

574 Daily

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

THURSDAY, 11th JULY, 1918.

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OFFICIAL REPORT.



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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 10th July, 1918.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

PARLIAMENT AND LOCAL
ELECTIONS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

[Sir D. MACLEAN, Deputy-Chairman,
in the Chair.]CLAUSE 2.—(*Further Postponement of Local
Elections.*)

(1) The next statutory elections of county and borough councillors, district councillors, guardians, and parish councillors shall, subject to the limitations hereinafter contained, be postponed, or, in the case of elections already postponed under the Elections and Registration Act, 1915, the Parliament and Local Elections Act, 1916, the Parliament and Local Elections Act, 1917, or the Parliament and Local Elections (No. 2) Act, 1917, further postponed, for a year; and the term of office of the existing councillors and guardians shall accordingly be extended, or further extended, by one year.

This provision shall apply only where the next statutory election (whether a postponed election or not) would take place before the first day of March, nineteen hundred and nineteen.

(2) Section two of the Elections and Registration Act, 1915, and paragraphs (2) to (10) (inclusive) of the Schedule to the Parliament and Local Elections Act, 1917, subject to the substitution in paragraph (7) of four years for three years as the period by which the term of office of an alderman of a municipal borough is extended, and except the provisions of paragraph (10) relating to the revision of jurors' lists in Ireland, shall be deemed to be incorporated in this Section as though they were set out therein, and expressly made applicable to the provisions thereof.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "This provision shall apply only where the next statutory election (whether a postponed election or not) would take place before the first day of March, nineteen hundred and nineteen."—[*Sir H. Harris.*]

[Continuation of Official Report, from col. 444, Wednesday, 10th July, 1918.]

Mr. MARTIN: Every argument except one put forward by the Mover of this Amendment on behalf of the London County Council in favour of having their elections postponed to next April twelve-

month would apply equally well to elections for Parliament. The exception was the argument that the Representation of the People Act did not give the soldiers the same power and privilege of voting at county council elections as at Parliamentary elections. The proper way to meet that argument is not to extend the time for holding county council elections, which the Government have agreed not to do at present, but to slightly amend the Representation of the People Act by giving soldiers the same opportunities for getting on the register and voting at county council elections as they have in respect to Parliamentary elections. That would place both elections on the same basis. The argument that there would not be candidates coming forward in April next will be very comforting to those who are standing. The same argument would apply also to Parliament. If there are not going to be candidates for the county council on account of the War, then for the same reason there will be no candidates for Parliament. I am one of those who do not believe that there is anything in these arguments about not having an election during the War. Excluding soldiers, the people who are going to vote at an election can easily spend fifteen or twenty minutes or even an hour casting their votes, without in any way interfering with their war work. The hon. Gentleman said that members of the county council themselves are in favour of having the election postponed. Probably hon. Members in this House might, for the same reason, be in favour of having elections postponed for a year or longer. That is not an argument at all. It is not a question of what hon. Members of this House or of the county council think; it is a question, surely, of what the people of the country want! The argument, too, was noted the other day on Second Reading that there was such an increase in the electorate! But that applies equally to the county council and other elections as to Parliamentary. Women will vote at them. I understand that the women teachers of the county council of London have a great grievance on the salary question against the council. They and their friends have votes, and they will be sure to show by them to the county council that it is desirable to have enough salary to keep body and soul together while endeavouring to do their work. There has been a general election for the

[Mr. Martin.]

Dominions. There have been, I think, local elections in almost every province; in the minor ten provinces of Canada there has been a local election in every one during the War. It has caused no trouble. The Canadian people are just as much engaged in the War as are the people here. They have the same problems to meet. The circumstances there are just about the same as here. The elections here hurt nobody. This House I am addressing is moribund, without any idea of what the people really want, instead of administering the affairs of the country in the light of present conditions we are back into 1910, nearly eight years ago—

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN (Sir D. Maclean): That, I think, has nothing to do with this Clause.

Mr. MARTIN: Well, the hon. Gentleman has put these arguments forward. He said, "You could not have elections during the War, for you could not get candidates or the people to vote." I say there is nothing in that. What the people really want is a new Parliament, newly-elected bodies, so that when questions come up we do not deal with them by the ideals of eight or ten years ago, but in the light of the new ideals that have arisen during this great War.

Mr. BOOTH: I am astonished at the line taken by the representative of the London County Council. He seemed to believe that they could very properly represent their constituents although it is many years since they were elected. I happen to sit on a body in London which contains a delegation from the London County Council. They sing a different tune there to what we have heard to-night. They pose as super-men because of their close touch with the electorate and the vast majorities they get. The President of the Local Government Board heard a little of that doctrine at the deputation this morning. But there are some also who utterly refuse to go to constituencies; who want to refrain from that great pleasure for twelve months or longer. We must not deny the London County Council the unspeakable happiness of meeting their constituents, following the view of those connected with the body to which I have referred.

Mr. WATT: This Amendment which has been proposed by the hon. Member for

Paddington (Sir H. Harris) is that an extension of time for the election of the London County Council should be made for a year from March. The measure is that the life of this Parliament should be preserved for six months longer, and the life of local authorities generally should be preserved a year after November, while the suggestion of the hon. Member for Paddington is that the county council of London, the county councils of England, and the boards of guardians should have their lives preserved for even longer than that—for a year after March. Why the London Members should have that privilege, God only knows. They are spoilt individuals. They get far too much of their own way. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will adhere to the position he has taken up in refusing London members. As one hon. Member has said, it is not for representative assemblies to say that their lives shall be prolonged, and that no election shall take place. This House has said that several times, and most representative assemblies have passed resolutions to that effect. But it is not for them; it is for the electors to say. They should have the opportunity of electing bodies to represent them. If they chose not to have elections in their localities they could bring that about by having only one nomination for each seat. They would never get the chance, because this institution, time after time, prolongs its own life; so does the county council, and so do the county councils all over the country. It is an unwise policy. I have held all along that this House should not have prolonged its life, but gone to the constituencies in the first instance when its career had been run, and the constituents, themselves taken up with the War in its initial stages, would, in all probability in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, have returned unopposed single members in each constituency. I am glad the right hon. Gentleman has refused this demand by the London Members, and I hope all London Members will take to heart the lesson which has been given that hereafter the Government are going to put them on an equality with other Members of the House.

Amendment negatived.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. PRINGLE: I beg to move to leave out this Clause. It seems to me that the

arguments which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has addressed to the Committee in answer to the Amendment which has just been disposed of are conclusive in support of my proposal to leave out this Clause. We know now that it is the intention of the Government to have an election in the month of November. That is advertised in the usual channels. It is blazed abroad in the Press which is in the confidence of the Government. We know also that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board stated in the course of the Second Reading Debate that he could give the House an assurance that the register would be ready three months before the 31st of January. Consequently the new register—which, by the way, is much easier to make up for Local Government Board purposes—is bound to be ready in full time for the November elections. In these circumstances, as it is obviously not in the public interest that the town councils should continue to exercise their very important functions without any representative authority, I think that the Government are bound by their own arguments to assent to the omission of this Clause. If our town councils were simply restricted to their ordinary former duties in times of peace the situation might not be so serious, but we know that special functions have been delegated to these bodies in the course of the War—very important functions touching closely the everyday life of all our fellow subjects.

They have functions in relation to pensions and other war materials, and are entitled to elect representatives to deal with these problems. On a number of other things they are closely connected with the War, and I think it is the greatest possible anomaly that men who were elected long before the War, and who have no touch whatever with their constituents, should be able to exercise the autocratic power to which I have referred. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will say now—having stated the arguments which I have just repeated in a much more forcible way than I have been able to state them—that he will assent to the logical conclusion of these arguments. In the Second Reading Debate there was only one argument which he put forward which had any apparent vidity against this proposal, and that was that while provision was made for soldiers

and sailors voting in Parliamentary elections, no such provision was made in the case of local government elections. Are we to understand by the right hon. Gentleman advancing that argument that he does not intend any local elections to take place until all the men embodied in the armed forces of the Crown are demobilised? If that is so, it is an appalling prospect. The War may go on for another two years, and it may be two years more after that before these men are demobilised; so that the conclusion of this argument is that for another four years we are to have no local elections in this country. That is absurd. While it is very important that men serving in the armed forces should be entitled to the franchise in the event of an election taking place in the course of the War, the same arguments do not apply in the case of local elections. The functions of these local bodies are purely functions of local administration. They affect only the people at present residing in the locality. The soldiers and sailors are absent. They are untouched.

Sir G. YOUNGER: Their property is rated.

Mr. PRINGLE: They are untouched by the administration in regard to these war matters of which I am speaking. They are not affected by the rationing locally. So far as their families are concerned they are affected, but their wives have votes. The wives are on the local government register and represent the family for the purpose of local representation, so that the hon. Baronet's argument does not touch the point.

Sir G. YOUNGER: They are responsible for paying the rates which these people levy.

Mr. PRINGLE: In so far as they are property owners, I assent to that proposition; but, on the other hand, they are not being affected by the actual administration. They are not the victims of the interference of these local bodies. When the House decided not to put soldiers and sailors on the local government register it did it with its eyes open and with a meaning in view, namely, that it was most important that the people residing within the area who are affected by the work of the council should be the people to elect. These people are on the spot, and there is no valid argument why they should not be entitled to elect local bodies

[Mr. Pringle.]

in whom they have confidence, who will be responsible to them, and whose views they may be able to check and control in the ordinary process of popular election. For these reasons I propose that the Clause be left out.

Mr. C. PRICE: I have recently received a resolution of the Trades Council of Edinburgh, which is a very representative body, representing the working classes in Edinburgh, in favour of elections in November. I believe that many other hon. Members have received similar representations in favour of the hon. Member's Amendment, and I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will accept it.

Mr. BOOTH: In following the calculation with regard to the period of three months, I may point out that if the register is ready three months before the end of January, that would be the 1st of November. But elections take place in the country on the 1st November—I do not know about Scotland—and if the register were only ready that day it would not give candidates much opportunity for circularising electors. I take it that, when the point was made that the register would be ready three months before January, it would be ready about the middle of October, and if it were in print the week before the 1st of November, that would be all that is required so far with regard to machinery.

On the general point I think that there is an indisposition in this country to have these local electors largely because the leading men in various parts of the country for the first time in their lives are meeting on local committees without jealousies. In the old days, if you suggested in a joint committee, particularly in small towns, it would require to be made up of equal numbers of, say, Conservatives and Liberals, and if either side preponderated the arrangement would not work. Happily, during the last few years that has been largely forgotten, and if there is a local committee for war charity purposes people are not so careful as to whether there is a majority of one, two, or three on one side or the other. Men have sunk their politics. They do not dispute about politics every morning in railway carriages or tramcars as they had been accustomed to do, and I think that they rather enjoy the rest and are loth to begin to

divide themselves into hostile camps for local purposes, as they want to be united for Imperial purposes. That is the result of my investigation.

No doubt such men as candidates, secretaries, and so forth, feel that if they have to divide on party lines for local elections, as they do in many cases, they would not be quite so united for charitable purposes and Imperial purposes. That is the difficulty which has weighed with me up to the present, but as the years have gone on I think that that tendency has become lessened, and it might have another effect, and a good one, if elections were to take place this November. I do not think that there would be so much party spirit as formerly. I think that that would be a gain, and on balancing those two ideas I rather incline to the conclusion that it might be a healthy thing to allow local authorities to go before the electors. The late Lord Salisbury made a great mistake in suggesting that these local elections should be all fought on party lines. Many elections—such as those for guardians—in England are not generally fought on party lines, but elections in boroughs, and in some urban districts, generally are, and I always thought that that was a mistake. If the local authorities are now compelled to go before their constituents, I think that this would be avoided to a certain extent, and that might be a healthy and desirable change.

I think that most of the same men would stand again, but would not issue party manifestoes, or show party colours, or employ party canvassers, but would rather make a point of patriotism and their knowledge and efficiency with regard to local conditions. I know that in some cases a party fight is the easiest way out. I remember a local election in which all the different denominations put up candidates—Church of England, Nonconformist, co-operators, temperance people, and so on—and the general population intervened, and said, "For goodness' sake, we don't know where we are." In the larger towns I feel sure that party politics would not be the dominating influence as in the past, and that might be a welcome change; but unless we can accomplish that now, I am afraid we may revert to party differences when the War is over. There is trouble, expense and difficulty during the War, and in many cases while the War is going on I know that would be disagreeable. I do not know whether those places which

desire an election should have one, but at any rate we can only make such inquiries as are possible. No doubt in many cases in the country they would like to have an election. The right hon. Gentleman's Department has sent out a circular suggesting that where there was a vacancy it should be filled up by the party who supported the deceased member or the retiring member. In some cases that has been done, but not in all. In some cases very great feeling has been aroused. I know some cases where the majority have deliberately chosen the exactly opposite course. In those cases there is no doubt that a feeling of bitterness has been growing up which has led to defiance of the Circular of the Local Government Board. There are advantages both ways, but where it is in doubt, I believe the safer plan is to appeal to the people.

Mr. FISHER: The question before us is whether we are to postpone the elections to be held in March, and we have decided not to postpone them. We have further to decide now whether to postpone the elections in November. My arguments on the Amendment of the Member for South Paddington were, I think, conclusive against it. There is no reason why the House should decide now as to postponing the elections in March, because the House would be far more cognisant later of the circumstances in which those elections would probably be held. We have to consider the elections to be held in the first week of November, and we must remember that we are not likely to reassemble until about the middle of October, and that we could not well put off to that time the question of postponing the November elections until March, because obviously those concerned would meantime be left in a state of uncertainty. Therefore it is necessary to decide this question to-night, and to put into the Bill whether or not these elections shall be postponed, and the Government have come to the conclusion that these elections should be postponed. The hon. Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Hogge) says he has some evidence that the Trades Council of Edinburgh desire the elections to be held in November there, but I can assure him that all the evidence which has reached me from those who are best qualified to give a judgment on the question is to the effect that it is far better that the November elections should be postponed. The Municipal Corporations Association is of that opinion, and the

great volume of evidence which reaches me is also of that opinion. The argument is used, which carries great weight, that the whole machinery of local government is now being used to the very fullest extent in the very matters which have been mentioned by the Mover of the Amendment—in the matter of tribunals, in the matter of food regulations, and in many other extra duties, such as the pensions committees, which all these local bodies are performing marvellously well, and which are more in the nature of national than local duties. If the elections took place in November, all this machinery, which is of such great use to the country at the present moment, might be dislocated by some great sweep of the electorate, which might turn out of office many of those who have been doing this work and acquiring such valuable experience. The hon. Member says they are not in touch with their constituents, but I would point out to him that, as a rule, the members of the tribunals and of the food committees and the pensions committees are the oldest and most respected members of their various localities. They are men who have sat year after year on these bodies, and, therefore, I do not think the hon. Member can fairly say they are out of touch with their constituents. If the elections were held in November, there might, as I say, be a clean sweep out, and the whole machinery might be dislocated.

Mr. RAFFAN: All that might be so next year.

Mr. FISHER: At all events we should have one more year, and a very valuable year, of administration by these gentlemen who are so well acquainted with the work. The hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. Pringle) used a most remarkable argument. He said, "It is true that in the elections in November the soldiers could take very little part," and therefore the elections in November would be determined mainly by the ladies whom we have just enfranchised. But he said, "What does that matter to the soldiers? The soldiers have no concern with all these questions which are going to be determined by the local bodies, and what does it matter to the soldiers as to what policy is initiated by local bodies as regards housing or matters of that kind? It is not necessary for the mto have a vote or to take part in any of these local elections." I think the House will come to a very

[Mr. Fisher.]

different conclusion from that. I think we ought to give an opportunity to the soldiers to take some very considerable part in these elections, and to have a very big voice in the questions that are going to be determined, particularly in the question of housing.

Mr. PRINGLE: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer this question—whether he intends to postpone local elections until the soldiers are able to take part?

Mr. FISHER: What we intend by this Bill is to postpone municipal elections until the following November, and while nobody can prophesy as to when this War will come to an end, at all events we do give ourselves a far better chance of having our soldiers back again with us and of their taking part in these elections. After all, if you hold these elections next November these men will be shut out from taking any part.

Mr. PRINGLE: Is it not the case that only one-third of the members are elected in any one year?

Mr. FISHER: That is so, of course, in many of our big towns, but in London it is not so. The Metropolitan borough councils are elected for a period of three years, and, therefore, everybody who is serving his country would be excluded from taking part in these elections for three years. For these reasons I believe the Government have come to a right conclusion. They have refused to postpone the elections that will take place in March or April, but they have decided—and I think the Committee will agree with them—to postpone the elections which would otherwise take place in November.

Mr. HOGGE: We have had a very remarkable speech from the President of the Local Government Board stating the reasons why he is opposed to this perfectly innocent and useful Amendment. In the first place, he deprecates the idea that the women voters of this country can express the wishes and desires of their husbands who are at the front. The right hon. Gentleman understands and appreciates the municipal problems in the country, and he knows perfectly well, and would be the first to admit it, that if anybody knows about the local rates and the local arrangements it is the wives of the men who have to pay those rates. Therefore to suggest that, because the soldier and the

sailor at the moment are not at home, you must not have the election, in the possible hope that in a year now the War will be over, is a policy of despair. After all, with the exception of London, so far as the rest of the country is concerned, it does not count. With the exception of London, only one-third of the local representatives in any of these councils retire in any one year. In another month we shall be at the beginning of the fourth year of the War, so that men who were members of these councils, particularly in England, in August, 1914, who were in the third year of their term of office are now completing the seventh. Surely it is a reasonable thing to suggest that after at least one-third of every borough council in England has been in office for seven years without any reference at all to the ratepayers, the time has arrived when, unless we are extraordinarily timid, we might address an appeal to the electorate. There are a great many questions which ought to be referred to the electorate at the speediest possible moment. A scandal with regard to housing has been brought before the notice of the House. Reference has been made to the fact that soldiers would not be in the country able to vote. There are, of course, some soldiers and sailors who are here and will be able to vote. They are the discharged men. Attention has been drawn to the fact that in Sheffield, which gets the credit of being a progressive community, at least two discharged soldiers with their wives and families are resident in two disused pigstyes because there is no other accommodation. It is an extraordinarily grave indictment of housing in Sheffield if it is true, and I believe it is a fact which cannot be contradicted. I shall be glad to know if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fisher) has investigated it.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That is not relevant.

Mr. HOGGE: I should like to know why it is not relevant.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: After I have given a ruling it is not competent for any hon. Member to ask for reasons for it.

Mr. PRINGLE: Is it not competent to put forward as a reason for having local elections the fact that the public has no opportunity to bring its wishes to bear

upon the existing council regarding such a situation as my hon. Friend has referred to?

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That is a hypothetical question. I was dealing with the practical position taken up by the hon. Member who is now in possession of the Committee.

Mr. HOGGE: The point I am putting is not a hypothetical case. I am putting a case—

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I say that case is not relevant to this discussion.

Mr. PRINGLE rose—

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I have already given my ruling on the matter, and I do not propose to discuss it any longer.

Mr. HOGGE: I am sorry you have so ruled, because to me it is a matter of very grave concern. I shall try to avoid incurring your displeasure further with regard to that point. The conditions which I have described, and which you say I cannot go further into, are an indication of the kind of problems that await solution when reference is made to the municipal electors. This Clause deprives them of the opportunity of considering those problems which are closest to their daily life, and it is because of that that I support this Amendment, in order to allow the municipal electors to address themselves—they have every right, and indeed every necessity, to address themselves to them. Since this War began Parliament has thrown upon the local authorities a good many further duties, one of which concerns the administration of pensions in the various localities all over the country. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board knows that these pension authorities are elected by the local governing bodies. These are known as local war pensions committees, they are elected by local councils in certain proportions, and to-day, in spite of an Act of Parliament passed by this House, which lays it down that on every local war pensions committee there shall be at least two discharged soldiers and one woman, either the widow or a dependant of a soldier or sailor who has lost his life in this War, it is now proposed that discharged men who are municipal electors shall be deprived of the right of recording their votes at the November election. They will thus be deprived of the oppor-

tunity of getting that representation on the local pensions committees which it is the desire of this House they should possess. The Parliament which is prolonging its own life without any mandate, and which has imposed this legislation upon these local bodies, is now proposing to enable these municipal bodies to prolong their own lives. It is the old story of the House of Commons passing legislation and then imposing the duty of administering it upon local authorities, while at the same time denying to the electors any say as to who shall carry out these administrative duties. I can conceive only one reason why the municipal authorities should seek to prolong their existence, and that is that they have not yet got the O.B.E. or some other honour from the Government for the performance of war duties. There are 288 Members of this House who have got the honour, and I do not know how many members of bodies outside Parliament have secured it. There must be some 5,000 or 6,000 in various parts of the country. It seems to me, if you are going to perpetuate the kind of fallacy that because people are already in power, and because, therefore, my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board thinks they know all about the work they should continue to perform it lest certain things happen, you are carrying it to the extreme and even to the verge of the ridiculous. Let me recall the argument of the President of the Local Government Board. He said if there were an election these people might be swept out of office. If that did occur, would it not be proof that the public wanted to get rid of them? We are continually being reminded that in this War we are fighting the cause of democracy. Democracy may sweep these people out of office to-morrow and yet municipal government would still go on. Suppose the same wave that swept these municipal dictators out of office were also to sweep the present Government out of office, would not this country go on just as well even if my hon. and right hon. Friends no longer occupied the Front Bench? The work of government is not carried on by the representatives but by the machine created by those representatives, who are there to criticise and keep the machine up to its best and most effective form. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that, if he did not turn up at the Local Government Board to-morrow

[Mr. Hogge.]

because of the late sitting of the House, he has perfect confidence in the officials of the Local Government Board that they would carry on the work to his satisfaction when he turned up there on Friday. Therefore the argument, so frequently used by Ministers in distress when they are trying to meet sound arguments, that, if these things happened, the world would come to an end, is so much moonshine. It does not mean anything at all. It may be true, as the right hon. Gentleman says, that all these bodies are working at high pressure, but the revelations of the one little Committee of this House which is looking into the question of expenditure and into the staffing of the Departments have proved over and over again that all our Government Departments are over-staffed.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: This is the second time I have directed the hon. Member's attention to the irrelevance of his remarks.

Mr. HOGGE: I know that you have twice said that my remarks are irrelevant, but I have been trying my level best—and I am not without experience—to keep my remarks to the point. I do not often transgress. I was showing that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, that the Amendment would dislocate the business of the municipalities of this country through the holding of the elections, was not sound, because of the fact that the municipal departments and the local War departments were, like the national departments, over-staffed. The last point, the powerful argument which the right hon. Gentleman has kept in the background, is that the register will not be ready. That argument means that the register, which it will be impossible to use for a municipal election in November, is to be used for a national election in the same month.

Mr. FISHER: I do not know why my hon. Friend is saying that I said the register would not be ready for an election in November. I made no such statement, nor any other statement which could possibly be interpreted as meaning that.

Mr. HOGGE: Of what statement is the right hon. Gentleman complaining?

Mr. FISHER: The statement of the hon. Member that I said the register would not be ready for an election in

November: I made no such statement or any other statement which could possibly be twisted or contorted into meaning that.

Mr. HOGGE: I am sorry if, after all his efforts, my right hon. Friend will not have the register ready for an election in November. In any case, whatever the right hon. Gentleman means, the argument he has used with regard to the dislocation of the municipalities would apply equally to a national election in November. For all these reasons I beg to support the deletion of this Clause.

Mr. SHERWELL: Every member of the Committee will be agreed on one thing at least, that is, that where any interference with the limited life of any popularly elected body is necessary, the area of that disturbance should be limited as far as possible. I confess that personally, in view of a good deal of public discussion in recent months, I was surprised to find that

municipal elections were covered by the provisions of this Bill. The general trend of expectation in the country had been that we had reached the limits of desirable interference with the municipal elections, and I am quite ignorant what set of new considerations have influenced the Government in departing from what I still believe has been the unmistakable trend of public opinion for some time past. One of the main grounds upon which the extension of the life of this Parliament has been advanced is that it is exceedingly undesirable that we should have any disturbance of public thought and energy in view of an impending offensive at this particular moment. Obviously, that consideration cannot apply to prospective municipal elections in November next. But for the most conclusive argument that has been used by the Government has been that if a General Election were to take place you would have to use a register which everybody knows and acknowledges is entirely unreliable as affording an index of national thought and opinions. It is clear from the admissions of the President of the Local Government Board that most important considerations could not possibly apply to the municipal elections in November next. The President of the Local Government Board arranged that many men who might otherwise be candidates are now under the scope of the enlarged Man-Power Bill engaged upon military service. He will acknowledge

—certainly the experience of the last four years has abundantly shown it—that there can be no stronger claim to electoral support on the part of any candidate, Parliamentary or municipal, than that he should be engaged on actual military service. I cannot conceive a stronger recommendation for a municipal candidate than that he should be debarred from personally conducting his own campaign by the fact that he was serving in arms in France or elsewhere.

There is this further consideration. We are all aware that under the so-called party truce any vacancies in the municipal councils that have taken place in recent months or years have been filled by co-option. This system of co-option does not pay attention to the wishes or opinions of electors in any constituency. It is a pure arrangement between the political caucuses of both sides or of the three sides. It does not follow, and, as a matter of fact, it is within the experience of all the Members of the House that in many cases vacancies have not been filled by those best qualified to fill the responsible position of municipal councillor, and I do think that it is exceedingly undesirable, in the interests of the municipal life of the county, and especially in view of the most important municipal questions that are looming up in the immediate future, that you should have persons elected who have not unmistakably the mandate of the municipal electors behind them. I do not think that the Government have made

out a clear case for inclusion of municipal elections within the scope of this Bill. I still hope that the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider the matter, and that on reconsideration he will exclude the municipal elections. I am quite confident that the evidence which he has quoted on the authority of the Council of the Municipal Corporations is not the sort of evidence that can be conclusive in an assembly of this kind. Obviously, the further removed any elected representative, whether Parliamentary or other, is from the constituency which originally elected him the greater becomes his indisposition again to face the electorate, and it is quite natural that the council of the municipal corporations, representing the elected bodies, should desire to prolong their existence and to postpone the evil day when they will again have to seek a fresh mandate from the electors. It is not a consideration that weighs with me in the slightest degree. It is a consideration based upon ordinary motives, quite human in their character and in their inspiration. In the interest of the municipal life of the country it is desirable that the municipal electors shall have the chance of saying who shall constitute their governors in municipal matters in the immediate future.

Question put, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 69; Noes, 7.

Division No. 61.]

AYES.

[12.6 a.m.]

Agg-Gardner, Sir James Tynte
Baird, John Lawrence
Baldwin, Stanley
Barlow, Sir Montague (Salford, S.)
Barnett, Capt. Richard W.
Barnston, Major Harry
Barton, Sir William
Bathurst, Col. Hon. A. B. (Glouc., E.)
Bellairs, Commander Carlyon W.
Boscawen, Sir Arthur Griffith-
Bridgeman, William Clive
Bryce, John Annan
Butcher, Sir J. G.
Carew, Charles R. S. (Tiverton)
Cator, John
Cecil, Rt. Hon. Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Coats, Sir Stuart (Wimbledon)
Colvin, Col.
Craig, Ernest (Crewe)
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.)
Davies, Sir W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dawes, James Arthur
Fisher, Rt. Hon. William Hayes
France, Gerald Ashburner

Gibbs, Col. George Abraham
Gilbert, James Daniel
Gilmour, Lt.-Col. John
Gretton, John
Hambro, Angus Valdemar
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Luton, Beds.)
Harris, Sir Henry P. (Paddington, S.)
Havelock-Allan, Sir Henry
Hope, James Fitzalan (Sheffield)
Jones, Wm. S. Glyn- (Stepney)
Lane-Fox, Major G. R.
Larmor, Sir J.
Law, Rt. Hon. A. Bonar (Bootle)
Layland-Barratt, Sir F.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, Rt. Hon. John Herbert
Lloyd, George Butler (Shrewsbury)
M'Curdy, Charles Albert
Marshall, Arthur Harold
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Mason, Robert
Mond, Rt. Hon. Sir Alfred Moritz
Morison, Thomas B. (Inverness)
Newman, Sir Robert (Exeter)

Parker, James (Halifax)
Pease, Rt. Hon. H. P. (Darlington)
Pennefather, De Fonblanque
Pollock, Sir Ernest Murray
Pratt, John W.
Pryce-Jones, Col. Sir E.
Pulleys, C. T.
Rea, Walter Russell
Rees, Sir J. D.
Robinson, Sidney
Samuels, Arthur W. (Dub. U.)
Sanders, Col. Robert Arthur
Smith, Harold (Warrington)
Strauss, E. A. (Southwark, W.)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton)
Weston, John W.
Whiteley, Sir H. J. (Droitwich)
Wilson, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Worcs., N.)
Wilson-Fox, Henry (Tamworth)
Winfrey, Sir R.
Younger, Sir George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Lord
E. Talbot and Colonel Gibbs.

NOES

Booth, Frederick Handel
Hogge, J. M.
Jowett, Frederick William

Martin, Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinburgh, Central)
Raffan, Peter Wilson

Watt, Henry A.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr.
Pringle and Mr. Sherwell.

Clause 3 (*Short Title*) ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Bill reported, without Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Mr. HOGGE: We are being asked at this hour—on Thursday morning—to take the Third Reading of so important a measure, which we have been trying to amend in Committee. I do appeal to the President of the Local Government Board to carry out the promise made by the Patronage Secretary that if we did not get the Bill yesterday it should be taken on Friday. We began the discussion of the Committee stage on Wednesday; it is now Thursday, and as the Bill was not concluded last night I think he ought to carry out his intention that it should be taken on Friday.

Lord EDMUND TALBOT (Joint Patronage Secretary to the Treasury): I have no recollection of having said that, but if he says I said it, of course I will keep my word.

Mr. HOGGE: It may have been a misunderstanding, but I was informed by my Friends in the Lobby that it was so. As the Patronage Secretary knows, nobody more than myself appreciates the way in which he keeps any bargain he makes with any Member of this House. I have made as many arrangements with him as most people, and I willingly pay this tribute to him, that I do not know any member of the Government or of any Government who so implicitly keeps every promise that he makes to Members. Therefore, I was not seeking to imply to him a promise which he did not make. I was distinctly given to understand from the conversation I had with my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Watt) in the Lobby that such a promise had been given. The hon. and learned Member is in constant attendance, and he was under the impression that the promise was made. He said that if we got through the Committee stage we should not have to wait very long, as the

Bill was to stand over until Friday. Even if there was a misunderstanding, why not take the Bill on Friday? There are only several small measures for Friday, and there is no reason why we should proceed with it to-night. If we do, seeing that we have all lost our trains now, there is more time to discuss it than we would have in an ordinary sitting.

Mr. BOOTH: I am afraid I was unwittingly to blame for this misunderstanding. Certainly the Patronage Secretary did not say he did not want the Third Reading to-night, I happened to ask him—and he is always very courteous with any Member who goes to him—what was the business on Friday, and he mentioned one or two Bills. He also said that if this Bill was not finished to-night it would have to be taken on Friday. So far as I am concerned, I do not think we ought to take advantage of the position, and I suggest that we give way and allow the Bill to pass.

Mr. WATT: May I explain my position? I was under the impression that the Patronage Secretary had said that if the Bill was not passed last night (Wednesday) it would have to be dealt with on Friday. It was a misunderstanding. I do not insist upon the Patronage Secretary keeping a promise he never made, and I suggest that we should allow the Bill to go through.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed.

The remaining Orders were read, and postponed.

It being after Half-past Eleven of the clock on Wednesday evening, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House, without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at Twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 11th July, 1918.

[OFFICIAL REPORT.]

The House met at a Quarter before Three of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 6) Bill,

Read the third time, and passed.

NEW WRITS.

For the County of Hants (Southern or Fareham Division), in the room of Colonel Sir Arthur Hamilton Lee, G.B.E., K.C.B., now Baron Lee of Fareham, called up to the House of Peers.

For the Borough of Manchester (North-East Division), in the room of the Right Hon. John Robert Clynes, Food Controller.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

WAR.

CHINA (INDIAN OPIUM).

1. Sir J. D. REES asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have any means of enforcing the arrangement or agreement with China for the abolition of the trade in Indian opium; and will he explain what is the constitution and what are the functions of the Opium Combine?

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. Balfour): The trade in Indian opium with China ceased with the expiration, on the 31st December last, of the agreement relating to opium concluded between the United Kingdom and China on the 8th May, 1911. His Majesty's Government would, of course, take all possible means to prevent the resumption of the opium trade between British India and China should any attempt be made to revive it.

I have no precise information as to the firms and individuals constituting the opium combine, but I understand that it is a private and unofficial syndicate or association of merchant importers of opium at Shanghai. So far as I am aware, the functions of the combine are to regulate the price of the stocks of Indian opium in bond and generally to protect the interests of the members of the association.

Sir J. D. REES: Is it not the case that what has happened points to the general weakness of the policy pursued in regard to it? Is it likely that it can be carried out?

Mr. BALFOUR: I understand—although it is a subject with which I have no great intimacy—that there is every hope that the trade between India and China is finally severed.

JUTE (CONTRABAND).

2. Sir J. D. REES asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the only jute mills on the Continent of Europe are in Germany, so that jute is useless to Spain, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Switzerland except for sale to Germany; whether any harm to the legitimate trade of these countries can result from declaring jute to be contraband of war; and whether, in view of its importance as a factor in war making and of the fact that the Government of India nevertheless permitted its export to Italy, steps will be taken to formally and immediately declare it contraband of war?

Mr. BALFOUR: According to my information there are jute mills or other means of utilising raw jute in all the neutral countries mentioned and also in Norway. His Majesty's Government have, and exercise, complete control over all exports of jute to neutral countries, so that to declare jute contraband of war would add nothing to the means at our disposal for preventing its reaching enemy countries.

RUSSIA (MURMAN COAST).

3. Mr. KING asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will state the present position on the Murman Coast?

Mr. BALFOUR: I cannot with advantage make any statement at present.

PRISONERS OF WAR (TURKEY).

5. Colonel Sir CHARLES SEELY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps the Government are taking to expedite the carrying out of the agreement for the exchange of English and Turkish prisoners of war concluded at Berne in September last?

Mr. JAMES HOPE (Lord of the Treasury): As I stated on June 24th, we have endeavoured to hasten the execution of this Agreement by making representations through the Netherlands Minister at Constantinople, the Spanish Ambassador at Vienna, and the British delegates at The Hague Conference. I should be extremely grateful if my hon. and gallant Friend could suggest to me in private anything more that could be done. I may add that the Agreement was concluded not in September, but on the 28th December.

70. Sir F. HALL asked the hon. Member for Sheffield (Central Division) whether, considering the mortality amongst British and Indian prisoners of war in Turkey and the difficulty in securing delivery in Turkey of food and clothing for our prisoners there, the Government will take steps, through the proper channels, to urge upon the Ottoman Government to enter into negotiations without further delay for the general exchange of prisoners, if possible upon a man-for-man basis, but, if this be not possible, to ascertain on what conditions the Turkish Government would be willing to make the exchange, such exchange not to be in terms of the Berne Agreement only, but to be applicable to soldiers and sailors in addition to civilians, doctors, and invalids?

Mr. J. HOPE: I am afraid I can add nothing at present on the subject of a further agreement to the answer given on Monday by the Leader of the House to my Noble Friend the Member for Nottingham. With regard, however, to the terrible death-rate among our prisoners in Turkey, it must be borne in mind that the greater number of deaths occurred in the march up country from Kut, and, however deplorable the present position, the mortality has not continued on the same scale.

Sir F. HALL: May I ask whether this matter of the Turkish prisoners is under the control of one Department or whether it has to go through two or three Departments, and, if so, which?

Mr. HOPE: It is quite obvious, as happens in almost every question regarding prisoners, several Departments are concerned with the different aspects of the subject.

Sir F. HALL: Is not that a means rather of delaying than of expediting the supplies to these prisoners of war?

Mr. HOPE: No doubt it would be much better if it could be taken by one Department, but obviously, in a case like this, not only the Prisoners of War Department, but—not to speak of others—the India Office, and the War Office are immediately concerned.

ARMENIA.

6. Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is following the resistance which the Armenians are offering to the Turkish army seeking to overthrow the Armenian Republic in consequence of the declaration of that republic that it will not accept the provisions of the Brest-Litovsk treaty regarding Armenia; and whether the Allied Governments pledge themselves to do everything in their power when the settlement after the War comes to be made that the future of Armenia will be decided upon the principle of self-determination?

Mr. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; His Majesty's Government are following with earnest sympathy and admiration the gallant resistance of the Armenians in defence of their liberties and honour, and are doing everything they can to come to their assistance. As regards the future of Armenia, I would refer the hon. Member to the public statements made by leading statesmen among the Allied Powers in favour of a settlement upon the principle he indicates.

MILITARY SERVICE.

VOLUNTARY RECRUITING (IRELAND).

9. Mr. KING asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, seeing that it is now several weeks since the Government policy

of voluntary recruiting in Ireland was initiated, he will state the numbers of recruits enlisted up to a recent date?

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** for **IRELAND** (Mr. Shortt): The information is not available at present.

Mr. KING: Is there any information at all available anywhere? That is to say, has there been any result whatever?

Mr. SHORTT: Oh, yes!

COMPULSORY DRILL.

25. **Colonel YATE** asked the Minister of National Service whether he will consider the question of making it compulsory for lads between fifteen and eighteen years of age to attend drills with the Cadet companies of Volunteer battalions in the same manner as men of older age are compelled to attend drill with Volunteer battalions?

The **MINISTER** of **NATIONAL SERVICE** (Sir A. Geddes): A proposal on these lines was most carefully considered at the time of the preparation of the Bill which became the Military Service (No. 2) Act, 1918, and it was decided after full investigation that the balance of advantage lay in not including such a provision.

Colonel YATE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what is the balance of advantage?

Sir A. GEDDES: I am afraid that it would be impossible to do so without exceeding the limits of time allotted to questions and answers. If my hon. Friend likes to discuss the matter with me I will talk it over with him, and then he can put down any further question he wishes.

SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING TRADES.

27. **Mr. HOLT** asked the Minister of National Service whether all apprentices to the engineering trades have been called up for military service; and, if so, what steps are being taken to provide a supply of trained engineers in the immediate future?

Sir A. GEDDES: No, Sir; all apprentices in the engineering trades have not been called up for service. Those in Grade 1, born in 1898 and 1899, and a limited number of those born in 1900, have been called to the Colours. This leaves a very large number of apprentices born in these years, as well as all those born in

later years, the number of whom has greatly increased through the expansion of the engineering industry due to the War. As a result, I see no reason to fear that the supply is likely to be endangered, more especially as the vast majority of the skilled men in the forces are engaged in technical units at their trade, and are subject to a low rate of casualty.

28. **Mr. HOLT** asked whether the number of men enlisted into the Army from the shipbuilding and engineering trades during the first half of 1918 is more or less than 12,000?

Sir A. GEDDES: My hon. Friend was informed by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of National Service on Monday that about 12,000 men had been released from the forces during the past six months for work in shipyards. I can make no general statement as to the numbers of men recruited for the armed forces in the course of this year, but if the object of the question is to learn how many men have been released for military service from the same establishments during the same period, I can assure him that the number is very much less than 12,000. With comparatively trivial exceptions, there has, in 1918, been no recruiting under the Military Service Acts from men engaged on ship hull construction and repair.

Mr. HOLT: Has there not been a very great deal of recruiting among men engaged in ship engine construction?

Sir A. GEDDES: Not a very great deal. The total number taken from that particular industry is quite small even in relation to the 12,000 of which the hon. Gentleman originally spoke.

ONE-MAN BUSINESSES.

30. **Sir GEORGE GREENWOOD** asked the Minister of National Service whether the Local Government Board Circular of 17th December, 1917 (R. 167) is recognised by him as being still in force; whether he has instructed, and will continue to instruct, the National Service representatives to observe and carry out the pledges and conditions therein contained with regard to one-man businesses; whether such instructions have been strictly adhered to up to the present time; and whether business hardship is still recognised as a ground of exemption in cases of

[Sir G. Greenwood.]
sole proprietors of businesses who are in Grades 1 or 2, as specified in paragraph (c) of that Circular?

Sir A. GEDDES: I am happy to be able to inform my hon. Friend that the answer to all parts of his question is in the affirmative.

HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY (PRIVATE
WATSON).

31. **Mr. WATT** asked the Minister of National Service if Private Donald Watson, No. 63227, Highland Light Infantry, was taken into the Army, notwithstanding that he held an exemption certificate from the local tribunal, which has never been reviewed or withdrawn, and that the authorities at Stirling had been informed that such is the case by both National Service representatives for the county of Bute; and whether he will take steps to see that Watson is immediately released and returned to civil life, and the authorities at Stirling asked to explain their action?

Sir A. GEDDES: I have investigated this case, and it appears that Mr. Watson had not registered in the National Register as the proprietor of a business. He registered himself as a butcher, and, as such, was decertified, without reference to the tribunal, by the Military Service (Withdrawal of Exemptions) Order No. 1, of 1918. The technical procedure of the officials concerned was, therefore, correct; but on its being ascertained that Mr. Watson's liability to service was based on a technical point, and not on the real facts as to his occupation, arrangements were at once made for his return from the Army.

FIRE BRIGADE MEN.

33. **Mr. LAURENCE HARDY** asked the Minister of National Service whether his attention has been called to the danger which has arisen through the calling up of the larger number of members of fire brigades throughout the country, especially in the rural districts which depend on small voluntary fire brigades for protection of life and property from fire; whether he is aware that a few able-bodied men are essential for the work of these fire brigades; and whether he will issue instructions that such work should be held to be of such national importance as to justify exemption where regular attendance at the work can be proved?

35. **Mr. RENDALL** asked the Minister of National Service whether he is aware that the indefinite replies constantly given to questions asking whether pivotal members of unpaid fire brigades are to be exempted from combatant service, if in Grade 2 under the new Act, are causing doubt and uncertainty in the minds of tribunals; and will he now say definitely that, until the Ministry's representative or the Home Office makes a final decision as to the position of each fire brigade, tribunals will do right in adjourning or exempting all cases where the chief officer of the brigade states to the tribunal that the appellant is a pivotal or essential member of a fire brigade?

Sir A. GEDDES: Instructions have been given to the regional directors of the Ministry to the effect that the National Service representatives are not to oppose before tribunals the exemption of part-time members of fire brigades, certified by the chief officer of the brigade to have satisfactorily performed fire brigade duty during the preceding twelve months and to be essential to the efficiency of the brigade, provided these men are in Grade 3 and over thirty-five years of age, or in Grade 2 and over forty-five. National Service representatives have also been instructed to give careful consideration to the cases of men of lower ages in these grades who are of special value to the brigade on account of their exceptional qualifications and long service.

MEDICAL GRADING.

36. **Colonel Sir FREDERICK HALL** asked the Minister of National Service if he is aware that Mr. J. A. H. Gray, who is forty-eight years of age, is employed as a clerk in the office of a Government firm and, having recently been graded Class 3, inquired at the Hotel Windsor as to whether the work he was engaged upon was considered of national importance, to which a reply was made that the Ministry were unable to state whether his employment came within that meaning or not; whether, under the circumstances, he will give instructions for officers to be placed in charge of the various Departments who can give a clear and concise reply to applicants, thereby saving unnecessary trouble; and whether he will state if it is needful for such a man as the one referred to to give up such employment in order to work on the land, or whether his present occupation, age, and

grading will be accepted as sufficient reason for him being allowed to remain where he is?

Sir A. GEDDES: I regret that Mr. Gray should have failed to get information satisfactory to himself from the official whom he saw. He was one of 1,200 individuals who was interviewed by the official in question in the course of the week, and his is the only complaint received. As Mr. Gray is aged forty-eight and is in Grade 3, he is not, as has been stated in this House, and published in the Press, of a type that is being called for service at present.

Sir F. HALL: Will the right hon. Gentleman give notification to the officials of the National Service to extend courtesy to people who make applications?

Sir A. GEDDES: I do not think there has been any complaint received, apart from the official in this instance, who is most courteous. Possibly there was some difficulty with this gentleman when he was called.

HERRING FISHING INDUSTRY.

39. **Sir ARTHUR FELL** asked the Minister of National Service if his attention has been directed to the calling-up notices now being served on skippers and engine drivers of steam drifters employed in the herring fishing industry; if it is intended that these notices shall be acted on; if so, is he aware of the result this must have on the autumn herring fishing on the East Coast and the many thousands of tons of fish food involved; and if, in any case, the calling up of these essential men can be postponed until December, when this fishing season ends on the East Coast?

Sir A. GEDDES: I am aware that some skippers are being called up, but I was not aware that any enginemens had received calling-up notices. These men are dealt with as fishermen, and, as such, can enrol in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, Y Section, and continue in civil life until their services are required in the Navy. Men who have not so enrolled, and are called up for service, have an opportunity of joining the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, Y Section, instead of being posted to the Army or Royal Air Force. I know that every endeavour is made by the Admiralty, in consultation with the Fishery Departments, to avoid dislocation of the fishing industry, so far as is com-

patible with the minimum requirements of the naval service. It must be remembered that the men called up for service on mine-sweepers and patrol vessels perform most essential service in helping to ensure the national food supply.

Sir A. FELL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the suggestion contained in the last part of the question could be especially considered?

Sir A. GEDDES: Yes, certainly; that is a point which is being most carefully watched.

MEDICAL BOARDS (CERTIFICATES).

76. **Mr. ALBION RICHARDSON** asked the Comptroller of the Household, as representing the National Health Insurance Commissioners, whether he is prepared to make arrangements to enable a man summoned to appear before a medical board, and who cannot afford to pay a fee to his panel doctor for a certificate stating his medical history, to obtain such a certificate free of charge?

Colonel GIBBS: The furnishing of such a certificate as is referred to in the question would, of course, be entirely outside the scope of a medical practitioner's agreement for services under the National Insurance Acts, and he would, therefore, be under no obligation to furnish it. Moreover, it is a fundamental principle that any information as to the state of health of an insured person which may come into the possession of the doctor by whom he is attended under the provisions of the National Insurance Acts is strictly confidential, and is to be used for national health insurance purposes only. In these circumstances, it does not appear possible that such arrangements as the hon. Member suggests should be made under national health insurance nor be paid for from national health insurance funds.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Will the hon. and gallant Gentleman make representations to the Government as to the great injustice this causes to poor men, who cannot afford to pay for a medical certificate, in being deprived of their only opportunity of laying their medical history before the medical board, and put in a much worse position than those who can afford to pay for a certificate?

Colonel GIBBS: Perhaps my hon. Friend will put down a question to the Minister of National Service?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I will put it to the Prime Minister.

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS.

83. **Mr. THOMAS RICHARDSON** asked the result of the investigation into the ill-treatment of a number of conscientious objectors, known as Seventh Day Adventists, while confined to No. 3 Military Prison, Le Havre?

The **UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Macpherson):** The result of the investigations has disclosed a certain amount of irregularity, but owing to the lapse of time and the constant changes in the subordinate prison staff it has been found impossible to bring responsibility home to any particular individual.

IRELAND.

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND.

10. **Colonel YATE** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, during the last eighteen months, only 200 acres of land have been allotted by the Congested Districts Board of Ireland to persons who had either themselves served in the Army or Navy or who have or had sons so serving, and, similarly, only 850 acres have been so allotted by the Estates Commissioners, while, on the contrary, 90,000 acres have been allotted by the Congested Districts Board and 35,000 acres have been allotted by the Estates Commissioners to persons who have not themselves served or have had sons so serving; and whether he will now give an estimate of the amount of land allotted, respectively, during the first two and a half years of the War?

Mr. SHORTT: As regard the first part of the question, I would refer the hon. and gallant Member to the reply given on this subject on the 20th ultimo. The Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board distributed respectively during the first two and a half years of the War about 18,000 and 70,000 acres of untenanted land. The Estates Commissioners did not during this period take the fact of service in the War as a consideration in the allotment of land, and consequently are unable to state how much of the 18,000 acres was allotted to persons who served or had members of their families serving in the War. Approximately 125 acres were allotted to such persons during this period by the Congested Districts Board.

SHOT-GUN PERMITS.

11. **Major NEWMAN** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he will ascertain if permission to use a shot-gun for the protection of their crops has been applied for and refused to several farmers in the neighbourhood of Cork and Kinsale; whether as a result extensive damage has been done to their crops; and will the Irish Government direct that permission to use a shot-gun shall not be withheld from farmers with an extensive acreage under cultivation and who are known to the authorities as loyal and law-abiding men?

Mr. SHORTT: As regards the first and last parts of the question, permits for the use of shot-guns have only been refused where the police authorities were satisfied that the applicants were unable or unwilling to prevent the arms from falling into the hands of ill-disposed persons. The preservations of crops is an important consideration, and it is hoped that a diminution in the cases of raiding will justify the grant of a larger number of permits in the future.

SEDITION CHARGES.

12. **Mr. KING** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he will give figures for the first six months of this year showing how many persons belonging to Sinn Fein, Cumann na m-Ban, and the Gaelic League, respectively, have been convicted for any act of sedition or breach of the peace?

Mr. SHORTT: It would not be possible, from existing police records, to classify among the societies mentioned in the question, all the persons convicted in the first six months of this year of any act of sedition or breach of the peace. The inquiries necessary to enable such a classification to be made would involve an unreasonable expenditure of time and work by the Department concerned.

Mr. KING: Surely there are not very many such persons? Can the right hon. Gentleman give any indication within round numbers of the number of such persons cumulatively disregarding the various regulations?

Mr. SHORTT: The work involved is far greater than any useful service that would be served.

CUMANN NA M-BAN.

13. **Mr. KING** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he is aware that

the Cumann na m-Ban, recently proclaimed in Ireland, is a women's organisation, and that its only political recent activities have been directed against Conscription or forced military service; whether he will reconsider the position of Cumann na m-Ban; and whether all persons working against Irish Conscription will now be treated equally?

Mr. SHORTT: The membership of this society is restricted to women of Irish birth or descent. It exists primarily for the founding of First Aid and Ambulance Classes for the Irish Volunteers, and is closely associated with the various activities of this body. Its members are enjoined to learn drill, signalling, and rifle practice. The answer to the third part of the question is in the negative. As regards the last paragraph of the question, such persons always have and will be treated equally.

Mr. KING: With regard to the last part of this question, is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the Irish Hierarchy are unanimously and strenuously against Conscription, and are they to be left alone while innocent women are persecuted?

Mr. SHORTT: No innocent women are persecuted because they are against Conscription.

MEETINGS (NOTICE TO POLICE).

14. **Mr. KING** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether all meetings, processions, or assemblies have, under a Defence of the Realm Act Regulation, been prohibited in Ireland unless seven clear days' notice is given and authorisation obtained from the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police or a county inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary; and how many such authorisations have been given for Orange demonstrations, meetings, etc., on 12th July?

Mr. SHORTT: The answer to the first part of the question of the hon. Member is in the affirmative, but instructions were given to county inspectors in every county not to press the seven days' notice in the case of meetings which had already been arranged. Each case of Orange demonstrations will be considered on its merits by the county inspector, and will be subject to the same conditions as any other demonstration.

Mr. KING: Has the right hon. Gentleman considered the songs that are to be sung at the Orange demonstrations, samples of which are given in the "Daily Chronicle" this morning?

Mr. SHORTT: No, I have not, but I have no doubt the county inspectors have.

Major NEWMAN: Will the Union Jack be displayed at these Orange meetings?

Mr. SHORTT: The hon. and gallant Gentleman had better refer that to the people who run the meetings. I do not know.

Mr. KING: Will the Orange flag be displayed?

Mr. SHORTT: I do not know.

SEDITIONOUS LEAFLET (PROSECUTION IN DUBLIN).

15. **Mr. KING** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he is aware that, on 4th July, Emmet M'Auliffe, a boy of fifteen years, was arrested in Dublin for distributing handbills headed "Stop Press"; that he was still on 8th July confined in Bridewell, Dublin, kept in solitary confinement, on a plank bed without mattress, refused exercise or fresh air, and no charge made against him; whether this lad has been interned under a Defence of the Realm Act Order, signed by him; and, if not, whether he will now be set free?

Mr. SHORTT: I am informed that this youth, who gave the name of Emmett McAuliffe, and stated that he was fourteen years of age, was arrested in Dublin on the 4th inst. for the offence of distributing seditious leaflets. He was confined in the Bridewell till the 9th inst., when he was charged before the divisional police magistrate and remanded for a week to Summerhill Detention Home. During his confinement in the Bridewell he was visited every day by his mother and other relatives. Neither they nor he made any complaint to the police of his treatment while there. The bed was a reclining wooden bed with two rugs. He got no open-air exercise while in the Bridewell, but the cell in which he was kept by himself is large and well ventilated.

Mr. KING: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen a copy of this leaflet, and is there anything seditious in it except the final words, "Get ready"?

Mr. SHORTT: I have seen the leaflet, and if my hon. Friend has seen it he knows as well as I do that it is highly seditious.

Gaelic League.

16. **Mr. KING** asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he is aware that the Gaelic League was founded over twenty years ago to save and foster the Irish language; that it has included persons of different religious creeds and political views; that it has branches in Oxford and elsewhere in Great Britain, in the United States, in Canada, and South Africa; whether any steps have been or will be taken to prevent these branches from continuing their activities; and whether there was any evidence that the Gaelic League, when proclaimed as dangerous in Ireland, was an organisation supporting seditious aims or violent methods?

Mr. SHORTT: The answer to the first and second parts of the question is in the affirmative. I have no knowledge of the activities of the Gaelic League outside Ireland. In answer to the last part of the question, there was evidence that extremists were intending to use the Gaelic League for seditious aims and violent methods in case Sinn Fein had to be put down, and the Proclamation was a matter of precaution.

Mr. KING: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the immense service which the Gaelic League has rendered to the cause of temperance and sobriety and general peace throughout the whole of Ireland?

Mr. SHORTT: Yes; I am perfectly well aware of that. The Proclamation is intended not against the Gaelic League, but against people who might use the Gaelic League for seditious purposes.

Mr. KING: Are the peaceful and useful functions and activities of the Gaelic League to be allowed or to be suppressed because of a few extremists?

Mr. SHORTT: They will be allowed so long as they remain so.

METROPOLITAN SPECIAL CONSTABLES.

17. **Mr. CROOKS** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that Metropolitan

special constables are doing five turns of duty, each of four hours, per week without pay; that these duties make it impossible for the men to earn extra wages at their own work and thus be in a better position to meet the increased cost of living; and whether he will consider the possibility of establishing a rate of pay for special constables?

The **SECRETARY OF STATE** for the **HOME DEPARTMENT** (**Sir G. Cave**): I am informed that with the exception of a very few men attached to headquarters staffs, and one special constable who has for more than two years voluntarily and regularly performed six hours of duty weekly, no Metropolitan special constable is doing five tours of duty a week. Although every endeavour is made so to arrange the duties of special constables that their means of earning a livelihood are not unduly interfered with, I am aware that service in that force entails substantial sacrifices on the part of many of those who have undertaken it; but as intimated in this House by my predecessor on the 13th December, 1915, and by me on the 8th November last, the Metropolitan Special Constabulary was enrolled upon an honorary basis, and there is no intention of making it a paid force.

VENEREAL DISEASE.

18. **Mr. LEES-SMITH** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has now given further consideration to the question of whether he will issue instructions that women charged under the new Regulation 40D of the Defence of the Realm Act shall in all cases be informed that there is no power to compel them to submit to a medical examination against their will?

Sir G. CAVE: I have considered this matter and have found no sufficient reason for issuing an instruction as proposed. No woman is examined without her consent.

Mr. LEES-SMITH: When the right hon. Gentleman says that no woman is examined without her consent, does that mean that she is deliberately told that she need not be examined unless she wishes it? Will the right hon. Gentleman say that that is the case?

Sir G. CAVE: No; she is asked if she will consent before the examination takes place.

19. **Mr. LEES-SMITH** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the general rule laid down by him that women would not be prosecuted under Regulation 40 of the Defence of the Realm Act without the soldier or sailor concerned being summoned as a witness is being broken in a number of cases; and will he say what action he proposes to take?

Sir G. CAVE: The question does not correctly state the effect of the reply which I gave in this House on the 9th May, to which I beg to refer the hon. Member. I see no cause for any action on my part.

Mr. LEES-SMITH: Did not the right hon. Gentleman say that as a general rule the soldier or sailor would appear, whereas in the majority of cases they are not appearing, and is not that a contradiction of the statement which he has made?

Sir G. CAVE: I said that as a general rule the soldiers or sailors concerned would be called as witnesses. I laid down no general rule, but if the men are called there will be no difficulty.

PACIFIST DEMONSTRATION, HYDE PARK.

20. **Brigadier-General CROFT** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mrs. Swanwick will be permitted to speak at a pacifist demonstration in Hyde Park on Sunday next; and if she is a German by birth, only British by marriage, and a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation?

21. **General CROFT** asked the Home Secretary whether his attention has been called to a peace demonstration to be held in Hyde Park on the 14th July; whether the Women's International League is taking part; if so, whether he is aware that this society advises women to abstain from war work and from giving any sort of material, intellectual, or moral support whatever to the War; and whether he will take action to end such action?

Sir G. CAVE: I understand that the 14th July, the date fixed for this pacifist demonstration in Hyde Park, is being

kept as the French National Fête Day, and that a demonstration of sympathy with the French nation, supported by the Alsace-Lorraine League, is being held in Hyde Park on the same day. Having regard to these facts and to the certainty that the demonstration in honour of the French nation will draw large crowds of soldiers and others to the park, I am advised by the police authorities that the holding of a peace demonstration on the same day and in the same place is likely to give rise to grave disorder and to cause undue demands to be made on the police. I have accordingly decided, in the interest of public order, to prohibit the pacifist demonstration. Having regard to this decision, the other parts of these questions do not appear to arise.

General CROFT: Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to those words in the programme of the Women's International League which appear to be seditious?

Sir G. CAVE: I have not taken action on that ground, but on the ground stated in the answer.

General CROFT: Will the right hon. Gentleman look into this matter, and see where women are urged to take no part in war work, or to give any support whatever, and is not that seditious, and might not a raid take place at the offices of the Women's International League?

Mr. KING: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that he has already raided the Women's International League, quite unsuccessfully, several times?

PRISONERS' DIETARY (WANDSWORTH AND MAIDSTONE).

23. **Mr. T. RICHARDSON** asked the Home Secretary what is the scale of dietary for prisoners in Wandsworth and Maidstone Prisons, respectively?

Sir G. CAVE: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for North Somerset on the 24th June. I do not think that it is desirable to publish the dietaries. They are carefully settled in consultation with the Food Controller, and are varied from time to time as circumstances require.

Mr. KING: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that there are in Ireland every

[Mr. King.]

day protests about this dietary, and, owing to this uncertainty and the refusal—

Mr. SPEAKER: The question on the Paper has nothing to do with Ireland. It is about Wandsworth and Maidstone Prisons.

Mr. KING: With due respect—[Hon. MEMBERS: Order!"]—the Home Secretary referred in his reply to an answer to me; and my question related entirely to Irish prisoners in English prisons, and, therefore, this supplementary question as to protests in Ireland arises out of the question on the Paper, and is perfectly in Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. Member put it down if he attaches any value to it.

GERMAN COLONIES (INTERNMENT RULES).

24. Colonel **WEDGWOOD** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what rules have been followed as to the internment of German subjects in the following Colonies: British East Africa, German East Africa, German South-West Africa, Togoland, New Guinea, and Samoa; and whether he will call for a Report from each of these Colonies with a view to harmonising their treatment with that given to British civilians in Germany?

The **UNDER-SECRETARY** of STATE for the **COLONIES** (Mr. Hewins): I assume that my hon. and gallant Friend is referring to European German subjects. As regards British East Africa, practically all of these subjects were removed to India for internment at the beginning of the War. The other places mentioned are occupied enemy territory, and the question of the treatment of the inhabitants of occupied territory is a general one, which affects the Allies as well as this country.

Colonel **WEDGWOOD:** Will my hon. Friend inquire whether the treatment of German subjects in German East Africa is as he expressed it now?

Mr. HEWINS: I will look into it.

MALE DOCTORS.

26. Mr. **HOLT** asked the Minister of National Service how many male medical

students under twenty-eight years of age there are in the United Kingdom; and what steps are being taken to provide a supply of male doctors in the immediate future?

Sir A. GEDDES: I regret that I cannot state how many male medical students under twenty-eight years of age there are in the United Kingdom. There are, however, at present 5,380 male medical students and 2,250 female medical students at work in the schools and hospitals. The male students freshly registered in 1917 numbered 1,378, as against 1,366 in 1914. Administrative arrangements providing for the safeguarding of the supply of male doctors for the next five years are in force, and there does not appear to be any ground for anxiety.

WORKING BAKERS (SHORTAGE).

29. Mr. **ALDEN** asked the Minister of National Service whether he is aware that the master bakers of Tottenham and the surrounding districts are unable under present circumstances with the shortage of labour to produce enough bread to feed the population; that frequently the shops are closed on Saturday and other days at one o'clock because the bread is sold out; that the journeyman bakers are working, instead of eight hours a day, sometimes sixteen hours a day, even during this comparatively slack time; whether, under these circumstances, he intends to call up any more men between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five; and what steps he proposes to take?

Sir A. GEDDES: No, Sir; I was not aware of the facts stated in the question. On the contrary, as the result of inquiries I have made of the Ministry of Food and of the local officers of the Ministry of National Service, I am informed that no report of any shortage of bread in the Tottenham district has been received. I may say, with regard to the latter part of the question, that if the tribunal has acted, as I have no doubt is the case, with due regard to the conditions laid down in the List of Certified Occupations, indispensable bread bakers over thirty-five years of age should still be in civil life, in addition to all those of the new military ages who, by reason of their being in a certified occupation, are not called up for military service.

I may add that special arrangements have been made with the Ministry of Food to secure the protection of men who are necessary for the production and distribution of essential articles of food such as bread, and schemes of co-operation among bakers have been started under the auspices of the Local Government Board and my own Department, for the concentration of the baking business in each district, so as to maintain both the commercial interests of the trade and the supply of bread to the public.

Mr. ALDEN: If I bring some facts before the right hon. Gentleman to show that there is a shortage, will he have the matter carefully looked into?

Sir A. GEDDES: Most certainly.

COMPULSORY NATIONAL SERVICE (WOMEN).

32. **Mr. MARRIOTT** asked the Minister of National Service whether his attention has been called to the desire of a number of women that the principle of compulsory national service for women should be forthwith adopted; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter?

Sir A. GEDDES: Yes, Sir; I know that a certain number of women are in favour of the introduction of this principle; but although a definite shortage of women in certain categories exists there is not, at the moment, sufficient indication of any shortage of woman power as a whole which would justify a measure of compulsory national service for women.

WAR WORK VOLUNTEERS.

37. **Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD** asked the Minister of National Service whether any special consideration is to be given to men of between forty-three and fifty years of age who have been working upon munitions since Mr. Neville Chamberlain's first call for national service; and are they to volunteer as war-work volunteers, or is their present work to be recognised?

Sir A. GEDDES: Arrangements are in force whereby men employed in essential occupations receive a certificate of protection. It is open to any man employed on munitions, who is not qualified to

receive such a certificate, to volunteer as a war work volunteer. The question as to whether or not his present work is of sufficient importance to justify his assignment as a war work volunteer to the firm by which he is employed is a matter which can only be decided after consideration of the circumstances of each case. In the meantime, no man of the new military age, registered as engaged on munitions work, is being called, even for medical examination.

FUEL AND LIGHTING ORDER.

41. **Mr. J. MASON** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he proposes to make the coal allowances for country houses more liberal than those for town houses, in view of the difficulty of heating them; and whether in the case of gas and light being privately produced this will be counted by equivalents or by the amount of coal consumed in their production?

The **PRESIDENT** of the **BOARD OF TRADE** (**Sir Albert Stanley**): Except for houses over fifteen rooms which can claim to be specially assessed under Clause 12 of the Order, no difference is made between town and country. Wood or peat is generally available in country districts as an alternative fuel. Gas or electricity produced privately for consumption will be rationed in the same way as gas or electricity purchased. The allowance of fuel for their production will be fixed so as reasonably to prevent excess production.

Mr. MASON: Can my right hon. Friend say whether a deduction will be made from the coal allowance in the case of acetylene plant or oil-engines being used?

Sir A. STANLEY: If the right hon. Gentleman will communicate with the local authority which deals with this matter I think he will find it competent to give him an answer.

THAMES PILOTS.

42. **General CROFT** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that the exempted Thames pilots, who are all over military age, have been deprived of their livelihood, he can now state what steps he proposes to take, in conjunction with the Trinity House authorities, to place all pilots on the River

[General Croft.]

Thames on an equality under one body, in order that they may share the work with other Thames pilots?

Sir A. STANLEY: I am informed by the Trinity House that of the forty men included in the class of exempt pilots, thirteen are under fifty. The average earnings of these men in recent years have been as follows:

	£
1912	301
1913	352
1914	355
1915	446
1916	357
1917	339

So that it will be seen that there has been no appreciable diminution in their average earnings compared with the pre-War earnings. In the opinion of the Trinity House, the suggestion that all pilots on the River Thames shall be put on an equality under one body, in order that they may share the work with other Thames pilots is not practicable.

General CROFT: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in many cases these pilots definitely state that they are not receiving these funds at all, and do not the figures apply to a few only?

Sir A. STANLEY: No; I am not aware of that. They apply to the whole, so far as I know, but I will make inquiry.

43. **General CROFT** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he has now inquired into the fact that when the Admiralty took over and requisitioned the steamers trading in the Thames the licensed Trinity House river pilots for exempted ships were deprived of their means of livelihood and are in many cases now on the verge of starvation; and what steps he proposes to take to compensate these sufferers for the losses they have sustained?

Sir A. STANLEY: Although the average income of this class of pilot has not appreciably declined, as compared with the pre-war income, I understand that the earnings of some of the men have been reduced from various causes, but I regret that the Board of Trade have no funds at their disposal to compensate these men for any falling off in their employment.

TIMBER HAULAGE (DAMAGE TO ROADS).

44. **Mr. CAREW** asked the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that during the past year no less than 152,000 tons of timber, a large portion of which was for pit-props to be used in Government-controlled mines, has been hauled over the main and district roads in eighteen of the urban and rural districts of Devonshire, causing damage estimated at £24,373; as this traffic, although for Government purposes, was not carried directly by Government Departments but by private persons, will he consider in what way highway authorities are to be reimbursed for the damage done to the roads; will he also state the policy the Government propose to adopt with reference to claims in respect of damage by private timber hauliers; and whether the Road Board are to be asked to report and make recommendations upon such claims in the same way as they have hitherto done with regard to traffic for which Government Departments are directly responsible?

Sir A. STANLEY: My attention has not been called to the particular haulage referred to, but arrangements have been made for dealing with extraordinary claims for damage to roads by timber haulage, whether by the Timber Supply Department or private timber merchants, in cases where the timber is to be used for purposes of national importance. Such claims will be dealt with by the Lands Branch of the War Office under Treasury instructions and in consultation with the Road Board.

ENEMY GOOD CONDUCT (PUBLICATION OF FACTS).

45. **Mr. HOLT** asked the Prime Minister if he will give instructions to the Minister of Information to collect and publish facts as to good and kindly conduct by our enemies equally with facts as to crimes and atrocities, so that the information given by the Government as regards the behaviour and character of our enemies may disclose the full truth?

The **CHANCELLOR** of the **EX-CHEQUER** (Mr. Bonar Law): As the adoption of the suggestion contained in

the hon. Member's question would not, in my opinion, add materially to the work of the Department, I am willing to bring it to the notice of the Minister of Information.

ALIENS.

NATURALISED PERSONS OF BRITISH BIRTH.

48. Mr. ALBION RICHARDSON asked the Prime Minister whether the Government will undertake that no naturalised British subject of German birth interned in Germany and Holland shall be repatriated to this country during the War?

Mr. BONAR LAW: No, Sir. There is no power to exclude a British subject from this country, but if any naturalised person of German birth is suspected of being dangerous there is power to deal with him when he comes here.

Mr. RICHARDSON: May I ask my right hon. Friend whether he will undertake that none of these naturalised British subjects of German birth shall be repatriated voluntarily to this country under any arrangement made at The Hague?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I am afraid I could not give that undertaking. The whole arrangement might break down if we insisted upon one particular thing like that.

ENEMY BANKS.

50. Sir J. BUTCHER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the estimated value of the outstanding assets of the London branches of the German and Austrian banks which have not yet been placed in safe custody; and what steps have still to be taken in order to place such assets in safe custody?

Mr. BONAR LAW: No precise estimate can be made of the value of the vested securities held by the Controller as the agent of the Custodian and not yet lodged at the Bank of England, to which I understand my hon. and learned Friend to refer, but their value reaches, I am informed, several millions sterling. As regards the second part of the question, a statement as to the future arrangements for dealing with the enemy banks will be made in the course of this afternoon's Debate.

MUNITION WORKS (ERECTION OF CHURCHES).

53. Mr. HOLT asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer under what provisions of the Vote of Credit the Government consider themselves to be authorised to grant money for the erection of churches in the neighbourhood of munition works?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of MUNITIONS (Sir Laming Worthington-Evans): The Grants towards the cost of erection of churches were made as desirable in view of the conditions created by the War.

Mr. HOLT: May I ask the hon. Gentleman to refer me to the terms of the Vote of Credit which he says authorises it?

Sir L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: These are the words of the Vote of Credit.

Mr. GULLAND: Is it not a fact that the Ministry of Munitions, as employers at these munition works, also spend a great deal of money in the erection of cinemas and recreation halls?

Sir L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: I believe they do.

Mr. ROCH: May I ask whether these Grants are made only to the Established Church or to all denominations?

Sir L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: I must refer my hon. Friend to previous replies which have given the details.

Mr. HOLT: Is it the view of the Ministry of Munitions that a Vote of Credit authorises them to spend money on any single thing which they think is desirable?

Sir L. WORTHINGTON-EVANS: No, my hon. Friend must not understand that. The words are "desirable in view of the conditions created by the War."

Mr. PRINGLE: Is there any right under a Vote of Credit to take a departure of policy involving the endowment of churches?

ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.

54. Mr. L. HARDY asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, owing to the fact that no new assessment for Income Tax has been made since 1910 on account of war conditions, his attention

[Mr. Hardy.]

has been called to the burden which is falling upon the landlord of agricultural land, who has to pay still upon the assessment made before the increase in the value of tithe took place, as the surveyors of taxes cannot allow deductions which alter the existing assessment; and whether he will give instructions to the surveyors of taxes that the assessment may be varied in such cases to meet the exceptional circumstances?

Mr. BONAR LAW: My right hon. Friend is under a misapprehension. The practice already existing is to allow a reduction of the Schedule A assessment on titheable land in years other than revaluation years, if the owner shows that the assessment is excessive by reason of increased tithe being payable to a tithe owner who is directly assessed.

INCOME TAX (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.

55. **Mr. MACMASTER** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Bill to consolidate the statutes in regard to Income Tax will be introduced; and whether it is his intention to give it legislative effect before the House rises for the summer vacation?

Mr. BONAR LAW: It is not anticipated that the Bill can reach this House until the end of this month.

FOOD SUPPLIES.

FRUIT BUYING (SCOTLAND).

59. **Sir J. D. REES** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether **Mr. J. M. Hodge**, solicitor, of Blairgowrie, has been appointed sole buyers' agent for fruit for the whole of Scotland; whether, acting in this capacity, he prevailed upon local fruit associations to accept 10s. instead of 15s. per ton of fruit in order that he might allow commission at the same rate to other fruit salesmen; whether afterwards he refused to pay such 10s. commission to such salesmen or to some of them; and, if so, will he take action in order that the reputation of the Government may not be prejudiced and fruit salesmen be injured by such dealings?

Mr. PARKER (Lord of the Treasury): No, Sir. The Ministry of Food are not purchasing fruit in Scotland, and consequently no buyer has been appointed.

INVALIDS (EXTRA RATIONS).

60. **Mr. WATT** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether he is aware that local food committees in Scotland, when presented with medical certificates asking for extra rations for invalids, are still replying that such permits can only be had from the head office in London; and that, in particular, the local food committee of Rutherglen are taking this stand in connection with the issue of white flour to invalids; and will he see this remedied, in view of the delays and risks of life occasioned in communicating with his London Department?

Mr. PARKER: The new procedure by which food control committees will have power to deal with applications for extra rations in an extended list of diseases, and with applications for white flour in certain cases, will come into force with the introduction of national rationing on July 14th. After that date it will only be necessary to refer exceptional cases to the Ministry. Should any cases arise in which life would be endangered by delay, the local committees will have power to deal with them under the special provision made for cases of grave emergency.

Mr. WATT: Will the hon. Gentleman represent to the Department that this is an old grievance, and that a promise was made in the matter long ago?

POTATO FLOUR.

61. **Mr. PERKINS** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether the experimental plant for the production of potato flour has been sufficiently tested to prove its suitability; whether the sanction of the Treasury has been obtained for the provision of the necessary money to enable the plant to be made on a sufficiently large scale; will he say how many of such plants are proposed to be set up by the Ministry of Food; what will be their total capacity; and when does he expect that the plants will be in full operation?

Mr. PARKER: The answer to the first two parts of the question is in the affirmative. The number of plants will depend upon the surplus of potatoes available

after due provision has been made for the needs of ordinary consumers. Each plant will be capable of handling from 300 to 350 tons of potatoes weekly, working night and day. The plants will be worked by private enterprise, and the requisite machinery will be provided as circumstances require.

LOCAL FOOD COMMITTEES (EXPENSES).

62. Mr. P. A. HARRIS asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food if he will state what arrangements have been made to defray the expenses of the local food committees; whether he is aware that the committee for the Market Harborough area have received no financial assistance towards the salaries of their officials and staff, and the whole of the cost thereof has been defrayed out of the rate account; and what action it is proposed to take to remedy this most unsatisfactory position?

Mr. PARKER: Food control committees are entitled to claim repayment of reasonable expenses incurred by them in carrying out the Food Controller's Orders, provided that such expenses are in each case certified to have been necessary by the Food Commissioner concerned. The Food Commissioner for the division in which Market Harborough is situated has found himself unable to certify as necessary all the expenses in respect of which repayment is claimed by the Food Control Committee. I am, however, taking steps with a view to securing an early settlement of the case.

CROPS (ISLAND OF TIREE).

64. Mr. WATT asked the Secretary for Scotland, as President of the Scottish Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that the crops planted on the farm of Balephetrish, in the island of Tiree, by the crofters are being eaten by sheep at the order of the farmer there; that the police are preventing the sheep being driven off by the crofters; that the representative of his Board, when in the island, made the statement that it would be criminal to allow sheep to eat crops so valuable for human food; and that the farmer proposes to put cattle into the potatoes planted by the crofters, although within a month of being ready for human consumption; if so, will he say what action he proposes to take in the matter; and whether he has considered the advisability of compensating the farmer for

withdrawal of his sheep and cattle, so that the food may not be destroyed in war-time, during the dispute?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Munro): My inquiries into the facts of this case are not yet complete. I propose to communicate with my hon. and learned Friend when I have received the information for which I am waiting.

Mr. WATT: Will the right hon. Gentleman take care that in any case the food is preserved for the benefit of the nation?

Mr. MUNRO: I shall certainly bear that consideration in mind.

GERMAN PRISONERS.

77. Colonel FABER asked the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is aware that, although German prisoners were promised last January for carrying out drainage work and banking and ditching in the district of Wood Walton and Connington fens, where there are frequently floods, no prisoners have yet been sent; whether he is aware that this district is one of the most prolific in England for all sorts of produce and that even now the fen weeds are so thick that they are choking the crops; and if he will take steps to see that German prisoners are sent at once?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Sir R. Winfrey): The Board have endeavoured to obtain prisoners for this work, but no guarantee was given that they would be available, and it has not proved possible up to the present to secure them in view of the many other urgent demands for their services. The Board fear that there is no likelihood that they will be able to supply combatant prisoners at once, but it has been suggested to those concerned in the work that interned aliens might be employed instead. It is believed that a sufficient number of such men can be obtained on application to the Home Office.

CORN AND POTATOES.

78. Sir J. SPEAR asked the President of the Board of Agriculture if, in view of the probable deficiency of the yield of corn and potatoes from the late sown crops in consequence of the continued drought and consequent menace to the food supply, he will, in order to avoid further loss through lack of men to harvest the crops, urge the War Office to

[Sir J. Spear.]
provide that the recently called-up men be allowed to return to the farms from which they were taken for one month to secure the harvest?

Sir R. WINFREY: I regret that I can add nothing to the answers given on this subject to the right hon. the Member for the South Molton Division on the 1st instant.

Sir J. SPEAR: Is it not more serious to run the risk of losing a considerable part of the food supply than it would be to return these men for a month?

Sir R. WINFREY: I think the President of the Board of Agriculture fairly understands the position.

FEEDING LANDS.

79. Mr. TICKLER asked the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is aware that agricultural committees are ordering some of the best feeding lands to be ploughed up, although no barns or other buildings are available in the district, and the owner has offered to plough up other lands in another part of the country of an equal acreage and where buildings are available; and if he will advise a more reasonable attitude to be adopted by these committees?

Sir R. WINFREY: I am not aware of any such cases, and if my hon. Friend will be good enough to supply me with particulars of any which he has in mind, I will have them looked into at once.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND).

63. Mr. DUNDAS WHITE asked the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the tenure of small landholders under the Small Landholders (Scotland) Acts may be placed in jeopardy if the proprietor sells the estate in small lots so as to enable the individual purchasers to apply to the Land Court to authorise the resumption of the land for their own personal occupation under Section 19 of the Act of 1911; whether his attention has been directed to the statement in the last Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland that the holders of eleven full-sized holdings created by the Board in 1914 on the Middlebank estate, in Perthshire, though they would have pre-

ferred to continue as tenants under the small landholders' tenure, have purchased their holdings rather than risk the possibility of losing them in this way; and, as it was not intended when the Act was passed to enable the proprietor, by selling the estate in small lots, thus to prejudice the interests of the small landholders thereon, whether he will introduce legislation to prevent small landholders being thus adversely affected by the sale of the proprietor's estate?

Mr. MUNRO: My attention has been called to the matters to which my hon. and learned Friend refers. I am considering the legal position, in consultation with my advisers. I cannot at the moment make any statement regarding legislation.

Mr. WHITE: Will my right hon. Friend be able to make any statement before the House rises for the Recess?

Mr. MUNRO: I shall endeavour to.

NAVAL AND MILITARY PENSIONS AND GRANTS.

65. Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Pensions Minister whether his attention has been drawn to the cases of the families of men who enlisted voluntarily in the War who are penalised, inasmuch as the rates of wages at that time are not at all comparable with the rates now being paid; and whether he is taking steps to rectify this state of affairs?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of PENSIONS (Colonel (Sir A. Griffith-Boscawen): I am quite aware of the difficulty brought to my notice by my hon. Friend, and am endeavouring to meet it so far as supplementary allowances to the wives of serving men are concerned.

66. Mr. MACMASTER asked the Pensions Minister whether it is his intention to publish a short and concise statement of the pensions to which wounded or disabled or discharged soldiers are entitled and the allowances to which their dependants are entitled, in order that the information may be readily accessible to all those interested in the subject?

Sir A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: A small pamphlet, entitled "Soldiers' Pensions," setting out the information referred to, was issued last year. It has

now been revised to meet the amendments effected by the Royal Warrant recently issued, and copies will be issued as soon as the printers can deliver them. A similar pamphlet, applicable to the naval service, has also been issued.

Mr. PENNEFATHER: To whom will these leaflets be issued, and where?

Sir A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: They are issued. Arrangements have been made for the distribution of large numbers at kiosks of the Government Information Bureau. A copy will also be given to each man on discharge from hospital.

Mr. MACMASTER: Will they be accessible to Members at the Vote Office?

Sir A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: Yes; they will be accessible to Members of Parliament if they desire copies.

Mr. HOGGE: Seeing that these concessions are for the discharged people only and the Pensions Ministry know the names and addresses, will they send the leaflets instead of requiring them to be asked for at kiosks?

Sir A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: I have already said they are issued to each man as he is discharged from hospital.

Mr. HOGGE: May be!

90. **Mr. NEEDHAM** asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will arrange for a leaflet to be sent with each ring paper stating briefly the full rights of dependants in such matters as sickness grants, expectant mothers' grants, advances when draft books are missing, rent allowances, etc., and the help and advantages generally which are accorded through local war pensions committees to such dependants?

The **FINANCIAL SECRETARY** to the **WAR OFFICE (Mr. Forster):** I will communicate with my right hon. Friend the Minister of Pensions as to this, and let my hon. Friend know the result.

BISHOP OF OXFORD (VISIT TO UNITED STATES).

67. **General CROFT** asked the Representative of the Ministry of Information whether the Bishop of Oxford is going to the United States on behalf of the Ministry?

Colonel GIBBS: The answer is in the negative.

ADMIRALTY EMPLOYEES (WORKS COMMITTEES).

68. **Mr. ROWNTREE** asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any modification has yet been made in the scheme proposed by the Admiralty for setting up works committees of Admiralty employes in order to meet the objections raised by the trade unionists; and, if so, what is the nature of such modifications?

The **PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY** to the **ADMIRALTY (Dr. Macnamara):** Our proposals of the 13th May were, as my hon. Friend knows, sent out as a basis of discussion. We have received a considerable volume of written opinion upon them, and I have met six deputations, representative of the trade unions.

Meantime, the War Cabinet, as the Leader of the House informed my hon. Friend last Thursday, has appointed an Inter-Department Committee, with the Minister of Labour in the chair, to work out in detail the application of the principles of the Whitley Reports to Government establishments. We must, of course, await its decisions before submitting the proposals to the Board.

ADMIRALTY PILOTS, GIBRALTAR (CONDITIONS OF SERVICE).

69. **Mr. CHARLES DUNCAN** asked the Secretary to the Admiralty whether a reduction has been made in the earnings of the Admiralty pilots at Gibraltar; what this reduction entails on the weekly earnings of these men; why such reduction was made; and whether the pilots concerned were ever consulted in the matter, or whether such reduction was simply put in force without giving the pilots concerned any other option but to accept it?

Dr. MACNAMARA: The pilots in question are the masters of yardcraft in Admiralty employment. A rearrangement of their conditions of service has been made, and I should be very glad indeed if my hon. Friend would go through the details with me. My impression is that he will agree that these employes have been quite fairly treated. As regards

[Dr. Macnamara.]

the last part of the question, I believe it is the fact that the employés themselves were not consulted.

ROYAL AIR FORCE (UNIFORM).

71. Sir F. HALL asked the Under-Secretary of State to the Air Ministry whether a further alteration is likely to take place in the uniform, which has been in existence about three months, of officers and men of the Royal Air Force; and, if so, whether, considering the shortage of labour, the loss of material, the cost to officers concerned, and the request of the Government to economise and not to waste labour, he will immediately give instructions that such contemplated alteration is not to be carried out during the War?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE to the AIR MINISTRY (Major Baird): The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The introduction of the new uniform was decided upon by the Air Council, after the fullest consideration of all the factors involved. No additional labour will be required; no loss of material is involved, as all khaki uniform will either be worn out before it is replaced, or it will be cleaned and repaired and returned to the Army for reissue; no additional cost is involved to the State, as the new uniform costs less than the uniform hitherto worn by the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps. Officers will only be called upon to provide themselves with the new uniform when that which they are at present wearing becomes worn out, and no compulsion will be exercised to make them get it earlier.

Sir F. HALL: May I ask if it is a question of economy to alter the existing uniforms for a new branch of the Service, instead of supplying them with a new uniform, and allowing those that have been made for the Air Force to be entirely worn out before there is any question of alteration?

Major BAIRD: I am afraid I did not make myself quite clear. I did say the uniform will be worn out before it is replaced.

Sir F. HALL: Then it is to be understood that the existing uniforms are not

to be altered for either branch of the Service? I hope the hon. and gallant Gentleman will make this perfectly plain.

Major BAIRD: I am afraid I do not quite see my hon. and gallant Friend's point. The Air Force uniform will be different from that worn by the Navy and Army. There are three different Services, but not three different branches of one Service.

Sir F. HALL: Why should it be necessary, after being in existence only three months, to have an alteration in this uniform? Why were not proper steps taken in the first place?

Major BAIRD: It has not been in existence; it is only just coming out.

Sir F. HALL: The present one.

Major BAIRD: What has been discovered is that khaki is not liked by sailors, and it is having a bad effect on the *esprit de corps* and *moral* to put them into khaki. That is the plain fact, and as we can both please the sailors and soldiers, without any increased cost to the State, certainly it is worth while doing so.

Colonel YATE: Knowing how all commanding officers are anxious to see all their men in up-to-date uniform, will the hon. and gallant Gentleman give special instructions that no officer is compelled to purchase a new uniform until the old uniform is worn out?

Major BAIRD: I have already said that.

CHINESE LABOUR (FORFARSHIRE).

72. Mr. WILKIE asked the Minister of Labour whether he is aware that a number of Chinamen are being employed in road-making at Edzell, in the county of Forfarshire; whether his Department have been consulted regarding the employment of these men; which Department is responsible and who are the employers; whether the recent refusal of the Forfarshire County Council to increase the wages of their roadmen has anything to do with the employment of the Chinese; and whether he will make careful inquiries into this matter and draw the attention of those responsible to the objection on the part of British labour to the employment of Chinese?

The **PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of LABOUR (Mr. Bridgeman)**: The position is, I understand, that thirty-four Chinese seamen, who are temporarily unable to follow their ordinary vocation, have been employed upon road work at Edzell since the end of April. The information as to the employment of the men first reached the Minister of Labour when the arrangements had actually been made, and in view of the importance of the work and the difficulty of obtaining British labour he did not raise objection. I am informed that the men are employed by the Road Board acting as agents for the Air Ministry, and the Forfarshire County Council are not concerned in the arrangement.

Mr. PRINGLE: Will the employment of Chinese not enable the county council to resist a demand for increased wages?

Mr. BRIDGEMAN: I cannot answer that.

CENTRAL CONTROL BOARD (LIQUOR TRAFFIC).

73. **Colonel GRETTON** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions if the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) intends to extend its present holding of licensed property in Cumberland; if so, what is the extent of the extension contemplated; and can he state the estimated expenditure?

The **PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the MINISTRY of MUNITIONS (Mr. Kellaway)**: There are licensed premises situated within the present direct control area which have not yet been acquired by the Board. Whether the acquisition of these premises should involve the acquisition of other properties owned by the same brewers but situated outside the area is now being considered on the suggestion, as I understand, of the brewers themselves. The answer to the last two paragraphs will depend upon the decision taken.

MILITARY SERVICE (MEDALS).

80. **Mr. NEEDHAM** asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he is discussing the question of recognition of military services, by means of a medal or otherwise, of British, Dominion, and Indian soldiers at Gallipoli with the Dominion Prime Ministers and representatives of India who are now in London?

84. **Sir J. BUTCHER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether the representations made by the Australian and New Zealand Governments to the Colonial Secretary on the subject of issuing a medal or ribbon to the troops from the Dominions who took part in the Gallipoli operations have been communicated to the War Office; whether it is the desire of those Governments that such a medal or ribbon should be issued; and whether he will forthwith consult with the Dominions and the Colonial Office on the subject, and will issue a special Imperial medal or ribbon to all the troops who took part in those operations?

Mr. MACPHERSON: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies is in possession of the views of the Army Council on the proposal to issue a medal to the Dominion troops who took part in the operations at Gallipoli. The answer to the first two parts of the question by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for York is in the affirmative.

Sir J. BUTCHER: Will the hon. Gentleman answer the latter part of my question, as to the issue of a special Imperial medal for all those who took part in the operations?

Mr. MACPHERSON: I answered that previously—it is under consideration.

CABLE FACILITIES.

81. **Brigadier-General CROFT** asked whether any firms applied for and received preferential cable facilities with Spain; and what firms, if any, applied for and were refused the advantages granted to Messrs. Harris and Dixon?

Mr. MACPHERSON: A limited number of firms were in 1916 allowed special facilities for their cablegrams to Spain. I think it right to state that other rival firms with large commercial interests in Spain got these facilities before the firm of Messrs. Harris and Dixon. I can find no trace in the office of the Chief Cable Censor of any firm having been refused these facilities upon application, except the firm of Hall Brothers, Cairns, Noble and Company. This refusal was only given after reference by us to the Director of the Trade Division at the Admiralty, whose representative had been present at

[Mr. Macpherson.]
a meeting of the Board of Trade a few days before, at which it was also decided to withdraw all facilities from the other firms to which I have referred.

Mr. WATT: Can the hon. Gentleman say—has he made inquiry—as to whether the profits of these firms went up immediately the decision was given?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that. It does not arise on this question.

BLACK WATCH.

86. Mr. PONSONBY asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that all B2 men in the Black Watch at a certain station have been drafted into another battalion at another place, paraded before a doctor, and, with the exception of five, passed as fit and equipped for service abroad; whether he is aware that these men had been before several boards, the last only a fortnight previous to their transfer, and declared unfit by their own doctor; whether unfit men from other regiments, such as the Seaforths, the Gordons, etc., are being sent to the same place for the same purpose; and whether he will have an inquiry made into these proceedings?

Mr. MACPHERSON: The process of medical examination, transfer, and selection for drafting described in my hon. Friend's question is one which is carried out almost daily in every battalion in this country, and the regiments mentioned in the question have been so treated. Those men who are selected for service abroad are subjected to a final medical examination before being drafted overseas, and, as I stated in answer to a question by my hon. Friend the Member for North Somerset, on the 12th June, every reasonable precaution is taken to ensure that men will be utilised on duties for which they are fitted.

WOOL CONTRACTS.

82. General CROFT asked whether any wool contracts have been given to a firm which is German, naturalised or otherwise; and, if so, what firm?

Mr. FORSTER: As I have already informed my hon. and gallant Friend, the answer is in the negative as far as I am

aware, but if he has any information on the subject, I shall be glad if he will communicate it to me when I will have inquiries made.

General CROFT: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that when I asked the question nobody on that bench answered?

SOLDIERS' PAY.

87. Mr. PERKINS asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether a private soldier, unfit for active service and transferred to a Labour Battalion, if living at home and engaged as a farm labourer, receives 25s. a week from his employer but loses his Army pay and separation allowance; and, if so, whether he can see his way to arrange for the release of such men from the Army in order that they may earn the wages current in their employment?

Mr. FORSTER: I would refer the hon. Member to my reply on the 3rd July to the hon. Member for South Leicestershire.

Tithe Rent-Charge Bill.

47. Mr. L. HARDY asked the Prime Minister whether he can state when the Bill dealing with tithe rent-charge will be introduced; and whether it is intended to pass it before the summer Adjournment?

Mr. BONAR LAW: It is hoped that it may be possible to introduce this Bill before the Adjournment.

Elementary School Teachers.

74. Mr. CHANCELLOR asked the President of the Board of Education whether teachers in elementary schools possess the same rights as other Civil servants and employés in other trades and professions to demand arbitration on matters in difference between them and the employing authorities; and, if not, whether he will take steps to secure for them such rights as will place them in a position not less unfavourable than others?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Herbert Fisher): Though I have received requests from bodies of teachers to use my good offices to secure arbitration in particular cases and on particular issues, I have not been

approached by the bodies representing different classes of teachers with a view to the establishment of a general or obligatory system of arbitration, and I have no reason to believe that they desire the establishment of such a system.

Vivisection.

75. Sir GEORGE GREENWOOD asked the President of the Board of Education what sum of money is annually expended by local education authorities in England in assisting universities in the medical departments of which experiments on living animals are carried out; whether such sums are given for general purposes or ear-marked for any specific purpose; and what universities were in receipt of such sums during the last educational year?

Mr. FISHER: A total sum of £84,254 was in 1913-14, the last year for which I can at present give figures, contributed by local education authorities to the Universities of Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, London (King's College and University College), in which there are medical departments licensed for the carrying out of experiments on living animals. Part of the contributions was earmarked for special purposes (e.g., for payment of students' fees or for particular departments), but the greater part was available for general university purposes.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

British Gas Light Company (Norwich) Bill [Lords],

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

Nelson Corporation Water Bill [Lords],

Sligo Corporation Bill [Lords],

Reported, with Amendments: Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

BILL PRESENTED.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL,—“to suspend the operation of Section fifteen of the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883,” presented by Mr. SHORTT; supported by the Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

WAR.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

Mr. TREVELYAN asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that it is generally understood that the Bill for the Ministry of Health is already drafted, the Government will consider the advisability of introducing it at an early date for the First Reading, in order that it may be printed and circulated for the consideration of the public generally and, in particular, of the women of the country, who are very keenly interested in the measure?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I have nothing to add to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary to a question by the hon. and gallant Member for Plymouth on the 10th of July.

ENEMY BANKS.

Sir J. BUTCHER asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is proposed during the continuance of the War to pay the outstanding debts still due from the London branches of the German and Austrian banks to British, Allied, and neutral creditors; and, if so, what is the amount of such debts?

Mr. BONAR LAW: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative so far as funds are available for the purpose. The approximate amount of admitted non-enemy liabilities still due, or unclaimed aggregates, is £5,190,000.

INCOME TAX, ETC. (UNEARNED INCOMES).

Sir LEICESTER HARMSWORTH asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can see his way to issue a table, similar to that issued by his predecessor in May, 1914, showing the total percentage of unearned incomes from £150 to £100,000 payable under the recent Budget as Income Tax, Super-tax, and premiums necessary to provide Estate Duty, taking forty as the age for the last purpose?

Mr. BONAR LAW: The following table gives the information asked for:

TABLE showing the Estate Duty, Income Tax and Super-tax, payable on certain Unearned Incomes, expressed as shillings and pence in the £ of total Income, at rates proposed in the Finance Bill, 1918—

Income.	Equivalent Estate at 5 per cent.	Rate of Estate Duty.	Estate Duty Payable.	Average Annual Life Insurance Premiums (starting at age 40) necessary to provide the Estate Duty.	Equivalent Rate per £ of Total Income.	Income Tax per £ of Total Income.	Super-tax per £ of Total Income.	Total Annual Rate per £ of Total Income.
£	£	%	£	£ s.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
150	3,000	3	90	2 10	0 4	0 7	—	0 11
200	4,000	3	120	3 7	0 4	1 2	—	1 6
300	6,000	4	240	6 14	0 5	1 10	—	2 3
400	8,000	4	320	8 19	0 5	2 1	—	2 6
500	10,000	4	400	11 4	0 5	2 5	—	2 10
600	12,000	5	600	16 16	0 7	3 1	—	3 8
700	14,000	5	700	19 12	0 7	3 4	—	3 11
1,000	20,000	5	1,000	28 0	0 7	3 9	—	4 4
3,000	60,000	7	4,200	117 12	0 9	6 0	0 5	7 2
4,000	80,000	8	6,400	179 4	0 11	6 0	0 10	7 9
5,000	100,000	9	9,000	252 0	1 0	6 0	1 2	8 2
10,000	200,000	11	22,000	616 0	1 3	6 0	2 4	9 7
100,000	2,000,000	20	400,000	11,200 0	2 3	6 0	4 3	12 6

THE HAGUE CONFERENCE (HOME SECRETARY'S RETURN).

Sir JOHN BARRAN asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the recall of the Home Secretary from The Hague was by a collective decision of the War Cabinet; if not, by whom it was decided on; who sent the telegram recalling him, and what members of the War Cabinet saw it beforehand; and whether it is the view of the War Cabinet that the consideration of the Report of the Select Committee on Aliens is a more important national object than the securing of favourable terms for the release of British prisoners of war?

Mr. BONAR LAW: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The telegram was sent by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the request of the War Cabinet. As regards the last part of the question, in view of the stage which the negotiations at The Hague had reached, it was considered that it was in the public interest that the Home Secretary should return.

INTERNED PERSONS (RENTALS).

Major Sir S. SCOTT asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether British subjects interned in Germany receive rent direct from German subjects for any premises or land owned by them in Germany and rented by Germans?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I have not up to the present been able to obtain any information as to this, but I am causing further inquiries to be made.

Sir S. SCOTT asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that British subjects occupying premises or land owned by Germans interned in this country have to pay rent direct to the enemy subjects; and whether, in view of the provisions of the Trading With the Enemy Act, he now can give advice as to the course which ought to be pursued by these British subjects, as hitherto all applications to the Treasury for advice have failed?

Mr. BONAR LAW: It is impossible for the Treasury to offer advice as to whether such payments should be made or withheld, the question being one for the Courts to decide. The only action taken by the Treasury in the matter is to make sure that no money should reach enemy countries.

MEMBERS HOLDING APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE CROWN.

Colonel AMERY asked the Secretary to the Treasury if the name of the hon. Member for South Birmingham was incorrectly included in the return, dated 26th April, 1918, of Members holding appointments under the Crown?

Mr. BALDWIN: I am informed by the Secretary to the War Cabinet that the rate of pay of the Member for South Birmingham, whose name was correctly included in the return, was incorrectly entered as £650 per annum. The entry should have been "Army pay," the hon. Member not having received pay as Assistant Secretary to the War Cabinet.

FOOD SUPPLIES.

RASPBERRIES.

Mr. TICKLER asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food if it is a fact that his Department has requisitioned the whole crop of Scotch raspberries; if he is aware that this policy is likely to lead to great waste of valuable food; and will he consider the advisability of allowing the crop to be dealt with in the usual manner?

Mr. PARKER: The Scotch raspberry crop has not been requisitioned; the remainder of the question does not therefore arise.

FRENCH BLACK CURRANTS.

Mr. TICKLER asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food if he is aware that, owing to the importation of French fruit having been placed in the hands of people acting under the direction of the Food Controller's Department, and owing to mismanagement, 60 tons of French black currants arriving last week were condemned as unfit for food; and will he take prompt measures to allow this business to be done through the ordinary channels of trade, and thereby prevent the waste of food?

Mr. PARKER: I understand that some 60 tons of French black currants became unfit for food owing to delay in transit, which occurred before they reached this country. There is no ground for supposing that this delay was due to any mismanagement on the part of the buyers, and it is not proposed to alter existing arrangements.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (PENSIONS).

Mr. KING asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he is aware that superannuated members of the Royal Irish Con-

stabulary draw £1 a week pension, which being without war bonus represents only 9s. 6d. in pre-war days; and whether he will arrange for their receiving a war bonus, or an increased sum weekly from the Constabulary Force Fund?

Mr. SHORTT: The average pensions at present being drawn by retired head constables, sergeants, and constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary are respectively £71 7s., £53 6s., and £41 8s. As regards the last part of the question, I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. and gallant Member for Enfield on the 4th inst.

RECORD OFFICE CLERKS (WAR BONUS).

Mr. CROOKS asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether it has been decided to grant a bonus to Record Office clerks to meet the increased cost of living?

Mr. FORSTER: Record Office clerks are already in receipt of the bonus awarded to clerks in general.

NAVAL AND MILITARY PENSIONS AND GRANTS.

Mr. C. DUNCAN asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a first-class air mechanic named H. Renter, No. 18027, was killed while employed loading aeroplane trailers at a railway station on Thursday, 4th July; and whether the widow will be entitled to a pension?

Sir A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply to this question. A Court of Inquiry will be held by the authorities into the circumstances attending the death of H. Renter, and unless it is found that his death was due to his own serious negligence or misconduct his widow will be eligible for pension. She will continue to draw separation allowance for twenty-six weeks from the date of death, so that the question of awarding pension will not arise until January of next year.

Colonel STIRLING asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers who elected pensions under

Army Order No. 1, of 1918, may be permitted to cancel their election on refunding the amount of pension and arrears paid to them, and to reckon their service towards pension as they would have been entitled to do had they not so elected?

Mr. FORSTER: No, Sir; the Royal Warrant definitely provides that the election, once made, is final.

MILITARY HOSPITALS (ALLOWANCE TO INMATES).

Colonel Lord HENRY CAVENDISH-BENTINCK asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in view of the fact that many officers in charge of military hospitals do not avail themselves of the discretion allowed to them to make a weekly allowance of 3s. 6d. to the inmates of their hospitals, he will send a circular to all principal medical officers of military hospitals drawing their attention to the power possessed by them of giving such allowance?

Mr. FORSTER: Instructions have been issued from time to time on this subject, and a further circular is not considered necessary; but if my Noble Friend will inform me of any cases in which cash issues appear to be unreasonably withheld, I will have them investigated.

MILITARY SERVICE.

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY (SERGEANT-FARRIER).

Sir J. JARDINE asked the Minister of National Service if he will make inquiry, with a view to discharge from the Army or at least a prolonged extension of leave granted for three weeks from Egypt, into the case of James M'Kenzie, a sergeant-farrier, Royal Field Artillery, serving with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, on the following grounds, namely: that he has served in the Army since August, 1914, and in Egypt since May, 1915, that his two brothers are also in the Army, and that his father, now seventy-five years of age and one of the two blacksmiths serving the great agricultural district of Kelso, Mr. Alexander M'Kenzie, of the Butts, Kelso, will have to close down from having no workers left, which would be a loss to the nation?

Sir A. GEDDES: This is a matter which primarily concerns the Scottish Board of Agriculture, from which Department no application has as yet been received for Sergeant M'Kenzie's release from the Colours. Careful consideration will be given to any such application, but I must point out to my hon. Friend that it is unlikely that the War Office at the present time could agree to dispense with the services of a non-commissioned officer with important responsibilities and presumably fit for general service.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS (SCOTLAND).

Colonel Sir J. HOPE asked the Minister of National Service if he can now give the names of the Committee appointed to consider the staffing of Government Departments in Scotland as regards men of military age; and if he will explain the delay in appointing the Scottish Committee which has taken place since all similar English Committees were appointed?

Sir A. GEDDES: I would refer my hon. and gallant Friend to the answer which my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry gave him on Thursday last, but I am happy to be able to add that Lord Dundas has consented to act as Chairman of the Committee. There will be two other representatives of the Ministry of National Service, one of whom will be Mr. D. H. Young. Representatives of the several Scottish Departments will also be invited to join the Committee at the appropriate stages of the inquiry.

Mr. hon. and gallant Friend is mistaken in supposing that all the Committees dealing with Government Departments in England have been set up. Most of them are already established, but, owing to the large number of Departments concerned, it was not found possible to hold quite all the inquiries simultaneously.

RUSSIANS' DEPENDANTS (ALLOWANCES).

Colonel YATE asked the Home Secretary whether any protests have been received from public authorities regarding the allowances paid to the wives and dependants of Russian aliens who elected to return to Russia rather than to fight for the Allies; if so, what action has been taken in the matter; and what do these allowances consist of?

Mr. HAYES FISHER: I have been asked by my right hon. Friend to answer this question. As I have previously stated, the allowances referred to are paid to the dependants of Russians who returned to Russia for military service, in compliance with the terms of the Anglo-Russian (Military Service) Convention. The allowances, which are at the rate of 12s. 6d. a week for an adult and 2s. 6d. a week for a child, are only paid in necessitous cases, and the necessary funds have been provided by His Majesty's Government, on the understanding that they will be ultimately recovered from Russia. A few boards of guardians have raised objections to the payment of these allowances, but it is not proposed for the present to discontinue the existing arrangements.

ENEMY ALIENS.

Mr. H. SAMUEL asked the Home Secretary what was the number of Germans and the number of Austro-Hungarians naturalised in each month of the year 1916, and the total, excluding women of British birth, readmitted to British nationality?

Sir G. CAVE: The figures are:

	Germans.	Austro-Hungarians.
January ...	1	2
February ...	3	—
March ...	1	—
May ...	1	—
November ...	1	—
	7	2

Total—7 Germans
2 Austro-Hungarians

9

HAY SUPPLIES.

Colonel Sir C. SEELY asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will arrange for a sufficient quantity of this year's hay crop to be reserved on farms adjoining collieries to provide for their requirements for the coming year, and thereby avoid the waste of transport which was caused this spring by the action of the Army authorities?

Sir A. STANLEY: Under the new arrangements for dealing with this year's

crop of hay the distribution of the supplies required for civil needs will be in the hands of a civilian committee, and the point raised by the hon. and gallant Member will be brought to the notice of that committee. At the request of the Controller of Coal Mines, the Board of Agriculture is engaged in taking a census of the acreage of grass land on colliery farms producing hay, and the expected yield. As soon as this census is complete it will have the joint consideration of the two Departments, and the necessary measures will be taken.

BLACK SEA (GERMAN TROOPS).

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can make a statement as to the landing of German troops on the eastern shore of the Black Sea, and the progress made by them inland?

Mr. BALFOUR: I am not in a position to furnish information on this subject.

Prisons Service, Ireland.

Mr. KING asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland if he is aware that, notwithstanding a circular issued by the General Prisons Board in January, 1917, stating that the allowance of £10 will be extended to those officers at Maryborough who were not in receipt of it before, Warders Kilroy and Lilly, then serving at that prison, never received the allowances, and that £15 each are still due to these officers for the period served at Maryborough; and whether their applications for the amounts have been considered and replies given?

Mr. SHORTT: No such circular as that alleged in the question has been issued by the General Prisons Board. Warders Kilroy and Lilly were employed at Maryborough Prison as supernumerary ordinary warders, and they applied for the special allowance granted to warders on the established staff of that prison, but as they did not form part of the established staff they could not be paid the allowance. No sum is due to them, and they are no longer employed at Maryborough Prison, having been transferred elsewhere in July, 1917.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: May I ask what business will be taken next week?

Mr. BONAR LAW: On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, the Report stage of the Education Bill will be taken.

On Thursday, Supply (Board of Agriculture Vote).

Mr. G. TERRELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the Imports and Exports Bill will be taken?

Mr. BONAR LAW: No, I cannot state a time. I do not think it will be possible to introduce it before the Adjournment.

Mr. PRINGLE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when an opportunity is to be given to discuss future commercial policy in connection with the denunciation of the Most-Favoured-Nation Treaties?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I had hoped to be able to fix a time before the Adjournment; that is still possible, for the subject is now under discussion by the Imperial War Cabinet, and that has made it necessary for us to delay it.

Mr. HOLT: Will the right hon. Gentleman give the House an assurance that nothing will be done until the Debate takes place?

Mr. BONAR LAW: No, I cannot give that assurance; as a matter of fact, nothing is being done at the moment.

Mr. J. MASON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when Vote 8 of the Admiralty will be taken?

Mr. BONAR LAW: As my hon. Friend knows, that depends upon applications in the usual way. I have not heard of applications for it.

Captain WRIGHT: Will the Petroleum Bill be taken before the Recess?

Mr. BONAR LAW: I cannot say definitely; perhaps my hon. Friend will put a question down.

Mr. KING: Has the Government come to an approximate idea as to when the Recess will be taken?

Mr. BONAR LAW: Yes. I have come to an approximate idea—but I do not like to express it at the moment.

Mr. PRINGLE: Do it now!

Resolved, "That this House do sit Tomorrow."—[*Mr. Bonar Law.*]

ALIENS IN UNITED KINGDOM.

GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS.

SIR G. CAVE'S STATEMENT.

Lord EDMUND TALBOT (Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury): I beg to move "That this House do now adjourn."

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir George Cave): The Adjournment of the House has been moved, as hon. Members know, in order that there may be a general Debate upon the subject of aliens. I think it will be convenient to the House if I at once make a statement upon the subject; and, as I have a good deal of ground to cover and may occupy some time, I hope I shall have the indulgence of the House. A few weeks ago I went abroad, having already made certain plans connected with this subject. While I was at the Hague I was practically cut off from all home news. On returning rather reluctantly to this country—

Mr. PRINGLE: Who sent for you?

Sir G. CAVE: I think I should have been more reluctant still if I had known what was awaiting me. But on my return here I found that a somewhat acute controversy had arisen in connection with this matter. I feel bound to say that of some of the methods employed in that controversy I do not, as an Englishman, feel very proud. I do not refer to the attacks on responsible Ministers. They do not really matter in the least. I am sure I myself have often got credit where no credit was due, and I am equally prepared to bear criticism even when I believe it to be undeserved.

I refer to the practice, somewhat new in this country, of attacking public officials and public servants who are doing their best loyally to carry out the directions of their chiefs and to give effect to the decisions of Parliament and of the Government. Those officials do their

duty without fear or favour. They can not answer attacks made upon them, and I think it is most unfair that their names should be dragged into a discussion of this kind, and that an attempt should be made to throw blame upon them, when, if any blame should be thrown at all, it should be thrown upon the Minister responsible, who can answer in this House. But do not let us allow ourselves to be distracted by our dislike of some of the methods employed from the duty which lies upon us all, to give our very serious thoughts and our perfectly cool attention to a matter which, I freely admit, has excited widespread and genuine public concern. I believe that the anxiety that has been widely expressed is to a great extent due to insufficient knowledge of the steps actually taken to protect our country against anything like an alien danger. Still, it is true that even among thoughtful and reasonable men there is anxiety as to what may be the effect of the presence of a large number of aliens in our midst, and it is our duty not only to take care that all reasonable steps should be taken for the protection of this country, but to make it clear to everyone that those steps are being taken and that they are having their proper effect.

May I add that it is only natural that this subject should from time to time be reconsidered and revised. Since our existing system was devised and set into operation, certain new facts, which must affect the minds of us all, have come into existence, or have become more evident. I believe that the continuance of those outrages on humanity of which our enemies have been guilty, such outrages as the sinking of a hospital ship the other day and matters of that kind, must for all of us affect, and reasonably and naturally affect, the point of view from which we approach questions of this kind. It is impossible that a nation which permits itself, or permits its servants, to perpetrate acts of that kind can be allowed to continue in that course of action without suffering seriously in the estimate of all decent people or without affecting the position of its subjects in different countries.

Again, there have been in quite recent days charges against persons of enemy origin. Of those I desire to say nothing that can prejudice a decision, but charges such as have been made and brought forward in responsible quarters

must make all of us somewhat more careful as to the manner in which we deal with aliens. I believe also that the recent calling up of the older men in this country for service in the Army has had some effect upon public opinion. It is unavoidable that when a man of mature age is called upon to do his duty towards his country and has to leave his business, he should view not only with alarm, but with great distaste, or even something stronger, the possibility of the business which he has made and kept alive so long as he was at home being taken over by an alien living near him. I think that the trade aspect of the matter, although perhaps not the most serious one, yet has a great effect on the minds of our people, and that is a consideration which we must bear in mind. I say most strongly that while these considerations do not justify a condemnation of the course hitherto pursued, yet they do justify some further consideration of the lines that we have laid down ourselves.

Let me say just a few words as to what we have done in connection with the internment and repatriation of enemy aliens, because I think people sometimes forget how much has already been done. At the beginning of the War internment was an exception; the policy first adopted was to intern only people under suspicion and others who were in a special position. A little later a much wider scheme of internment was adopted. The late Prime Minister announced in May, 1915, that a decision had then been taken, namely, that we should intern all male enemy aliens of military age, and should repatriate all male enemy aliens above that age, and all women who were enemy aliens, unless in each case exemption had been granted on grounds which my right hon. Friend defined as grounds of justice and humanity.

In order to deal with those exemptions Advisory Committees were set up—one in England and one in Scotland. Each of those Committees contained a judge, or more than one judge, and Members of both Houses. It was their duty to consider all applications for exemption and to recommend the grant or refusal of exemptions. Those Committees got to work, and I do not think there has been any criticism as to the manner in which their work was carried out. They laid down the rule, and I think this is some-

[Sir G. Cave.]
times forgotten, that on any application for exemption the presumption was in favour of internment. It was not for the authorities asking for the internment of an enemy alien to make out a case against the alien upon which he should be interned, but it was for the alien asking for exemption to make out some reason why he should be taken out of the general rule. That procedure has been followed throughout. The cases were carefully considered by the Committees, and I am certain they kept in the forefront the question of public safety, and it is upon the recommendation of these committees that the exemptions now in force have been granted. These exemp-

4.0 P.M. tions may be divided into four classes—first, we have the exemptions granted to men of friendly races, such persons as Alsations certified by the French authorities to be friendly to France and to the Allies, the Czechs and Czecho-Slovaks, men of the same race as those who are now fighting for the Allies in the East, the Poles, who, much against their will, are under German or Austrian rule, and are enemies of our enemies, and others of that kind. In these cases the committees have relied upon the advice of special bodies representing these nationalities and set up to advise on this very question, and I think exemption was only granted on the advice of those bodies. Then came a second class on which I need not dwell, namely, men in such bad health that they could not properly be interned. As to them, special precautions were taken that no prejudice should ensue. Then came the cases, not many in number, of persons of enemy nationality who were doing for this country work from which by reason of their special skill they could not well be spared. I may instance men of scientific attainments or skill, men making lenses and others engaged in industries of that kind, the loss of whose labour would have been a loss to the country. Of course these men were not exempted unless they were free from suspicion and vouched for by responsible British-born people as quite trustworthy.

Then came a fourth class of those exempted by the Committee, as to which alone controversy has arisen. They did grant exemptions to a certain number of enemy aliens who had their roots in this country. They took as their test that the man must have lived here for thirty years, have married a British wife and had

British-born children, or, if the man was unmarried, I think thirty-five years was considered as an adequate residence. In each case they required a guarantee of trustworthiness, and in some cases, but very few, they required security. That is the class upon which a considerable amount of controversy has arisen. As regards women, I do not think it is quite well understood, but the rule regarding them was the same with this exception, that they were not interned but repatriated unless they got exemption on grounds which I have indicated.

I think it only fair to say that the procedure which I have described was at the time accepted substantially by all of us as offering adequate protection for the safety of the State. The matter was debated in this House more than once—in fact, a good many times. In each case the explanation of the system by the Minister of the day was accepted, and on no occasion did this House pronounce any opinion against the treatment of aliens on these lines. Indeed, I think it would be true to say that the most active of our critics to-day were among those who approved the system adopted and were willing in special cases which appeared to them to be proper for exemption, that exemption should be granted. Until very recent times there was nothing like disapproval of the system. Nor can it be said for a moment that there was in any quarter any neglect in carrying out the directions to which I have referred. Nor, indeed, can it be asserted that any ill consequences can be proved to have occurred. There have been spies in this country as in others, but I believe I am right in saying that except in the first few weeks of the War the spies have been found not amongst subjects of enemy States, but among the subjects of other nationalities. I do not think anybody can say that the system which I have described has resulted in injury to the interests of this country. Still, as I said at the beginning, you must look at this matter in the light of events as they occur. You must take into account public feeling, although you must not be pressed by public feeling, however strong, into doing what is unfair or unjust. It is with that view we have undertaken to reconsider the whole system and to consider whether it cannot be in one way or another tightened up with a view to the security of this country.

With this preface, let me put before the House the proposals which we have to make to-day. Let me take the most important matters in their turn. I will deal first with the question of the internment of enemy aliens. I have had a good many resolutions and I have read a good many speeches founded upon the maxim, "Intern them all." [An HON. MEMBER: "Hear, hear!"] I hear only one cheer in favour of that. It is a very good, because a very concise cry, but I do not know any single person who, having taken the responsibility of looking into the facts and knowing what that decision if carried out would really mean, has hitherto adhered to it or would to-day adhere to it. Certain Members of this House who held strong views on this matter were recently asked by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, to put before him the practical suggestions they had to make, and they made a Report which I have no doubt hon. Members have seen in the Press. It is not surprising to me, but it is certainly worth notice, that those hon. Members who feel, I suppose, as strongly as anyone on the question of enemy aliens do not adopt the recommendation that all enemy aliens be interned. I am not surprised at it because they have looked into the matter very carefully. Their view is that enemy aliens should be interned except where there are definite national or medical reasons for their exemption. I think I appreciate the wording of the recommendation and understand what it means. Their exception would cover the persons of friendly nationalities to whom I have referred.

There are good national reasons for not interning in this country the compatriots of those who are fighting for us in other places—the Czecho-Slovaks, the Poles and others who are fighting for the Allies abroad. To shut up such men would be not only grossly unfair but against the national interest. The exception would also cover the second class of people, those who are invalids or too old, and not fit to be interned. It would also cover the third class to which I referred in dealing with the action of the advisory committees—those men who being themselves free from suspicion are engaged in work of a special character for the benefit of this country. Internment would mean putting an end to the work of these men. I am not sure whether the general class of exceptions which these hon. Members propose would

cover the fourth class—I mean the men who have lived long in this country, who have British wives and British-born children, some of them fighting in the War, some of them perhaps having fallen in action. I think on a wider view of what is the national interest the exceptions to which my hon. Friends have given their adhesion would cover that class too. If they take that view then there is nothing between us as regards the internment of enemy aliens. If, on the other hand, they take the other view and desire that men such as those whom I have just described should be interned without any discrimination whatever, I say frankly that I cannot agree with them. I maintain that when a man's son fights for us abroad to imprison the father at home would be a grossly unfair course to take, and one to which I would never give my assent. But I believe my hon. Friends will agree with me that in some cases, I do not say in all cases, in which exemption is now being granted, but in some cases which can be ascertained on careful investigation discrimination must be allowed; you cannot intern every man.

I notice that my hon. Friends, in their recommendation, refer only to exemptions on national or medical grounds in the case of men, but that in the case of women they are willing that there should be exemptions on the grounds of justice and humanity. I do not see why, if you are to have regard to justice and humanity in the case of women, you should not also have regard to justice and humanity in the case of men. I think, upon the true reading of the two clauses in the Report, that I may assume that my hon. Friends agree with that view. Now let me say what we propose to do. It is true, and I have felt it for some time, that the exemptions were granted some two or three years ago. The work was done under very great pressure—I am not casting the least blame upon anybody or questioning the efficiency of the work—but many thousands of cases were dealt with by the committees in a very short time, and I do not think that there is anything unreasonable in suggesting that the list might now be very carefully reviewed and drastically revised. We propose that that process shall take place, and we shall ask a central committee in each country to undertake the duty of revision.

[Sir G. Cave.]

The existing advisory committees, I think, have very often obtained commendation in this House or elsewhere, and probably they would be the best committees to entrust with this work. It would, however, be quite wise, and we propose to strengthen them by certain additional members, including at least one military member, who will be able to take the military point of view on the matter. It may be that they will find it convenient not to hold all their sittings in London or Edinburgh, but to go themselves, or by some of their number, into the provinces and deal with some of the cases on the spot. I think it would be right that they should be asked to state their reasons for any exemptions that they recommend, and that it would also be right, where exemptions are granted, that the statement of reasons should be open to the public. If that course be followed, I think the public may have the fullest confidence that every alien enemy will be interned except where there is a strong reason for exemption, a reason which the public will know. I am quite sure that the adoption of that proposal which we make to-day will give general satisfaction to all those who are concerned in the action to be taken in this matter. Of course, what I say applies to the exemption of women from repatriation as well as to the exemption of men from internment. That is our proposal on that point. It will be seen that in one sense we are not able to accept the proposals of my hon. Friends, but in another sense we do accept them. I am quite sure that the proposals we make will meet every reasonable view.

I now pass to the second subject of importance, namely, the subject of the review of certificates of naturalisation. As regards the greater part of the proposals which have been made in different quarters, I believe that the Bill which I have already introduced, and which I hope may be debated to-morrow, will enable us to deal with the questions which have been raised. Under that Bill we can deal with all certificates whenever granted, including those granted at any time before the War, and including those granted to aliens who were not enemy aliens. In all those cases, when any man comes under suspicion or breaks the law, he will be liable to have his certificate reviewed. There remains one class of certificates which, I

think, might fairly be specially treated. I mean certificates granted during the War. I have no doubt that in all those cases care was exercised in granting naturalisation. At the same time it is only natural, where a person of enemy nationality is naturalised in wartime, that the utmost care should be exercised both in granting and, if need be, in reviewing the certificate, and I see no objection to those certificates being brought under review by the committees that we propose to appoint under the Bill to deal with other applications for revision. Probably there will have to be an Amendment to the Bill. The effect will be that all certificates of naturalisation granted to enemy aliens during the War will be reviewed by the Committee, and if they so advise, they will be revoked.

Sir J. BUTCHER: Would the right hon. Gentleman say that certificates of naturalisation granted since the War will be cancelled unless there are national reasons for retaining them?

Sir G. CAVE: I think it comes very much to that. I propose that those certificates shall be submitted to the judicial committee for review, and, if there are any grounds for revoking them, they will be revoked. I should not think that they are likely to advise their retention unless there are good reasons for doing so.

Mr. WILLIAM WATSON: Will these grounds be grounds personal to the holder of the certificate, and no general grounds?

Sir G. CAVE: I think my hon. Friend had better wait until we come to consider the necessary Amendments to the Bill to which I have referred. Take, next, the question of changes of names. It is a somewhat difficult question to deal with, but, none the less, it excites a good deal of public interest. The suggestion made by my hon. Friends in the letters to which I have referred is that any changes of names during the War by persons of enemy origin shall be made inoperative for a period. I pass over the words "enemy origin." My hon. Friends have not defined them, and they will find them rather difficult to define. They ought to be much more precise than they are.

Mr. KENNEDY JONES: The right hon. Gentleman already defines "hostile origin," in a Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act.

Sir G. CAVE: We are very careful not to define "enemy origin." The ground is already partly covered, because an enemy alien cannot change his name during the War. That has been the law since some time in 1914.

General Sir IVOR PHILIPPS: Is it enforced?

Sir G. CAVE: Certainly it is enforced. I have not heard of a case in which an enemy alien has been allowed to change his name. Secondly, as regards business men, as the House remembers, special provision is made in the Business Names Act, under which, if a name is changed, the former name must be disclosed. As regards other people, I say, frankly, that I have some sympathy with people who are British born, whose families have lived in this country perhaps for generations, and who, having a German name, have thought fit to change it. One can understand that people should wish to escape, if they lawfully can, from a position of that kind, and I think we ought to be very careful in dealing with this matter. At the same time it is also true that where the name of a person naturalised in this country is changed during the War, some amount of suspicion is excited, and it is felt that the man may get credit for British birth when he is not entitled to it. Some extension of the present law may fairly be considered, and we propose that no person who is not a natural born British subject shall change his name without a licence from the Secretary of State. That applies to all persons not natural-born British subjects, a law which already applies to persons who are alien enemies. I have no doubt that in all proper cases a licence would be granted. At all events, it would be some security against a change of name that ought not to be allowed.

Sir H. DALZIEL: Is that for the future only?

Sir G. CAVE: No; we propose to make it retrospective, so as to apply to changes of name during the War. I have always thought that our law as to changes of name is much too loose. A man can change his name at will. He has only to take a new name and put it upon his visiting card or elsewhere and that change becomes effective. I have never thought it right, but we cannot expect to alter the law in that respect during the War, and

we must be satisfied with the limited change that I propose. The fourth point I have to deal with is also one of difficulty. I refer to the question of employment in Government offices. There, again, we are asked to say that every person of enemy origin who is in a Government office shall be summarily discharged. I do not know what the words "enemy origin" mean. We may be told later whether they include grandparents on either side or not, but, however you define them, to discharge summarily all public servants who are of enemy origin would in many cases cause very great injustice. I do not know whether the recommendations are meant to apply, for instance, in the case of a public servant who happens to be the son, say, of a naturalised British subject, who has done good service to the country, and who, perhaps, has fought for us in the War. I think that in a case of that kind it would be very difficult to justify discharge. Apart from that, you must consider not only the individual but the public interest in this matter, and in the case of some men it would be a great public loss to discharge them from the public service. There are men, for instance, of special scientific skill, or of special skill of other kinds, who are engaged specially for war purposes, and who are there because they are needed for the War, but who may be of enemy origin.

Major BOWDEN: Are they Germans?

Sir G. CAVE: I do not know. I am putting the case of men of enemy origin within the meaning of the phrase to which I have referred. To discharge these men from the national service would be a loss to the country in the War. Anybody who knows the facts would say that you must look into the matter and exercise some kind of discrimination. What we propose to do is this: We propose to make it a rule that no person shall during the War be employed in a Government office unless he is the child of natural-born subjects of this country or of an Allied country, but to allow exceptions where there is a definite national reason for making the exception. I take the words "national reason" from the Report of my right hon. Friend (Sir H. Dalziel). I am sure he will agree with me that it is a matter of difficulty.

Colonel Sir F. HALL: That is the same as the conscientious objectors.

Mr. PRINGLE: Will they go before the Advisory Committee?

Sir G. CAVE: Then comes the question, Who is to say whether there is a definite national reason for the exception? That must be considered by some body or tribunal. What we propose is that there shall be a small Committee, composed of men who will command public confidence and who shall be wholly independent of any Department of the Government, and that where any question of exemption from the rule arises it shall be sent to them, and they shall say whether or not there is a good national reason for relaxing the rule. I am certain if that proposal is fairly considered that it will meet all reasonable doubts and difficulties, and will do so without causing grave injustice and without great detriment to the interests of this country.

Mr. ROCH: Will those national reasons be made accessible to the public?

Sir G. CAVE: I do not know; I think there may be some doubt about that in this case. [HON. MEMBERS: "Why?"] I should have thought it was quite obvious. This case rests on a different footing from the others. There may be men employed in public war work whose names, work and qualifications it is very undesirable, in the public interest, to make public. I am quite sure there is no desire on the part of the Government to conceal anything, but there are many reasons why we could not publish—

Mr. FRANCE: Will that include officers in the Army to-day?

Sir G. CAVE: I think not. I am speaking now of Government offices. I am afraid I have been rather long, but I have two other matters to which to refer. First, as regards aliens other than enemy aliens. Their case is a little difficult to deal with. They are registered, and their movements are restricted. It is difficult to do much more as regards those other aliens, who may be friendly or may be neutral. But we do propose to extend the system which already exists of identity books. Aliens other than enemy aliens who go into prohibited areas must have an identity book, but that is not universal. We propose to make that system universal, so that every alien must have his identity book and can be challenged or called upon to show it. That will give us an opportunity of

tracing his movements. The second point I want to mention is this: There have already been many deportations of undesirable aliens. I have reports every week of quite a number of aliens who, for some reason or other, are better out of this country. I make no difficulty at all in making an order of deportation where a proper case is made. Notwithstanding that, there are, as we all know, in this country thousands of aliens who may fairly be called undesirable. Some of them are the source of disease and of all kinds of trouble. There would have been before now, I should think, wholesale deportations from London and elsewhere of undesirable aliens but for the difficulty which we all know of—I mean the difficulty of finding shipping to transport them to their own homes. With regard to that class, we intend to do our very utmost, with the help of the Shipping Controller, to get over that difficulty at the earliest possible moment. I hope that the drastic steps the Government intend to take to free the country of undesirable aliens of all kinds will soon have its effect, and will be a protection to this country, not only against disease, but against evils of other kinds.

I have dealt with the personal aspect of this alien question. I want now to say a word about the trade aspect and about the steps to be taken in connection with enemy businesses and matters of that kind. First, in regard to patents. Here I am speaking with the consent and concurrence of my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade. The question of patents has been the subject of a good many questions in this House. The procedure in this country with regard to patents is that after a patent has been granted it is only kept alive by the payment of a renewal fee annually. The object of that is to benefit the poor inventor who can only pay a small fee in the initial stages, with an increase if the patent increases in value during its life. In the United States it is different. There is one fee which is paid at the beginning, once for all. Our system of renewal fees involves communication with enemy subjects, through neutral countries, in order that their patents may be kept alive by the payment of fees in war time, although, of course, since the War, the right to use the patent has been secured to British subjects. There are something like 10,000 patents belonging to enemy aliens which are actually now

in force. Since the War no patents have been granted to subjects of enemy states, but applications for new patents have been received, and, in some cases, the specifications have been accepted. Those patents, or, rather, those applications, are vested in the Public Trustee, and the use of the invention is secured to British subjects. This procedure is now in force throughout the Empire and in Allied countries. The German Government are treating British patents in the same way. This arrangement secures to this country the benefit of new ideas originating in enemy countries, and secures the protection of British industries and industrial property in enemy countries. But it is a disadvantage in that it means frequent communication to and from enemy countries, although that is done through neutral states. This, under present conditions, the Government consider undesirable, and they propose to discontinue this practice and to cancel the general licence for such communications. They are proposing to vest all patents issued to enemy subjects prior to the War in the Public Trustee and to discontinue the receiving of applications from enemy subjects for the grant of patents.

With regard to businesses carried on before the War in the interest of enemy subjects, we have done a great deal in the direction of getting rid of them. Over 500 winding-up orders have been made, and a substantial number of important undertakings have been transferred to British shareholders, the principal of these being the British Petroleum Company, Siemen's Electrical Works, and, after careful consideration, the Government think that some Amendment of the Trading With the Enemy Act is desirable to enable them to complete the winding-up. Several Members, including my hon. and learned Friend the Member for York, as well as the Advisory Committee of the Board of Trade, have pointed out that where, at the commencement of the War, a partnership existed between alien enemies and British subjects, we have not been able to wind-up that business because the partnership was automatically dissolved by the War. In such cases, under the existing law, the enemy interests have been vested in the Public Trustee; but it is possible, of course, that the business may be kept alive by the former associates of the enemy partner, so that the old connection might be revived after the War. I do not think

there can be many such cases, but to guard against them we propose to take power to wind-up such businesses where there is any reasonable suspicion of such a revival.

We have experienced a further difficulty which we propose to deal with by legislation. The Board of Trade can to-day wind-up a business owned by a company, but as regards the company itself, as distinct from the business carried on by it, that can only be wound up by an Order of the Court, which will necessarily take some time. In order to overcome that we propose that the Board of Trade shall have power to wind-up the company itself and strike it off the register at the time when the business is closed. In the same connection, I want to say a few words about enemy banks. Hon. Members know that the German banks in London are at present under control. As a matter of fact, they are, so far as business is concerned, practically dead, and I think the Controller really does nothing but to ascertain and get in the assets of the banks, to ascertain what they owe and to make preparations for paying the British creditors out of the assets of the bank. Still, it is true that, in theory, at all events, the existence of these banks continues. They are still entities; they are still nominally in existence. I think it is to that aspect that objection has chiefly been taken. We propose to apply at once to the Court for winding-up orders as regards these banks. The result will be to put them into liquidation, and the assets can then be got in and distributed at the earliest possible moment, and the business ended. Those steps we propose to take at once. [AN HON. MEMBER: "After four years!"] One other matter. It is of no use to close those banks if they can be reopened immediately after the War, or if other banks can be opened, perhaps by the same people or by others representing enemy interests, in our country. A bank is not like other trade or commercial undertakings. The German bank has been made an instrument of the German Government in this country. It has been used as the means of getting hold of our trade and financial connections, and of injuring the business interests of our country. Therefore, I think it is right to treat it in a special way, and to consider what shall be done as regards enemy banks after the War. We propose to introduce legislation, somewhat on the

[Sir G. Cave.]

lines of the Non-Ferrous Metals Act, which will make it impossible for a period of years to open any enemy bank in this country after the War. That is a step which, I think, is justified, and which I am sure is a legitimate step to take in time of war, and I think it will be for the benefit of this country. I am reminded that the proposal to wind up these banks has the strong approval of Sir William Plender, under whose control these banks now are.

Mr. ROCH: When did Sir William Plender come to that decision?

Sir G. CAVE: Some little time ago. No one is more anxious than he to get rid of these liquidations. I have dealt with the changes which we propose to make in connection with enemy aliens. Other suggestions, of course, have been made to us. Some of them, I think, are founded on a misunderstanding of the present law and practice. I need not go through all of them in detail, but I am sure they will be considered by those who have charge of these matters, and we shall always be glad to have suggestions in connection with this subject, and will do our best to attain the object we all have at heart. The proposals which I have made will, I think, commend themselves to all who desire to do what is necessary to secure the safety of our country. I put them forward as a substantial contribution to that end. I believe they satisfy the reasonable and urgent needs of the position, and I hope we may look for the help and co-operation of all parties in this House in carrying them into effect.

Sir HENRY DALZIEL: I am sure the House will agree that we have listened to a very calm, dispassionate speech on a matter of some considerable public interest and importance. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by criticising the action of certain persons in condemning members of his Department. I am sure that could not be referred to any member of the Committee which has been considering this question, or to any Member of the House of Commons. I am totally ignorant of any criticism whatever of members of his Department with regard to this matter. It is in accordance with the best traditions of this House that the head of a Department, the Minister responsible in this House, should be the only person who ought to

be criticised in connection with the administration of the Department. I was glad to observe that the right hon. Gentleman did not make the accusation against the suggestions which some of my colleagues and myself put forward that they were flavoured with injustice. I challenge any Member of the House to get up now and tell us where, from beginning to end of these recommendations, there could be any injustice to enemy aliens in this country if they were all carried out. I would never be a party to doing anything unjust or unfair to any enemy aliens who may happen to be at our mercy at present. I hope we shall do nothing that is un-British even in the midst of this great struggle, but I hope when the impartial historian writes the story of this War it will not be possible for any person to point to any page and say, "Here the British acted unfairly and ungenerously." I am certain that, so far as these suggestions are concerned, they will not justify any criticism of that kind.

The right hon. Gentleman has, in the main, accepted practically all our proposals. It is impossible at this moment to give a final judgment on the sketch of policy which he has given us to-day. Practically everything depends on the steam that is going to be behind the proposals. The policy is all right. The only question is, How is it going to be applied? Is there going to be enough vigour, and is it going to attain the object which, I take it, the whole House has in view? Take the first recommendation. It has been spoken of as if it was something which was far-reaching, un-British, and something we ought not to support. We recommend that every alien enemy in this country ought to be interned unless there is a national or a medical reason against it. It simply means that able-bodied Germans who are going about the City of London to-day, who have no sons in the War, men of thirty and thirty-five who are carrying on the businesses of men whom you have called to the Colours, are no longer to have this freedom. I am speaking of men who have been in this country ten or fifteen years, but have never thought it worth while to adopt British nationality, who are walking about freely, calling at Government offices, and getting concessions from Government Departments. We say it ought not to be possible for alien enemies to-day

to walk the streets of London, and have access to all our information, carrying on business without any control. The right hon. Gentleman justly paid a tribute to the Advisory Committee. I should like to associate myself most fully with that. I know something of its working. I do not think the House has ever realised the painstaking character of their proceedings. They are private. There is no public mention of them. But the right hon. Gentleman must agree at the same time that he has not always taken the advice of his Advisory Committee. It consists of two of the most eminent judges and some of the most distinguished Members of the House of Commons. There are cases, as he admitted the other day, in which they have recommended internment, but their advice has not been taken.

Sir G. CAVE: I have always taken their advice.

Sir H. DALZIEL: I am glad to hear that. But the right hon. Gentleman has indirectly admitted that, after the fullest and most careful examination by the Advisory Committee, after taking evidence for and against, they came deliberately and unanimously to the conclusion that these men ought to be interned. Why did we take this risk? Why were these men not interned? They were not interned because someone at the Home Office—I do not say the Home Secretary—was powerful enough to stop the machinery of action and to prevent the decision of the Committee which you yourselves had appointed from being carried into effect. That is wrong, and it is these things which are naturally contributing to the anxiety which people feel. There must, of course, be cases where there is a reason, it may be a national reason, for not interning an alien enemy. In the most confidential Department of all our Government Departments there are Germans to-day. In the most secret Department of the Admiralty we have it that there are not naturalised Germans but full-blown Germans. They are there day by day, presumably getting information. I have no doubt someone must be convinced they are helping us or they would not be there. You have three unnaturalised Germans who are employed by this Government, and must be in a position to obtain information which would be helpful to the enemy.

Mr. ROCH: Does my right hon. Friend actually say there are unnaturalised Germans at the Admiralty?

Sir H. DALZIEL: There are unnaturalised Germans at the Admiralty. I asked a question some time ago as to why they were still there, and I never got an answer. These are the things that create anxiety. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of some of them being out because they had guarantees. I beg him to revise the guarantees. I beg of him—and I suppose it will be done—to make further inquiry about the persons to whom he gives them, I have no doubt the guarantees are given perfectly innocently. You could almost have got a quorum of Members of the House of Commons who have been painted by Laszlo and who were able to say what an innocent person he was. It is very easy to be deceived, especially by enemy aliens. What was the case of Mr. Laszlo? He was found out, after a considerable time—it was kept a little bit of a mystery—committing an act of treason against this country, and, if I am not misinformed, just to show that you ought not always to trust enemy aliens, even though they have guarantees, he was thanked, I understand, for his report on the condition of affairs in this country. I only utter this to show that we really must not approach the consideration of this question full of trust in enemy aliens. I doubt not we have a duty to them. I am sure we have. But we have a duty to ourselves. Why should we take risks in time of war like we have been doing? No other country does it. Germany does not do it. Every British subject in Germany was rounded up in the first week of the War. Does anyone hear of any Englishmen in Germany who are allowed freedom as Germans are in this country? Has anyone heard of any in Italy or in France? None of our Allies have shown the tenderness which we have up to the present.

Mr. KING: There are millions of Germans uninterned in the United States.

Sir H. DALZIEL: I have no doubt my hon. Friend knows where the Germans are.

Mr. KING: Does the right hon. Gentleman deny my fact that there are millions of Germans uninterned in the United States, and does he mean to assume that I have special information?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has no right to interrupt in the middle of a speech.

Mr. KING: On a point of Order. If the right hon. Gentleman gave way and sat down, have I not a right to speak?

Mr. SPEAKER: I was referring to the hon. Member's original interruption. An hon. Member interrupts. Someone answers. Then he gets up to explain, and then rises to a point of Order, and so it goes on, and may possibly end in somebody's suspension. That is how trouble arises, and that is how oratory is spoilt in this House.

Sir H. DALZIEL: My hon. Friend did not understand my reference. There is absolutely no comparison between the conditions in America and

5.0 P.M. here, but, so far as activity on the part of the American Government is concerned in areas where enemy aliens are likely to give information, and in regard to places where it might be supposed they were going to be responsible for acts of destruction against ships, the American Government have been much more active than our Government have been, although they have only been a short time in the War compared with us. We ought not to take any risks.

I am glad that the Home Secretary has accepted our second proposal with regard to those who have been naturalised since 1914. I admit that the cancellation of a bargain which has been made leaves itself open to the suggestion that we are going back upon our bargain. But that does not really apply in regard to the possible cancellation of certificates taken out since August, 1914. Why? Because the Germans who became naturalised since the beginning of the War did it practically for business reasons, for their own reasons, under duress. They knew, at the same time, that a law had been passed in Germany in 1913 providing for the very conditions which took place at the outbreak of war, that if any German acquired the nationality of another country, providing it was done for business reasons, he should still retain his German nationality. Therefore, those Germans who have become naturalised since the outbreak of war are not able, to use a colloquial phrase, to deliver the goods. They were not really entitled to become naturalised, and, therefore, there

is no breach of faith in reviewing and, if you like, possibly cancelling their certificates. If you consider the case of those who were naturalised before the War, our proposals, which, I understand, have been adopted by the Government, only provide that any naturalised German who is disloyal to his adopted country need fear them in the slightest respect. The German, who is naturalised in this country so long as he observes the laws of the country, and so long as he is not disloyal, need not be in the least degree anxious about himself. We provide that those concerned shall have an opportunity of going before a committee, consisting of two judges and laymen, to state their case. For the life of me I cannot understand why some people should think that these proposals are extreme.

With regard to "national reason" and Government Departments it ought not to be difficult to define "national reason." It covers a case where the work is national as distinct from personal and is of benefit to the country. That is a distinction which it is not difficult to make. I want very particularly to ask the Government not to use the word "national" in order to shelter the very men who ought not to be in British employment to-day. It is right to provide exemption in a case of a person who is doing work which no other man could do. If a German is doing work and you say "the country is going to suffer if this man is removed; we have no Britisher to take his place if he is interned"; even then if there is such a case—and I can imagine there may be a chemist or an engineer with a secret process—the greatest precaution ought to be taken. The term "national reason" if put forward ought not to be made a cover for the escape of people who in the ordinary course of things would be interned. It is not the poor men of whom I am most afraid, the poor men in a back street with no friends and little money, probably most of whom have been interned already—but it is the men of wealth and social influence who have entertained many distinguished politicians and many public men at their country houses. I do not say that they have contaminated them, but they have induced confidence. It is so easy to do that, and it is very difficult to shake off the idea that these men can do anything disloyal to the country of their adoption. We know what some naturalised Germans have been doing

since the War began. My hon. Friend the Member for Brentford will deal with that. Thousands have become British subjects and have been helping the country which they disowned at the beginning of the War. These persons must be approached not with the idea that they are innocent, but with the idea that they are possibly guilty, and they ought to be treated as such. It is impossible to kill nationality by a stroke of a pen or by the payment of money. All these men who have been naturalised since the beginning of the War had an opportunity years ago before the War broke out to join their adopted country, but they never did it. Can you believe in the patriotism of a person who only becomes a member of a community to suit his own convenience? Nothing of the kind. Therefore, we ought to be less trustful than we have been in the past.

With regard to the new tribunal we have not had the particulars of it. A great deal will depend on its constitution. I hope this question is not going to be shelved. I can tell the Government, although some people may misunderstand it, that there is a real solid public feeling in regard to this matter, and it is not going to be allayed by a mere postponement. What is to be the constitution of the tribunals? I take it that they are going to interpret the policy of the Government which has been sketched to-day. It is not to be the Advisory Committee. I have considerable confidence in that. It is to travel to different parts of the country and is to contain a judicious element and a military element. I cannot very well see where the military element is going to have any *locus standi*. It is not suggested that the military are going to look for recruits from the particular classes that will come under review.

Sir G. CAVE: The hon. Member is talking of the Committee which will deal with exemptions from internment. Our proposal is that that should be the present Advisory Committee, strengthened by the addition of other names, and among those names will be probably a military representative who will put before the Committee any military situation in favour of an internment.

Sir H. DALZIEL: I think I appreciate what my right hon. Friend says. There will be a Committee apart from this Advisory Committee which will have the duty of settling what is "national reason" for Government Departments.

Sir G. CAVE: That will be a separate and, no doubt, smaller Committee.

Sir H. DALZIEL: That is the Committee about which I should like more information, because really the whole question of policy in regard to Government Department must depend upon the constitution of that Committee. I understand the right hon. Gentleman used the word "judicial," and, therefore, it suggests there will be a judge appointed. I agree with him that it must not be entirely a judicial authority. You must have laymen strongly represented on that Committee to give it confidence, and, if necessary, you ought to have Members of this House. In cases where certain persons are to be continued in employment for a national reason we ought to have the fullest publicity in regard to the action which has been taken. I would remind the Government that this question of employment in Government Departments is one which will not be allowed to rest until it is satisfactorily settled. It is too dangerous at the present time, and the case for immediate action is necessary. I welcome very warmly the declaration that the winding-up of businesses is to be expedited. They have been allowed to continue too long. I think the Government made a mistake at the beginning when they appointed the Controllers on a monthly salary. It seems to me that when you appoint persons at one hundred guineas or two hundred guineas per month that stands in the way possibly of terrible expedition in carrying out the duties. I hope the Government will give a limited time to the men who have charge of these businesses. Many of them have discharged their duty with quickness and dispatch, but others, having less important businesses to wind up, are still short of a clerk, they say, and cannot send in the official papers, as the President of the Board of Trade knows. I am glad that something is to be done to wind up these businesses quickly. They can dispose of their assets and of their debts, for there are plenty of buyers, and can bring the business to an end quickly. We have heard this afternoon possibly the last of the German banks. The Government are doing something to-day which they might very well have done a long time ago. The German banks at the present moment are carrying on business under conditions laid down by the Government. The effect of the appointment of Controllers by the

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Board of Trade will be to liquidate all these banks. From the moment action is taken the banks will be in a state of liquidation. This is a great step forward, and I thank the President of the Board of Trade for assisting in carrying it out. I thank the Government for bringing forward these proposals, but much will depend on the manner in which they are carried out. I believe that if they are properly carried out, and if the tribunal is properly representative, a great deal will be done to put a stop to this troublesome controversy.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: Those of us who have listened to the Home Secretary this afternoon must have been relieved by the tone and attitude he adopted. When we have had experience of the "stunt" Press for the last fortnight the speech of the Home Secretary struck me as being a refreshing instance of what is English, as opposed to what is German. It is almost astounding to hear a representative of the Home Office pay some attention to justice and humanity, and it is certainly not un-English to pay some attention to justice and humanity. The steps that the Government are going to take to meet the evils of the enemy aliens question seems to me not the most important matter under discussion this afternoon. The important thing is that the Government should explain to the country that the danger which has been conjured up before their eyes repeatedly by the whole of the Yellow Press in the country is not so great as they imagine at the present time. We are really getting into a condition in this country such as overwhelmed England at the time of the Popish plot. A man with a foreign name or suspected of having any sort of foreign ancestry, particularly German ancestry, is not only regarded as an enemy to the human race but is treated as one in England to-day. The poor, unfortunate British wives of Germans in this country are not suffering one-tenth as much at the hands of the Government as they are suffering at the hands of the uneducated, stupid people of the country, who see possible infinite danger in their presence. They are boycotted, they cannot go into a shop, and they cannot get work. The treatment of these poor people in England to-day is a blot upon Great Britain, and I hope that the speech of the Home Secretary will do something to show that this persecution ought to be put an end to.

The part of his speech which I disliked was the indication that he was moved to tighten up the regulations on account of this public clamour. We ought not to be moved by public clamour. We ought to see that any risk of spying is stopped to the best of our ability, but whether the "Llandovery Castle" is sunk by these murderers or whether there are isolated cases of people with alien ancestry brought up before the Courts, we ought to see that these matters which do sway public opinion should have no effect upon the Government of the country. I felt during the last fortnight more ashamed of my country than I have at any time during this War. The people who are going to win this War are people who can keep a stiff lip, who can keep their balance and keep their heads cool, not people who go shouting. We have not got an easy thing before us in this War, and if the Press encourage the public to give way in this fashion nothing but evil can follow with regard to the whole prosecution of the War.

I think a mistake was made by the Prime Minister himself, and that the Prime Minister has encouraged this agitation in a way that is most unfortunate. We cannot conceive why, pressed by the Member for East Herts, he should have written that letter to the electors, still less why he should have appointed this Committee to report to him—a Committee selected of Members of this House who are notorious in this agitation, and in no way represent the Members of this House. It gives the whole of the country the idea that the Report is the Report of the average Member of the House of Commons, whereas it is the Report simply of people who, rightly or wrongly, believe in this peril and have made a great feature of it in the country and in the Press. It is not the Report of the House of Commons; the House of Commons is much more level-headed than that. I do not blame any of them. I think they are all earnestly anxious to stamp out this alien peril in our midst, but to say that the alien peril is anything like what has been described—well, we know perfectly well that the spying which takes place is largely the result of Allied aliens in our midst, aliens of any sort, and even of people of British nationality. Who is suspected first of all? The person with a foreign name or of German ancestry. But the person who is suspected is not very good material for spying.

I want to urge upon the Home Secretary that it is his duty to stand up for English character and English fair play. If the country is carried away now, and if the Government gives way to it weakly, and tries to live up to popular clamour, it will be something which history will look back upon as deplorable. I cannot help thinking of Pontius Pilate, who washed his hands, saying, "I will be innocent of the blood of this just man," simply because of public pressure. We do not want our Government to take up that line; we want our Government to see that justice is done in spite of public clamour. We do not want the Government, a Government which I often support, to be playing up to the electorate in this country. They have got a solid majority behind them, and they will not increase but rather decrease that majority by taking measures which are not called for by the actual situation, but are called for merely by a Press which changes its tune and its cry from week to week. For instance, take this matter of making people change their names back from English to German. I think it may be worth while to call upon people who have changed their names to record them at the Home Office, to get them to notify the change, but I cannot conceive of anything more unjust and less in accordance with the national interest than that those people, many of whom have lived here thirty or forty years, and who changed their names to English from German names, should be forced to change them back again because of this clamour. Really, it is much better for them to have English names, because they acquire English traditions much more quickly in that case than if they have got foreign names. We all know what an enormous amount a family name has to do with one's feelings. Besides, it is not only undesirable from a national point of view, but, to my mind, it is perfectly stupid from the point of view of looking after them and watching over them.

You have here a problem which has been before the English nation throughout its whole existence. If you are going to hunt up the foreign origin of people in this country, you may black-list, for instance, my hon. Friend the Member for Montrose, because his origin is Norman and not Anglo-Saxon, and you may pick out from your Government offices endless people who have foreign relations. Are all these people to be hunted down and turned out

simply on account of this clamour from the Yellow Press of the country? We do not want to be carried away by this clamour to do that which is manifestly unjust, still less do we want our Government to encourage it. Rather they should put their foot down and stop it. I have seen endless cases of hardship in connection with the Government action against aliens, but I have seen more hardship caused by the action of unintelligent crowds against unfortunate English women married to Germans. The more we can put a stop to that, the better will be our chance of retaining our name clean and bright; and the more we can stop this panic in the country, the better will be our chance of carrying through the whole of the War successfully.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: I cannot help thinking that my hon. Friend (Colonel Wedgwood) has not realised the somewhat moribund condition of the House of Commons when he complains of the expression of public opinion through the Press. He surely knows that this House of Commons has been ten years without being revived by access to public opinion, and really the only way in which public opinion has to express its opinion at the present time is through the medium of the Press—and, I ought to add, the medium of correspondence. For the amount of correspondence I have had during the last fortnight is remarkable. I am perfectly certain, whatever the opinion of this House may be—I do not profess to say whether this House represents public opinion or not, and in many cases I know it does not—public opinion outside this House is not only favourable to this Report, but 90 per cent. of that opinion endorses the Report which my colleagues and myself presented to the Government.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: You get all the letters; I have had none.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: I am surprised, as my hon. Friend is so convinced public opinion supports him that he has not had a large swarm of letters on the opposite side saying, "Go down to the House of Commons and condemn this Report." But he says he has not had one, and I suppose that is the proportion one would expect him to receive on this question. I should like to point out one matter in which he is wrong before I deal more fully with the whole question. In regard to the change

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of name, he complained that men who had been thirty or forty years in the country, who had struck their roots here, should not be allowed to change their name, and he suggested that change of name was one of the best ways of signifying that they intended to be members of this great community. As a matter of fact, we do not complain of people who changed their names before the War. Everyone of the people we complain of are people who have been here thirty or forty years, have had children here, and have not thought it worth while until the War came to change their names.

We say those people who have not cared to do so prior to the War must, in honour to ourselves—it has nothing to do with them—go back to their old names in order that we may still know that they are Germans with whom we are treating, with whom we are trading, and among whom we have to live and move. I think, as English people, we are entitled to know they are people of enemy alien origin instead of allowing them to masquerade under English or Scottish names. My hon. Friend may take up the "Gazette," and he will see dozens of cases every month of Germans who have changed their names to English names for trading and for other purposes. I say the Government is well advised to accept that portion of our Report and to insist upon these names going back, certainly where they have been changed since the War. I am not going fully through the speech of my right hon. Friend, because I think he has met us fairly, and I want to associate myself with all that the Chairman of our Committee said a few moments ago on that point, but I would like to say a word about national and personal reasons. My right hon. Friend will forgive me for saying that he was not fair to some of us when he said that there was no challenge until recently of his four heads in which men should remain uninterred. He will not forget that on 17th December resolutions were moved by me in this House which were in all essential respects practically the same as the Report of the Committee.

Sir G. CAVE: I meant to indicate before that.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: My right hon. Friend agrees with that. There was at that time a difference of opinion between my right hon. Friend and myself as to

those men who had sons fighting in the Army, and I should like to clear the position up. He asks us to say that men of friendly races should be exempted. I agree with him there. He refers to the Czecho-Slovaks, the Armenians, and so forth. So far as the Czechs are concerned, I have information given me to-day by a member of the Czech Society that there are only 887 Czechs in this country—men, women, and children—of whom 300 have voluntarily joined the Army, 150 are making munitions, which leaves a few old men, women, and children. With regard to sickness we are agreed and with regard to specially skilled men. The whole question arises as to the number of Germans at large—the 6,500. The Czechs do not affect that; the Czechs are Austrians, not Germans.

Sir G. CAVE: Some are Germans, and then there are some Alsations.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: How many Germans are there in our midst to-day? We had a figure that it was somewhere between 6,000 and 6,500. In December last my right hon. Friend suggested that half these had married British wives and had British-born children, and even went so far as to suggest that many of them had sons serving in the Army. I asked him a question in the course of the Debate and my hon. Friend said that probably more than half of them had sons in the Army. I will read the extracts from the OFFICIAL REPORT:

"Mr. Joynson-Hicks: Can my right hon. Friend give us any idea of the proportion of the 6,000 uninterred male Germans who have got sons in the Army—is it as much as one half?"

Sir G. Cave: I should think more than one half.—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 17th December, 1917, Vol. 100, col. 1,699.]

I asked my right hon. Friend in February of this year if he could give us any figures, or how did he arrive at the figures, and he told me that there was no means of arriving at any figures at all. Then I think in the other House two nights ago Lord Sandhurst gave a figure of something like 2,600 who had sons fighting in the Army.

Sir G. CAVE: I gave a figure in this House that there were up to 4,000 I think with British wives, and 2,700 with sons fighting in the Army.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: With regard to those there is a very great distinction, which the Advisory Committee should consider, between Germans living here who had sons in the Army before Con-

scription was introduced, and whose sons were fighting for the country of their adoption, and those who had sons who joined the Army after Conscription was introduced. I quite agree that if a young German went to fight for the country of his adoption, that would be, so far as that man was concerned, a national reason, but in the case of a German who kept his sons back to look after the business, who objected to their fighting for the country of his adoption, and whose sons did not go until they were compelled to go, I submit that it is no reason whatever for exemption from internment, and I would ask my right hon. Friend to see that the Committee which is set up will deal with the matter on that basis.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: May I point out that almost all these exemptions were granted before compulsory military service was the law of the land?

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: But I do not understand that, at the time those exemptions were granted, they were granted on the ground of National Service. My right hon. Friend is going through the exemptions again, and I would ask him to see that no one should be exempt unless for a national reason, and I want to find out whether the national reason is that the sons joined the Army voluntarily or the sons were forced to join. The figures which have been given are the figures of to-day.

Mr. SAMUEL: There have been practically no exemptions since.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: But the point is as to exemptions based on the fact of sons being in the Army. We do not know what the reasons were at the time. They were based on various reasons. The cases are now to be gone over again, and I want to make it quite clear that a line should be drawn between parents whose sons went voluntarily and those who went as a result of Conscription. Now as to Government offices. I also want it to be made quite clear—

Sir W. RUTHERFORD: And the War Office.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: All the Government offices. I do not want to attack any individual by name. I quite agree with what my right hon. Friend said. Many naturalised Germans have gone out and fought for us in the Army. That would be to my mind a very great ex-

tenuating circumstance, if they came back and were employed by the Government, but I have been going through the list of Government Departments which anyone can get in any Government publication. I do not wish to pillory any particular individual, but you will find such names as Sonnenschein, Endoven, Niedermeyer, Schlessinger, and von Haag. You could not go through a list of persons employed in Government offices in Berlin and find such names as Butcher, Cooper, Terrell, and Joynson-Hicks. I am sorry that my hon. Friend the Member for the Midlands is gone. But I would like to explain that we did not base our report on the spy mania at all. We based our report quite frankly on the ground that we here in England do not think it right that we should be compelled to have here in our midst this large number of members of a race whom the Government themselves have described as criminal, and that is the reason why there is this great agitation throughout the country. It is not that we think they are spies, but that people think that they are Germans, and do not want to have Germans in their midst, meeting them in trains and trams, in business, and so forth. I would ask my right hon. Friend to make it quite clear to the Committee that, unless there is very exceptional reason in the national interest, all Government Departments should be cleared of men of enemy origin.

There is a point which I may put before the House which was not dealt with by our Committee. That is the German propaganda which is taking place in this country by means of the German societies and organisations. I myself had no knowledge of this until a few days ago. Information was given to me by a society which is working under the full authority of my right hon. Friend and the Home Office. There is a society in London known as the United Alien Relief Society, upon which there are representatives of England, Germany, France, and Russia. They are doing excellent work. I have seen the chairman and secretary of the central council of that society. In April last year the Home Office wrote to them, asking,

“Can you tell us anything about German schools in London, and whether any propaganda is going on in German schools?”

They replied on the 18th April to the Home Office, giving particulars of no fewer than three or four German schools

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which are still in existence, and supplied by German money, kept by the subscriptions mainly of the great naturalised Germans in this country. Before the War they were kept going by the German Government itself. There is one in Marylebone, which is not controlled either by the Board of Education or the London County Council, and this United Council wrote to the Home Office:

"Dear Sir,—From my knowledge of their system of education I am convinced that they are a source of potential if not actual danger as a centre of German propaganda."

There was a German Lutheran school which was presided over by a German clergyman who was expelled from his country early in the War—Mr. Wardenburg. Then another gentleman turned up—Mr. Kruger—to look after the school, and he was expelled from the country, but the German school still goes on there. Then there is a school in Little Alies Street, controlled by a German pastor of a very pronounced type. There is one in Islington, and prior to the War there were what were known as "charity dinners" for the upkeep of these schools. The German Ambassador generally presided, and speeches were made as to the desirability of training German boys in the idea of German kultur, and devotion to everything for which Germany stands. Even in 1913 there was a project to start a school for higher-class German children which, I believe, did not come to anything. The Home Office replied some time this year:

"I am much obliged for your valuable account of German schools in London. The matter is being looked into, and I share your surprise that it has not been brought to the notice of the Home Office before."

What has been done during the last fifteen months? Are these organisations still going on? Has any effort been made to stop German propaganda?

Sir G. CAVE: Inquiries were made through the London County Council, the Scottish Education Department, and the Board of Education. It was found that in three schools there was something which might be called German propaganda going on. No doubt these are the schools which my hon. Friend has in mind. Those have all been dealt with. The head masters of two of them have been deported, and from the third all German teachers have been removed.

Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS: I am very much obliged. Then there is the German Society of Benevolence, which might be said to be doing good work, but work which could be done equally well by the United Council. Early in this War some priests were expelled from South Africa, and were going back to Germany, and when passing through this country they were actually taken round London by members of this society in order that they might see the effect of the last Zeppelin raid. We were not allowed to see that. That society is still in existence in London to-day. I am sorry that the Committee did not know of all this kind of thing before in order to include it in their Report. I hope that my right hon. Friend will see that all these societies which by any possibility could be the means of German propaganda will be got rid of at once. I now come to what is really more dangerous—the rich naturalised German. I do not think that it is the poor German, the man who came over here as a baker or a barber thirty or forty years ago, married an English wife, settled down here, had children who were brought up to speak English and English only, and became naturalised who is dangerous. I think that in all probability he is thoroughly loyal, but if you go through the list, as I have done, of the big naturalised Germans in this country, men who were naturalised in order that they might become members of the Stock Exchange, or the Baltic, or Mincing Lane, or other exchanges where British subjects only are allowed to deal, you will see that they have kept up their German connection in a very singular way. You will find their names in the subscription lists of all the German societies and organisations. I need not trouble to give names. There is undoubtedly no greater source of German propaganda and thought in this country than that which is provided by these rich naturalised Germans. I venture to say that they are more dangerous than any others, and I hope that my right hon. Friend will also ask the Committee to find some way of dealing with them.

I may give some instance of naturalised Germans, merely giving the initials instead of the name. Here is one, a rich man who was naturalised in 1901. By a curious coincidence, he went to visit what he himself described as his home in Hamburg in his own private yacht on the 11th July, 1914. He came back here through the Kiel Canal on the 1st August, 1914.

He was naturalised, and there was no complaint to make against him. Does that look as if that man had really broken off his connection with Germany? He said in public court that he had broken off his connection with Germany, and become a loyal subject of this country. I had a letter from an officer in the Ministry of Munitions yesterday as to another case. Here is a German of from fifty-five to sixty years of age, who is chairman of a company in Yorkshire and was naturalised many years ago. Yet that man lived in Germany, only coming over to this country to attend the annual general meeting of the company once a year. It so happened that one of those meetings was taking place about the beginning of the War, and he was caught here, while his family remained in Germany. He is naturalised, but no one can say that that man is really loyal to this country. His whole interest and the whole roots of his existence remain in Germany, and that is what we want to do away with here. One more case. During the War a German woman and a German were charged with espionage, and there was a conviction. The woman was sentenced to ten years penal servitude and the man was shot. They had lived at a flat occupied by a young woman with a German name. She visited Germany, and when she came back to the flat it was under her German name. Why do I mention the fact of the German name? It is because the woman was at the time private secretary to one of the best-known Germans in this country. The facts were put before the Home Office, and she was interned. What we are trying to get at is that it is not merely naturalisation which makes of a German a British subject; we have got to go deeper than that. We have to see whether naturalisation was obtained purely for business purposes, or because the German person concerned had come to the conclusion that this was a better country in which to live, and that he wanted to get rid of German associations and German ideas.

I ask my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and the Government to realise that this agitation has arisen not because the people are angry—I will not say war weary. They are becoming more bitter as they see day by day the actions of the Germans, and hear day by day from their brothers and husbands who have been prisoners in Germany, and have returned here, accounts of the brutalities they have

suffered at the hands of the Germans. I received a deputation on this subject last week, and one of them stated to me that his son had been a prisoner in Germany for two years, and that only a little time ago, while still a prisoner, he was called out and flogged at the request of an officer who declared that he merely wanted to see whether he could "make the British beggar squeal." The father of this prisoner added that he had seen German officers who were being removed from one camp to another, and he said, "I assure you Mr. Joynson-Hicks, that they had with them more luggage than you or I would have when travelling." He stated that these officers were conveyed in motor-cars across London, though wounded Tommies have often to walk, that there were girls who drove those motor-cars, and he remarked, "And one of them might have been your daughter or mine, yet she would have had to get down, as these motor-car drivers did, to open the door in order that these officers might comfortably descend." I submit to this House that Germany does not thank you for treating prisoners in that way. Germany thinks you are afraid of her when that kind of thing is done, but it is that sort of thing which raises bitter feeling in this country. As to the question of internment camps, I hope that something will be forthcoming in that respect. I hope, too, that there will be a greater and more effective relationship, in respect of justice and humanity, between the treatment given to prisoners by the Germans and the treatment which we give to our prisoners of war here, with the object of ensuring that justice and humanity will in future mark the treatment of British prisoners in Germany. I think I have shown what is the real reason and the first cause of this agitation. I ask the Prime Minister to realise that we are fighting in a war which depends on the *moral* of the nation. We are now in the fourth year of the War, and it may be we shall be into the fifth year, and we have to keep up the *moral* of the people, and it is the *moral* of the nation which lasts the longest that will win this War. It is because the people are angry that they have raised this agitation, and I ask the Government to take that fact into consideration, and, as the right hon. Member for Kirkcaldy said, carry out this business honestly and fairly. I believe that the Home Secretary means to do so, but all

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depends upon the machinery which is set up, and I hope and trust that the Government will see to that.

Mr. HEMMERDE: I should like to congratulate the Government on the conclusions to which they have come, because when one followed what has been going on in the country during the last few weeks one began to fear that the Government might give way and do something unreasonable. This is not at all such an easy matter as the right hon. Member for Kirkcaldy seems to think, for apparently he imagines that it is only a case of dealing with aliens who have been here, some of them, for many years, and he talks as though the only people naturalised since the War were those who were naturalised after many years of residence here. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. I have in mind two cases to which I would call the attention of the Home Secretary. I do not know quite how far the Home Secretary thinks this is a question of friendly aliens. The first case was this: I had occasion once to appear before one of the committees which was presided over by a learned judge and the case of a young Hungarian. He was, of course, technically an enemy alien. His father was a Liberal—a fighting Liberal—and had actually fought the Prussians and done everything he possibly could. I had not been many minutes before the Committee when I at once saw that the man they were going to intern ought not to be interned. He was a young officer who had been some years in Paris, and had come over here. I want to know whether a man like that is to be interned, or whether, although he is a member of the Hungarian nation, his case, and other cases like his, are still to be sympathetically considered? The second point is a most important one. The Committee recommend that every certificate of naturalisation granted after a certain date shall be revoked unless there are good national grounds to the contrary. I do not think that would be fair. The Home Secretary, first of all, used words which led me to suppose that he did not think that fair either, and I hope the Government will not give way upon that.

I see no objection, having regard to the abominations committed by the Germans in this War, to refusing all certificates of naturalisation given after a certain date, but I do not think it would be right to revoke them automatically, unless there

are national grounds shown for leaving them. But surely the right thing is not to put this burden on the people concerned. Is it quite true that people naturalised just after the War broke out have, in all cases, been here a great many years? My right hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy said that they had been here twenty or thirty years, many of these Germans, and that they had not taken the trouble to become citizens of their adopted country. What sympathy could they expect? he asked. The Home Secretary on one occasion told me his idea of the case of someone who came here and remained a few years with the definite intention of becoming a British subject, and he said that if he was satisfied that was so he was prepared to give a certificate of naturalisation, but that was a totally different case from German men and women who had remained here for many years and had never taken the trouble to become naturalised. I brought the case before the Home Office of a young German, whose parents had been most violent anti-Prussians. To my knowledge he had come over here before he was twenty with the fixed intention of becoming a British subject. He had been here just over five years when the War broke out, and the Home Secretary, in the exercise of his discretion, and certainly strongly backed by members of the present Government, gave a certificate of naturalisation to him. I think he was perfectly right. I know another case in which a year or more before the War a young German woman came to this country to get away from Prussian militarism, and she expressed the joy she would have if she could become naturalised here. She was naturalised, I think in the September, after the War began. This is of the cases in which an obscure person was naturalised in the way I have shown, and yet you would put upon her the burden of losing her naturalisation certificate after nearly four years unless national grounds could be shown to the contrary. No committee who had these facts brought before it would refuse that naturalisation to stand. If you are going to take away certificates, save where national grounds can be shown to the contrary, injustices will be done.

My right hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy did not want one single person to say of this country that it had behaved badly or with want of chivalry. If you took away the certificate of one who had

been doing everything she possibly could, not only in America but among our other Allies, I submit that you would be doing a real act of injustice, and one utterly foreign to the whole idea of British chivalry. It is a very small point, but it is one that has been discussed in the newspapers, as to where the burden of proof lies, but surely if you are going to have justice done by any tribunal, you should give it rather wider discretion than is proposed. I submit that we should continue to do everything possible to treat with the greatest possible friendliness, consistent with the calls of the War, citizens of enemy countries like Hungary. The Hungarians are really very friendly to ourselves, and I believe have shown very friendly feelings towards many of our own people out in Hungary during the War. I urge the Government not to accept in its entirety the suggestion that the burden of proof for reserving the certificate should be entirely on the person who has got that certificate. This country has always been the resort of persons from abroad, and if you are going to say that people who had come over here years before the War with the object of becoming British citizens, and have subsequently become naturalised, are to be under this burden of proof, then I think you will be committing a great injustice. I would like to ask the hon. Gentleman who is now representing the Home Office this question, How are you going to deal with this matter of the revocation of certificates?

6.0 P.M. Will it be possible to revoke the certificate without giving the person a chance of being heard? There are some people who have been naturalised since the War who are at this moment abroad, and if you are going to revoke gifts that the nation has given to these people there must be some method of serving them with notice of those proceedings. There are very few cases of naturalisation since the War, but I hope we shall get some sort of consideration to that point as to how you are actually going to get hold of these people, some of whom are now nursing abroad and others of whom are abroad, so that there will be no sort of automatic revocation of certificates without giving the parties concerned the full right to be heard. If the Government will take care of those two points which I have urged upon their consideration, I think they will get rid of any real injustice in these

proposals. No one, however extreme his views may be, can complain of having all these questions reviewed after so many years of war. When the certificates were given earlier in the War no one had any idea that the War would last this time, and I do not object to any of the proposals of the Government except the two I have mentioned. But I most strongly urge on the Government not to disfigure their proposals by doing anything that may give rise to the smallest feeling, after we have waged this great War to a triumphant conclusion, that there has been any single avoidable case where injustice or lack of chivalry was shown to any man or woman who had his or her residence in these Islands.

Sir E. HUME-WILLIAMS: I want to say only a few words, and I am tempted to do so by the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member who spoke from the other side of the House. He seemed to think that the Government were to blame because they had acted in accordance with popular feeling in the country. It seems to me that instead of blaming the Government for that he ought to have praised them, because there is no doubt that there is a strong feeling in the country and that considerable discontent has been felt and aroused, and in times like this, when you are asking sacrifices every day from the community, the least you can do is to take away all questions of discontent which are likely to sap the people's patriotism and make harder the sacrifices they are called upon to perform. I remember only this last week-end I was staying down by the sea, walking along the front, and I met a little knot of Germans, all discussing their private affairs in loud, guttural tones, in German, and I confess I could not help wondering to myself, supposing a little knot of English people were to congregate in Unter den Linden, in Berlin, and to discuss their affairs in English, what would happen to them! It struck me that we are indeed a strange people, for there they were, talking their own language, quite unabashed, and with considerable fervour, so that they could be heard by anybody who chose to follow them. Do you wonder, when things of that kind go on, when there is an undoubted suspicion in the country that somehow or other information is reaching the enemy, and that some of the disasters, at any rate, which have occurred can be traced to information reaching the enemy

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from aliens here—do you wonder that there is discontent in the country? Therefore, I am only too glad the Government have taken the steps which they have, and that the Home Secretary is going to introduce the new steps which he has outlined.

I want to get one assurance from the Government, if I can. I want to get it quite clear that when this tribunal—a very distinguished tribunal, containing, if it is constituted, in part at any rate, as it was on the former occasion, some of His Majesty's judges in whom we had the greatest confidence, younger men with very clear brains and a well-known desire to do their utmost on behalf of the country—is set up it will know exactly what lines upon which it is to proceed, and I suggest that the common-sense line is that no person of enemy origin should be allowed to go free in this country unless he is of use to this country and a necessity in time of war, and unless the fact of his freedom is an asset for this country. That is a simple line, but it can be extended in some cases where a man is not doing very active work for the country, but whose patriotism is beyond all doubt. As a guiding principle you should start with this, that every man should be put out of danger unless he is at present a recognised national asset in the sense that he is doing something for our country. The majority of these people could have gone back to their country of origin if they had chosen at the beginning of the War, and if they remained here they must take the consequences, one of which is that they must help us. Much more important is this: It should be made abundantly clear that when the decision of the tribunal has been given, it is not to be interfered with by some officer in a Government Department. I have the best of reasons for my belief that in many cases after the existing tribunal had considered with great care cases which came before them and had ordered internment, some official at the Home Office—I hope after consultation with his chief—has reversed the decision of the committee, and a man whom they have ordered to be interned has gone free and is free still.

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Lloyd George): I do not know whether the hon. and learned Member was here when the Home Secretary spoke, but he said that that had never occurred in his time.

Sir E. HUME-WILLIAMS: I accept at once that assurance without question or demur, for there are no two right hon. Gentlemen whose word I would accept more quickly than the Home Secretary and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. But I cannot help fearing—and I am saying it with real and deep respect for the Home Secretary—that these cases have occurred without his cognisance, that some official in the Home Office has reversed on more than one occasion the decisions of the Committee, and has allowed men to go free whom the Committee had ordered to be interned.

Sir G. CAVE: It cannot have happened without my knowledge, and I feel sure that on no single occasion have I interfered with the decisions of the Committee.

Sir E. HUME-WILLIAMS: I accept that assurance from the right hon. Gentleman, and I only hope that if that is the existing system it will continue and be enforced, because there could be nothing more disheartening for the work of this new Committee than to think that their decisions were subject to a revision without consultation with them, and I would suggest that if the Home Secretary or those who advise him on the question do find in future that they have to alter in any respect a decision of the Committee, they should communicate the fact and the reasons to the Committee. Otherwise you will have discontent. Subject to that assurance being given, which I understand has been given, I think everybody in this House will receive with the deepest satisfaction the promises which have been made by the Government to meet what is undoubtedly a growing discontent in the country, and I hope, after what has passed this afternoon, that this discontent will be finally allayed.

Sir J. D. REES: The unwritten law, if it be a law, that those who hold official or quasi-official positions should abstain from Parliamentary Debates seems to me so sound that I had no intention of saying a word on this occasion, and I left the House, but when I came back the hon. Member for Brentford (Mr. Joynson-Hicks) was concluding his speech. I am one of those who are in favour of a severer treatment of this question, and I deeply regret that we are bound by The Hague Conventions and such like bonds which sit so lightly on our adversaries. But that is no reason why we should not quite accurately deal with any situation, and

when I heard the hon. Member for Brentford complain that German officers had been treated with too great kindness and consideration by being taken across London in motor cars, I would like to point out that that is not done for the comfort and luxury of the German officers but in order to segregate them, so that they might not be at large and loose amongst the population, that they may be taken from the train as quickly as possible, not to the place of execution, but to the place of internment. That is why they are taken in motor cars in that manner. And I submit that it is not so unbecoming as might appear that good looking young English women, as they very frequently are, who drive these cars are taking these officers from point to point in London. Similar charges have been made as regards the emptying of a first-class railway carriage for the convenience of these men, but it is not done for their convenience. It is done because the evacuation of a first-class carriage for them causes inconvenience to a smaller number of His Majesty's subjects than evacuation of a third-class carriage would. Though I have no tender feeling towards them and would see them more severely treated, it seems to me a pity to misunderstand a matter like that and so to create an impression which is not justified regarding the treatment of German officers in camps and during their transit to and from them. I am not complaining of anything that the hon. Member for Brentford said; I am only explaining. I know as he does that there is a very strong feeling all over the country on this subject, and for my part I sincerely hope that the Home Secretary will now take very strong steps to see that no German of any sort or kind fills the place of some absent British soldier. When that happens I can assure him that it brings the greatest odium, whether deserved or not, upon his Department, and the Government of which he is a member. Did I rightly understand him to say that in future Committees of Members or others are to visit the internment camps in order that they might be better posted?

Sir G. CAVE: No.

Sir J. D. REES: I wish it was so. because I am convinced that if Members of this House knew the conditions in the internment camps as well as I do, who have visited immense numbers of them, they would be convinced that whatever

may be said there is no luxury in the management of these camps, and that these persons who are interned are upon the whole treated probably as fairly as they can be. It is all very well to say that greater severity should be shown towards interned Germans, but what happens if any step is taken. Immediately a representation comes through a neutral diplomatic source complaining of what is done, and that has to be treated with respect, and, however little you may sympathise with the representation made, at any rate it has to receive respectful attention. As regards the naturalisation, I urged in this House early in the War that a German can be naturalised with a reservation. We know now that is the case. They can be naturalised here without losing their German nationality. That is a reason for revising all certificates of naturalisation given during the War, and I sincerely hope that measure will be pressed through. The great difficulty in dealing with all these questions is that, although in theory we are all agreed as regards the position of the Germans in England, directly you come to treat an individual case you find a lot of people coming forward saying that that particular individual is an exception, that he or she really loves the English better than their own people, and that an exception should be made in that case. This is a difficulty that happens whenever an individual case is under consideration, and I hope the Home Secretary will not hesitate to give the greatest scrutiny to all naturalisation certificates granted since the War began. To show how difficult it is to deal with these cases, I remember the case of a woman who was going to be deported, and she came to me, and, after a short conversation, said "I believe you must be an anti-German." I said, "I am." That a man or woman should be able to approach any Englishman in that spirit shows that there is a tendency to over-leniency in individual cases, and a little severity and stiffening on the part of the authorities would be greatly appreciated, I think, throughout the country.

My hon. Friend the Member for Brentford also referred to the question of these interned Germans having piles of luggage. He said they have more luggage than an Englishman going for a holiday. No doubt they have more luggage, perhaps, than they should have, but I can assure my hon. Friend, and all hon. Members

[Sir J. D. Rees.]

who heard him, that this subject receives the utmost attention on the part of all those who are concerned with the effects of German prisoners or civil interned prisoners. There are rules which are carried out with the utmost scrupulousness. Every effort is made to reduce the luggage they carry, and yet, whenever a prisoner is repatriated or returned on any terms to Germany, no sooner does he get there than he becomes the subject of correspondence about something he left behind, varying in size from a tooth-pick to a grand piano. I can assure my hon. Friend that this is a matter of the utmost concern, and that none of the authorities are anxious to add to the luxuries which are enjoyed by the interned Germans. And, in point of fact, it is altogether erroneous to think—and it would be unfortunate if the House had the impression—that any over-leniency was shown in the treatment of this subject. I had no intention of speaking, and I only got up because I happen to have immediate acquaintance with the particular subject, and I thought it right to remove, so far as I could, a misunderstanding from which my hon. Friend suffered. I do not complain of the general spirit of his speech. I believe there is the strongest feeling abroad about this subject. In every city in this country I visit I see proofs of it, and, although I think the Home Secretary fairly met the case, and that his measures meet with the general approval of the House, I hope there will be no Regulations allowed to be adopted which will lose any merits those measures have acquired on their announcement in the House.

General CROFT: I will not follow my hon. Friend who has just sat down into realms of—as they seem to me—minor matters concerning this very great problem, nor will I follow the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme into the rather Biblical exposition we heard from his point of view. But I want to say just one or two words with regard to the first part of the Home Secretary's speech. First of all he took the line that some of us in criticising his policy had really been unreasonable in the past, and then he went on to say that when he last introduced stiffening-up measures in this House really we could not complain because the House at that time had agreed to all he had said. I should like to remind him that many of us were

dissatisfied with what he said then, and, in fact, that he himself was distressed at the length some of us desired to go in the direction of bringing about greater safety in this country with regard to enemy aliens. And I remember well that, on the last occasion the matter was raised in this House, I, at any rate, had a stern rebuke from him with regard to the views which I held. Therefore the House was not unanimous before, and when we tabled a Motion facilities were not given, although we asked the Leader of the House to give a special day to discuss this matter. But no one will rejoice, at any rate, more than I do that the Government have seen fit to adopt largely the proposals of the Committee which they very wisely called into counsel during the last few days, and I think the House ought to congratulate that Committee on having arrived at its decision with such speed and efficiency.

I want to take exception to the governing reason which the Home Secretary gave for having come to the conclusion that more must be done. He stated, not once or twice, but three or four times—and other hon. Members have followed him on the same lines—that public opinion is now demanding that this should be done. It has always seemed to me to be a question of the safety of our country, apart from any other question. I do not believe the hon. Baronet, who made such an excellent case when the Home Secretary sat down, is inspired by hate, and I do not believe that any Friends who have been working with me have been inspired by hate on this subject. One question we have been asking ourselves from the very start is, Are we imperilling the safety of our country? That is the only question we want to look at, and when the hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme confuses that desire for safety with a sort of feeling of persecution, I venture to think it is really not quite fair criticism. May I, before mentioning the question of aliens, say how delighted everyone in this House is that this anomaly of the German banks has been put an end to? It will give tremendous satisfaction right through the country. It was, if I may say so, a stupid thing to keep the banks open, because it was not understood by the country, and, although these banks might not be doing any harm at the present moment, the people of this country wanted to see that these banks were not in a position to do

harm when peace came. I should like, therefore, to congratulate the Government on having taken that step.

With regard to enemy businesses, it was not made so clear what the Government intended to do, but I think the whole country would like to have a statement from the Government to the effect that they will not allow any enemy alien, whatever his character may be, to take a business from a man who is called up to serve his country or to purchase a house. In my Constituency alone I can give several cases where gentlemen of alien origin and many of alien birth have actually bought houses for large sums. I do not know whether its immunity from air raids, or what the attraction of the locality is, but the fact is that people who have been living there for years have been bought out by Germans, and I think the Government ought to look into it and prevent it, because it is the kind of thing people will not stand. When it is impossible to get another house or cottage of any kind, suddenly to find that property has been bought over a tenant's head in this way is, I think, asking for trouble. I do not want to waste the time of the House with many individual examples where I think I can show the Home Secretary there has been a laxity in the past which is altogether unpardonable. As a matter of fact, I have had several hundred cases which have really merited analysis, and at least a score of cases where, in my opinion, there was very great danger to the State in the case of aliens at large, and also several cases where it seems almost criminal that naturalised aliens—as they were in those cases—should have been retained in Government employment. Each of these cases we hear of can do a great deal of harm, and though we hope they are really faithful to their new love, which is this country, and faithless to their old, the fact remains that the risks are too great to take it for granted that all these men are loyal.

I want to give one or two brief instances of certain cases of which I have heard lately. I do not propose to give the names unless the House desires. I have the names here, and am quite ready to give them if desired. There is a large company, which was formerly German and was wound up, and became an English company, but the German managers are kept in. They are men who, to my knowledge, stated before the War that they would never give any business to this country

which they could possibly give to Germany, and yet they are kept there in this so-called English company. I could give cases in various districts. Just to take one district alone—Wakefield, in Yorkshire. I could give five different cases there of Germans owning property alongside the railway, in one case within a few hundred yards of 250 railway arches. I could give the case of two men living at Wakefield at the present moment, one of whom was literally driven out of Keighley for German remarks, and fined for food-hoarding, and yet he is still at large. Then I could give the case of a German, not naturalised, who has lived at Wakefield, it is true, for fifty years, but has always expressed German views, and when war broke out went to a sub-post office and told an assistant there that Germany would wipe the British off the face of the earth.

These may be loyal British subjects, but when the Home Secretary told us a year ago they were all watched it is a very expensive amusement. It is admitted there are 6,000 Germans, apart from other enemy aliens. The watchers could be more usefully employed in some other sphere of usefulness if these people were put under a small guard. In the last case I quoted at Wakefield, that gentleman, who told us the British were going to be wiped off the face of the earth, has a son, and this son goes to the Lofthouse Detention Camp and has conversation with some of the interned aliens. Men who have expressed hostility to this country ought never to have been allowed to be at large, and I cannot see how you can discriminate. The Home Secretary looked very pained at one or two of us who agreed with the expression used to-day, that "You ought to intern the lot." I think it is better to intern every enemy alien at large in this country other than those who are specially inquired into by special committees I would like to propose in a minute. It may be an inconvenience. But surely they could be interned in such a way that they could be comfortably housed, and, if necessary—if the Government thought it advisable—they could have champagne for breakfast, luncheon, tea, and supper. They ought, however, not to be in a position to do any harm to this country, for reasons I will point out in a moment.

Let me give the case of a business firm in London. Here, again, I am prepared to give names and addresses if required, but, as the Government is going to act,

[General Croft.]

I do not want to bring out the names and addresses. This business in London was run by two brothers, and is a most astonishing case. One of the brothers was naturalised in December, 1914. The other brother is not naturalised yet, although he applied in 1914, when he was registered as an enemy alien. The brother who was naturalised was naturalised four months after the commencement of the War, yet he had been serving in the German Army, and actually left this country to undergo his service with the German Army. When the attention of the Board of Trade was called to this matter some little time ago by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Ludlow (Major Hunt), the answer to the question was that of the two partners, one was a registered alien, and the other had been naturalised since the War. We were told that this British business could not be wound up under the Act because the business, as carried on, was not wholly or mainly either for the benefit of, or under the control of, enemy subjects. In other words, half the shares were held by a German whom the authorities would not naturalise, and the other half was held by a German who became a British subject four months after the opening of the War. Therefore, they said, half was in the hands of a British subject, and this business was continued. That is the kind of thing which has made people suspicious, and I hope the Prime Minister will insist on this matter being dealt with in the near future, so that we shall get rid of this state of affairs. There is no doubt about this instance, because practically every man in that line of business within a very big radius petitioned the Board of Trade to have this enemy business wound up. Yet these men, one of whom had served in the German Army and was not naturalised until four months after the War, was allowed to be half a British shareholder, and so kept the firm going.

Let me look now at another rather extraordinary case. There has not been nearly enough care in this matter, and I do not think there will be unless this thing is thoroughly dealt with. This is the case of an officer whose only address before 1914 was a certain number of a certain house of a town in Germany on the Rhine. He was gazetted to a regiment in Wales—in this country—on 14th August, 1915. He became a full lieutenant on 1st

July, 1917. The other officers of his regiment were anxious about this gentleman, and made inquiries. What was the answer of the Home Office in reply to the inquiry? The Home Office said that this gentleman was a natural-born British subject. As a matter of fact, he was the son of a German, and happened to be born in this country. In 1911 what did this notorious gentleman say when he was interviewed by a Press correspondent? He said:

“I am the heir to large entailed estates in Prussia and therefore have retained my German nationality, but I was born in England. . . . I have offered my services to the German Army but was not required to serve. I have never been naturalised.”

The answer of the Home Office when attention was called to this case was that they had been asked to make inquiries into this notorious case, with the above result. If we are still going to have exceptions of that kind, I am inclined myself to think that the better way would be to intern them all.

One or two words now in regard to what seems to me to be a much more serious matter, and that is literally the network which exists in our Government Departments of men who are of German origin. It is perfectly true, and I think we all believe it is true, that probably nine out of every ten of these men are loyal to this country. I think it is. I think most people believe it is so. Most of us know cases of men whom we believe to be loyal to this country, but if there is one out of these ten who is put in a position of great governmental responsibility that man may endanger the whole success of the War or of the British Empire. It is a case of finding out who are the enemies. It is not, as the right hon. Gentleman said, a question of sentiment, of the poor old man or the crippled old woman. The Home Secretary appealed to us to take a strong line in that direction. But we do not want to be hard upon these old folk: they can be kept in safety and comfort and where they do not imperil the position of the country. In regard to the people in Government offices would it not be wiser to say, if the man was born in Germany, if he had been naturalised in the last ten years—for every good German knew the war was coming ten years ago, every one of them—that they should be removed from every Government Department? It seems to me that there are plenty of ways where they

can show their usefulness in other spheres of labour; not in Government offices. I could give a very great number of cases in Government offices. [An HON. MEMBER: "Go on!"] I do not want to deal with any case vindictively, but here is a clerk in charge of accounts at the Home Office. He bears a name, the honoured name of an English house, the name of "Greenwood," yet his name was Grunwald. He may be all right. A Mr. Bochmar has changed his name to something similar in English, Beamer. Why do they change their names? We all know cases, some of them quite notorious, in the Ministry of Munitions, because I referred in this House to the matter and I was informed by the Home Office that some of these men were indispensable. There is the case of De Wendt, another German. I am glad this matter was taken up. It is monstrous to say that he was indispensable. He has been in possession of information as to the absolute locality of every aerodrome, park, and other matters of that nature which are of the greatest importance. He may be all right. I expect he is. But should we run the risk which affects the whole conduct of the War? There may be some cases for which exemption could be granted, some wonderful cases where a man may be the sole maker of lenses and who may be the only man who can do such work in this country. Apart from this, I think the formula "Intern them all" is probably the wisest. Our object is our country. There is no reason why these people should not be carefully looked after, but they are not of British race.

In the course of his observations the Home Secretary referred to reasons why we should not intern them all. He spoke of the case of the Poles, the Alsations, and the Czechs-Slovaks. In these cases we all realise that there are men who are faithful Allies. But what I want to ask the Prime Minister, who is present, whether it is not the fact that in Poland at the present time there are a considerable number of Poles—I admit they are in a minority—who do favour the Germans? Is it not a fact that a very large proportion of the Jewish community in Poland actually at the present time, have supported the Regency Council in Poland, which has been set up there and which was nominated by the German Government? I think it is notorious that there are a great number of Poles who do hold that view, though we know that the vast

majority of the nation are soundly attached to the Allied cause. We realise what they have done in their army. It is precisely the same with the Alsace. I believe the Prime Minister will have discovered in France that whereas the spies in France from Alsace cloak their work with loyal professions, yet, as with the other races I have referred to, they do the work. Would it not be possible to set up in the case of these so-called friendly enemies—I think that was the description applied to them—special committees of men who are really qualified to know them in their own country? If they are well known and their integrity is vouched for they could be accepted as loyal. Otherwise it does seem to me that there is no other formula on the subject but "Intern them all."

The last word I should like to say is this: Supposing there was a landing in this country, what is going to be the position of these 6,000 persons of German birth? Supposing at the present time there were 6,000 British citizens in Germany. I very much doubt whether out of that 6,000 at least 1,000 would not be working day and night to further the cause of this country. Everyone of us here if we happened to be in Germany and had a man amongst us who did not feel the call of the blood knows he would be regarded by the rest of us as a traitor. The Germans, we know, possess almost every vice you can conceive, but they have one great virtue, and that is patriotism. Their loyalty to their Fatherland comes out. If these men really had abandoned their German love for German institutions and German kultur, why did they not become naturalised in this country? The reason is that they wanted to take everything out of this country they could, and so they remained Germans. When the War came it may be thought that some of them, under the force of the blow and the stress of the storm, certainly became enamoured of things British. I venture, however, to think that when you are engaged in a ghastly war like the present, when you realise that any one of these thousands of enemy aliens walking about at large may come into contact with any young inventor or any young officer, it may be all to the bad for the country. Such men, say, invite a young officer to dinner. You see these men at seaside places, gentlemen who are not Britishers. They entertain young officers, and get information. Of

[General Croft.]

course, they are not spies; but when the War broke out these Germans were told that they need not have any further communication with Germany, because they were watched. There is nothing to stop them giving information to neutrals and so sending information over to Germany. What we know now, if we did not know it before, is that a very large percentage of these enemy aliens are doing everything they possibly can that Germany may triumph in the War. Therefore, for no reason of hatred, with no desire to persecute, with every desire to see that these people are kept comfortably and housed comfortably, yet for the safety of our Army and Navy, for the safety of our mercantile marine and the ships which leave these shores, I say it is the duty of the Government—and they have got the country behind them!—to intern all and only to let those be out who are known to have worked loyally for this country or for our Allies.

The PRIME MINISTER: I have only a very few words to add to those which have fallen from the various speakers on both sides in the course of this Debate. I feel very gratified that practically all sections of the House have accepted the general principles and propositions laid down by my right hon. Friend. The Government have given very careful consideration to this matter. I may say that I myself, during the last few weeks, in spite of other urgent matters, have given consideration to it, because I considered it as a matter of great concern affecting the prosecution of the War. I agree with my hon. Friends who have taken part in this Debate, and with the hon. Gentleman who spoke immediately after the Debate opened, that what really matters now is that these propositions should be carried out vigorously, rigorously, but with absolute fairness. That is the first thing, and in order to ensure that there are two very important considerations, one of them affecting the Government, and the other affecting the Members of the House of Commons. First, it is for the House to keep the Government up to the mark as far as the first part is concerned, and I want to keep the House and country up to the mark as far as the second is concerned. The first is the character of the Committees set up for the purpose of carrying out this policy. It will depend far more upon them than the Government Departments. I was very

pleased to hear from all parts of the House an expression of confidence in the advisory committees, and there is no doubt that they are a first-rate body of men and very able, and they have done their duty very patriotically, and a very difficult duty it has been to discharge. The task has been enormous, and especially I think in view of the reasons which certainly influenced me in coming to a decision in favour of an immediate revision and change. I think it is very important that there should be a military representative on that body. There are many considerations where they can resist. I, therefore, say, that the first condition of success is the constitution of the bodies that are set up.

One body will be an absolutely new one, and that will be the body dealing with cases that arise in Government Departments, the most difficult cases of all. I will give an illustration to show my hon. and gallant Friend how difficult they are. He gave a case in the Home Office. He did not suggest that these two clerks should be dismissed, but he said that it was a case for inquiry. I have inquired since he made the statement. I sent out, and this is an indication of the danger of adopting a universal rule without any limitation at all. Take the case which he gave—that of Boehmer, which was altered to Beamer. The name has a sound which at once carries conviction to the minds of the public as being a case where you ought to exclude the man from the public service. What is the case? It is true that he has converted his name to Beamer. [An Hon. MEMBER: "Why!"] I will give the reason. His grandfather came here, he was an Hanoverian who had been fighting in the British Army before 1800. He came to this country before 1800, fought as an officer in the British Armies all over the world in the Napoleonic wars, and then he came here. His son went to the British Dominions, and he was a British officer. His father was also an officer in the British Army, and he was born in the British Dominions. If there ever was a case where a man ought not to be dismissed from the service, I think that is the case. There must be a limit.

General CROFT: Ten years.

The PRIME MINISTER: There are few people in this country who are not of Teutonic origin. I am not sure that I am not the only survivor on this bench who is not of alien origin, and there must be a

limit. The second case referred to is that of Grunwald changed to Greenwood. Here the father and grandfather were of a Jewish family which came to this country seventy or eighty years ago. Clearly these are not cases where you could treat the men as aliens and enemies, because they have become part and parcel of the life of the country. The real test is, have these men cast in their lot with us; and I think naturalisation is a very good test. Naturalisation after the War is very suspicious. I only put that in order to show that it is a case where you ought to have a strong Committee and a thoroughly impartial one, but you ought to have a Committee which will not allow—I am sorry to put it like this—the sense that you are doing personal hurt to a man to interfere with the public interest. I am sorry to have to say that. After all, war is a matter where you are inflicting hurt upon people who in themselves are quite innocent, but who get mixed up in the great national quarrel. The real danger is that the Committee will say it is very hard upon this young fellow. That may be so, but you must consider nothing but the public interest in this matter, and that has got to be done ruthlessly by these Committees.

Now I come to the second point—and I have been uneasy about cases in the public service, and things have happened I would rather had not happened. I hope these Committees will do their work quite ruthlessly in this respect. These are men who have really cast in their lot with this country. The second consideration is very important. The Committees cannot act without some sort of evidence. I can assure my hon. Friend that, in so far as there is agitation, it is simply a sort of instinct of the Press knowing what is good copy and what is going on, and they are keeping their ears to the ground. I have seen it so often, both journalistically and politically. It is not that they have created the agitation; and they could not create the agitation, and unless you had really a deep sentiment in the minds of the people the Press would trumpet in vain. They call up no spirits from the vasty deep unless the spirits are there, and there they are, and the Germans have roused them, and it is entirely their own fault that we have got this sentiment. It makes a man's blood boil to think of the things that have happened in the last few days, the tales that are brought to me officially and unofficially, not merely the outrage on the

hospital ships, but the outrages committed upon our poor, helpless prisoners, which makes you so angry that it is difficult to preserve your judicial temper in examining this question. They are responsible for all that, but it is a real temper.

There has never been a case of a British set-back that I do not get anonymous letters written by Germans in this country crowing over it, with British postmarks upon them, obviously written by Germans, and they say they are Germans. Where are they? I feel that that sort of business has got to be stopped. The call of the blood is entirely on the other side. There is very good scriptural authority for the danger of the alien immigrant in a country, of a man brought up from years of unconsciousness, and adopting a nationality that was not his own, and yet when there was a fight between a man of his own blood and the people who had treated him well all his life, he slew the Egyptian. There is a good lesson in that. The call of the blood overcomes everything else, and we must remember that.

It is no use saying these men are traitors. There they are, and we must take care that they are not in a position to injure us. We must save them from temptation. Therefore, I come to the second point—the importance of supplying these Committees with evidence. These Committees have done their best, and everybody acknowledges that, but they can only act on the evidence before them. When it is a question of considering whether you are to intern a man or let him off, they hear the case against internment, which is presented naturally by the prisoner and his friends, and they do not always hear the other side. How can they? I get lots of evidence sent in to me, and my hon. Friends hear all the evidence that is put at the disposal of Members of Parliament, and this ought to be sent in for examination by the people who are adjudicating, otherwise it is impossible for them to act. They can only act on evidence before them, and the whole of these facts ought to be sent in to the people who examine these cases.

Now we have got a revision, and the time has come for a revision. The argument for a revision is a very strong one. It has nothing to do with all the outcry in the Press, which is rather the result of a genuine feeling in the country, and

[The Prime Minister.]

many a time I am sorry to say there have been cases where the outcry in the Press about genuine grievances made it very difficult to deal with them. My hon. Friend says, "Do not do this, because you are doing it because the Press urges it." May I make another appeal? We must not refuse to do the right thing because the Press urges it. That is equally bad. Do not let us rush from one extreme to the other, and in this case there is no doubt at all that the facts are of such a kind as to make us feel a little anxious about the fact that aliens are in positions where they can do harm. If, upon examination by absolutely impartial men, they come to the conclusion that there is no ground for suspicion, then they ought not to be interfered with. There is no doubt that men of alien blood are rendering very great service to the country.

I interrupted my hon. Friend about the publication of the reasons. I take responsibility for not publishing the reasons in some cases, because I know the services they are rendering, and it would be folly to insist upon publication in such cases. The services which they are rendering are conspicuous, and I trust that my hon. Friends in the House and those who have evidence outside will place it at the disposal of the proper Department, in order to see that there is a real examination of all these cases, and once they are examined, I have not the faintest doubt that whatever dangers there may be, and I am afraid there may be great dangers in the case of war, we will give the benefit of the doubt to the country. I feel the risk is too great for us not to search out very ruthlessly. The only limit I place upon it is that I would not enter into competition with Germany in inhumanity, injustice, and unfairness. That would be degrading our flag, but do not let us commit the folly of over-trustfulness to the extent of injuring the country we love best.

Sir JOHN BUTCHER: The statements of the Home Secretary and of the Prime Minister will, I am sure, go far to allay the feeling of unrest in the country, and will satisfy the public at large, because the policy laid down by the Home Secretary with regard to the matters which he described is, on the whole, fairly sound. I say that with all the more sincerity because it carries out the recommenda-

tions of the Committee of which I have the honour to be a member. Not only is the policy sound, but I gather from the Prime Minister that it is intended to carry it out rigorously, vigorously and ruthlessly. If that is done, I think, the public will have very little ground for complaint. The Prime Mini-

7.0 P.M. ster reminded us to-day that this is not an agitation manufactured by the press. There is, for instance, a good deal of sound common sense at the back of the agitation for winding up the German banks and internment dangerous people. The public and the press have both seen the dangers from these quarters. I want to say a word on the subject of the winding up of the German banks. I am extremely glad that a definite policy with regard to these banks has now been adopted, and that the existing banks are not only to be wound up, but that care is to be taken that they shall not be brought into existence again after the War. It may be asked, why be alarmed about the German banks, as they are not doing any business. We were, indeed, told by the Home Secretary that their business was almost dead. Personally, I think it would be a true description to say that their business was in a state of suspended animation, and the public was afraid that after the War they would come to life again. Therefore, the public made up its mind that the banks ought to be wound up. We know what those banks have done in the past in the way of assisting German industries and German commerce. We know how they aided German commerce at the expense of the credit of this country, and the public had clearly made up their minds, and I think quite rightly, that not only during the War should the businesses of these banks be suspended, but that after the War these institutions should not be revived. I am therefore glad that this new policy has been definitely announced. Up to the present time these banks have been in existence. They have been actual entities under German management. True, the management was controlled, but still, the managers were German, and there was nothing whatever to prevent them, the moment peace was declared, opening their doors again and resuming business. The effect of winding up orders under the Act of 1916 will put these banks under the control of some British liquidator, instead of a German manager, and it will

be his duty to get the assets in. Nothing pleased me more in regard to this matter than the announcement of the Home Secretary that the Government are going to bring in legislation to ensure that, after the War, for some period of years, there shall be no agency or branch of any German bank established in this country. On this question of the German banks, I think the action of the Government as communicated to us to-day is entirely satisfactory.

I have a word to say on the question of naturalisation. The hon. and learned Member for North-West Norfolk (Mr. Hemmerde) seemed to think that the policy of the Home Secretary with regard to revoking certificates of naturalisation granted to persons after the War was rather harsh. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will stick to his announcement and carry it out. As the Prime Minister reminded us, naturalisation after the War of subjects of a country which is our enemy is always a very suspicious matter requiring strong causes to justify it. I think it is not too much to say that the certificates granted since the War began to subjects of a country with which we are at War should be cancelled unless it can be shown it is in the national interest that they should be continued. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Hemmerde) spoke of it is a very small matter. But it is by no means so. Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman has not studied the number of those who have been naturalised since the War began? One hundred and forty-six German and forty-four Austrians have been naturalised in that time, and how this large number of people came to be naturalised, I cannot understand. The policy of naturalising enemies ceased in November, 1916. I am delighted to know that these certificates of naturalisation granted at a time when we did not know the German character as well as we do now are to be reviewed. Some of us, I fear, even in this House, in the early days of the War, entertained the old pre-war idea that a German was some gentle sort of creature longing to be at peace with everyone. Certificates of naturalisation were granted, I believe, to a considerable number of these Germans under that supposition, and they cannot be justified now we know the true character of Germany in times both of peace and of war. It is right, therefore, that the certificates should be revised and cancelled unless justification can be shown

for them. I understand a Bill is to be brought in to-morrow, in order to carry out the policy which has been communicated to us to-day. Some considerable amount of legislation may be required, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be willing to listen to proposals which we may be able to suggest for making the policy even more effective. My only reason for rising was to indicate the very sound reasons for demanding these reforms, and, secondly, to express my satisfaction with the Government announcement of policy.

Mr. ROCH: I think everyone who heard the statement of the Home Secretary must have been at some loss to understand what was the motive, so far as his statement went, for the policy which he announced, because, while the right hon. Gentleman was careful to say that public opinion was aroused upon this question so far as I was able to follow his statement, he gave no reasons at all justifying the public feeling; indeed, he gave no indication that public opinion on the matter was justified. While to some extent public opinion will have been satisfied by the speech of the Prime Minister, I am afraid there will still remain in the mind of the public a considerable amount of disquiet, which it is in the power of the Government to put an end to. After all, the real gravamen of the case—the real cause of the feeling in the public mind is a suspicion as to what is actually going to occur. May I give the right hon. Gentleman some evidence of the grounds for that suspicion? At the request of the Prime Minister my right hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir H. Dalziel) and other hon. Members were constituted a kind of Committee of Public Safety to overlook the right hon. Gentleman in the exercise of his very drastic powers as regards aliens. The Committee had considerable powers of calling evidence and having had the facts before them, they were conveyed to the Government in a secret Report. The evidence was denied to the ordinary public and to the Members of this House as well, but it is very disquieting to read the report of an interview which my right hon. Friend (Sir H. Dalziel) gave to the "Daily Mail," and in which he embodied his considered opinion, based on the evidence received by his Committee. These are his words:

"Heads of Government offices and industrial businesses are pulling wires to keep alien

[Mr. Roch.]

assistants in their employment. There lies the danger, and after the evidence that we have examined I have no hesitation in saying there is not a Government Department which does not shelter a potential spy."

That is what creates public disquiet. That is what has caused the feeling in the country, and I had hoped that the Government, which has told us quite frankly that there does exist the evil of suspicion, would have been able to inform us that there was no justification for it. There are rumours flying about—I have even heard them from half a dozen Members—that, until quite recently, there has been a serious leakage from two men who hold places in Government Departments whose communications to the enemy have actually been intercepted. I do not know whether it is true or not, but it is widely believed by a great many people. The rumours which are flying about have not been denied, and the result is the feeling of unrest which exists in the country to-day. I would ask my right hon. Friend even now to tell us, after four years of war, whether there are in any Government Department any potential spies. Is there any reason to think that the positive statement made, after evidence received, by my right hon. Friend (Sir H. Dalziel) is well founded? We ought to have some specific statement on that point, and if we can get a definite denial it will remove the public disquiet; otherwise that disquiet will continue.

I should like to ask the Home Secretary if he will tell us a little more precisely what the administrative changes which he has adumbrated are going to be. Will legislation be necessary for them, or can they be effected under the Defence of the Realm Act? I should also like to ask him a question with regard to the two Committees—the Advisory Committee to which additions will be made, and the new special Committee which is going to deal with Government Departments? Is there going to be a specific reference to these two Committees as to what they are to do? Is there to be a specific reference to them as to the class of cases they are to deal with? Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether their decisions are going to be final or will they be liable to be overruled by any person in the Cabinet or elsewhere? I should like to ask my right hon. Friend whether he is going to indicate to these two Committees, and particularly to the Committee which is going to inquire into the Gov-

ernment Departments, the specific cases they are to consider. Are they to be the cases of all men who are not of British blood and patronage. Is there going to be a precise definition of the cases or is it going to be obligatory on everybody, wherever placed and however high their position, to come forward and justify themselves in order to retain exemption? I will tell the right hon. Gentleman what is disquieting this country. There is an idea that people in mean streets, small tailors and other traders, who have not much opportunity of gathering information, will be called upon to come forward, while highly-placed people, with social influence, power, and money behind them, will not be treated on the same basis. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman the feeling prevails throughout the country that everybody who comes within this definition, whoever they are, however high their positions, should present themselves to justify their exemption in the same way as any poor man. Unless that is done, that public feeling of uneasiness will continue.

Sir G. CAVE: Does the hon. Gentleman suggest that any such differentiation has been made?

Mr. ROCH: There is a very widespread feeling that there has been such a differentiation in the past, and a fear that it may continue. There is the case of Princess Loewenstein Wertheimer, who has been recently naturalised. I know nothing of the circumstances, or whether her naturalisation was justified or not, but I am told that she was naturalised on 11th June last.

Sir J. D. REES: Re-naturalised!

Mr. ROCH: I am told that she was naturalised, though she had married a German, and had therefore taken her husband's nationality. It is a remarkable fact that this lady had been prosecuted under the Defence of the Realm Act for not obeying the Regulations. Evidence was given, which was not contradicted, that she had registered at an hotel in a false name and had given a false address. In spite of that fact, and in spite of the conviction which took place last year, she had the special privilege granted her of being naturalised in June last. I do not know whether there is any explanation, but that is the kind of case that gives rise to suspicion, because I do not think

anyone who was not highly placed would in those circumstances have been able to get naturalisation.

Sir G. CAVE: It really is not very fair of my hon. Friend. I have made it a practice to look with the greatest favour upon the application of a British-born widow of a German to regain her British nationality, and I have naturalised dozens of poor women upon that ground alone. The woman to whom my hon. Friend has referred is no doubt in a better position. She is the British-born widow of a German. She married him twenty years ago. After two years he died, and since then she has lived in this country. She expressed a desire to regain her nationality. I knew, of course—I was told—about the conviction to which my hon. Friend refers. I inquired carefully into it, and I was told that the magistrate had said that the offence that she had committed reflected in no way upon her loyalty to this country. That being so, I did not think it fair to impose upon her the great additional penalty of refusing to her a privilege that I had granted to others.

Mr. ROCH: I am very glad to hear the explanation, but I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will agree, where there is this wide discretion, and where cases like this do arise, it is better to prevent the feeling that persons highly placed are able to press their claims and obtain a privilege which is denied to others, and I ask him to indicate that this Committee will inquire into the case of everybody who falls within the definition, that the decision of the Committee will be final, and that it will not be possible to go behind the backs of the Committee and secure a preference which is not given to all and sundry. I hope also that the right hon. Gentleman will indicate a little more precisely what are his intentions and how he is going to put these proposals into definite shape. I hope he will bear in mind what I have said, and that he will give some indication whether there is any justification for this feeling which has arisen about men in Government Departments. If he does that, and administers his proposals quite fairly and impartially, that, and that alone, will put an end to the unrest which undoubtedly exists.

Colonel GRETTON: The speech of the Home Secretary to-day undoubtedly marks a very great step forward in dealing with this subject. I am not quite

sure whether I understood him correctly that there will be no limitation of age regarding enemy aliens whose cases may be investigated as to whether they shall remain at large or be interned. There is some doubt whether it is the intention to confine investigation to men of military age only. Of course, that would not meet the whole case. The investigation should be extended to all enemy aliens in this country, whatever age they may be.

Sir G. CAVE: Oh, yes. In the case of men of military age the question is whether there should be exemption or internment, and in the case of the older men it is whether they should be interned or repatriated.

Colonel GRETTON: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. There is the case of the father who has sons who are members of the forces of the Crown—the Army, Navy, or Air Service. That is an exceedingly difficult case, but I would suggest that it ought to be faced. Each one of those cases should be investigated. The mere fact that the son of an enemy alien has joined some part of His Majesty's forces should not exempt the father from some kind of examination. The fact of joining the forces does not necessarily mean fighting for this country. There are many appointments and occupations in connection with the work of the Crown which do not involve any conspicuous service to this country, and I therefore urge, unpleasant and distasteful as it will be to investigate these cases, that they should be looked into. It may happen that a son is doing great service to this country, though the father may still retain his sympathies for the country of his birth. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman was a little less certain with regard to the investigation into the circumstances of persons of enemy origin in Government offices. He knows, as all the older Members of the House know, the great difficulty there is in dealing with Government Departments. Ministers are dependent upon their officials, and, when there is any proposal which tends in any way to disturb the organisation or personnel of a Government Department, there is always the most strenuous resistance. In this matter no doubt resistance will be as strenuous as customary, but I hope and trust that the Government will not be deterred, and, where they find that there is a case for the removal of an alien in the Government service, that they will act fearlessly and ruthlessly.

[Colonel Gretton.]

I want to make one allusion to the question of German banks and other institutions of that character in this country. I am not satisfied that the Government have taken the shortest and quickest course to bring these banks to an end. They are going on with the process of liquidation. It is a prolonged process, and the excuse for adopting it is that there will be loss if they proceed to realise the assets forthwith. They have got to face a loss in any case in liquidating the assets of these banks. They could bring them to an end in a summary fashion. They could have done it months ago if they had used the powers of the Defence of the Realm Act and had issued a Regulation taking possession of all the assets and investing them in the Public Trustee with an order to the Public Trustee to proceed to realise them. That would have brought these German banks suddenly and finally to an end without any long process of winding-up. This business of winding-up has aroused suspicion in the minds of a great many persons. There are two kinds of winding-up. There is the winding-up of a clock and the winding-up of a business with a view to bringing it to an end, and there is a suspicion as to which kind of winding-up it is in this case. There has been a strange hesitancy in dealing with these German banks, and there is the strongest opinion held in some quarters, which I hope the action of the Government will dispel, that Ministers desire to keep these banks alive for future negotiations when the Peace Conference is held. There are other banks besides these notorious institutions which have been the subject of debate in this House. I hope the closest investigation will be made into the standing of these financial houses and that the Government will not hesitate to take action if they find that they are being kept alive as enemy property. Names readily occur to one. I do not care to mention them, but there are undoubtedly several banks and financial houses which are still carrying on business in this country and which are being kept on by enemy aliens. On the whole, I am certain that the country will be gratified by the step which the Government have announced to-day.

Sir J. WALTON: I rise to make a suggestion to the Home Secretary in regard to the question of enemy aliens who cloak their nationality by changing their names to British names. I understand that from

now onwards this change of name on the part of enemy aliens will require special sanction, but since the beginning of the War so large a number have cloaked their nationality by changing their names to British names that it constitutes little less than a sort of fraud on the traders of the country when they come to do business with people bearing British names and declaring themselves to be of British nationality whilst at the same time they are actually of alien enemy nationality. I suggest that those enemy aliens who have changed their names to British names should be obliged, in their communications and when they register at an hotel in any part of the country, to state that they are naturalised British subjects. I suggest that they ought not to be allowed to enter themselves as British subjects pure and simple. That would be some safeguard to the people who are brought into contact with them. Further than that, it would be quite reasonable to demand that every enemy alien who has adopted a British name should also, after his newly-adopted British name, say, "né Bernstein" or "Schmidt." It is only right. We make business firms disclose the full particulars of the partners, and I submit that for the protection of the people of this country that those two demands I have mentioned may reasonably be made upon the enemy aliens in our midst. Apart from that, I warmly congratulate the Home Secretary on the step forward he has taken to-day, backed up forcibly by the Prime Minister, and his determination to exercise more drastic supervision and control over the enemy aliens who are still at large in our midst and who undoubtedly constitute a real danger to the interests of this country in the prosecution of the War. It is a perfect scandal that, in my own district on the North-East Coast, and in the other sea coast places of this country, there should be to-day many enemy aliens still in residence. I feel my anxiety considerably relieved by the announcement of a more drastic policy that has been made to-day. I can only hope that it will be speedily and in a very thorough fashion carried into effect, in order that the feeling of anxiety and discontent so widespread through the country may be allayed, and in order that His Majesty's Government may no longer be chargeable with having any complicity in or in any way conniving at the continuance of a state of things which constitutes a real national danger.

Colonel YATE: What we have heard to-day shows how necessary it is that there should be drastic alterations in our naturalisation laws. I hope the Home Secretary will consider these points when we are dealing with his Bill to-morrow. I was very much struck the other day in hearing a naturalised alien say that no naturalised man could ever possibly put the interests of his adopted country before the interests of the country of his birth. In our naturalisation laws we ought to make a great difference between the men of the first generation and those of the second generation. A man who comes here and is naturalised should not be given the same full privileges of citizenship or rights which possibly might be given safely to his sons who are born in this country. I do not know whether it is possible to make this difference. The full rights of citizenship should not be given unless the children are actually born in this country. The country of your birth is the one to which all your feelings and thoughts naturally go. The right hon. Gentleman said that he was going to deal with the questions of naturalisation and the change of names which have taken place since the commencement of the War. Is it right to name the 4th August, 1914, as the date? I should antedate it by at least six months, and the right hon. Gentleman should consider all changes of name made and naturalisation papers issued for at least six months before the War, so as to be on the safe side. I would support what was said by my hon. Friend the Member for Brentford (Mr. Joynson-Hicks) in regard to prisoners of war in this country. I feel pretty sure that our treatment of prisoners of war in this country militates greatly against our getting proper treatment for British prisoners of war in Germany. I would urge the Prime Minister to appoint a Cabinet Minister—a full-time Minister—with full authority to deal with all questions connected with prisoners of war both at home and abroad, subject, of course, to the War Cabinet, but a Minister who would be able to co-ordinate all questions in all Departments concerned with prisoners of war at home or abroad. Until we have that, and until the whole question is in the hands of one Department, I doubt whether we shall ever arrive at any satisfactory conclusion as to British prisoners of war. I would ask the Home Secretary to represent this to the Prime Minister, and to see if we cannot

have a proper Prisoners of War Department in this country. The treatment of our prisoners in this country militates against the success of our negotiations with the Germans abroad.

I would also urge the Home Secretary to make the rules he is going to issue regarding the closing of enemy alien banks and business houses in this country equally applicable to British possessions abroad, especially to British concessions in China. Ever since October, 1915, I have been urging that the German banks and business houses in the British Concessions in China, especially Shameen and Canton, should be closed. The Foreign Office have always told me that they had no power to turn out these German banks and business houses by process of law. I would ask the Home Secretary are we at war with Germany, or are we at law with Germany? Are the lawyers in the Foreign Office to reign supreme and to stop us from doing what is necessary in the matter? I asked the Foreign Office whether they would publish the representations made by the British residents in these Concessions, but that was refused. Only the other day the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told me that, pending a decision in regard to the legal questions involved, no buildings belonging to Germans have either been taken over, nor have their leases been determined. Is it for a lawyer at the Foreign Office to put all these difficulties in the way when we are at war with Germany? Are these Germans to be allowed to remain in this British Concession for ever? The question is causing tremendous feeling amongst British residents in China. The Press has been full of it for years. The last article I have received is headed:

“Germans in China.”

and it reads:

“It is strange that in the fourth year of the War the British Government should still entertain doubts either as to the advisability or the legality of doing everything within its power to eradicate this plague spot.”

I would ask the Home Secretary to make the rule as to the closing of German banks and business houses in England equally applicable to German houses abroad, and I hope he will see that these Germans in the British concessions in China are turned out neck and crop.

Mr. KENNEDY JONES: I had not intended to intervene in this Debate, but after listening to all the speeches which

[Mr. K. Jones.]

have been delivered, it seems that one point really responsible for a good deal of the trouble with which we find ourselves faced has been entirely omitted. It was not even referred to by the Prime Minister or the Home Secretary. It is this: What are you going to do to co-ordinate the efforts of the eight or nine Departments which deal with the question of the enforcement of the law in regard to aliens? You have at present certainly eight such Departments. In the Committee we were told there were nine Departments which, in varying degrees, have to carry out the restrictions with regard to aliens and enemy aliens. What we have been told to-day as to the policy of the Government is that they are going to expand the Advisory Committee in regard to internment, and that they are going to appoint a new Committee in regard to persons of enemy origin who are employed in Government offices. That new Committee will mean the addition of another authority to the many authorities now dealing with the question. I contend, from my knowledge of this matter, which I acquired during a very minute investigation into it, that merely by adding another Committee you are not going to solve this problem. You have to co-ordinate the efforts, and direct them to a common end and in accordance with a common policy. It is to be regretted that neither the Home Secretary nor the Prime Minister alluded to that very important matter in their speeches. Let me give the House an instance which came to my knowledge in the course of our investigations. I was told by the head of a very important Department that, in connection with prohibited areas, in many cases they felt that certain individuals ought to be removed, because they were people who were dangerous to the public safety. This gentleman told me that that authority had to work through the military authorities and convince something like seventeen people of the necessity of the removal of these individuals before he arrived at the head who really gave orders for removal, and that head, in these cases, being the military officer in command of the district, said:

"Oh! this is a matter which does not concern my Department. It concerns another Department, therefore I will have nothing to do with it."

Therefore, these respective persons remain in these prohibited areas. That is a danger we ought not to permit to con-

tinue. It can only be removed by a proper co-ordination between the Departments, acting through one common authority. I know that co-ordination in regard to this War is a blessed word, but in regard to this particular matter of the alien and the enemy alien and the national safety, unless a common policy, clearly defined, is administered through one co-ordinated authority, you are going to leave the trouble exactly as it is to-day. We ought to have some assurance that that aspect of the matter, which has not been touched upon in any of the speeches to-day, is going to receive the attention of the Home Secretary and his Department.

Major BOWDEN: The Prime Minister referred to the risk of overtrustfulness. As representing a very large industrial constituency, I want to bring home to him and to the Home Secretary a greater risk. The real risk at the moment is the temper of the people at home. I only wish that those Members of this House who temporise on this question could come with me into the midst of the Derbyshire miners and listen to their opinions, expressed in the vernacular peculiar to them, on this question of the alien enemies in our midst. It is horrifying to me, and a matter of very great surprise, to know that it is possible in this House or anywhere else at such a time that an alien enemy or a person of German origin can possibly be described as an asset to the British nation. I do not understand it. In common with the man in the street I cannot see any line of reasoning which is going to make any German at such a time a national asset to this nation. Even though you may have definite proof that for years a man of German origin may work apparently correctly in some Government Department, if the call of the blood should come only for a few minutes to that man he can do so much mischief that he will undo once and for all any good work he might have done previously.

I interrupted the right hon. Gentleman when he referred to the possibility of a German being a national asset to such an extent that no one in this country could be found to take his place. I refuse to believe it. I asked him to define what sort of man it would be. He said a chemist or an engineer. I should be very sorry to think we could not find chemists to replace any German chemist, and as an

engineer myself I am not going to admit for a moment that you are going to find German engineers who can carry out special work in a way that men qualified in this country cannot do. I know the Admiralty has advisers, not necessarily of German origin but with German names, on the transmission of power in their shipyards, and I believe the Ministry of Reconstruction has similar advisers, if not the same. On more than one occasion I have offered criticisms on engineering matters, and I think I have been the means of effecting an alteration in the methods of transmission of electric power. I cannot believe that chemists or engineers are going to give place to Germans, and I want very much more proof than we have had to-day to convince me of it. But you are not going to convince the man in the street. The man in the street has to be persuaded very much more than he has been so far—men who have lost their nearest and their dearest, and see in their midst aliens taken care of and supported and given positions of trust. It makes them uneasy, and the uneasiness is growing so strongly that, while undoubtedly we must accept the assurances of the Home Secretary, we shall watch very jealously in the next few days for proofs that this action is going to be carried out ruthlessly. We demand it, and we will see it done. I am very pleased to have an assurance that at last we are going to have the closing of the German banks. Many business men, I among others, at the outbreak of the War had their securities in neutral countries diminished, and in fact lost. No kindly Government took care of them, because we who foresaw this War and could prophesy within a few months that it would occur, did not do our financing through the German banks. Is it possible that we can now obtain, on the closing of these banks, a list of the securities involved? People all over the country have assumed, rightly or wrongly, that the securities are such that it has been an interest to the Government and to those in high places to foster and keep the banks in existence till now for the sake of the securities. They said boldly to whom they belong. I do not know. I cannot contradict the statement. I cannot possibly agree with it, but I would ask that someone should convey to the Treasury that it would be desirable to satisfy the man in the street that we should have a list of the securities involved if possible.

My hon. and gallant Friend (General Croft) spoke of the laxity of the employment of aliens in our War Departments, and even in the Army and the Navy. Here is a case I want to have put on record. The Prime Minister quoted the case of Mr. Boehmer, and when you see a case so transparently on the same lines treated so differently, one naturally asks what influence has been brought to bear to bring about the different treatment. The case I have been writing about to the Admiralty for the last five or six months is of a boy sixteen years of age. His mother comes of an old Cornish family and his father was considered sufficiently English to be permitted to fight for us in the South African War, though he was of Austrian birth. His grandfather was an Austrian. That boy, educated in England and encouraged to believe that he would be permitted to go into the Navy, passed his examinations for Osborne after being allowed to buy his kit—and his people are not at all well-to-do—and not until he presented himself at Osborne was he told there was a doubt as to his parentage, and he is not allowed to enter the profession which he longs to join. Yet this Mr. Boehmer can be supported although he is of Austrian or German birth. It would appear that there is some ground for the feeling in the public mind that influences are brought to bear which give preference to those in high places. The expression has been used to-day, "Germans who have got their roots in this country." People are going to object to the German with his roots in this country, because the public, rightly or wrongly, regards the German in this country as a weed, and he must be removed root and branch. Another expression which has been used is "justice and humanity." The justice which must have first consideration is justice to our own country, and humanity must be for those who are mourning for those whom they have lost or who are anxious for those near and dear to them who are in danger. We must remove from our midst all chance of information leaking out which would result in the repetition of such disasters as that of the "Lusitania." The demand of the British people to-day is that this alien question should be dealt with ruthlessly.

Sir R. COOPER: The policy which the Home Secretary has laid before the House appeared to me to follow very closely the principal recommendations which were

[Sir R. Cooper.]

submitted by the Committee, and it appears to have met with very general acceptance. So far as that goes, I am very contented with that expression of policy on the part of the Government, but I am dissatisfied with the declaration relating to Government Departments, because in my judgment it does not go far enough to protect the realm in time of war. There seems to be a great difficulty on the part of Members of the House in forming any definite opinion of what people of enemy origin are. I have a very clear idea in my own mind as to what enemy origin means in regard to people employed in Government Departments, who I think, without any exception whatever, should be dismissed without a day's delay. My definition would be "a person, one of whose parents is, or was at the time of the person's birth, a subject of a country now at war with us." At any rate, the Government has consistently during the War adopted the phrase "hostile origin" and used it in Acts of Parliament and Government Regulations. I assume those who have to administer these Acts and Regulations have a pretty clear idea of the meaning of that phrase. Whatever the interpretation may be, I feel strongly that the proposals which have been submitted to us as regards people in Government offices fall short of the mark and require further strengthening.

There were two points of omission from the right hon. Gentleman's speech. My hon. Friend (Mr. Jones) referred to the necessity of co-ordination between the eight Government Departments which are now concerned in dealing with the alien problem. The policy which has existed hitherto would very nearly have met the needs of the nation in time of war if it had been administered strictly and firmly both in the spirit and in the letter, but it has not been. The administration, to my knowledge, has been extremely sloppy, and there are cases which have come before the Committee, cases of importance, which are at the service of the Government Departments if they wish them, which do indicate that we are, to the knowledge of responsible officials of the Government, suffering to some extent because of the lack of co-ordination and the cumbersome difficulty of

8.0 P.M. getting certain things done where two or more Departments are concerned. I see that the Under-Secretary for the Home Office is

looking at me and wondering, perhaps, whether I am specially singling out his Department. I am not. I have particularly in mind the difficulty which is met with every day in administering this aliens question by the Admiralty and the War Office where their interests are continually clashing, and where the machinery necessary to get anything done effectively is far too cumbersome, too difficult, and too slow.

So far as we can understand the proposals of these Committees they are only pieces of machinery, important pieces, no doubt, for doing pieces of specific work. They are not Committees that are going to embrace representatives of different Departments so as to co-ordinate those Departments. Quite apart from administration by Government officials there is a great importance to be attached to the advantage of having one man in this House who can answer on the aliens question, instead of having a number of different officials who almost day by day shuffle from one to the other in giving answers, or in refusing to give answers, owing to overlapping, and the difficulty which many of them are in in giving a straightforward reply. I believe that one thing that has affected the mind of the public as much as anything is the fact that since the War Ministers have been bombarded with questions about the alien problem, and the public have seen the shuffling answers that have been given for nearly four years, with the result that it has had an effect upon the public mind which, to anyone who knew the whole facts and the difficulties which many of the Ministers are in, might have been obviated. One hon. Member has made reference to rumours. We know that there are rumours being spread every day, and we have every reason to believe that they are being spread by people sympathetic to Germany, with the deliberate object of undermining the moral of the people of this country. Therefore, quite apart from administration, it is exceedingly important to co-ordinate these Departments into one piece of machinery, with one responsible Minister in this House so that we might have a very much better opportunity of getting at the real facts quickly, and crushing these rumours, knowing what false statements are being made, and making a much better impression upon the public generally. It is the duty of everyone of us to lose no oppor-

tunity of impressing upon the Government the necessity of doing everything possible for the safety of the State, and I do urge upon the hon. Gentleman that he will pass on to the Home Secretary the view that something more is wanted than that which has been foreshadowed by the Home Secretary this afternoon.

In the Report of the Committee to the Prime Minister the first point urged co-ordination and improvement of the machinery, dealing with the alien problem. The Home Secretary has not made any reference to the prohibited areas, and the necessity for better control over the visits to ships calling at British ports, or the leave granted to crews of British or neutral vessels calling in British ports. Here is an illustration of my point, which has just occurred to me. The right hon. Gentleman has made no reference to these recommendations because he knows nothing about the matter. He is Home Secretary. Prohibited areas affect the Admiralty and the War Office, and there is nobody who can speak on behalf of the Government on this phase of the alien problem. I hope it will be brought to the notice of the War Office and the Admiralty that the position to-day in prohibited areas, in the opinion of important officials of the Government, is not satisfactory. I am quite prepared to give proof for this statement if required. If those who to-day are administering the laws and regulations find that there are matters that are not satisfactory, I am quite sure my hon. Friend will admit that I am right in pressing for some improved method of dealing with these difficulties. Unless something is done in a little time, I shall put down a question with the object of finding out whether this matter is receiving the necessary consideration.

Apparently there is, and has been, a very great difference in the outlook or the mental aspect of various Members of this House since the beginning of the War in regard to this aliens problem. There are some who are described as the hotbeds, or extremists, who want to intern everybody and take very drastic action, and there is another considerable section, who say, "Do what you really know is necessary, but for Heaven's sake run no risk of doing the slightest injustice to one of these poor sons of Germany, Austria, Turkey, or Bulgaria!" I believe that one of the reasons that makes this great

difference is that one section of Members have come to the conclusion that the German Government prepared for war in this alien matter for forty years or more just as assiduously, as deeply, and as unscrupulously as she prepared for war on land and sea. I am convinced that Germany has gone very deep down in this country years ago most unscrupulously to do everything that would prepare for internal dissension in this country when time of war came. It happened in Russia, and we have had evidence of what she did in this direction in the United States and particularly in South America. If we are right, I think it must be admitted that the policy which has been submitted this afternoon and the policy recommended by the Committee has not been so wild as one or two papers and speakers have suggested. I do earnestly hope that the Government will not put this policy forward. It is little enough, but I think it is enough if only they will from now onwards administer it fearlessly, firmly, and in the best interests of the safety of the realm.

Sir F. HALL: I listened to the speech of the Home Secretary and was particularly impressed with what he was bound to acknowledge—that this aliens question had not been dealt with heretofore as drastically as it should have been. If the proposals put forward by the Home Secretary are carried out, I think we shall go a considerable way towards meeting the difficulty. I am afraid the Home Secretary failed to realise the fact that the general feeling right through this country has been that the Government has helped the aliens and has given them protection against, in many cases, people of purely British birth. I am one of those who fail to believe that we are not capable of finding people in our own country to do the work that is required in Government Offices, instead of employing enemy aliens. I was astounded this afternoon to hear the Home Secretary eulogising the efforts put forward by unnaturalised Germans, indicating plainly that Germany was in a position to produce better men and men capable of carrying out work in Government Departments better than our own British subjects. I say unhesitatingly that I do not believe it, and I think the sooner Government offices are combed out ruthlessly the better. It is only a week ago that I put down questions to the Admiralty, the War Office, the National Service Department, and the

[Sir F. Hall.]

Postmaster-General, asking for a Return of naturalised and unnaturalised persons of enemy origin who were engaged in these various Departments. Surely that was a question which ought to be answered. When we find ourselves in our present position, owing to the inhuman manner in which the Germans have acted towards the people of this country, and particularly those on the high seas, I do not think it was an unreasonable demand to ask for such a Return. I received a reply first from one Département and then the other referring me to an answer that had been given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer a week previously, and when I looked up the answer which had been given it was in that usual negative manner which conveys no information whatever. I would like the Government to understand that when we ask these questions we are simply asking them for the purpose, if possible, of giving information to the people in this country which they are entitled to have.

It is said that it is very difficult to define a man of enemy origin. On the 13th August, 1917, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in dealing with this matter, said, "The Law Officers of the Crown have advised the Government that it is not legal for any British subject resident in His Majesty's Dominions to engage in conference with enemy subjects without a licence of the Crown duly obtained." If the Government themselves do not know what is enemy origin, I should like to ask them, when they make these statements in the House, to whom they are referring. If you are not to have conference with enemy subjects, I fail to understand how the Government can satisfy the country in regard to the employment of these people. Where information by correspondence is wanted I do not think it should require officials of German origin serving in Government offices to supply it. Surely it would be perfectly easy to find purely British subjects to do work of that character. Then I would like to draw attention to the apparently easy lackadaisical manner in which people have been naturalised in this country. I quite agree that guarantees have to be given, but we have seen the value of many of these guarantee. The Government should lay down a strict rule making it incumbent upon all those who act as guarantors for the respectability of these foreign sub-

jects, whoever they may be, to say how long they have known them, and if necessary to put a responsibility upon those guarantors, because I know full well how easily some people unfortunately lend their names to statements regarding other people—I do not suggest for a moment for the purpose of doing any injustice—but that sort of easy-go-along way is exceedingly bad for this country. We cannot be too careful. We have been too easy in the past, and if we are going to start a new era owing to the agitation that has arisen in all parts of the country so much the better.

The Home Secretary said this afternoon that, as far as he was concerned, it was not owing to the public indignation he had brought forward this change, but merely in consequence of many of the atrocities which had been committed by the Germans. With all deference to the right hon. Gentleman, I cannot help thinking that it is because of the public outburst of indignation that has taken place that a move has been made in this matter at last. I hope that the Government will not, in consequence of the vast amount of work that they have, leave this matter in abeyance, because the end of the Session is approaching, and the House being closed, it will not be possible for us to bring the matter forward. I hope that they will not leave it in that dilatory way, but will start to work at once without hesitation, and act in such a manner as will satisfy the people of this country. I am not one of those panicky people who say "Intern all these people whether they are naturalised or unnaturalised." I have written in reply to many letters that I have had from my own Constituents, which probably may be used against me hereafter, and I have written it plainly, that I am not in favour of interning all naturalised Germans. Because I say we have made a contract with these people and we have got to accept the decision. We do not want to go forth that we have entered into an undertaking and that, irrespective of all considerations, we have destroyed it. What I have said is this, that in all those cases where there is any suspicion at all resting on any of these people who have been naturalised this suspicion should be looked into, and these people should be drastically dealt with. That, I hope, is the attitude that the Government will adopt.

I may say, as showing the easy way in which this has been dealt with, I have

had many cases brought to my own knowledge of Germans unnaturalised who have been in our midst taking work from our own people. I have sent communications to the authorities. With what result? "Oh, we know nothing against these people. There is nothing proved against them." That is not the case with regard to these people of military age who are not naturalised. Those who are living around them feel, at all events, rightly or wrongly, they should not be so privileged. Surely, the authorities might take the trouble to look into these cases instead of simply turning them down, saying, "There is nothing against these people and they can just continue on." I do not like their being in our midst in that way. It is the same with the unnaturalised women. I think there is just as much danger with the women as with the men. We have seen and we know there is a great deal of danger caused by women who have acted detrimentally to the interests of this country. If the result of this Debate is going to be to tighten up the authorities so that we do not continue in the style in which we have hitherto, the Debate will not have been in vain. The Home Secretary said that had it not been for the shortage of transport, thousands of these people would have been deported before. Having known of the danger in our midst, I cannot help thinking that, notwithstanding the whole of the difficulties of transport, these people ought to have been transported. Some steps ought to have been taken, knowing the danger there was, even with our shortage of transport, to have sent them to their own countries. There is one thing I hope is going to be done now, that the Home Secretary will take the proper steps to deal with this as drastically as he intends to deal with the German banks and with the non-ferrous metal industry—that at all events it shall not be in operation only for the period of the War, and that the same attitude will be taken with these undesirable for a considerable number of years after the War. The Home Secretary is prepared to deal with the banks, and I am very glad to hear at last, after four years, that that is being done. I am very glad to say that an English bank is occupying the premises of the Deutsche Bank and another one the premises of the Dresdner Bank.

I would venture to suggest to him that there is another matter which requires

looking after—that is with regard to the foreign insurance companies. Their name is legion. They come over here and they find out exactly what our commerce is. It does not signify whether the business is going to pay at first, but it is worth their while to get the business in order to know what we are doing in our commercial world. If we want to save our commercial world for the benefit of British subjects and for our Dominions overseas, we want to cut out this cancer which we have suffered for so many years. I hope, at all events, that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade will bring that to the notice of the Home Secretary. From my own knowledge I know full well the great use that they have made of the information that they have received in that way.

There are certain matters with regard to the Ministry of Munitions that tend to make one wonder once more whether these matters would have continued if it had not been for the outburst of public indignation. I have here a copy of a letter that was written on the 4th August, 1917, to the Ministry of Munitions, giving them the names of two or three gentlemen of German origin who were employed on important work in connection with the Ministry of Munitions in Derby. The reply, dated 3rd September, 1917, stated:

"I am directed by the Ministry of Munitions to acknowledge receipt of your letters of the 4th and 10th of August with regard to Messrs. John and Julian Kahn, and in reply thereto I am to inform you that the Minister has caused very careful inquiries to be made into the circumstances relating to these two gentlemen, but that he is satisfied that there is no cause for taking any action against either of them."

On the face of it it seems that these gentlemen were quite sufficient. There was a tone of respectability about them. The whole of their connections had been inquired into, and it was found justifiable to keep them in the Ministry of Munitions in place of British subjects, but, owing, I venture to say, to the manner in which this has been brought before the public another letter was sent on the 1st July, 1918, from the gentleman who wrote the other letters:

"Referring to my letters of the 4th and 10th August, 1917, I again draw your attention to the cases of, etc. . . ."

—and he suggested that:

"probably that they are not proper persons to have in connection with munition factories. Once a German, always a German."

[Sir F. Hall.]

And what a change in the tone of the reply received from the Ministry of Munitions. It is dated July 8th, 1918:

"Sir,—I am directed by the Ministry of Munitions to reply to your letter of the 1st July concerning Messrs. Albert and Julian Kahn and to inform you that this matter has already received your attention."

I hope that that means that the services of these gentlemen have not been found to be indispensable to the carrying on of the work of the Ministry of Munitions, and I hope that the Ministry is satisfied that the services of these German subjects are not required for the good administration of that most important Department.

We have seen cases brought forward in which information was communicated from father to son and from the son perhaps to Germany. That is the sort of thing that we do not want to see, and what is more, the people of this country will not have it. They have decided this matter has got to be dealt with, and if the result of this Debate is to clear the minds of the British public and to clear from Government offices these undesirable men of enemy origin—a phrase the meaning of which it may be possible to find by looking into an encyclopædia or an English dictionary—then we shall not have had this Debate in vain. There are other matters on which I would have liked to touch, but perhaps I shall have an opportunity soon in another Debate, in regard to the atrocities of these people, but I do not think the Government have taken the right steps to bring these matters plainly before the British public, and I cannot help thinking that if there had been posters depicting these atrocities at the place where the men enter the aircraft factories to do their work we should have had no strikes. But I hope that something may be done in this matter, and done before long.

Mr. STANTON: I listened with very much interest and with great pleasure to the remarks of the Prime Minister. I happened to be one of the little crowd of unreasoning people who dare to cry out: "Let us intern all these gentlemen." I was very much impressed by the reasonable attitude of the Prime Minister. While we have no desire to play the hog-gish game of the Hun, we can ill-afford in the interest of ourselves, our country or our Empire, to be befooled by those people, the peace-at-any-price crowd, who want us on this occasion again to turn

the other cheek to our brother Huns, who say: "Never mind the 'Lusitania' or the treatment of our poor boys, or the bombing of hospital ships, or the bombing of hospitals in France, but please do not exasperate the Hun." What are we afraid of? I am one of the people who have not admired the Home Secretary as having shown any great strength or determination of purpose. From time to time I have heard questions put in this House, and very feeble replies given by him to them. I wonder, after all, what is our boasted strength as Britishers if we are going to crack up before Germans every time? I do not give a hang who the German is or what his Department is, we have always got a Britisher down at the bottom who is a damned sight better than any German. There is no use in saying that these people are indispensable. We can dispense with them, and, in the best interests of the Empire, if we are not going to intern them, then for heaven's sake pension them off with as little delay as possible. The country is not behind these people who talk of peace at any price. While we may not all go as far as Billing the other day and get frog-marched out of this House, at the same time, I would sooner join Billing and be frog-marched out of the House if I thought it was hopeless to appeal to those Benches and ask the Government to do its duty. Perhaps it is because there is an awakening of conscience that now the Government is taking some action? I hope that I am willing to curb my impatience a little while longer, but I am convinced that it is necessary to take drastic action. We have had these people parading around at our seaside resorts long enough, reviling and laughing at our people while they smoke their cigars. We read the other day of one of these dirty beasts who spat at one of our poor Tommies, but I was glad to see that he was well hammered for it, and then one of our too fair-minded representatives of the law fined the poor devil for what he had done. It is enough to make a Britisher's blood boil, when he thinks of these things.

I do not want to be unchivalrous, and I am never a cowardly cur with an opponent, but I cannot sympathise with the Hun, nor can I go out of my way in appreciation of people who ask us to make these Huns comfortable, and to treat them well, in face of the terrible

stories of their cruelties to our own boys that we have heard during this War. Unless we buck up and put more of the devil into our fight, more grit and grip into it, the German is not going to be quickly overcome. We have put up a good fight, and now a better, with the help of America; we are holding our own in a still more determined fashion, and what we have to guard against now is the danger at home, this great "social entanglement" of which we have read in the papers, though we do not get all the particulars, much being cut out or concealed. We know for ourselves these things which are hinted at are going on. It is a dirty, underhanded, and treacherous business, not forgetting some concerned in it are in high positions. We must see to it that we defeat this danger and overcome this mischief, if we are to preserve our country clean and victorious. It is up to the Members of this House to support Ministers in their efforts to bring about better conditions, without regard for persons, however high their position and influence. I hope the Home Secretary will have a stronger mind in the future than, in my opinion, he has exhibited in the past. I hope also that hon. Members will speak their mind in regard to all these dangers at home, and show the Germans a united front in the prosecution of this War. While I may not be able to measure exactly the distinctions drawn between different cases of Germans resident in this country, still I am reasonable enough, I hope, to see that there are distinctions which should commend themselves to the minds of reasonable citizens. The descendants of an ancestral German, who came to this country two or three hundred years ago may well be looked upon as British subjects, nor would anyone be inclined to treat them other than as British subjects.

But it is not that we are complaining of as a danger; what we complain of is that there are Germans here who are avowedly, whether naturalised or un-naturalised, in England for the purpose of obtaining high salaries, or making their thousand or two a year in commerce, and who are still, though calling themselves citizens of this country, Germans in heart, blood, and sympathy. There is no truer saying than "once a German, always a German." I have a certain amount of respect for a Hun who does not deny his country and is ready to fight for it, but I cannot extend that respect to Huns

who, while professing to be loyal to the British cause, are all the time using their presence here to betray us to the Germans. In my view we do not want the Huns, and we should not ask any Hun to fight for us, even if he be of the second generation. We should say, "Very well, live in this country, admire this country, say you are prepared to be loyal to its flag and wish to be our friend; still, we will not allow you to fight for us." I would treat these people equitably, even generously, but I submit that the true, the safe, and the secure policy, that which is demanded by the country, is that to remove these Huns from every opportunity to be a danger to this country, and it is only in that way that you will satisfy the public and secure us against betrayal. If we are to "play a strong game upon them," it is impossible to have any rotten cant about chivalry. We cannot be chivalrous with the Huns. If you are walking along the street with your wife or daughter and a hooligan approaches you with cowardly cunning, you cannot wait, from a desire to treat him kindly, until he has got you down and mauled and defeated you, and then has an opportunity to attack those whom you cherish. You must be equipped and prepared to down the hooligan. And so it is with the Huns. We know what they are from our terrible experience of the past, and surely we are not going to be misled into weak methods, and into a pretentious sort of high virtue, by these namby-pamby people who preach mild treatment of these brutal enemies! We have got to meet them and beat them, and again I repeat that, while I do not want to be anything more than reasonable, and while I certainly do not want to be unreasonable, yet I do think that the best thing for the British Empire is to see that we are not mulcted in the future as we have been mulcted in the past.

Captain TRYON: I am glad the Government are taking far more resolute and definite action in regard to this question, for I know it will strengthen the country for the War, and will show that they realise the great anxiety which exists among loyal people throughout this country on this subject. I only wish the policy which is now about to be adopted had been put in force on the 4th of August, 1914; it would have been a good deal better for the country if that had been done. One serious flaw in their

[Captain Tryon.]

policy is that after nearly four years of War the Government are now contemplating dealing with the subject which, had they acted in 1914, they should never have had to face at all. We hear that Germans are indispensable. I do not believe that anybody is indispensable. One realises in life sometimes that a person in a high position is considered as indispensable, but when he dies, or goes elsewhere, fortunately, there are always other people to be found to carry on his work. I do not believe that anybody is indispensable, and certainly Germans are not indispensable. We know that German organisation before the War was very elaborate, and it may well be that they had or have outposts in certain of our Departments, highly-skilled chemists, or well-equipped men, who are employed in some other way—men who may be regarded as having special skill and doing good work for this country, but, at the same time, are really nothing more than the outposts of Germany, giving information to Germany. I hope the Government will have a whole policy for the thorough and complete removal of Germans from all Government employment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPPLY.—[17TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS

ESTIMATES, 1918-19.—[*Progress.*]

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. WHITLEY in the Chair.]

POLICE, ENGLAND AND WALES.—Class 3.

Resolved, "That a sum, not exceeding £58,346, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1919, for the Salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the Contribution towards the Expenses of the Metropolitan Police, the Salaries and Expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary, and Expenses in connection with Special Constables and the Police Reserve."—[NOTE: £50,000 has been voted on account.]

HOME OFFICE.—Class 2.

Resolved, "That a sum, not exceeding £123,651, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1919, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."—[NOTE: £130,000 has been voted on account.]

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [12TH JUNE].

Resolution reported,

"That a sum, not exceeding £10,141,304, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1919, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office, including Telegraphs and Telephones."

Resolution agreed to.

SUPPLY [2ND MAY].

Resolution reported,

"That a sum, not exceeding £543,980, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1919, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

Resolution agreed to.

The remaining Orders were read, and postponed.

Whereupon Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 13th February, proposed the Question, "That this House do now adjourn."

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at Twelve minutes before Nine o'clock till To-morrow, pursuant to the Resolution of the House this day.

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