

## ROLE-PLAY # 1 The host of the radio/TV show: Script

Hello--and welcome to England's favorite morning talk show,

GOOD MORNING, NOTTINGHAM !

My name is Macro Economics, and I will serve as your host in another of our series of topics on the Industrial Revolution. Other topics we have explored in past shows have been child labor, standard of living controversies, famous inventors and the connection of industrialization with imperialism.

Today's discussion will focus on the Role of Government during the Industrial Revolution. That is, should the government be playing a greater role in the affairs of the country by regulating or controlling the economy. Our guests are Robert Southey and Thomas Babington Macaulay, two citizens of Britain who symbolize the on-going debate about the Industrial Revolution.

Here is our format:

--Each of our guests will make a brief introductory statement.

--Each will then present a more detailed statement about their position on the topic.

--Finally, we will give each of them the opportunity to exchange views in a more informal manner and to entertain questions from the audience.

## ROLE-PLAY # 2 Robert Southey

OPENING STATEMENT: Good morning. I am Robert Southey, poet laureate of England since 1813. I am proud to be one of the so-called 'lake poets' along with my friends William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge. I have written an article on the negative aspects of the Industrial Revolution entitled "Sir Thomas More: Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society." (1829)

In this work, I used the literary device of a conversation between a real historical figure from England's past, Sir Thomas More, and a fictional character called Montesino. More, as you will recall, was executed by Henry VIII in the 1530s for defending his religious beliefs. Like More, I have been savagely attacked by Mr. Macaulay, whose ego and narrow-mindedness is like that of our obstinate former king.

I am here today to respond to Macaulay's charges, although, frankly, I would rather be walking the moors or tending to my roses.

#### POSITION STATEMENT:

I strongly believe that our people are worse off than ever before. Our cities are crowded and filthy. The exploitation of children is a national shame. It is, therefore, my belief that our government has a responsibility to do more to help the needy and working poor. It should, for example, provide public work jobs for the unemployed, establish a national system of education under the guidance of the Anglican Church, and assist those who wish to emigrate from England.

We cannot presume that progress is inevitable. Misery is often the cause of wickedness. Ignorance, vice, crime and poverty are flourishing in what was once the garden of civilization. Many people wake up every morning without knowing how they are to eat or where they will lay their heads at night. Some of our leaders cry about Negro slavery in the colonies but yet are blind to problems here at home. Our problems are such that we must be wary of revolution. The masses of people could appear in the streets. Lava floods from a volcano would be less destructive than the hordes that our great cities and manufacturing districts would vomit forth. Our morals have declined. The desire to gain has eaten into the core of the nation. All men are oppressing their neighbors, preying like wild beasts upon their fellow creatures. **Surely, a degree of wholesome restraint and regulation is needed.**

In conclusion, I feel that a more peaceful and a more beautiful England existed at one time. Weren't people happier and better provided for when the land was open before enclosure? Can we not do something to restore that time--a time of rose bushes and weather-stained cottages, of unspoiled lakes and of a happy and healthy people? I think we can and must, but not with the leaders of the ilk of Mr. Macaulay who is unable or unwilling to see what is happening to dear old England.

#### ROLE-PLAY # 3: Thomas Macaulay

OPENING STATEMENT: My name is Thomas Babington Macaulay. I am a lawyer, writer for THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, member of Parliament, colonial official in India, and author of the famous HISTORY OF ENGLAND, which focuses on the Glorious Revolution of 1688. I did indeed write a 37-page review of Mr. Southey's COLLOQUIES in 1830 and found it to be pathetic and laughable. Southey may be a good poet, but he is surely not a good economist or historian. He has no right to lecture the public on economic and political matters of which he has still the very alphabet to learn.

I have no idea why Mr. Southey brings Sir Thomas More back to life in his COLLOQUIES. Perhaps this device would be appropriate in a traditional epic poem, but it makes for lousy economics. What I want, Mr. Southey, is facts! In my review and again today, I charge that you do not bring forward a single fact in support of your view. I challenge you to prove that the great and beneficial Industrial Revolution has been a disaster. To my way of thinking, it has brought wonderful progress and prosperity. So, I look forward to our debate this morning.

POSITION STATEMENT: As I stated in my introductory comments, I question the source of Mr. Southey's opinion. He surely has not studied bills of mortality or statistical tables. He obviously does not stoop to study the history of the system he abuses or to compare districts or generations. Rather, it seems that Mr. Southey's methodology is this: he stands on a hill to look at a cottage and a factory to decide which is prettier. Does he really think that the English people ever lived in substantial and ornamental cottages with box-hedges, flower gardens, bee-hives and orchards?

He believes that a government nears perfection as it interferes more and more with the habits of individuals. I, for one, do not want an omnipresent and omniscient state. I believe that nothing is worse than a meddling government, one that tells people what to read, say, eat, drink and wear. Mr. Southey is a pessimist. He fears revolution instigated by the poor masses, who will invade the streets like volcanic lava. I look, however, on the state of England with much greater hope and satisfaction.

Southey asserts that people were better off than before. Perhaps he would have been better suited for the first twenty years of the sixteenth century when More lived. But people are better off now and certainly better off than people in Russia and Poland. The fact is that medicine and medical care is better, that life expectancy is longer, and that we are making more products at lower cost. The serving man, the artisan, and the farmer have more food and better clothing and furniture than their ancestors. Merchants and shopkeepers are richer. We are not, in a word, sir, the wretched of the earth.

I am not a prophet, but can anyone deny that in a hundred years--say by 1930--we will be even better fed, clothed and housed? And it is clear that the prudence and energy of our people will continue to carry us forward.

In conclusion, in contrast to Mr. Southey, our government should confine itself to its legitimate duties, which are:

- leave capital to find its most lucrative course.
- leave commodities to find their fair price.
- leave industry and intelligence to find their natural reward.
- leave idleness and folly to find their natural punishment.
- maintain the peace and defend property.
- observe strict economy in every department

AND THEN, LET THE PEOPLE DO THE REST. Thank you.

