

Social Credit held a convention last summer and elected Red Deer's Robert N. Thompson national leader.

The Campus Social Credit Club brought Mr. Thompson to Con Hall Monday night, and you all had a chance to see him in action on the platform. Gateway Features attempts to bring you what each individual cannot get on his own, a more personal glimpse—at close range—of our public personalities.—B.W.

ETHIOPIA AND ECONOMY

by Bentley LeBaron

"I know Africa intimately, not from the standpoint of a foreign diplomat but from that of the African himself, because I was co-deputy minister of an African government, and when I was in India, in the Middle East and in Europe, in all these countries we've been mentioning, I was there not as a Canadian but as an Ethiopian."

Time, for the Africans—Mr. Thompson says—with still rising storms of nationalism and political pressures from abroad, is a commodity in "desperately short supply."

"You can never have democracy without a literate people; you cannot have literacy without education; and you don't educate people overnight. . ."

"Let's not condemn even Ghana as being a dictatorship just because their form of

"DEMOCRACY DOESN'T WORK"

democracy is not exactly like ours. Let's try to help them take the thing step by step. Ultimately, I believe in a parliamentary form of government, but for that you must have a literate people. . .

"Their whole mentality doesn't allow for that sort of thing" (multiple party system).

Then what form of government will work best for the new African governments? "Well, not democracy, as we know it here, for a long time yet, but perhaps a modified form. . ."

"A democracy doesn't work if it doesn't fit their needs and mentality—then they're going to take something that seems to have hope, which will often be communism."

Mr. Thompson was not boasting when he referred to his international acumen. His 15 years service in Ethiopia gave him a whirl at quite a range of activities—not only diplomatic and executive, but health, education and air force training.

It was a temptation to just let him ramble an about adventures and analyses of African affairs—Algeria, Angola, Congo, South Africa, as well as Ethiopia. Mr. Thompson is at his best talking about foreign affairs. It is an area in which he is a fascinating, as also a convincing conversationalist.

In purely domestic affairs—particularly economics—he is slightly less inspiring. Perhaps this is partly because we seem to have grown a little cynical about modern economics—the problems are so grand, so complex, so seemingly out of ordinary reach, that we smile almost automatically when a man suggests that he has solutions. But perhaps it is also because of a certain reliance on formula, which sounds im-

"ECONOMIC CLIMATE"

pressive the first time round, but a bit standardized, the second.

Bob Thompson seems sure that Major Douglas and his basic principals are as sound as ever. He still would like to create "enough consumer credit to buy back whatever can be produced."

Inflation depends on "what hands it's in"—what the credit is used for. "If credit was matched by consumer

goods you wouldn't have inflation."

Mr. Thompson wants to combat unemployment indirectly with a favorable economic "climate" in which business and industry create the jobs. "To create jobs for everyone is not what government is for."

Specifically, Mr. Thompson favors Kennedy's lower tariff proposals, and low-interest Bank of Canada loans for schools, hospitals, roads and housing. He sees socialism as "dan-

RARE MORAL POLITICIAN

gerous." He would nationalize public utility monopolies, but not medicine, which should be a "personal thing" and is quite a different category.

I'm still not convinced that Social Credit has the economic answer all cut to measure. I'm not sure there is that sort of answer—Social Credit or no. But after one short hour's interview, I should not attempt to pontificate unduly on Mr. Thompson's, and Social Credit's platform. As to political drawing power, the polls will give their verdict. But as to personal qualities—it took only an hour for me to be well impressed.

The man is confident and obviously able, but not overbearing; friendly and likeable, without backslapping.

On meeting communism: I don't agree with him all the way, but I am impressed by his rationality and command of facts.

On good and evil: my version may not coincide, but that a politician thinks and acts in moral terms is rare and choice.

On Canadianism: he is, refresh-

NO ISOLATIONIST

ingly, both national and international in orientation, a patriot, but in no sense isolationist.

On Douglas, Pearson and Diefenbaker: Thompson mentions them with respect, and so holds mine.

On Social Credit: "any approach Social Credit has made before has been rather provincial in its outlook." Such frankness charms me.



ANSWER CUT TO MEASURE



OBVIOUSLY ABLE

PEACE CORPS AND CONSERVATISM

by Dave Parsons

"The usefulness of the UN has all but been lost. The secret of peace today amongst the two power blocs of the world is not the UN."

This was the reply Mr. Robert N. Thompson gave when I asked him about the effectiveness of the UN as an instrument of peace.

As for a permanent UN police force, Mr. Thompson said "Only if the communists would play ball, would an international police force be useful."



GOLDWATER OF CANADA

In specific reference to the Congo, Thompson contended that "peace cannot be brought by force, particularly in the hand of a peaceful organization."

Though the Social Credit leader has no faith in world police forces, he is a firm believer in force being used unilaterally.

"My hope for stability in the western world lies in an organization such as NATO. There the purpose of NATO is to maintain peace by mutual strength and force if necessary."

On trade Mr. Thompson's views were very nationalistic almost isolationist.

"We should be developing our home markets. We don't need to be worrying about the European Common Market. If we would halve the time and halve the energy developing Canadian markets that Hees has been spending trying to find foreign markets we'd be better off."

"Our trade deficit could be wiped out if we were to use our own products, our own natural resources."

"ALMOST ISOLATIONIST"

We could have some protective legislation for home development!" Specifically, Mr. Thompson proposes that a pipeline be built to Montreal to sell Alberta oil.

Mr. Thompson is against high taxes and heavy government spending and claims that they are the cause of many of our troubles.

"We have priced ourselves out of the world market simply because our price of government is so terrifically high—and that's where our labour problem lies too."

Mr. Thompson contends that tax reform rather than increased government spending is the way to combat recession and unemployment.

In the field of health Mr. Thompson was "completely opposed to medicine being brought under the central government's control." He claimed it is a provincial responsibility and right.

Yet he is not in favour of Premier Douglas's Saskatchewan scheme. He felt medicine is a personal thing, and individual responsibility." He wants "free enterprise" medicine as opposed to "socialized medicine."

GOOD EXTEMPORANEOUSLY

Mr. Thompson has developed into an effective speaker, especially when speaking extemporaneously.

His views on international affairs, his economic nationalism, his belief in small and decentralized government, and his belief in individual initiative echo Barry Goldwater.

Thompson with his right wing politics is developing into a potent force. He may become the Goldwater of Canada.

Though the Social Credit Party may never gain federal power it is seriously challenging the Progressive Conservatives as to which is the true spokesman of Conservatism.

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