

obtained. Our restrictions would not be the less prejudicial to our own capital and industry because other governments persisted in preserving impolitic regulations.

"That upon the whole, the most liberal would prove to be the most politic course on such occasions.

"That, independent of the direct benefit to be derived by this country on every occasion of such concession or relaxation, a great incidental object would be gained by the recognition of a sound principle or standard, to which all subsequent arrangements might be referred, and by the salutary influence which a promulgation of such just views by the legislature, and by the nation at large, could not fail to have on the policy of other states. . . .

"As long as the necessity for the present amount of revenue subsists, your petitioners cannot expect so important a branch of it as the customs to be given up, nor to be materially diminished, unless some substitute, less objectionable, be suggested. But it is against every restrictive regulation of trade, not essential to the revenue — against all duties merely protective from foreign competition — and against the excess of such duties as are partly for the purpose of revenue and partly for that of protection — that the prayer of the present petition is respectfully submitted to the wisdom of Parliament.

"Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable house will be pleased to take the subject into consideration, and to adopt such measures as may be calculated to give greater freedom to foreign commerce, and thereby to increase the resources of the state."

Concept of the New Europe

By PAUL KNIGHT

"M. Monnet dismissed the economic factors of the Common Market as a hook to catch the fish. The fish, in his view, is not even political; it is moral".

THE above statement is from one of several articles recently published eulogising the "Father of the Common Market" (Anthony Sampson's phrase), M. Jean Monnet. It is as intriguing as it is explicatory of this man, the quiet, yet dynamic genius, as he is commonly described, who fishes with a long rod in the turbulent waters of ancient prejudice and revolutionary ideas.

To any understanding of the shifts and changes that congealed, at least temporarily, into the concept of the New Europe, of which the E.E.C. is but one manifestation, it is essential to know something of this man, Monnet, who, more than any other, was its inspiration.

Following a career between the wars in which his organising ability took him through the fascinating jungles of commerce in countries as various as the U.S. (banking), Sweden (the match industry), Poland (currency), and China (railways), he was again, in the second world war,

co-ordinating Anglo-French supplies from America. He was responsible for the highly imaginative scheme of British-French unification, actually drafting Churchill's famous statement on the concept. He devised the great lend-lease project. Later, he was engaged on the work of France's post-war reconstruction, out of which came the famous Monnet Plan. He drafted the Coal and Steel Community plan, itself a model for Euratom, and later the Common Market plan.

Thus, the picture emerges of the Great Planner. Monnet is a self-declared socialist — of the genus Continental. He is an admirer of British pragmatism; a politician "using economics for practical results." Says Sampson: "He is still not much of an expert on tariffs and economics."

What does this add up to in the light of political economy as Georgeists understand it? Is he to be seen as the great beneficent influence, the unifier of antagonisms, the creator of the supra-national Europe for which so many now praise him — and for which de Gaulle detests him; or is he to be considered the *evil* genius of State Planning, Centralism, the preservation of privilege and the ever-greater concentration of power, confessedly ignorant of economic principles, pursuing an organisational dream in which men, human beings, have become cyphers, statistics, industrial fodder?

Describing Monnet's work in the rebuilding of France's shattered post-war economy, Sampson says: "It was a ruthless rebuilding — for the plan was financed, not only out of Marshall Aid, but also out of inflation, with corresponding suffering for ordinary people."

That he is dangerous is, thus, clearly enough seen. This ruthlessness is inherent in the acts of a visionary who acquires power to affect the lives of millions in the name of a "plan", however "noble" in concept, however "moral" in purpose, however "unifying" in aim. What, in the long run, is the difference between being organised by a tyrant and being organised by a well-meaning theorist "for your own good?" What, in fact, is the essential difference between the sort of "New Europe" of Jean Monnet and that of de Gaulle?

For all the talk of unity and the abandonment of nationalism, the "new Europe" of Monnet's is still something arranged between governments. It has not arisen out of the spontaneous wishes of the people of Germany, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg or France. Under the existing political and economic systems in vogue in these countries, there is little opportunity for ascertaining the wishes of the people on any issue; their electoral systems alone preclude it. In any case, the perpetuation of privilege, and the power that flows from it, implicit in the private appropriation of land-rent — common to the whole area — makes nonsense of the term Democracy, of which Monnet and his fellow socialists talk so glibly.

Between de Gaulle, the realist, and Monnet, the idealist, there is little to choose which can give comfort to the truly liberal mind concerned for the preservation of liberty and dignity, and the safeguarding of justice.