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Things I do not Believe In, 1936.

THINGS I DO NOT BELIEVE IN

Delivered By Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

> At The Temple

On Sunday, March 1, 1936 From time to time people take stock of the things they believe in, their credo. I suggest that it would be helpful if people, from time to time, took stock of what they don't believe in - their negative credo, of the ideas which are no longer valid - an enterprise which will help to clear the doubts, as it were, in their mental world. So, from time to time, I am tempted to take stock of things I don't believe in any more. It is in a sense a negative approach to reality and truth.

I have had in common with other people a great number of ideas on the subject of peace; for example: how to go about obtaining world peace, the best method for the pacification of the world. I used to believe in many methods I have now come to disbelieve. Thus, for example, I no longer believe that neace can be had through the way of pacificism, through a refusal on the part of am individual citizens to bear arms, to take part in war. From time to time oaths have been taken by certain groups, students on campuses, colleges, never again to go to war. That is a dramatic, undoubtedly a sincere expression of people's horror, distaste for war. But it is an altogether ineffective and purposeless effort. I used to think that agitation against armament was an effective method to get peace. I no longer think so. I used to think that exposing the horrors, the stupidity of war, the facts and figures, statistics, is a sure way of ending war. I no longer think so. I used to think that peace meetings and agitation for peace, arousing the peace sentiments in the world was the way to make peace. I used to think that tolerance on the part of nations, international

pacts against war as the way toward peace. I don't believe that at all any more. These methods may be sincere, but they are a wrong approach, a futile wasted effort.

There is only one way to get peace in the world. When that way becomes clear, it will allow mankind to help focus its thought on that one way and that is to establish a form of collective security so that nations will feel secure against unprovoked aggressions and therefore as a matter of course will automatically reduce their armaments. Only a world organization strong, able and ready to exert the utmost pressure through econ mic and military sanctions on the part of recalcitrant nations, on violators of covenants will give security to weaker nations or will persaude those nations to think of peace rather than of war.

Wars and preparations for war will cease only individual nations will realize that it simply doesn't pay, that they can't get away with it, that threat of war will not get them anywhere because the power of an internationally organized body of nations will make it impossible for that individual nation to carry through a successful war, nay even to initiate a war.

Peace sentiments are not enough. The force of public opinion is not enough. You cannot persuade the nations of Europe if apprehensive of a particular threat to rely on public opinion. A nation cannot rely on public opinion, on the moral sentiment of the world that it should not resort to rearmament in self-defense. They cannot trust that public opinion. It is too vague. Our public opinion, as you know, can be propagandized, distorted, made to do the wrong thing instead

of the right. Nations will rely only upon a forceful international body capable, competent, ready to protect each and every nation within the organization against a wrong that is done. All these other efforts upon which we are spending so much of our precious time, energy and substance are wasted.

There are altogether too few pacifists in the world making any decisive inroads upon the belligerency of mankind. Real philosophic pacificism belongs to the isolated few - the spiritual hierarchy of mankind.

When a nation declares war, even peaceful citizens, even peace loving citizens will go to war out of a sense of duty, out of a desire not to be regarded as traitors. The Quaker way, the pacifist way is a noble way, but I am afraid not an effective way that will lead to peace. There are very few people in the world who want war. You don't have to sell people the idea of peace. We work in circles advocating, extolling peace. What we must do is to built a new League of Nations which will be strong and empowered and quick to impose law upon all the nations of the world, a system of law, in other words, backed by positive punitive force, either economic or military, or both.

Norman Angell in his book "Peace and the Plain Man" wrote:

"The practical issue is finally reduced to a choice between two courses: to employ force for the purpose of defense by placing it collectively behind law; or to use it by the old competitive, individual method." Either you put force in the hands of collective organizations to back up international action and arbritration, or use it by the old competitive individual method. Either nations

will have to build up their own forceful self-defense against every other nations or collectively build up a common defense against any national violating the law.

I think that this disbelief of mine is an effective disbelief and I would recommend it to all people. There must be a clear direction given to the peace movement the world exceeding all else. That direction points to the strengthening of the international institutions and machinery for enforcing peace. Then nothing else world is important. And until the nations of the/come to understand this, they will continue to talk peace, want peace and yet spend every year a larger budget for xxxxx rearmament. Peace sentiment in the United States is greater than it has ever been. Yet we set a larger war budget. The same thing in England. Unless there is collective security, cooperative self-defense, united action to protect the weak against the strong, the race for rearmament will continue, for secret alliances and there will be danger of another and a greater world war.

I would like to tell you of another article in my creed of disbelief. I do not believe that our country is going Communist or Fascist and this article of unbelief helps me to maintain my intellectual equilibrim in this hour of confusion. I refuse to be stampeded into a mood of desperation by talk of the United States going Communist or Fascist today or tomorrow.

I find that the great masses of American people feel that in spite of our failures, our system of government can be made to produce

a nobler system of life. They are not interested in overthrowing the government by violence. I find that the American people are not class conscious and can not be persuaded into a creed of class struggle. If there is a war, I think the Fascist trend may be a little more possible than the Communist trend, although it is not nearly as great a menace as some people believe it to be.

It is not radical ideas which destroy a form of government, but orthodox ideas which outlive their usefulness and refuse to die. I believe that it may be the destiny of the American people to work out a synthesis between individualism and collectivism. It is not written in the Book of Destiny of the American people that they must pass from what some people call "Rugged Individualism" to what I call "Rugged Collectivism". The American people has its own way of doing things, its own pioneering spirit. While it may lead a good way from the Slavic model of collective life, it will not accept dognatically the whole Marxian philosophy and will not subscribe to it for all time and for all place.

in going over to Communism
The Russian people/did not have to sacrifice 150 years
of personal freedom, of free participation in government, of
inalienable rights. The Russian people did not have to do violence
to any essential sector of their racial culture which for the
American people means destroying a maximum of initiative and
enterprise - the very warp and woof of American life.

And so I have another Article of Unbelief which I believe helps me to maintain a certain stability in thinking in the present day. I don't believe that our people is going Fascist or Communist.

Another Article of Unbelief is that Liberalism is dead. I do not believe that Liberalism is dead, either as a way of life or as a goal of life. I know that Liberalism is more or less a discredited thing today.

I know that our mood is still a mood of tension, emergency. I know that some people feel that the only way to change things is through ruthlessness, change and destruction. The mood of our people is still pathological, not only from the World War but from what followed the war - the breakdown in democratic government in the world, the economic depression which is unparalleled in the history of mankind. These and many other factors have given us the kind of world we have, a world apprehensive, full of madness. Yet I believe that the principle of progress through liberalism, human advancement through the free exercise of man's power of will has got to reassert itself and I believe it is beginning to reassert itself today.

A few days ago I came across an article by one of the greatests minds today, Professor Dewey, who had been wavering between Liberalism and Dictatorship, but who has come finally to the steady light of a firm conviction. He writes:

Radicalism in the minds of many, however, both among its professed adherents and its bitter enemies, is identified with a particular method of changing the system. To them, it means the change of the present system by violent overthrow. Radicalism of this sort is opposed to liberalism and liberalism is opposed to it. For liberalism both by its history and by its own nature is committed to democratic methods of effecting social change.

The idea of forcing men to be free is an old idea, but by nature it is opposed to freedom. Freedom is not something that can be handed to men as a gift from outside, whether by old-fashioned dynastic benevolent despotisms or by new-fashioned dictatorships, whether of the proletarian or of the Fascist order. It is something

which can be had only as individuals participate in winning it, and this fact, rather than some particular political mechanism, is the essence of democratic liberalism.

The denial of the democratic method of achieving social control is in part the product of sheer impatience and romantic longing for a short-cut which if it were taken would defeat its own end. It is in part the fruit of the Russian revolution, oblivious of the fact that Russia never had any democratic tradition in its whole history and was accustomed to dictatorial rule in a way that is foreign to the spirit of every Western country. In part, it is the product of the capture of the machinery of democratic legislation and administration by the dominant economic power, known for short as plutocracy or "the interests."

Discontent with democracy as it operates under conditions of exploitation by special interests has justification. But the notion that the remedy is violence and a civil war between classes is a counsel of despair. If the method of violence and civil war be adopted the end will be either fascism, open and undisguised, or the common ruin of both parties to the struggle. The democratic method of social change is slow; it labors under many and serious handicaps imposed by the undemocratic character of what passes for democracy. But it is the method of liberalism, with its belief that liberty is the means as well as the goal and that only through the development of individuals in their voluntary cooperation with one another can the development of individuality be made secure and enduring.

I pass on to one other article of unbelief. I do not believe that science can save mankind. I do not believe that salvation of mankind lies in the conquest of knowledge. I have seen and you have seen that a high level of scientific development can be destroyed - as in the case of Germany - with brutality and ruthlessness.

Thoughtful people have begun to speak questioningly about the advances of science. Science has lengthened life. But what do we do with our lengthened lives? Science has made possible greater ease in traveling. Where do we travel? Science has made possible easier communication between people? But what are we communicating? Science has given man more that power. But what is he doing with the power? Is he using that power to

create or to destroy? We are accumulating wealth. But what are we doing with that accumulated wealth?

Science will not save the world. Rather it is bringing us very near the brink of disaster. It is only the science of the inner life, unselfishness, love, that will save mankind.

Therefore, another article of disbelief is that "religion is dying." Religion is not dying and I do not believe religion is dying because I believe in the future will to live on the part of human life. When once it puts definitely away the menace of life which confronts it in the unspiritual scientific civilization which has developed and turns sharply about, it will begin to redefine and re-emphasise the dogmas of spiritual life.

There will come a day, as the Prophet Jeremiah said - There will come a day when there will be a great thirst, a hunger in the land and it will not be a thirst for water nor a hunger for bread but it will be a hunger and a thirst to hear the words of God. People are coming to hunger again for the spiritual life. They are coming to thirst again for life which is more than food, raiment and shelter.

Reverence, sanctity, happiness, spiritual discipline - that is Religion. Thus in essence, Religion, my friends, never changes. Churches, synagogues, may undergo all kinds of transformation. But man's outreaching for Godliness, for a juster, nobler, sweeter way of life - that endures forever and that is religion and that Religion can never die.

The ideals which we fashion out of our own hands can be very cunning, amazing, but they cannot save is It is only the ideals which we fashion inside of us that can save us. There are people in the world who say: If we could only change this economic system - other things would come right of themselves.

The real continents for the improvement of human life are within man the Isle Within. Religion has concerned itself with this Isle Within.
Religion has tried to teach man, to educate man, how to practice selfrestraint, how to sublimate himself, how to substitute the predatory
instincts of man which are harmful for mutually helpful ones.
Religion has given/a set of ideals which if lived by, will enable him
to get a maximum of satisfaction out of living.

And so I believe that the prophecy that Religion is dying, is false. (quotation)

15 From time to have people tall stak of the Sermon 446 It is also helfful - ideas no longer valid-Clears decks for efficient that taction 2 - I-eace - pacifism. Exposing honor-cost-stufidity Peace theetings reales + Pacts. @ Fatile + inefective - Wrong afebroah - Hew Worked Effort ( Only Collection Security, and the confidence of quiet and certain common defence against unprovided aggresses will persual nature. (1) Only a world org- strong and empowed to oct- them econ. + military sanchois. will deter-(d) Wars + preparations for war will aose - Can't get away - les chaves of the uning. (2) Reace south ment and enough - Public grining at tings Nations cannot sely on it - Fear-Uf Pacifish - only very few - when peace-lavory a topen feel when was is declared ever peace-lavory a topen feel duty - traiter. I walle - way - with way - 7 do ud behen (9) Opinion aroused to un four of Loge - thoug-- lusuro que a system flow backed (h) augell (Juto)

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Norman angell: "Peace and By Placin Man"
'The Road Out"

The practical issue is finally reduced to a choice betwien 2 courses: to employ force for the purpose of defence by placing it collectively behind law; or to use it by the old competitive, underschaf method!

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Jer. 31.1-19

### NOW OPERA IS STREAMLINED

### Singers Upholstered in the Victorian Manner Are Being Replaced by Slenderer Artists

(Continued from Page 15)

ing. It was the voice that counted, voice with a beautiful figure, so much to the good. But girth and or woman.

However, forces were at work that were bound to alter the com-Opera House ran into pecuniary form to these ideals." difficulties and found that it had to turn to the general public for support. The radio had immeasurably widened the field of interest | believes that opera, since it comin opera. The Metropolitan had to bines music and the drama, canreach this new audience; opera had to take on a semblance of demo- element. His program embraces, cratization or go under.

The Metropolitan did not go under, and a large new public entered its portals. It was an audience that had become accustomed rôle." to the high visual standards set by audibly when a mastodonic juvenile tried to embrace a ponderous compelling though the melody and of place in another rôle. the voice might be, of a love-sick "A singer must be able, above standards of appearance in the

(Continued from Page 16)

For many of the dinners people

do dress, and the food is excel-

The attractive externals are sup-

to work. Its members select the

seven most "strategic" people in

the neighborhood—the seven most

"tempted" people, the seven most "difficult" people-and they pro-

ceed to win those people by indi-

THE world is familiar with mass

Evangeline Booth. But such genius

is rare. Unless the common people

reach the common people, so the

Groups believe, many people will

not be reached at all. Among the

Groups the individual orator is

superseded by "the team"-a com-

pany of men and women, old and

young, rich and poor, who, on the

platform, deliver their united wit-

ness. But the platform is only

used as a kind of reconnaissance.

It is in personal conversation that

the Groups, as a rule, win their

adherents or influence those who,

without being adherents, respond

There are people in the churches

who say that they are doing just

what the Groups-as critics put it

-are "making such a fuss about."

Over the movement churches and

even families are sometimes sharp-

ly divided between the "changed"

and the "unchanged." In saying

this, it is fair to add that the

movement has matured and out-

grown what may be called symp-

Nations are obsessed by fear of

war and of the revolutions that ac-

company war. Is it possible that

the Groups are making a contribu-

and social stability? Amid armies

toms of spiritual adolescence.

to the "message."

evangelism-the genius of a

Moody, a Billy Sunday or an

vidual and unreported activity.

maiden who scaled close to 200.

As Mr. Johnson, serving his first year as general manager of the and if a singer united a beautiful Metropolitan, states the case: "Our new audience does not know how much it knows. Its experience has breadth were held against no man been so extensive that rigorous standards have been absorbed, sometimes unconsciously. The theatre and, particularly, the screen elexion of operatic standards. A have idealized stage people, and theatre like the Metropolitan the opera must do its best to con-

Mr. Johnson, for the Metropolitan, is striving to restore the stage picture to its rightful place. He not afford to ignore the dramatic ultimately, better lighting, smarter sets, correct costumes and more fluid staging, as well as singers who have the modern "physique du

"It must be emphasized," Mr. smooth Broadway and Hollywood Johnson observes, "that 'physique productions. It was an audience du rôle' is a relevant concept. The that would not hesitate to titter proportions of a figure are a prime consideration. A big man, even one with some excess weight, may soubrette, no matter how well the look all right in a Wagner musicpair sang. It was an audience that drama that treats of Norse gods would not take seriously the plaint, and godlike heroes, yet seem out



From Harper's Weekly (Culver Service)

Opening night at the Metropolitan in the days of carriages.

people do at the opera is to see, not to hear, and if they are inexperienced in listening they may be distracted easily by bad stage pictures. The result may be that the singer will not get a chance.

"If the voice is beautiful and is used with real art the singer will, of course, be able to overcome physical obstacles. The human voice is the perfect musical instrument, and such an instrument, placed at the disposal of great music, can make up for any shortcomings. Caruso was stout, and it did not matter. And so I say, by all means let us develop new

really great voice, it will be of first eyes on a shot at the Metropolitan. importance."

opera, still in its early stages, is own. The result may be a race of active mainly in this country. Soon singers who will be concerned as it should spread to other lands, if much about their figures as about it has not already done so. For- their high C's.

all else, to sing. But the first thing | opera house; but if I can find a | eign singers always have their They may now be looking to our The movement for streamlined motion pictures as well as to their



Increasing Attention to race relations; to what the

Is Attracted to Their Movement and navies and airplanes it may

ported by self-sacrificing enthuseem to be an absurd question. But siasm behind the scenes on the part of people-usually of moderthought. Mankind yearns for an ate means—who never get into end to perpetual disturbance of soprint, even in a Group photograph. A typical Group, say of seven, gets

The Group movement has definitely mobilized itself for international peace-not merely for plans are eliminated.

The Groups advocate what appears to be a corrective of undue the Groups are engaged in activities that help Germans to be more valuable to Germany; Germans are helping Frenchmen to be more valuable to France. In South Africa the success of the Groupsso it is claimed-has been accompanied by a noticeable reconciliation between the Dutch and the

The same philosophy is applied Groups call "the sins of empire"; to capital and labor. The objection that workers cannot suddenly throw up their jobs and attend house parties is met by the suggestion that the world needs there is a wish that is father to the leadership—that a movement which emancipates leadership from national, racial and economic restrictions, which inspires leadership to real honesty of purpose and sympathy with justice, has a place in the scheme of things. Many who to keep the peace but for men- have attended house parties are entality from which impulses for war gaged in social work among the

The pronouncements of many public men suggest that, at this nationalism. Frenchmen within moment of uncertainty, the idea within the Groups is more important than the Groups themselves. The conception of a fulfilled individuality, shared by all people with one another, is not new. It is the restatement of this idea in popular unconventional terms and with evident conviction that has been and is the task of the Oxford crusaders.

### FISHERMEN WHO DEFY WINTER

feet in length. Each season the and coffee set to simmer. fishermen swear that the boreal they are on the job.

frosted lives. In the mornings they brighten up the metal work on his drape gasoline-soaked cloths over boat he substitutes a bit of dried the ice-cold motors of their boats, ignite them and so warm the cockles of the engines' iron hearts. burning, but the motor starts more he is seen patting its sides affection to the maintenance of peace easily.

In subzero temperatures they dip a tragedy.

ESPITE the bitter cold of a their heavy mittens in the ocean, New England Winter and the wring them out and don them. The icy gales that lash the coast wool steams and the steam keeps with sleet and hail, 200 small fish- their hands as warm as toast. ing boats are plying their trade They fasten metal pots to the redaround Casco Bay, Me. They are hot mufflers of the engines; in open, motor-driven craft, 20 to 25 these juicy lobsters can be boiled.

If the fisherman has no match elements take too much out of to light his smoke, he dips a cottonthem; that they will remain on wrapped stick in the gasoline tank, land during the cold days. Yet disconnects the spark plug wire when the next Winter blows in and touches it to metal, creating a spark that ignites his tiny torch. Odd habits creep into their When he lacks emery cloth to dogfish skin.

Next to his family, the fisherman loves his boat. Frequently, after A little paint is removed in the mooring it at the end of the day, tionately. The loss of his boat is

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### SPEAKING OUT FOR LIBERALISM

John Dewey Says It Fosters Liberty and Is The Democratic Way of Effecting Change

(Continued from Page 3)

the mouth of radicals liberalism is a term of hissing and reproach.

In spite of the extreme clash, both schools of liberalism profess devotion to the same ultimate ideal and goal. The slogan of both schools is the utmost possible liberty of the individual. The difference between them concerns the province in which liberty and individuality are most important and the means by which they are to be realized. One has only to read any outgiving of the adherents of laissez-faire liberalism to see that it is the liberty of the entrepreneur in business undertakings which they prize and which they come close to identifying with the heart of all liberty.

To the spokesmen of the Liberty League and to ex-President Hoover in his doctrine of rugged individualism, any governmental action that interferes with this particular kind of liberty is an attack upon liberty itself. The ruggedness, independence, initiative and vigor of individuals upon which they set chief store is that of the individuals who have come to the top in the existing economic system of finance capitalism. They are exposed to the charge of identifying the meaning of liberty and of rugged individualism with the maintenance of the system under which they have prospered.

The charge is given force by the Build up your resistance and vitality so fact that they have for the most that your system will easily throw off germs and poisons! Insure yourself against illness the sunshine way!

part supported the system of protective tariffs, against which original to the sunshine way. tective tariffs, against which original simon-pure laissez-faire liberals directed some of their most violent attacks. The author of the phrase "rugged individualism" used the government to come to the aid of industry when it was in straits by means of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and, as far as I know, the opponents of governmental intervention made no protest at this flagrant case of governmental interference with the free course of private industry.

The most vocal spokesmen for this special form of liberty have never attacked land monopoly and if they think at all about Henry George, think of him as one of the subversive and dangerous radicals. They have themselves built up financial and industrial systems so concentrated as to be semi-monopolies or monopolies proper.

IBERALS of the other school are those who point to things like those just mentioned and who assert that the system of industry for private profit without regard to social consequences has had in fact a most unfavorable effect upon the real liberty of the would defeat its own end. It is in mass of individuals.

Their conception of what I called the province of liberty and individuality is broader and more generous than is that of those who come forward as the self-appointed champions of liberty. They think that liberty is something that affects every aspect and phase of human life, liberty of thought, of expression, of cultural opportunity, and that it is not to be had, even in the economic sphere, without a racy or "the interests." degree of security that is denied to millions by the present economic system.

They point out that industry, banking and commerce have reached a point where there is no such thing as merely private inand in such deep and enduring ruin of both parties to the strug-

ways that all business is affected with a public interest. Since the consequences of business are social, society must itself look after, by means of increased organized control, the industrial and financial causes of these consequences.

There is, accordingly, no doubt in my own mind that laissez-faire liberalism is played out, largely because of the fruits of its own policies. Any system that cannot provide elementary security for millions has no claim to the title of being organized in behalf of liberty and the development of individuals. Any person and any movement whose interest in these ends is genuine and not a cover for personal advantage and power must put primary emphasis in thought and action upon the means of their attainment.

At present those means lie in the direction of increased social control and increased collectivism of effort. Humane liberalism in order to save itself must cease to deal with symptoms and go to the causes of which inequalities and oppressions are but the symptoms. In order to endure under present conditions, liberalism must become radical in the sense that, instead of using social power to ameliorate the evil consequences of the existing system, it shall use social power to change the system.

ADICALISM in the minds of many, however, both among its professed adherents and its bitter enemies, is identified with particular method of changing the system. To them, it means the change of the present system by yiolent overthrow. Radicalism of this sort is opposed to liberalism and liberalism is opposed to it. For liberalist both by its history and by its own nature is committed to democratic methods of effecting social change.

The idea of forcing men to be free is an old idea, but by nature it is opposed to freedom. Freedom is not something that can be handed to men as a gift from outside, whether by old-fashioned dynastic benevolent despotisms or by new-fashioned dictatorships, whether of the proletarian or of the Fascist order. It is something which can be had only as individuals participate in winning it, and this fact, rather than some particular political mechanism, is the essence of democratic liberal-

The denial of the democratic method of achieving social control is in part the product of sheer impatience and romantic longing for a short-cut which if it were taken part the fruit of the Russian revolution, oblivious of the fact that Russia never had any democratic tradition in its whole history and was accustomed to dictatorial rule in a way that is foreign to the spirit of every Western country. In part, it is the product of the capture of the machinery of democratic legislation and administration by the dominant economic power, known for short as plutoc-

Discontent with democracy as it operates under conditions of exploitation by special interests has justification. But the notion that the remedy is violence and a civil war between classes is a counsel of despair. If the method of vioitiative and enterprise. For the lence and civil war be adopted the consequences of private business end will be either fascism, open enterprise affect so many persons and undisguised, or the common



John Dewey.

gle. The democratic method of social change is slow; it labors under many and serious handicaps imposed by the undemocratic character of what passes for democracy. But it is the method of liberalism, with its belief that liberty is the means as well as the goal and that only through the development of individuals in their voluntary cooperation with one another can the development of individuality be made secure and enduring.

### ENGLISH VILLAGES WITH ODD NAMES

ROBABLY few countries have villages with queerer names than many in England. While motoring through Cornwall recently a party of Americans noticed a signpost pointing the way to a village called "Come to Good"-one mile off the main road between Truro and Helston. The travelers made inquiries and it was explained to them that the name is the English substitution of the old Cornish "cum-ty-coid," meaning "valley of house in wood."

"Dead Maiden" is the name or a village in Hampshire, about fifteen miles northwest of Southampton. Near Newcastle-on-Tyne there are places called Wide Open and Pity

Tadley God Help Us must be as odd a place-name as any in England. It is borne by a village in Hampshire, about ten miles from Reading. Make-em-Rich is the name of a village in Northumberland and Ugley that of one in Essex. There is a village in South Staffordshire named New Invention and the same place-name occurs in Shropshire. Fryup is in Yorkshire and Cold Roast Hamlet in Buckinghamshire. And a village named Ready Token is to be found in Gloucestershire.



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