some six or seven synthetic "States".

We speak of the future of Relief, and he strongly urges that Leith-Ross should agree to become one of Lehman's Deputy Director Generals. This would mean that he would be, not a Board of Trade, nor a Treasury, nor a Foreign Office, officials, but an international official of great standing and influence. This would be quite consistent with his desire to be Chairman of the European Committee, and, indeed, G. did not see how otherwise he could occupy this Chair, for Lehman, according to the Draft Agreement, was to preside over the Central Committee in Washington, and it would surely follow that the Regional Committees should be presided over by Deputy Director Generals. There would be, he thought, great difficulty in fitting L.R. into the F.O. framework, and this was really not necessary. I said I thought that L.R. would agree to this if it was suitably put to him. Personally, I liked the idea. There would then be a purely British relief organisation, which would be a relatively unimportant thing, and could be part of the F.O. machine, linked up with their arrangements for refugees and prisoners-of-war.

Snell
I spoke bluntly to G. about the intrigues of certain officials. I said that G. Barnes, the little rat whom Anderson kept in his rat-hole, had been taking too much upon himself. G. said that he had formed a very poor opinion of this little man. I also said that Bridges should stick to taking an accurate note of what the P.M. said in Cabinet. This was his proper function, and he might be wise to remember that some day someone else will be P.M. Anyhow, I was quite content ^{with} ~~that~~ my arrangement with A.E. that there should be a transfer of Ministerial responsibility after, but not until, the U.N.R.R.A. was a going concern with Lehman in the saddle.

G. raised the question whether L.R. would require any "instructions" before going to Washington, and I most vigorously said no. The only purpose of the Washington Conference was to get the Draft Agreement agreed. G. murmured something about "Combined Boards" and I said we had had enough talk about this. Our views had already been conveyed to Hfax.

DIARY26. 6. 43.

Lunch with Retinger. He has a swollen face but is, I guess, a little shrunken in other respects while Sikorski is away. He complains that the Russians are starting Polish anti-Sikorski newspapers in this country, and that Wassilewski-Korneiczuk are (or have they married, so that I should say "is"?) engaged in furious infiltration in this country, through the Daily Worker and other channels. I said that he should not take all this too seriously. The only useful thing to do was to try to improve Russo-Polish relations near the top. He wondered whether someone with standing in the Labour Party could not write something which would be helpful to the Poles on all this. I said that clearly I couldn't. He thought that perhaps J.W. might. I said that this too was difficult, since it would at once be said that it was really I. He said he did not see that this would matter. We left it that he would send me some material and I would look ~~into~~ at it.

Take a (Saturday) evening off, dining with the Highgate Diving Club at a pub called "Shakespeare's Head", somewhere off Oxford Street. This at the instigation of Paul Herbert. A very pleasant non-political evening. Tommy White of Australia was also a guest. We left together, when the proceedings were well advanced, nearly everybody in the room having by this time responded to the invitation to tell a story, and as we left, suitably applauded, I said "Tommy White and I both have had experience of attending Cabinet meetings. These are often bloody boring. We both much prefer meetings like this!" I did not see this reported anywhere in the press, but another of my remarks was reproduced in the Daily Mirror. I said "Whenever I try to get into the Board of Trade, my way is always blocked by a queue of women waiting to ask for ladderless stockings or outside corsets." It is really frightening, when one is in the mood to be frightened, how the press hunt one down. Other members of the party included a young Wing Commander,

/who

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who has just got the D.F.C. and succeeded P.H. as Chairman of the Club, a very tall and handsome young American officer, one of the champion swimmers of the U.S., from Michigan University, a number of British sailors of various ranks and sizes, visitors from Malta, Belgium and Holland, a private detective, and a number of other young men, presumably good at diving. We drink a lot of mild ale and eat a lot of sandwiches.

On the way home I had a drink with Tommy White, who is on the point of flying back to Australia to contest his election. If he doesn't get back in time, his wife, a daughter of Alfred Deakin, will fight it for him. He thinks he will hold his seat, but the result of the election as a whole is "anybody's guess". I told him my guess was that the Labour Party would increase their majority. I think this because, quite apart from the row over the "Brisbane Line", it will be forcibly argued that before Labour took office, their opponents had completely neglected defence, but that, since then, everything has been binged up and is now going pretty well. I did not tell this to T.W., but listened instead to his abuse of Menzies, who, he said, left out everybody except his relatives and those who licked his boots.

27. 6. 43. (Sunday)

Mostly sleep, but do a little composition in the evening on Location of Industry.

28. 6. 43.

See H.M., at his request, and run over a few political points:

- (1) Redistribution - on this I have sent him a note (attached). He says that he has succeeded in postponing this till after the war, but it is clear that there is no advantage for the Labour

/Party

Party in it;

- (2) He is still anxious I should have more of a fight with E.B. than I intend over post-war functions of the Ministry of Labour; I said that my paper was, I thought, diplomatic but insistent on the main point; he said he thought it was rather weak!
- (3) Monopolies. He has this very much on the brain and asked whether I couldn't produce some policy proposals, based on a factual report, in which he thought the B. of T. might co-operate with the Cabinet Secretariat. I said that something was already being done, and Meade was a link.

Warkham

C.W. is in a bit of a fuss over my statement to A.O. (who has also been in quite an unnecessary fuss) and Simmonds that I trade the leak in last Thursday's press to the Conservative Central Office. C.W. says that he must hold an investigation, with a view, if necessary, to sacking someone from this office who has been guilty of so grave an indiscretion. I tell him not to take it too heavily, but he says he is sure that if, in similar circumstances, suspicion fell upon the Labour Party Office, I should be equally concerned. I wonder!

Mr Cooper and Mr Claisse, the latter the Managing Director, of Gillettes, come to explain why they aren't producing more razor blades. I rather like Cooper, who is a Canadian, but the other man is just a bloody fool, and I explode at him more than once during the interview. He exudes a sort of booby-defeatism, whether on getting more materials, or more labour, or getting his machines repaired, or starting a new factory somewhere else. When I have shouted at him twice, Mr Cooper hurriedly presents me with two packets of their best razor blades, and whispers that Mr Claisse is suffering from high blood pressure and he is going to give him a good long holiday. I am to lunch at, and inspect, their Works next week.

/Douglas

Douglas Jay to dine. He has been asked whether he will become prospective Labour candidate for Oxford University. He says he met the most frightful lot of people, dim and wildly eccentric and totally out of touch with all reality, at Oxford last week, when the matter was broached. Some were for approaching A.D.Lindsay. We agreed that D.J. might say that, if they couldn't get Lindsay, he would accept, provided he could square this with his Ministry. I told him that it would give him an important increment of status in the Labour Party if he were a candidate, and make it easier to shift him to a better seat.

He thinks that we are producing far too many heavy bombers. A grotesquely high proportion of our total labour force and material is going into this. Therefore, he says, we are short of landing craft for the invasions and of much else, which could otherwise have been provided. He does not think we are getting any decisive results from our air bombing. The R.A.F. have had their way, and have been given their head, and the result is, he fears, that we shall neither bomb the enemy out of the war, nor have enough forces to invade Europe effectively this year, nor even perhaps next. He says that the Air Force have not yet sunk a single enemy battleship or aircraft-carrier in any sea. The Americans, Japanese and German bombers have all done better, because, he thinks, none have a separate Air Force. Our Air Force also failed, fantastically, to hit the Gneisenau and Scharnhorst. The Bismark, on the other hand, was destroyed by naval action, including the Fleet Air Arm. It may, he thinks, be argued that it was we who began the bombing of cities and civilian populations. Hitler did not start on us until we had attacked the Ruhr. It may also, D.J. thinks, be argued that we did hold back strong air forces from the battle fronts, and that, if we had thrown them all in, the result might have been different. We are now losing hundreds of heavy bombers a month, whereas our big battleships last for years, and in spite of our vast bomber production, the wastage is so great that, at any

/given

given moment, we have only ^{a few} months' supply of these monsters. In none of our battles, ~~before~~ El Alamein, did the Air Force play any real part at all.

I set all this down, omitting some striking figures, as a record of what he said. I think it wildly out of focus. The real effectiveness of our air bombing remains to be checked up later on. My own view is that it is becoming one of several decisive factors. But, like the blockade last time, the results won't show clearly till the end is reached. Everyone's views must be discounted by their natural bias, and the Ministry of Supply are furiously opposed to M.A.P., who has put all its factories in the wrong places and is voraciously snatching both labour and material from the M.S.

his D.J.'s book is in the Navy.

29. 6. 43.

Among P.Q.s this morning is my announcement of the Committee on Company Law. After J. Lucas had asked his arranged Supplementary on nominee shareholdings, Bellenger asked whether it was not most irregular for me to put my P.P.S. on the Committee. I had been prepared for this from somewhere and had a firm and, I think, effective reply, including the citation of the recent precedent of Hubert Beaumont serving on the Luxmoore Committee on Agricultural Education. This reply was well received, and J.W., who was discreetly absent from the House to-day, was told by several people next day that B. did very ill in asking this Question. I told J.W. it was clear that B. was both a bellyacher in general, and filled with jealousy, in this particular; he was, moreover, a ~~failed~~ P.P.S., George Hicks having had to get rid of him as thoroughly unsatisfactory. B. said to J.W. next day, "I am sorry I had to ask that question, but it raises an important constitutional point - and I was the first person in this House to put down questions about Company Law." This shows that my diagnosis was correct in both particulars.

The Committee, its personnel, terms of reference and appointment now by me, all have a remarkably good press. I circulate the information that the Chairman is the youngest of the Judges and that, of the 12 other members, 6 are under 50. "Youngest Committee ever appointed", one scribe writes. It will, I think, make a dint in our financial and, I hope, our legal history.

R. to dine with me and J.W. at the B. of T. She has seen Vienot and would very much like, later on, to go across to France and help to get things going again. Also she wants all possible done to put him in touch with useful people here. I tell her that G.J., who has recently met him, has told me of A.E.'s reactions.

30. 6. 43.

Attend, for the first time in my life, a Guildhall function, where the P.M. gets the Freedom of the City. He makes a typical and admirable speech, though, on reflection, there is nothing much new in it, except good news of the U-boat war and a prophesy that, "very probably, there will be heavy fighting, both in the Mediterranean and elsewhere, before the leaves of autumn fall."

L.P. Committee has up a proposal by E.B. to enroll a Domestic Corps and - this to me the only Departmental point - to put them in uniform. I firmly resist the latter, and the whole paper, to which other Ministers object on other grounds, is sent back for further enquiry.

Dine, after a longish interval from these occasions, with Lady Colefax and find myself between her and Lady Phipps. The latter was always said, when her husband was Minister at Vienna, to be a Socialist. She says that the American Ambassador Dodd at Berlin was a complete idiot, never knowing anything that was going on,

/and

and never understanding anything that was said to him. The only subject on which he was interesting was on the Old South. He was writing a history of this in six volumes. At the end of the Civil War the South was in a state of complete devastation. Martha Dodd, she says, had a series of love affairs with young Germans. The first few were Nazis, but later she fell in love with a young Jew, and it was only from this moment she turned anti-Hitler.

Lady P. then began to talk the most frightful drivel, which nearly launched me into a most ferocious argument. But I refrained, feeling a little weary. She thought it was a terrible sort of war in which the soldiers stayed fretting at home, and had no chance to fight or die for their country, while women and children were bombed from the air. I said the worst thing about the last war was that so many young men were killed and so few old people, or women of any age. In this respect I thought this war was much less evil. She did not seem to see the point at all, and said that there was something beautiful in a young soldier dying for his country, but nothing beautiful in civilians being killed. I said that if the bombing of German civilians and, after all, it was quite false to draw a line between a soldier in uniform and a civilian making arms for the soldier or otherwise assisting the "war effort" - resulted in shortening the war and saving the lives of large numbers of British soldiers, who would otherwise be slaughtered as on the Somme and at Paschendael in the last war, I was all for it. She said she was sure that the soldiers hated it. I said I would rather that they hated it and survived than died loving old-fashioned war - and they didn't love it anyhow. A silly woman! But I connect her reaction with D.J.'s and wonder whether Goebbels isn't having another mild success. Lady P. also said that this extermination of whole classes, e.g., the Jews, by the Germans, "was started by the Russians". Until they set an example, no-one ever did such things. The Germans, she said, never did it in the last war.

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