

SESSION 2011

AGRÉGATION
CONCOURS EXTERNE

Section : LANGUES VIVANTES ÉTRANGÈRES
ANGLAIS

COMMENTAIRE DE TEXTE EN ANGLAIS

Durée : 6 heures

L'usage de tout ouvrage de référence, de tout dictionnaire et de tout matériel électronique (y compris la calculatrice) est rigoureusement interdit.

Dans le cas où un(e) candidat(e) repère ce qui lui semble être une erreur d'énoncé, il (elle) le signale très lisiblement sur sa copie, propose la correction et poursuit l'épreuve en conséquence.

De même, si cela vous conduit à formuler une ou plusieurs hypothèses, il vous est demandé de la (ou les) mentionner explicitement.

NB : Hormis l'en-tête détachable, la copie que vous rendrez ne devra, conformément au principe d'anonymat, comporter aucun signe distinctif, tel que nom, signature, origine, etc. Si le travail qui vous est demandé comporte notamment la rédaction d'un projet ou d'une note, vous devrez impérativement vous abstenir de signer ou de l'identifier.

Tournez la page S.V.P.

The House of Lords only forms the first line of trenches. Behind it lies a whole row of defences, represented by the laws and the judiciary, the bureaucracy, the Court, the electoral machinery (favouring at every turn the power of the purse), the secret unrepresentative character and working of Cabinet Government, the manipulation of electoral opinion through the public house, the Press, the pulpit, and those other instruments of popular instruction which depend for their financial support upon the charity of the propertied classes.

All these forces will be brought into action to meet the New Liberalism, which, in the name of 'social reform,' proceeds to the attack upon 'monopolies' and unearned property.

Will Liberalism, reformed and dedicated to this new, enlarged, and positive task of realising liberty, carry its adherents with unbroken ranks with persistent vigour along this march of social progress?

The real crisis of Liberalism lies here, not in the immediate capacity to resist the insolent encroachment of the unrepresentative House, but in the intellectual and moral ability to accept and execute a positive progressive policy which involves a new conception of the functions of the State.

It is true that no sudden reversal of policy is required: the old individualism has long since been replaced by various enlargements of public activity. But hitherto these interferences and novel functions of the State have been mostly unconnected actions of an opportunist character: no avowed principle or system has underlain them. This opportunism, this studied disavowal of ulterior meaning, disarmed much opposition in the ranks of Liberalism: so long as "Socialistic" measures were shown as single moves in a party game, played by both sides, little offence was caused.

Our crisis consists in the substitution of an organic for an opportunist policy, the adoption of a vigorous, definite, positive policy of social reconstruction, involving important modifications in the legal and economic institutions of private property and private industry. For any faithful analysis of our existing economic system will show that nothing less can fulfil the demand, which Mr. Churchill has expressed, that "property—be associated in the minds of the mass of the people with ideas of reason and justice."

No one who follows the new crystallisation of Liberal policy, as displayed in the anti-destitution and insurance proposals of the Government, to which substance is already given in Old Age Pensions, Wages Boards, and Labour Exchanges, in the public provision for the development of our natural resources, in the Small Holdings and Town Planning policy, and in the financial claims of the State to participation in "unearned increments," can fail to recognise a coherency of purpose, an organic plan of social progress, which implies a new consciousness of Liberal statecraft.

The full implications of this movement may not be clearly grasped, but Liberalism is now formally committed to a task which certainly involves a new conception of the State in its relation to the individual life and to private enterprise. That conception is not Socialism, in any accredited meaning of that term, though implying a considerable amount of increased public ownership and control of industry. From the standpoint which best presents its continuity with earlier Liberalism, it appears as a fuller appreciation and realisation of individual liberty contained in the provision of equal opportunities for self-development. But to this individual standpoint must be joined a just apprehension of the social, viz., the insistence that these claims or rights of self-development be adjusted to the sovereignty of social welfare.

How far the historical Liberal Party in the country is capable of the intellectual and moral re-orientation demanded for the successful undertaking of this new career, is the fundamental issue at stake. In most European countries Liberalism has failed, because it has tied itself too rigorously to a set of narrow intellectual principles. Political parties in this country have never been dominated to the same extent by ideas: this logical weakness, we often boast, perhaps with reason, has been a source of practical strength.