

justification of British membership by those who advocate it. For the first time in history the British electorate could not call the government of this country to account in Parliament for the policy by which their lives and perhaps the very existence of their country would be governed: for the first time in history they would be powerless to change the government's policy by changing the government.

In the most literal and most comprehensive sense, therefore, the House of Commons and the people whom it represents are asked to give up—and to give up irrevocably in intention—their sovereignty and independence, their right to govern themselves and their right to be governed only by themselves. I need hardly say that this is not a decision which the House of Commons or the people will take once and for all on a single evening.

It is also because of this fundamental and irrevocable nature of the decision that it requires an exceptionally high degree of concurrence both from the House of Commons and from the public. This was always clearly and openly recognised by the advocates of British membership, by the Conservative Party and government, and most notably by the Prime Minister himself: and a truth which was recognised when it was hoped that the concurrence would be forthcoming cannot be denied now that it is known that it is not.

We know now, what we could not know then, that the House of Commons is deeply and bitterly divided on the question, and that Her Majesty's Opposition is against. There is no sophistry by which the full-hearted consent of the House of Commons can be claimed for a step which has been solemnly asserted to require it, and we cannot now job backwards and pretend that we never meant what we said but meant something else instead.

Of course the House of Commons is not in a vacuum. It is not for nothing that "Parliament and people" are linked together in this context. Behind the deep and bitter division of the House of Commons lies an equally deep division (which the House of Commons reflects, however imprecisely), among the people

themselves, the majority of whom have been left unpersuaded, after months of intensive exhortation, that their country ought to become part of the European Economic Community.

We were told at an earlier stage, that the government would now proceed, in anticipation of any further proceedings in Parliament, to seal a treaty of accession. I trust this is not so. It is in any case a dubious step for a British government to sign a treaty when they lack reasonable assurance that they can do all that is necessary for its ratification; but of course there is more to it than the taking of a risk. There is a certainty; and the certainty is that the government would thereby, as I said

three months ago, have incurred an "indelible breach of honour" by flouting the conditions which they themselves proclaimed. But there is more. There are some things which cannot happen, which cannot be done. One of them is that with a House of Commons and a nation divided from top to bottom this country could be committed to merge its political identity with that of nine other nations and to abrogate the sovereign independence of its Parliament.

We can, and I am sure that we shall, preserve for the electorate of this country the right not only to choose its parliament but to decide by what laws and on what principles it will be governed.

## ARTHUR ROEBUCK

**W**E MUCH regret to report the death of Senator Arthur Roebuck of Canada on 17th November, 1971.

His work to secure the acceptance of the economics and philosophy of Henry George was long and widely spread and his speeches in the Senate on the subject were models of logical thought.

In an article specially written for *LAND & LIBERTY* some years ago, he wrote:

*"Does it pay to be a reformer? How often in my long life have I heard that question asked and how frequently has it been answered in the negative! I am a lawyer, and I once read an article by a prominent member of my own profession in which he advised young graduates of the Law School not to take up with the radicals. If you do, he said, you will serve only the poorest of clients. If you would make money, he concluded, you must go where the money goes."*

Senator Roebuck was born in Canada in 1878, the great, great grandson of the founder of the Carron Iron Works, Boness, Scotland, and grand nephew of the noted radical Liberal of the Gladstone era, Rt. Hon. John Arthur Roebuck. He was called to the Bar before he was forty. In 1934 he became Attorney-General of Ontario, Minister of

Labour and Commissioner of the great Ontario Hydro-Electric system. He entered Parliament in 1940 and had been an active member of the Senate since 1945. For many years he was secretary then president of the Toronto Single Tax Association. He was also Vice-President of the International Union for Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade.

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## SENATE'S "BRILLIANT PERSONALITY"

From *The Vancouver Sun*, November 18, 1971:

Senator Arthur Roebuck, controversial friend of the underdog had a long political career that often found him at odds with his colleagues and peers. The bouncy senator, who said at 80 that "any talk of old age this side of 100 is premature," had been in ill health for about two years.

In Ottawa, Senator Paul Martin said his death "removes from Parliament one of its most brilliant personalities. Senator Roebuck, a small-l liberal to the last, served his country in a notable manner."

Among his final tasks before his last illness, Senator Roebuck conducted a committee study of legislation—subsequently passed into law—that outlawed racist propaganda.

On his 91st birthday he still worked in his Parliament Hill office from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.