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RECONSTRUCTION AND SOCIAL SECURITY

THE full significance of the Beveridge report is only becoming apparent as its place in general reconstruction policies is appreciated. Already the report has brought the phrase 'freedom from want' out of the abstract into the concrete, and in doing so, as an article in the American periodical *Fortune* shows, makes a contribution to Anglo-American solidarity that should not be underrated. "We believe that it is possible, and therefore desirable, for the Government to set a minimum below which employment and the national income will not be permitted to fall. . . . Such a policy would in effect guarantee the existence of a job for every man who wants and is able to work. We do not think that the American voter will settle for less, and we see no reason why he should be asked to."

In the conditions or assumptions upon which Sir William Beveridge bases his Plan for Social Security, its linking with an all-embracing public health service and a national and international policy to maintain employment, he is clearly in line with tendencies in the United States which were foreshadowed in President Roosevelt's speech on "The Four Freedoms" two years ago, as the reception of the Plan outside Great Britain testifies. Already the report has put into our hands a weapon for political warfare of the first importance, when once the Government has recognized the opportunity and matched it with a series of social measures such as would restore the faith of the ordinary man throughout the world in the power of democracy to answer the imperious needs of a new age.

The exigencies of the war situation are therefore a reason not for delay but for action on the report. Sir William Beveridge, in the closing passage of his report, urges the importance of his proposals, or other proposals covering the same ground, as an aid to victory. His prescience has been brilliantly vindicated by the reception of the report abroad, the universal recognition of the connexion between the Beveridge Plan and the Atlantic Charter, and the acceptance of the report as a concrete effort to apply our principles and give a lead in building a world for the greater happiness of the ordinary man. There may be modification in detail, but there can now be no casting aside of the report without breaking faith. Action is imperative, and while it is right that there should be full deliberation over the proposals, procrastination would be a peril to the common cause as well as to ourselves.

Emphatically the first need is for decision as to the acceptance of the principles involved. This is the first step to be taken, before the detail of preparing the necessary legislation and bringing the scheme into being ready for the end of the War can be undertaken by some person or body appointed for that purpose. Decisions as to the rates of benefit and contribution can be left until the probable level of prices after the War is better known.

What is true in this question of the prevention of want is no less true of other aspects of reconstruction.

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The prevention of want and the prevention of idleness, as Sir William Beveridge emphasized in his lecture to the Fabian Society, are distinct problems, needing distinct solutions. None the less, they are related problems, and the Beveridge report has the further merit that it places the whole question of reconstruction in its right perspective and calls for action all along the line in the attack on the five giant evils of physical want; of disease, which often causes want and brings other troubles in its train; of ignorance, which no democracy can afford among its citizens; of squalor, which arises mainly through the haphazard distribution of industry and population; and of idleness, which destroys wealth and corrupts men. Statement of a reconstruction policy by a nation at war is statement of the uses to which that nation means to put victory, when victory is achieved. In a war which many nations must wage together as whole-hearted allies, if they are to win victory, such a statement of the uses of victory may be vital.

Sir William Jowitt's speech, like that of Mr. Eden, in the recent two-day debate in the House of Commons on reconstruction, afforded some further evidence that the Government has fully in mind the wide range of problems involved, but the debate was chiefly of interest for its indication of a general sense that it is high time for general discussion to crystallize in terms of policy. Mr. Attlee has since affirmed the Government's resolve not to return to a scarcity economy, but to base policy on the utilization of abundance, and, in particular, has pledged the Government to an attack on the four great problems of unemployment, housing, social security and education, in the last of which, he said, investigations have reached an advanced stage. What is required, however, is decision on questions that determine policy. Of some of the vast territories on the map of the future which Sir William Jowitt and Mr. Eden endeavoured to unfold in response to Mr. Greenwood's appeal, a few, like those covered by the Barlow, the Beveridge, the Scott and the Uthwatt reports, have been fully explored. Others are now being explored by committees more or less well qualified and more or less adequately equipped. The recommendation of the Beveridge report for a further immediate investigation of the finance and organization of medical services with a view to the establishment of a comprehensive health and rehabilitation service is an example of other fields as yet marked out only in the broadest outline. The urgent need everywhere is to press forward the work of inquiry and, where this has been completed, for the Government to take clear and authoritative decisions of policy.

It is at this point that the Government's inaction is disquieting. The announcement of a new Ministry of Town and Country Planning is a decision to create machinery, not a decision of policy, and ill conceals a reluctance to reach a decision on the most important recommendations of the Uthwatt and the Scott Committees and the Barlow Commission. Again, there is a hesitant note about recent pronouncements on education, which the decision practically to suspend arts courses in the universities of Great Britain will emphasize. Further, the Beveridge report removes

the last reason for delaying a decision on family allowances.

First among the decisions of principle now or soon required from the Government are clearly those on physical reconstruction and development of rural and urban Britain, on the integration of social services, and on education. In regard to these, it may well be argued as further reason for urgency that, though there may be division of opinion as to method, there can be little as to objectives. There is vital work to be done on which there is no controversy on Party lines. Whole towns, for example, must be reconstructed because the enemy has left no option, civic life has to be restored and strengthened, and the mobilization of peaceful industry to be achieved with the demobilization of the defence forces and war industries. These are obligations laid upon us by the impact of war, and they will summon for their discharge a spirit of public service which is the pride of all Parties and the monopoly of none.

The failure to implement sound planning on the lines lucidly and cogently recommended by impartial experts of unimpeachable qualifications, as in the Uthwatt report, or to allow them to be whittled down by the mere fear of action on a scale commensurate with the need, is to miss a great opportunity. Every social advance entails, and always has entailed, an adjustment of private interests to the requirements of public interest.

The interdependence of domestic and external policies, though it must be kept carefully in mind, for freedom from want cannot be achieved in isolation, either from attack on the other problems emphasized by Sir William Beveridge, or from other nations, must not be an excuse for procrastination or indecision. A world economic survey in this field would assuredly yield valuable results in the assessment both of want and of available supplies, a matter in which the Allied Post-War Requirements Bureau is only covering a part of the field. There need, however, be no delay in taking the decisions on policy and the establishment of the machinery and the preparation of legislation while the final facts determining the level of need and contribution are being ascertained.

There can be no doubt as to the value of general confidence that the Government had effective plans for maintaining employment after the War, and would use all the powers of the State, so far as necessary, for that purpose. That confidence, as Sir William Beveridge rightly insists, would be in itself a major contribution to victory, and nothing could more surely engender that confidence than the demonstration in those fields where the exploratory work is complete that the Government is ready and determined to act. As Mr. Greenwood rightly observed, it is the Government's business to lead and to make proposals for the future which honourably fulfil, so far as within its power, the promises that have been made. There can be no sheltering behind a smoke-screen of non-controversy. The test must be, not whether proposals or policy are controversial, but whether they are necessary and desirable in the national interest.

It is true that there must be frank and balanced recognition of all the elements demanded in a collective national effort. The Social Security Plan, for example, may have repercussions on our export trade which must be considered, as was frankly recognized by Sir William in his notable address before the Fabian Society. Maintenance of employment, upon which the success of a social security scheme depends, is the most urgent, important and difficult of reconstruction problems. Methods of solving it must be agreed and settled during the War. The demobilization plans of the Government must include not merely dealing with the armed forces and converting the war industries to peace production, but also a great development of export trade to pay for the food and raw materials which used to come as payment of interest on our overseas investments and for our shipping services. National planning and direction in the use of our resources are also essential. Both capital and labour, as Sir William Jowitt emphasized, must be more fluid, and barriers of custom, trade union rights and property rights which hinder the use of national resources in the way most urgently needed must be abolished.

In the execution of the plan it will be vital to preserve initiative and enterprise. The practical problem is that of discovering how to combine the proved benefits of private enterprise at private risk in the past with the necessity of national planning in the aftermath of War. That problem can only be solved by thorough and impartial investigation, and we may well hope that it will not be neglected by the committee appointed to formulate detailed proposals on the organization of industry to which reference is made in the recent statement, "A National Policy for Industry". Moreover, any further extension of Government activity in the economic field clearly involves reconsideration of the machinery and methods of government, including both the central organization and the Civil Service. We must face the possibility that for new jobs we may require a new type of official and a new organization. Sir George Schuster suggested in the reconstruction debate that we may need to develop a new career of what might be termed industrial statesmanship. There are already great industrial organizations which provide places for men of this type, but men of like calibre and experience are required on the Government side, who understand industrial processes and trade and yet are in a position to see the tasks and problems from the point of view of the Government as representing the whole community. Sir William Beveridge's own suggestion was for an Economic General Staff.

The question of the democratic institutions by which the organizing power of the Government can be integrated with the driving force of individual enterprise is one of the fundamental problems that confront us, and none makes more searching demands on lucid and intrepid thinking. There can be no quarrel with Sir William Jowitt's statement that the Government is surveying industry by industry because the structure of industry will not fit into a common mould. Different methods of co-operation

and control may well be developed for different industries, but while the exact methods by which Government control and planning are to be exercised for particular situations require investigation and consideration, it is imperative that there should proceed simultaneously on the Government side an overhaul of the whole machinery of Government, including not merely the structure, recruitment and adequacy of the Civil Service as an instrument of modern government, but also of the ministerial and cabinet responsibilities and relations which are involved.

Those wider and fundamental considerations, rather than departmental interests or sectional views, should determine the choice of the machinery to be used in planning; between, for example, the recommendations of the Barlow Commission and the Scott and Uthwatt Committees. That is the least satisfactory feature of Sir William Jowitt's announcement of the establishment of a Minister of Town and Country Planning. Such a Ministry may, it is true, develop ultimately into the wider Ministry required to ensure full co-ordination and the formulation and execution of an adequate national policy. There is, however, nothing to indicate that the decision is based on a full examination of the structure of the Government machine, rather than on a desire to gain time and meet an embarrassing demand for action, as the successive changes of policy in this matter of planning might suggest.

It is well that there should be no hasty steps which might prejudice the establishment of machinery and institutions best adapted to serve the needs of the whole nation, and to reconcile the virtues of freedom and initiative with the order and discipline inevitable in a measure of planning. There must be timing in our planning: education is only one sphere where this is all-important. Democracy cannot seize the full opportunities which the War has opened up without fundamental and constructive thinking on these issues. Meanwhile, however, there is plenty of room for action to secure the ground required for further advance, to prevent obstruction by sectional interests and privileges, and to work out the technical and administrative details of the measures required to give effect to a national policy aimed at securing freedom from want and from unemployment, a programme for health and education, and the elimination of the squalor which arises through haphazard distribution of industry and population or the waste and abuse of resources or amenities. Wide though the range of Sir William Jowitt's survey, welcome as may be his remarks on housing, welfare and nutrition, agriculture, forestry, water supply, electric power supply and education, he said little to indicate that the Government has reached the stage of decision and action. Words alone will no longer satisfy the country as to the Government's earnestness in the matter, or fulfil the hopes and expectations which the Beveridge report and the speeches of Government spokesmen both in Great Britain and in the United States have already aroused. There can now be no turning back. The Beveridge Plan is not the only one which points to courageous simplification with

great savings in administrative costs and in efficiency at the centre. From scientific workers as from other members of the community comes the demand that the Government shall match both the opportunity and its own declarations with decisions and administrative and legislative acts worthy of the cause in which we contend. They would be as inspiring to the nation in its war effort as the implementing of a social security policy would assuredly be in giving strength and a renewed impetus to the cause of the United Nations.

NORTH-WEST AFRICAN PREHISTORY

The Prehistoric Archæology of North-West Africa
By Frederick R. Wulsin. (Papers of the Peabody
Museum of American Archæology and Ethnology,
Harvard University.) Pp. xii + 173 + 12 plates.
(Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1942.) 3
dollars.

THIS is a book some of us have been wanting for a long time. From the prehistorian's point of view, north-west Africa is an extremely interesting region, and until now information about it could only be obtained in 'bits and pieces', often in articles which were difficult to come by. It is true that the author does not pretend to have visited the area he deals with, still less to give the results of his own excavations in the field; but he has examined most of the available literature critically, and as a result has pieced together a consistent account of the whole subject. A certain school of thought has grown up recently which appears to consider that no publication can be of much worth which does not give the results of personal excavations and investigation in the field. Those who take this view perhaps forget that their own results will necessarily have to be utilized by future researchers in the same way as Mr. Wulsin has used his sources, and their findings similarly subjected to critical study.

That the final conclusions given in this book will be universally accepted in their entirety is, of course, unlikely—indeed there are a number of alterations which will probably have to be made—but none the less the whole collects together conveniently a mass of information and will form the basis for all future discussion on the prehistory of this area.

The opening chapter sets the stage for the ensuing work from its environmental point of view. The area is defined and the climate, both present and prehistoric, considered; and it is interesting to note that apparently there has been little climatic change since Roman times. There follows a chapter on the Lower Palæolithic sequence. Here the author seems to accept the possibility that some of the *coup de poing* industries found on the surface in this area could be of much later date than their equivalents in western Europe (p. 13). But surely it is not so much the similarity in the shape of tools, ranging from South Africa to western Europe, that matters, impressive as is this fact alone; the point is the similarity in the evolution of the industries in these far-flung areas. Yet such an evolution took place under diverse conditions, and different materials were used for fashioning the tools. Surely this similarity in the evolution of the industries argues for more or less of similarity

in date. Should there have been any great time lag, the different conditions in the different areas would have given rise to different developments. Indeed it would seem to me that there must actually have been slow cultural interpenetrations—like the movements of molecules in a liquid—which helped to give rise to the uniform developments that we find.

The relationship between the Lower Palæolithic industries and the geological changes as shown by strand lines is next considered. Here the author accepts Vaufreys's conclusion that no pleistocene bridge existed across the Mediterranean. If this were really so, north-west Africa would certainly have been, as suggested, rather a backwater than a highway—though none the less interesting for that—and communication between Africa and Europe would, until later times, have been almost entirely through Syria. One ventures to wonder whether this question is quite certainly settled. The author's tentative dating of the Chellean to a Mindel-Riss interglacial phase is, I think, probably incorrect. The industry at El Hank on subsequent investigation appears to be mixed Chelleo-Acheulean, and it would surely seem more likely that the true Chellean is contemporary with the final stages of the 90 m. shore-line and thus Gunz-Mindel in age—a correlation which agrees with the results of investigations in the Somme valley.

In his chapter on industries and their variants, the author deals with the middle stone age which, as always in Africa, is difficult to pin down and presents a number of variations. I wonder whether it is wise to use the term Mousterian until it has been definitely proved that Neanderthal man lived in the region and made these industries? But this question involves a definition of the term Mousterian. Mr. Wulsin uncompromisingly classes the Aterian as a Mousterian with one new tool, the tanged point. Actually tanged points have been found in Mousterian levels both in Jersey and at La Ferrassie. But surely the true Aterian is more than that. Among other types occurring, what about the points with thinning flaking on their under surfaces? That the Aterian has middle stone age traditions is undoubted, but can one not see later stone age contacts present? Its date, anyway, would seem to be late middle stone age. A chapter on the Upper Palæolithic follows next. Here a distinction is made between the Caspian culture and the Oranian culture, which has a rather different distribution. Both develop into Neolithic industries. One of the troubles in this southern region is the lack of the distinctive and drastic climate changes which give rise farther north to clear-cut distinctions between the various cultures. In Africa a culture, and the fauna too, just tend to continue on and merge into the succeeding culture, even when this latter is really mainly due to migration from outside the region and not to simple evolution of the predecessor.

Mr. Wulsin, naturally, does not discuss the problem as to whether there is any cultural connexion to be seen between the early Upper Palæolithic of north-west Africa and the Perigordian of western France; this would have made an intriguing digression. In passing, one can note a misprint on p. 81, where the word Caspian appears instead of Caspian in the table. Chapters on the Neolithic and early historic periods follow. There is still, of course, much work to be done on the desert pottery. It is unfortunate that many of the results obtained by