

# ... LEISURE ...

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## **THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF LEISURE**

By JOHN FITZGERALD

## **LEISURE IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE**

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## THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF LEISURE

By JOHN FITZGERALD

For the purpose of this paper I shall consider the aspect of leisure concerned with man's vital need to establish a correct and just relationship between himself and the physical world in which he is placed. And from our present point of view leisure is the opportunity for freely chosen individual activity, apart and above that necessary to sustain life at an individually and personally accepted standard.

It will be of undoubted interest, as well as being relevant to our subject, to recall some of the early experiences and line of thought which brought the late Major C. H. Douglas to the conclusions that he reached on matters closely related to the essence of the problem which we are about to consider. These he gave to members of the Canadian Club at Ottawa early in 1923 when in Canada by invitation to lay his views before the Canadian Parliamentary Committee on banking and commerce.<sup>1</sup>

The story began, he said, when he was in India about fifteen years previously (1908) in charge of the Westinghouse interests in the East. He was surveying for the Indian Government a large district which revealed a good deal of water power. In Calcutta and Simla he asked which was going to be done about this; to which came the reply, "Well, we haven't any money." At that time manufacturers in Great Britain were hard put to get orders and prices were very low indeed. Major Douglas said he accepted the statement made and, he supposed, pigeon-holed the fact and circumstances in his mind.

At that time he dined frequently with the Controller-General of India, a man who used to bore him very much by continually talking about something he called credit. "Silver and gold," said his friend, "have nothing to do with it. It depends on credit." Douglas remarked that had his friend given him a short, sharp lesson on Mesopotamia it would have been as intelligible to him at that time. Nevertheless, that fact also must have stayed at the back of his mind. He proceeded

to say that just before the war he was employed by the government in the building of a Post Office underground railway from Paddington to Whitechapel. There were no physical difficulties, but first he received orders to get on with the job, then to slow up and pay off the men. "And as a matter of fact," said Major Douglas amid laughter, "that railway is not finished yet." (1923.) "Then came the war," he said, "and I began to notice that you could get money for almost any purpose." And that struck him against as being curious.

On being sent during the war to the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough in connection with a certain amount of muddle into which that institution had got itself, he decided that it would be necessary to go very carefully into the costing process. His friend Sir Guy Calthrop suggested that he should make use of tabulating machines, and so after a time Major Douglas began to concentrate very carefully on them. One day he noticed with regard to the figures on the cards emerging from those machines that wages and salaries at the weekend did not represent the price value of the goods produced in the same period. "You might say that anybody would know that, and I suppose they would," said Major Douglas. But to him it followed that, if that was true, it was true every week and in every factory at the same time. Therefore the wage and salary purchasing power each week was insufficient to purchase the goods according to the price each week. Later he confirmed this by talking to his chief accountant, who also told him that the Treasury notes drawn out of the bank each week at Aldershot seemed to come back again. Some of them became quite old friends. When, after his work at Farnborough was completed, and he was immersed in industrial disputes, he found that the best way out of the difficulties with those who were fighting for more wages was to give it to them. "It settled everything," said Major Douglas, amid laughter. Then he went to Richborough, one of the new concrete cities built during the war, and was immensely impressed by the fact that, in spite of the withdrawal of something like seven millions of the best producers to the armed services, plus millions more engaged

in the production of immense quantities of materials to be destroyed, leaving behind only the old and the young, they were able to raise such wonderful new concrete cities, and yet everybody in the country was living at least at as high a standard as before the war. These facts also became pigeon-holed in his mind. Then his attention was attracted to a persistent propaganda that was being conducted to the effect that "we must produce more." And he began to think what would happen when the whole of this intensive production was diverted in peace time. The persistent propaganda gained in volume, to be supplemented by a new cry that they were a poor, poor nation, and only hard work would save them from destruction! So he wrote his first article on the delusion of super production, in which he showed that, if things were as represented, then the more that was produced the bigger the problem was going to become. He also knew for a fact that Britain and the United States, and he believed Canada also, were chock-full of the newest producing plant. Then came Major Douglas' predicted feverish boom, accompanied by a spectacular rise in prices, followed immediately by an equally spectacular slump and sudden mass unemployment. All those wonderful industrial plants began to be broken up and the owners to go into bankruptcy.

"It was not true in 1919 that Britain was a poor, poor country," emphatically asserted Major Douglas. "I know from my own technical knowledge," he said amid applause. "that there is no production problem as such in the world at all." Also, there is nothing wrong with administration. Socialism is no remedy but only an administrative panacea.

The only way that administration comes into the picture is that it does not control policy. But finance does. Emphasising the position, Major Douglas said that you have on the one hand a demonstrated capacity to produce and deliver goods and services which is far in excess of any possible demands so long as you don't produce that overwhelming consumer war. Yet on the other side there was an increasing clamour for the bare necessities of life in many places. Obviously something is coming between, and that is the distribution system which is, of course, the financial or the ticket system.<sup>2</sup>

One of the best ways, in my opinion, of obtaining a clear understanding of Major Douglas' solution of the aforementioned problems and those associated with them is by way of careful consideration of the physical realities involved. It is an axiom of philosophy that we proceed from the concrete reality to generalisations through our power of ratiocination, or inference, or analogy. To put the matter another way, only initially through sense perception do we know anything. Man is not matter alone—materialism; or spirit alone—spiritism, but a mysterious combination of both. The effect one upon the other is mutual. Hence the real importance of our subject.

From the purely physical material aspect man is like a machine performing work by the conversion of energy. Food is his fuel and the primary condition of life will obviously be that the amount of energy obtained from the food shall be sufficient to allow for the expenditure of energy in the searching for and consumption of food. We may imagine a state of life in which the energy obtained from the food just balanced the energy expended in the searching for and consumption of food, allowing also time for necessary sleep. Life must have begun at slightly above this level, for otherwise no progress or other activity beyond this would be possible. Now the difference between the energy necessary merely to sustain life and the total energy directly available represents *true profit* in its most fundamental sense, and a basic physical reality. Here we have the very beginning of the physical basis of leisure. This may be called part of the individual credit in its physical aspect, and a clear understanding of the principle is vital, for it lies at the very heart of Social Credit.<sup>3</sup>

There are, of course, many ways in which the surplus energy may be expended; in various forms of amusement, for instance. One of them, however, is of very special importance, and that is the use of this energy to improve the efficiency of the individual from an energy consumption point of view. The construction of tools, for instance, which allows not only the procurement of basic necessities in less time with less expenditure of *human* energy, but renders possible processes hitherto impossible. This is the basic physical reality

underlying the modern conception of investment. It is the devotion of energy to the increase of efficiency in the consumption of energy, and is intrinsically a multiplier. That is, it multiplies the energy directly available for any given constant expenditure of energy. Notice that it begins in the individual human being and originally benefits him directly. Tools and the knowledge of process utilising the individual's own human energy alone have resulted in a great expansion in the possible results of effort. We have only to think of the changes due to the use of the spade in horticulture. What is also important, of course, is not only the spade but a knowledge of spade practice and the habits of plants, and this principle can be extended over all the fields of man's activities, past, present and to come. Tools commonly outlast the life of their makers and are passed on to a succeeding individual. This we call physical inheritance. Also the knowledge of how to do things, which includes how to replace the tool when it is worn out. In all its wide ramifications we call this the *cultural inheritance*. This is again a fundamental conception of immense importance, as real as and more important than the longevity of tools and structures, for it not only enables the adequate use of the tool but ensures the possibility of the tool's replacement, as well as simplifying the basis for further possible improvements. We have thus found three basic elements at the very core of our subject. Profit we may define as improved efficiency accruing to the individual; and investment as the application of profit to the increase and enhancement of efficiency. Profit, investment and inheritance, especially cultural inheritance, are basic elements of economics, and a correct understanding of them, quite apart from any economic, and particularly financial theory, is vital.

Further factors that enormously extend the effectiveness of the individual effort are:

- (1) The association of individuals to achieve a common objective.
- (2) The introduction of solar and nuclear energy in place of human and animal energy as the basis of work done.
- (3) The arrangement of automaticity in mechanical and electrical operations.

In examining the first factor it will be noted that the first result of association is that a given job may be accomplished more quickly and more easily. But not only may two men lift a heavy weight more easily and more quickly than one man, but two men may lift a weight that neither alone could lift.

Within reasonable limits this result can be extended. There is a benefit from association of all kinds far beyond simple arithmetic progression, and this is what is called the *unearned increment of association* which really is true profit. A money system, when used, must be made to conform with this physical reality, otherwise it will eventually break up the association in which it is involved. There is nothing that modern man does that does not rest somewhere on this unearned increment of association, the various forms of which are of great complexity. In addition to primary association there is the association of associations which produces further increments. A notable example is the telephone system. The telephone, itself the result of complex associations, not only increases in usefulness with the number of users but increases the efficiency of the whole of industry and human society; and human society is exactly the same thing as human association. So important is the study of association for those who desire to investigate Social Credit seriously that the first chapters of the Social Credit Secretariat's textbook, "Elements of Social Credit," are entirely devoted to it. It is important to remember that human society is "an association—the most complex association we know: a vast construct, or complex, of separate associations." Society, from the aspect which concerns this paper, "is a complex of observable phenomena, and phenomena are observed results in nature, and all phenomena (all observed results in nature) appear to arise from some mode of association."<sup>4</sup> Every association has a result, and this is its *increment of association*. We can divide associations into different classes. Material, mass and energy associations, for instance. The cultural heritage which increases the power of human beings in association to do things is the conservation of means of doing things.

The second factor which incalculably extends the power of

human beings to produce desired results is solar energy, which includes energy stored in the form of wood, coal, oil, and water power derived from the changes in the distribution of water due to the sun's direct heat. It is most important to be very clear that it is *energy* and not machines as such which we are considering here. Machines are only elaborate forms of tools through which energy is transformed and directed. Their importance lies in the great and easily controllable rate at which they can transform and direct energy, compared with the individual human being. At the present day humanity has at its disposal vastly greater direct sources of machine energy than that of the total manpower of the whole earth's population. Thus an important ratio:

Machine Time Energy Units

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Human Labor Time Energy Units

ranging from at least fifty to in some cases many hundreds is increasing daily. Add to this atomic power and the still more spectacular possibilities of thermo nuclear or "Zeta" power and the magnitude of the picture may perhaps be glimpsed. In fact, human energy is becoming negligible and as with automation could for the most part be dispensed with entirely. Its importance lies in quite another direction. It is becoming what Major Douglas has described as a *catalyst*. Now this is an illuminating analogy. The term "catalyst" is used in chemistry to denote a substance, the presence of which either enables a chemical reaction to take place, or to take place much more readily. The rate of production depends on the rate of transformation of energy. A man may control the speed of a giant machine by the mere energy at his fingertips. The multiplying factor of automaticity via amazing electronic devices is even greater still. Certain functions of human thinking can be performed with incredible speed by certain electronic machines. For instance, in rocket research most complex and vital mathe-

matical calculations that would take more than a year for an individual to complete can be done in minutes by electronic calculators. So far removed is man from mere animal existence that it is all too easy to miss the significance in everyday life of the importance of the foregoing considerations. The very division of labour confuses the total picture and conceals the totality. Mankind during its history, but especially during the last one hundred years or so, has been engaged in the construction of an industrial machine, the result of which has been to transfer the burden of maintenance of life from the "backs of men to the backs of machines." In Major Douglas' unsurpassed description, "the industrial machine is a lever, continuously being lengthened by progress, which enables the burden of Atlas to be lifted with ever-increasing ease.

As the number of men required to work the lever decreases, so the number of men set free to lengthen it increases."§ This process is of the nature of acceleration and involves the ever greater rate of production of things to make things with; the leverage of real capital. But there is a limit to the amount of capital goods that can be utilised usefully, and barring unlimited export into outer space we are approaching this limit ever more rapidly. In case anyone should point to large numbers of people in under-developed countries it must be emphasised that our *capacity* to produce *capital* goods—things to make things with—is far greater than actual capital goods in existence. Something of the possibilities can be gauged by considering the magnitude of our effort when financial and other restrictions are relaxed. An interesting example of what I mean is given by Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University. The money cost of World War I is reputed to have been 400,000,000,000 dollars.

This is estimated at 1914 valuation to have made the following possible. For every family resident in U.S.A.,

Canada, Australia, England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany and Russia this could have provided a 2,500-dollar house with 1,000 dollars' worth of furniture, and placed it on a five-acre block of land worth 100 dollars an acre. Each city of over 20,000 people in all these countries could have been supplied with a 5,000,000 dollar library and a 10,000,000 dollar university. From the balance, 5 per cent. interest would pay for all time salaries for 125,000 teachers and 125,000 nurses. From that which was left over, everything—farms, churches, homes, railways and the public utilities, etc., of France and Belgium—could have been purchased.

The ultimate meaning of true industrial progress is that the amount of human work necessary in order to sustain a very high standard of living is steadily decreasing. In the words of Major Douglas, "the primary fact on which to be clear is that we can produce at this moment, goods and services at a rate very considerably greater than the possible rate of consumption of the world." This, then, is the physical and realistic basis of leisure. Quite clearly only either leisure or "employment" *outside useful production* can dispose of the so-called "unemployment problem. All problems of economics and politics are absolutely conditioned by the physical realities described. Short of sabotage or cataclysm the progress of the situation is inexorable. Anyone perceiving what is involved will see through the confusions which result from the wrong posting of problems. If employment is regarded as the problem then the result will be increasingly artificial employment. (1) As a result of obvious and deliberate policy together with the working of a long outmoded economic and financial system "full employment" is made to appear to be the legitimate object of the economic system. "The modern machine with its marvellous capacity for utilizing power is capable of releasing man

from much of his human labour and for providing for his economic independence so that he can be set free from other ends. Yet people's ideas have been so perverted that they have become slaves of the machine, ever more definitely rivetted to an invisible slavery."

—(C. H. Douglas in *The Approach to Reality*.)

The proper objective of the economic system is not employment, but the production of goods and services, as, when, and where required with the minimum of labour and inconvenience.

In order to see clearly how the institutions of society *can* be made to minister to the true welfare of man spiritually, materially, individually and socially, we will need to take a careful look at some important enunciations contained in Social Credit.

The first of these is that the cost of production is consumption. This is a real natural and fundamental law of economics, being expressed more fully in the statement that the real cost of production is measured by the consumption incurred in that production. Put another way, we can say that the true cost of a given programme of production is the consumption of all production over an equivalent period of time. Cost is only the natural penalty or condition paid by human beings in reaping the results of increment of association, one aspect of which is the fruitfulness of the earth. For instance the real cost of a crop of wheat is measured by the amount of wheat consumed as seed. If the planters of the seed ate only wheat as food to supply the energy for them to plant the seed, then the real cost of that crop of wheat is the seed wheat plus the food wheat, plus also, of course, unavoidable wastage. The *ratio* of wheat consumed to wheat produced is always a fraction less than one. The difference between that fraction and one represents true profit in the most fundamental sense.

Take another simple example. Imagine an isolated island upon which a small population lived on the coconuts which grew there. The pulp, let us say, provided the food, the shells houses, and the fibre, clothes. Supposing for a given population working a given number of hours twice as many coconuts were produced than sufficed for consumption. This would mean that the penalty or condition necessary for producing two coconuts would be one coconut. A notable result, for this means that it is possible in certain circumstances, for the cost of a volume of goods to be a fraction of itself. This makes nonsense of the oft repeated statement that "you cannot get something for nothing." If the islanders had been "rewarded" for the production of coconuts with a piece of paper — a money unit — for each coconut, then the money cost under present orthodox money rules would, if, say, one hundred coconuts were produced, be one hundred money units. "The true cost of a programme of production is in general not the money cost, but considerably less than the money cost, and a given programme of production can only be distributed to the buying public if sold at its true cost." Why? In the case of coconuts, one hundred money units represents the *monetary* cost of one hundred coconuts, whereas one coconut represents the *real* cost of two. Now it is obvious that the estimation of the efficiency of a system, that is "the power to produce the result intended," cannot be correct if it is based upon a wrong standard. The productive system is producing the result intended only when it is producing goods and services with a minimum of trouble to those participating in the system. Therefore, the degree to which production can be expanded without increasing consumption does not by itself increase efficiency. *Consumers may not require or desire the increased production.* An index to efficiency — the power to produce the result intended — must include "a minimum of inconvenience" clause. To

measure money costs does not establish "efficiency." A falling money cost indicates nothing more than the degree to which the consumers attached to industry can be reduced without reducing the volume of production. (2) Quite clearly in order to make the minimum of inconvenience requirement effective we need to know the degree to which the power of a community to produce had been advanced not by addition of workers but by the increase in powers per man, or production capacity. This is generally revealed by the rate of real capital appreciation and quite clearly there is a correct ratio of production of the means to produce, which is real capital, to the production of consumer requirements, which can only be attained through a mechanism reflecting the real need or desire of the community of consumers. Any other arrangement is not only the thief of leisure but increasingly subordinates man to economic activity, profoundly upsetting the balance of nature and man's true relationship thereto, a fact which was inferred in my opening remarks. Major Douglas has defined this production *capacity* as the ability to deliver goods and services, as, when, and where required, and is called by him the *real credit* of the community. This most important factor modifies the fundamental law previously stated, namely, that the cost of production is consumption, and the important ratio consumption is affected by it.  
production

Two interesting facts amounting to revelations emerge from the foregoing considerations. Firstly neither individuals nor the community of individuals can go into "debt" for true cost. If cost is consumption, it is "discharged" on consumption. Cost is properly measured as a ratio, in which production potential, the denominator is increasing much more rapidly than actual consumption, the numerator; therefore real costs are falling. Prices,

however, based on rules of orthodox accounting are rising. Secondly we can see that the poor are not poor because the rich are rich, they are poor, or are enslaved to the industrial and productive system, because of the operation of the money system. But "class war" is founded on the delusion that profiteering is the cause of poverty and "class war" is the foundation of Marxian socialism.

Two factors, a widespread ignorance of the nature of money and of inheritance, especially the cultural heritage, have operated powerfully to obscure reality. "The possibility of meeting the requirements of society for goods and services in a small and decreasing fraction of the man hours, or time energy units, which society has at its disposal comes from improvements in the industrial machine as a whole. If there is one thing more certain than any other in this uncertain world it is that the industrial machine is a common heritage, the result of the labours of generations of people whose names are for the most part forgotten, but whose efforts have made possible the triumphs of the past hundred years." (4) Writing in a Douglas Social Credit Quarterly Review, *The Fig Tree* of September, 1936, Dr. Tudor Jones says:—"The magnitude of the cultural inheritance is but dimly apprehended by individuals. At best each is directly aware of only a fragment of it. This fact can readily be demonstrated by directing one's own attention to any small collection of objects in sight at any time, and asking oneself to explain how they got there, in sufficient detail as to suggest that one could secure their reappearance by the same means ab initio, if they should be destroyed. Simple as it is, and few as the objects may be, provided they are products of civilised life and not merely natural objects, this experiment leads to the startling conclusion that no one has enough knowledge to satisfy the conditions. Indeed, the knowledge possessed collectively by all the individuals

living in our time is not nearly enough to achieve the end required, since the historical development of human abilities is known only fragmentarily . . .

"The colossal power of modern man is an increment of association derived from his unconscious co-operation with the legions of the dead. It is not a measure of his own intellectual stature . . ."

The total result of human association, receives contributions from two sources, the effort of living individuals applied to instruments which are largely the creation of past generations. We have an association between the present and the past yielding an increment which is present; and relatively to one another the past is enormously the more effective element in this association. (3) The misapplication of St. Paul's words has resulted in the doctrine that if a man will not work in *all* situations, neither shall he eat. This "completely denies all recognition to the social nature of the heritage of civilisation, and by its refusal of purchasing power except on terms, arrogates to a few persons selected by the system, and not by humanity, the right to disinherit the indubitable heirs, the individuals who compose society." (3a)

It is difficult to calculate this power of heritage origin. Thorold Rogers says that in 1495 an Englishman could support himself and his family in comfort by working 15 weeks in the year. English industrialists, Lord Leverhulme for instance, have said that they need not ask more than two weeks work from each of their employees per year. Between 1913 and 1945 in England, average man hours per unit of production, including transportation and distribution have roughly decreased in the ratio of about 100 to 15. On the basis of true cost therefore, the 1946 pound sterling would be worth £6/12/- instead

of 8/4. (3) A very large English manufacturing organisation in the whole field of electronics are now producing 60 million radio and television valves much more highly elaborate and diverse in design, for every million produced during the war. There is now in existence machinery which can produce entirely automatically all the components, and wire and assemble complex radio and television equipment.

The present world economic system rests on the financial perversion of the true law of supply and demand. With this is fostered the delusion that in some way money is inherently connected with "value." It is probable that this difficulty is associated with the classical idea that money is a medium of exchange. It may have been once, a long time ago, but ever since division of labour and process began, and with the advent of the credit debanking system it has never been any such thing. In any case money as a "medium of exchange" has nothing to do with the inherent nature of money.

The whole world is deeply indebted to the transcendent genius of the late Major C. H. Douglas for his revelations concerning the nature of money and the money system. Their importance more than doubles when we come to consider the nature of the "just price," with implications so profound for the whole foundation of Christian sociology. In his book *Social Credit* he writes:— "Now the distinguishing feature of the modern co-operative production system, depending for its efficiency on the principle of the division of labour, is that the production of the individual is in itself of decreasing use to him, as the subdivision of labour and process is extended. A man who works on a small farm, can live (at a very low standard of comfort and civilisation) by consuming the actual products of his own industry. But a highly-trained mechanic, producing some one notion of an in-

tricate mechanism, can only live by casting his product into the common stock, and drawing from that common stock, a portion of the combined product through the agency of money.

There are some deductions of major importance which can be made from these premises. The first is that money is nothing but an *effective demand*. It is not wealth, it is not production, and it has no inherent and indissoluble connection with any thing whatever except *effective demand*. That is the first point, and it would be difficult to overrate the importance of a clear grasp of it. It lies at the root of the question as to the true ownership of credit-purchasing-power. The second point is that, so far as we can conceive, the co-operative industrial system cannot exist without a satisfactory form of effective-demand system, and the result of an unsatisfactory money system (that is to say, a money system which fails to function as effective demand to the general satisfaction) is that mankind will be driven back to the distinguishing characteristic of barbarism, which is individual production. And the third point, and the point which is perhaps of most immediate importance at the present time, is that the control of the money system means the control of civilised humanity. In other words, so far from money, or its equivalent, being a minor feature of modern economics, it is the very keystone of the structure." Money is the starting point of every action which requires the co-operation of the community or the use of its assets.

"Yet perhaps the most important fundamental idea which can be conveyed at this time, in regard to the money problem — an idea on the validity of which certainly stands or falls, anything I have to say on the subject — is that it is not a problem of value-measurement. The proper function of a money system is to furnish the information necessary to direct the production and distribution of goods and services. It is, or should be,

an "order" system, *not* a "reward" system. It is essentially a mechanism of administration, subservient to policy, and it is because it is superior to all other mechanisms of administration, that the money control of the world is so immensely important." (4)

"The wealth of a country, and therefore the basis of its financial credit, is not so much in the things that it actually possesses as in the rate at which it can produce them. Now, the rate at which it can produce them is a composite thing, *because side by side with production we always have consumption*, so that we can say that the net rate of production is the gross rate of production minus the rate of consumption, and it is also possible to say that the absolute cost of all consumption is the rate of consumption divided by the rate of production. Every improvement of process, machines, and the application of power to industry increases the rate of production without necessarily increasing the rate of consumption. So that the rate at which we can issue additional credit is easily seen to be dependent upon the rate of increase of productive capacity." (5)

The apparent failure on the part of orthodox economists to perceive or to act upon the fact that the whole economic system is dynamic, not a series of static stages is one of the root causes of the world's troubles. Hence the lack of appreciation of the real importance of Major Douglas' definition of real credit as the rate or dynamic capacity at which a community can deliver goods and services as demanded. Real credit is a measure of the reserve of energy belonging to a community.

The rate of production is practically proportionate to the energy applied to it. The energy output of machines, not the input, applied directly to the production. If one unit of human labour with the aid of mechanical power and machinery produces ten times as much production as

the same unit working without such aids then either output will increase ten times or only one-tenth of the amount of labour will be required for the same original output. As production per man increases either requirements must increase, or the number of men required in production must decrease. When overall production increases beyond individual requirements as

the ratio  $\frac{\text{Machine Time Energy Units}}{\text{Human Labour Time Energy Units}}$  rises towards

near saturation level and very few men would receive wages and salaries to purchase the product, then price per unit production would have to fall so that the smaller amount and area of wage distribution would purchase the total product, some of which would otherwise remain unsold. Note, however, that even so the automated or near automated production beyond the largest requirements of the relatively few wage and salary earners would not be purchased, and displaced labour would have no purchasing power to purchase. Therefore both pragmatically, and ethically owing to the social nature of the cultural heritage the distribution of a social or national dividend is demanded. Between the two extremes of individual and totally automated production there is a correct ratio of dividend to wage and salary to reflect the true physical situation; the only way of providing genuine opportunity for true leisure. The true physical situation makes progress towards this status inexorable unless catastrophe supervenes. The nature of the cultural heritage and its operation increasingly through co-operative machine production is making producer and consumer increasingly interdependent. The natural born inhabitant of a country is becoming inherently less a wage earner and (but not in practice) more of the nature of a shareholder in his country. "The original conception of the classical economist that wealth arises from the interaction

of three factors — land, labour and capital, was a materialistic conception which did not contemplate and, in fact, did not need to contemplate, the preponderating importance which intangible factors have assumed in the productive process of the modern world. The cultural inheritance and what may be called the "unearned increment of association" probably include most of these factors, and they represent not only the major factor in the production of wealth, but a factor which is increasing in importance so rapidly that the other factors are becoming negligible in comparison.

It is both pragmatically and ethically undeniable that the ownership of these intangible factors vests in the members of the living community, without distinction, as tenants-for-life. Ethically, because it is an inheritance from the labours of past generations of scientists, organisers, and administrators, and pragmatically because the denial of its communal character sets in motion disruptive forces, threatening, as at the present time, its destruction. If this point of view be admitted, and I find it difficult to believe that anyone who will consider the matter from an unprejudiced point of view can deny it, it seems clear that the money equivalent of this property, which is so important a factor in production, vests in and arises from the individuals who are the tenants-for-life of it." (6)

In conclusion it must be re-emphasised that the only true, sane origin of production is the real need or desire on the part of the individual consumer whoever he may be. If we are to continue to have co-operative production then the system must be subject to one condition only—that it delivers the right goods to the right users. If any man or body of men by reason of their fortuitous position, attempt to dictate the terms on which they will deliver the goods, (not be it noted the terms on which

they will work) then that is a tyranny. Revolution, agitation, and reformism are merely symptoms of a grave and possibly fatal disease in the world's social system and unless an adequate remedy is administered there will be an irreparable breakdown.

"The prevalent assumption that human work is the foundation of purchasing power has more implications than it is possible to deal with here. It is the root assumption of a world philosophy which may yet bring civilisation to its death grapple. It consists in the domination of a system over all effective individual dissent. The steps to that end consisting in depriving the individual of economic independence either by vesting physical control in the state (conscription) or by "Nationalising" through grinding taxation, or otherwise the means of production, and abolishing all purchasing power not issued, on terms, by the state. . . . "Against this, mere physical force is powerless, leading but to that which it would destroy. There is, never-the-less, a weapon to hand, that faith, that credit based on the unity-in-diversity of human needs, which in sober truth has moved mountains, without which the Panama Canal would never have been cut, or the St. Lawrence spanned. Into the temple of this faith the money changers have entered, and only when they have been cast out will there be peace." (7)

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## LEISURE IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

By DAVID PURCELL

You will look in vain in a dictionary for a definition of Leisure. A dictionary will express its meaning vaguely as being "free time," which conveys a completely inadequate impression of what leisure really is. Now it is hardly surprising that a dictionary cannot help us. Leisure is a spiritual and mental attitude—an Idea—and we cannot encompass in a single term or sentence the definition of an Idea. An examination of some aspects of this Idea, however, will help us to understand the nature of leisure. The first thing to note is that leisure has a positive value of its own. It is not merely the negation of work. In Greek and Latin there were only negative words to express the idea of work. In Latin, the word for leisure was "otium." The word for business was "neg-otium"—"not leisure." Similarly also in the Greek. Most of the work in the Greek and Roman civilizations was performed by slaves. A free citizen would however have been involved in negotiations of one kind or another and would have regarded negotiation or what we call commerce or business as the negation of leisure and hence work.

Leisure is an attitude of contemplation, of an inward calm, of surrendering to Reality. The English word "leisure" is derived from the Latin word *licere* meaning "to be allowed." The Book of Ecclesiasticus gives us an insight into the nature of leisure when it tells us "The wisdom of a learned man cometh by his time of leisure, and he that is less in action, shall receive wisdom." (Ch. 38, v. 25). "leisure is a receptive attitude of mind, a contemplative attitude, and is . . . the capacity for steeping oneself in the whole of creation." (*Leisure The Basis of Culture*, Josef Pieper, p. 49.) Here again we note this idea of receptiveness—of letting things happen—*Licere*—to be allowed.

It should not be supposed that leisure means just idleness. The meaning of the Old English word "idel" was probably "empty." (*Concise Oxford Dictionary*.) An idle person then was one who was empty of reality. "Idleness . . . means that a man prefers to forego the rights . . . that belong to his nature . . . he does not wish to be what he really, fundamentally IS." "At the zenith of the Middle Ages . . . it was held that sloth and restlessness, "leisurelessness," the incapacity to enjoy leisure, were all closely connected, sloth was held to be the source of restlessness, and the ultimate cause of "work for work's sake." (*Pieper*, op. cit., pp. 48, 49.)

It has been held by many philosophers that what is hard work is good. This view was held by one of Plato's companions, by Emmanuel Kant, by Calvin and by a lamentably large numbers of modern (self-styled) Christians. The historical Christian view, still held (at least nominally) by the majority of Christians, is diametrically opposed to this viewpoint. St. Thomas Aquinas held that the essence of virtue consists in the *good* rather than the *difficult* and that virtue makes us perfect by enabling us to follow our natural bent in the right way. And he wrote that "there should be men who devote their lives to contemplation . . . necessary not only for the good of the individual who so devotes himself, but for the good of human society." (*Commentary On Proverbs*.)

It is obvious therefore that in classical and mediaeval Christian thought leisure did not derive its value from the relief it brings from work, nor from the fact that it can be a restorative after work or a strengthening agent for present or future work. If leisure is considered as merely a break in one's work it "is still a part of the world of work. The pause is made for the sake of work . . . and a man is not only refreshed *from* work but *for* work." (*Pieper*, op. cit., p. 56).

But we will more clearly understand the nature of leisure by examining the idea of leisure in Christian thought and teaching. Though one may only rarely find the word "Leisure" mentioned in Christian writing—the idea is inherent in Christianity and indeed is "one of the foundations of Western culture." (*Pieper*, op. cit., p. 25.) We can only comprehend this by understanding the Christian teaching on man's origin, nature and destiny. The Christian holds that "God created man to His own image and likeness." (*Genesis* 1, 26-27), and that "This image of God in man, is not in the body, but in the soul, which is a spiritual substance, endued with understanding and free will." (*Notes on the Revised Rheims, Douay Bible*, 1750, Bishop Challoner). Now although Christians held this for many centuries and the majority still hold it, there has been a denial of the true nature of man which, as I will show later, has profoundly affected man's attitude to leisure.

"All things are ordered to one good, as to their ultimate end . . . and this is God." (*Summa Contra Gentiles III*, Ch. 17, St. Thomas Aquinas). Nothing can satisfy man's will completely except God alone, for God is his beginning and his end. Man is imbued with what has been called a "divine discontent." This is what St. Augustine of Hippo had in mind when he prayed "Our hearts, O Lord, are restless, until they rest in Thee." Christian belief then is that God is the ultimate object, the ultimate end of all man's desires, and the possession of God by the soul is complete happiness. Since then this is so, all human activity should be directed towards true happiness. Every effort of man which endeavours to deny God, or to ignore Him, or to leave out of account the destiny of man, will suffer the fate of the ancient Tower of Babel. Men then attempted to build their own path to happiness. Because their actions were not in accord with reality, their efforts disintegrated. And the very name of the edifice which they attempted to erect has become the symbol of confusion—of feverish

activity directed to a futile end, of activism, or work for work's sake.

When we read the New Testament we notice immediately similarities between the civilization in which Christ lived, and our own civilization. We must be similarly struck with the contrast to these attitudes to life in Christ's teaching. Here there is no stressing the virtue of work for its own sake, there is no praise for material efficiency for its own sake. In fact we find the very opposite. In the New Testament we read the message of peace and tranquility of mind, and we find repeated warnings about the dangers of worldliness—of concentrating our attention on material things. "No man can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and mammon." (*Matthew* VI, 24). The Knox translation of the Scripture puts it "you cannot serve God and money."

"Come unto Me all you that labour and are burdened and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and you shall find rest unto your souls." (*Matthew* XI, 28.) I think that the "rest" of which Christ spoke here, could not possibly have been closer to the true nature of leisure. We find in the New Testament too a warning to distinguish between shadow and substance, between what appears to be important and what is in reality our destiny. "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and the moth consume and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust or moth doth consume and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also." (*Matthew* VII, 19-21.)

There is in the words of Christ Himself the first Christian pronouncement specifically on the subject of what I term activism—that is, the practice of activity without reference to the true purpose of Man—the modern concept of work. The scene was at the village of Bethany and Our Lord was the guest of the two sisters Martha and Mary. Mary sat at the Lord's feet and the Scripture tells us, she

"heard His word." But Martha, busy with the house-work and serving, complained that Mary had left her to do the work alone. And Christ rebuked her saying, "Martha, Martha thou art careful and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chose the better part . . .". (*Luke X*, 38-42.)

The primacy of the spirit, the supremacy of the spiritual over the material is exemplified in the Old Testament in the words: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." (*Deuteronomy VIII*, 3.) And in the New Testament: "For the Wisdom of the flesh is death, but the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace." (*Romans VIII*, 6.)

It is important not to misunderstand this attitude to material things—to what in Christian parlance is called the "world." The Christian speaks of this world as a "Vale of tears" and yet he knows that all creation, even material creation bears witness to the existence of God and a higher life. If we try to divorce this world from its origin and if we deny our own ultimate destiny, then this life becomes meaningless and empty and well we may despair for then we are really idle persons. This is one of the many paradoxes of Christianity. Of all men, this paradox of being in and of the world and yet unworldly, of despising this world's goods for their own sake and yet loving them as God's creation, is most clearly seen in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. A man so detached from material things that he actively envied with a burning zeal the materially poor and the destitute, and yet a man who so loved all created things that he bestowed upon them the title of "Brother," "Brother Dog" and "Brother Sun," and even his own body, with a paradoxical mixture of contempt and love, he affectionately called "Brother Ass." I mention St. Francis of Assisi for another reason. He is a Saint who is revered by Christians of all denominations and one who is frequently admired even by athiests and agnostics, usually

because there has come to be associated with his name a kind of benevolent humanitarianism and because his poetic nature appeals to the human imagination. It is very strange, that such a man should be revered, because in the sense that our civilization understands the term "work" he was a waster. From youth onwards he didn't do a day's "work" for the rest of his life! Could there possibly be a greater antithesis to modern thinking about work than the spirit of the Poverello of Assisi who typifies the attitude of the Christian Saints? St. Francis appreciated profoundly the true meaning of leisure. He loved nature—more than any other human being he considered the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air, and because of this, more than any other man, he followed implicitly the injunction: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all things shall be added to you." (*Luke XII*, 31.) If a man first seeks the Kingdom of God, and to the extent that he does so he will appreciate truly the gifts of God. It is an interesting commentary on the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries that St. Francis, because he first sought the Kingdom of God, inspired the art and poetry of these ages. These were the centuries in which, however imperfect in their individual lives they may have been, men had a clear idea of their nature and their final destiny. They knew the importance of developing one's personality, which they termed personal sanctification, and so it was natural that one in whom there was so great a development of sanctity should be revered as St. Francis was. It was not a matter of indifference to the men of the 13th to the 15th century how their lives were spent. They understood craftsmanship because they knew that God is glorified by beauty of form. The appearance of the Church—the House of God—was a matter of importance, and in building the great cathedrals they have left to us, they endeavoured to glorify God by building Him as fitting an abode on earth as possible. All this was directed towards their own sanctification—towards the

development of their own personalities through glorifying God. These were the centuries of the artisan, the craftsman who was engaged in the creative, organic process of true work. He was in contact with the finished product of his labour and it was stamped with his personality. He was "not the servant but the master in the process of production." (*The New Tower of Babel*, Dietrich von Hildebrand, 1953.) The artisan loved his work, and he may have been attached to it for the joy he derived from it, quite apart from its usefulness to him. The artisan has gone. He is replaced by the process worker, who is engaged on what is called "repetition work," who is a cog in the machine of the assembly line, who is no longer the master but the slave of production.

It is, I hope, now evident that there is a definite relationship between religion and leisure. Our modern materialistic "full employment" social system however, requires for its service men who are spiritually bankrupt. The spiritual void in the life of modern man is filled with "work" and his total occupation with this activity in, one form or another, gives him a false sense of fulfilment which mitigates the despair into which he inevitably lapses. A man spiritually enlightened achieves fulfilment—achieves his instinct of "belonging" to God and in God's creation in his religion. A man spiritually bankrupt feels a spurious fulfilment in "work." And so "work" has become the "religion" of our materialist age. What happened then to break down the idea of leisure which we have considered, so that, even though the idea survives, it is become clouded and is jostled into the background by new ideas?

At this point it is necessary to explain the Christian doctrines of Original Sin and Justification, for the Christian attitude to leisure is dependent upon the truth about the nature of man, and his state before and after the Fall of Adam. When the truth of these doctrines was denied, then the basis of the idea of leisure was undermined.

Briefly then, I summarise the teaching which was denied in varying degrees by Luther, Calvin, Jansen and others. God created Adam as the first man and Eve the first woman. From Adam and Eve the whole human race descends. When God created man, He gave him, in addition to his nature, certain other endowments to which man could lay no claim by virtue of his nature. Of these gifts the primary one was sanctifying grace. God gave Adam other gifts—immortality (ie., freedom from bodily death and from sickness and pain) and integrity. By the gift of integrity man was free from that inclination to evil, called concupiscence. These gifts Adam lost through the Fall and through Adam they were lost by his descendents—the whole human race.

Justification is a Divine act which conveys sanctifying grace to the soul, which by sin, either original or actual, was spiritually dead.

As simply and as briefly as I can put it, those are the doctrines which were held generally by Christians until the time of Martin Luther. It is true that early in the Fifth century, a British monk, Pelagius, denied the doctrine of Original Sin. His view and the views held by Luther on the matter were poles apart, and we need not concern ourselves in the context of Leisure with Pelagianism. It held sway for only some 25 years, and its chief opponent was St. Augustine (354-430).

Primarily it was the doctrine of Justification which Martin Luther denied. Luther's teaching is not pertinent to the subject of the Christian view of leisure except in one aspect, and that is the influence of his teaching on his own and subsequent generations which opened up the way for Calvinism. (I am not here dealing with what is held by modern Lutherans or Presbyterians, on which I am not qualified to comment. Here, and in the paragraphs which follow, I speak of what Calvin himself believed and taught.)

In the middle sixteenth century John Calvin accepted the

Lutheran view that human nature is irremediably vitiated by original sin. But Calvin was a much clearer and more logical thinker than Luther.

He developed Luther's ideas and held that view of the absolute predestination of mankind which though humourously expressed by Robert Burns in "Holy Willie's Prayer" is by no means misrepresented:

"O Thou, that in the heavens dost dwell,  
Wha as it pleases best Thysel',  
Sends ane to Heaven and ten to Hell,  
A' for Thy glory,  
And not for onie guid or ill  
They've done afore Thee."

Calvinism spread from Geneva to France (where its adherents were called Huguenots), to Scotland (where John Knox was its chief propounder) to Holland, to Poland, and to England through the Puritans. From England it crossed the Atlantic to America. In Geneva where Calvin had complete control, doctrine was quickly translated into action. Elders were appointed whose function was to watch over the lives of all individuals. They were stationed in every quarter of the city so that nothing could escape their scrutiny. There must be no leisure for its own sake—"those that are prodigal of their time despise their own souls." (*The Worth of the Soul*, Matthew Henry.) Contemplation became for the Puritan, a form of self-indulgence. Work was exalted into a virtue—"God hath commanded you in some way or other to labour for your daily bread." (*Baxter's Christian Directory*, Vol. 1, p. 168.) Calvin's followers accepted "the necessity of . . . large scale commerce and finance, and the other practical facts of business life." (*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 113, Prof. R. H. Tawney, 1926.) The word business is more correctly written and pronounced busy-ness.

In the year 1640, there was published a book (*Augustinus*) which was the fruit of twenty years' study of the

writings of St. Augustine. Its author, Cornelius Jansen, a Flemish Catholic Bishop, had died two years before its publication. In his book he refused to recognize that in the state in which man was created by God, he was endowed with numerous gifts and graces that were the pure gifts of God, in no way due to human nature. Since these gifts were, according to Jansen, an integral part of man's natural equipment, and since they were forfeited in the Fall of Adam, it followed that by Original Sin, our nature was corrupted in its essence. Man fell helplessly under the control of evil, so that, do what he would, there was an irresistible inclination drawing him towards evil. To counteract this inclination, Jansen held, God gives grace as a force drawing man in the opposite direction, consequently man is drawn, and drawn irresistibly towards good or towards evil according to the relative strength of these two conflicting inclinations.

The Jansenist doctrine was taken up in France by many who had hitherto rejected the teachings of Luther and Calvin, and led to a campaign of rigorism in the Catholic Church in France which lasted for nearly a century, and which was reminiscent of Pharisaism or Puritanism, which have much in common. It has been said that the Jansenists never learned to smile.

These policies were the logical outcome of the philosophies from which they sprang. They have reached their apotheosis in the period from the end of World War I to the present day. Exactly how successful they have been in completely changing the social structure of the world, is, I think self-evident. *Why* they were so successful and *how* the policies have been helped to fruition is outside my scope and would require a separate study.

To the Greeks and the Romans work was un-leisure. To the modern world leisure has become un-work. We rest from work only to repair the wear and tear of past work—only to build a reserve of energy to fit us for more

efficient work. The work of man has become the same as the work of animals. Both men and animals work to produce something. The sheep works of its nature to produce wool and lambs. There is no intention on the part of the sheep to do this—it does so of its very nature, operating by instinct. But in the work of man there is an element other than the result produced—this element is intention or purpose, which involves the exercise of reason and will and which includes self-perfection or self-development.

Errors regarding the nature of personal beings have led to the idea that the importance of a man consists primarily in the production of impersonal goods or in some aspect of organization of that production, and in his accomplishments for the State, for art, for science, for economics—even for sport. Achievement, as such, is placed above personality. Within the range of goods produced, the preference is given to those which are least stamped with the impress of individual personality. These goods are considered to represent the “important” and “serious” part of life such as the sphere of economics, politics, national “development” and so on. Pure knowledge or art, or communities such as family and marriage, are relegated to the background. Work, as such, is immensely overrated. The terrible rhythm of work enslaves the individual person and prevents him from fulfilling his true purpose. Pope Pius XI pointed out (in *Quadragesimo Anno*) that “. . . it may be said with all truth, that nowadays the conditions of social and economic life are such that vast multitudes of men can only with great difficulty pay attention to that one thing necessary—namely, their eternal salvation.” This is a modern reminder of the injunction of Christ to Martha—“. . . one thing is necessary . . .”. Speaking as the shepherd about his flock he remarked in a most poignant passage: “We can scarcely restrain our tears when we reflect upon the dangers which threaten them.”

The position to which the function of work has been

exalted, does not mean that all persons are engaged in the work itself for particularly long stretches of time. In fact, it is probable that the majority of people work for less time than they have done in past epochs. The important thing is though, that the function of work has been elevated into an end in itself. Individuals, trades’ unions, employers’ unions, political parties, whole nations are pursuing work as an end in itself. All clamour insistently that we must have “full employment.” Since work has become an end in itself life is orientated towards it. Studies of the aged are made with the primary aim of equipping them for useful work. They must not be allowed even to grow old in graceful leisure. Hours of work are shortened, and leave from work is increased, so that work may become more efficient. Special universities are instituted for the specific purpose of training people for work. Even the insane are conscripted for work. It has been found that they excell at certain functions which are soul-killing for a normal person. There has been speculation about what this type of work will do to one who is normal.

The alternative to work is amusement, and this is regarded as important and necessary, but, of course, somewhat frivolous in comparison with the really serious business of work. Amusement plays an enormous role and is considered an essential part of life. The racecourse, the football field, the television screen, the radio, the picture theatre, the hotel, have become the alternatives to work. We hear frequently the terms “escape films” and “escape literature.” Escape from the soul-destroying tedium of work into the dream world of amusement. Idleness in its true sense. Beelzebub is invoked to cast out Satan.

“The modern alternative to work on the one hand and amusement on the other is, in a certain way, an expression of infantilism. It is normal for children to consider school as being the serious part of life and to identify seriousness with unpleasant, burdensome tasks. The child is free to

play only when schoolwork is done, and playing thus becomes identified with the joyful. The same unfortunate alternative has sometimes grave consequences in education. Many guilt complexes are due to the fact that work is considered to be the only serious part in life. Some people feel morally guilty as soon as they are not working. They even feel "guilty" when they give their time to some important human affair rather than to professional work, even though in doing so they behave in the morally right way." (*Von Hilderbrand*, op. cit., p. 226.)

Few people engaged in the creation of the Modern Tower of Babel are even aware of what they are doing. Through the debasement of leisure in all its depth of meaning, men have lost their grip on Reality.

Generally, only the very young can tell you simply what is the purpose of man—to serve God (or if you will, to develop one's personality) on earth, and to enjoy Him forever in Heaven.

The idea of leisure, as I have said, depends upon an understanding of the nature and purpose of man. If we lose entirely our understanding of our purpose, we lose the idea of leisure.

Man is now regarded not as an image of his Creator, but as a tool for producing impersonal goods. There was a time when men spoke of a village of so many souls. Now men speak of factories of so many hands. Man now exists for the advancement of the greatness of the State. His worth is measured in terms of his contributions to that greatness, in terms of the time and energy spent in the production of goods. The mediaeval saint was revered because a man's worth was measured in terms of his holiness. Now that a man's worth is measured by another yardstick we have a modern type of "saint." The man who is now "canonized" and revered, the "man of the year," is he who is most efficient in the organization of industrial production, whose whole being is absorbed in one or another aspect of

his "work," his entire life orientated towards his "job." Such a one is the "saint" of the modern religion of "work." The prophets of the new religion are the economists and its holy books the sales chart and the production statistics. Small wonder that in writing about the logical development of these ideas, Aldous Huxley in the novel *Brave New World* replaced God by Henry Ford, and spoke of "in this year of our Ford."

One Australian industry devotes at least one weekly radio session to preaching the gospel of the new "religion." We learn that this industry exists to make Australia "truly great," to fulfil the vocation of those who feel the call to devote themselves to this great ideal. It tells us that it is providing employment and happiness for thousands of Australians—that it is training (God help us!) the future leaders of the nation. In thanking them for their trouble, I would point out that, without their assistance, we are already close to being a nation of morons. A moron is an adult person whose mental development was arrested before he reached the age of reason.

It is a gloomy picture. Is there no ray of light to relieve the darkness? Is the idea of leisure already dead? Is the Christian voice which spoke in times past of man's true vocation—the basis of leisure—now stilled?

I cannot know of course, how close to death is the idea of leisure, it may be already in its death throes, but it is certainly not yet dead. A great part of the world had already succumbed to the final logic of the dehumanization of man—the human ant-heap. But there are at least some persons, who even though they are chained to the modern treadmill of "work," recognize their involvement for the perversion of right order that it is. Their spirits are not yet seized by the lunatic idea which claims their bodies. But those who are living in cities, the great centres of production, the new Towers of Babel, have a difficult struggle to retain a grip on reality. The countryman is in a better

position. There are still to be found many farmers even in Australia, who live a life of true leisure—I know many personally. Generally they are of the older generations, the younger are proselytes of the new religion. There was not so long ago a man in Gippsland who surely practised true leisure. For many years he worked patiently day by day for as long as there was daylight, in decorating a church with his paintings, often in the most cramped and uncomfortable conditions for he painted walls and pillars, ceilings and niches. Over the years people marvelled at his patience. I cannot remember whether his paintings were works of genius—it does not matter. At least the spirit of a past leisure age was not forgotten while he lived. In the monastic orders throughout the world is still to be found a life of true leisure—the Church still practices leisure in her monastic sons, and she encourages them still in modern times—careful that they so not lose the true idea of leisure—purging them of any remnant or upsurge of Jansenism; the practice of rigor for its own sake. Within my own Church, every week-end there are groups of lay men and women who spend the two days apart from their usual environment. For this period they devote themselves to meditation, to true leisure, to concerning themselves with their final end, who in the words I quoted previously, steep themselves in Reality. I suppose it would surprise many to know that this is happening in the city of Melbourne. Outside the sphere of her own direct control, the Church still insists on her age-old principles.

Modern man has lost the sense of his real destiny. When he had this sense of his real destiny the emphasis was on the person, as such, rather than on his achievements. This was not strange, since man was regarded as a personal being who was an image of God, destined for immortality. His primary vocation was the development of his personal being—the gradual unfolding of the divine principle in him—the Middle Ages called it personal sanctification or holiness

The man who had attained the greater holiness—in other words, the saint as I have mentioned in the case of St. Francis was the man who was most revered. When the sense of man's true destiny was lost, the emphasis shifted to his achievements. Modern society is more interested in what a man *does* rather than what he *is*. Now as soon as a created good is made absolute and is idolized in the true sense of the word, one loses sight of its real value and this good inevitably degenerates. When man was made a God, he degenerated into a superior ape. Great achievements were made idols, and their worship degenerated into the worship of industrial magnates, film stars, cricketers, politicians. Leisure in its true sense is the *sine qua non* of the development of human personality or (to use a simpler expression) of holiness. If holiness means nothing, then leisure becomes meaningless too.

The Christian voice, though drowned out by modern secularism, is not stilled. Listen to the voice speaking here through the lips of Pope Pius XI in 1931: "The so called laws of economics, derived from the nature of earthly goods and from the qualities of the human body and soul, determine what aims are unattainable or attainable in economic matters and what means are thereby necessary, while reason itself clearly deduces from the nature of things and from the individual and social character of man, what is the end and object of the whole economic order assigned by God the Creator.

And through the lips of the Anglican Bishop of Oxford in 1955: "Man's life, on any Christian view, is something far greater and more profound than his capacity to produce goods. Freedom from unnecessary work is something to be welcomed and even extended as far as possible." (*Statement by the Bishop of Oxford in 1955.*)

"For it is the moral law alone which commands us to seek in all our conduct our supreme and final end, and to strive directly in our specific actions those ends which nature, or

rather, the Author of Nature, has established for them, duly subordinating the particular to the general. If this law be faithfully obeyed, the result will be that particular economic aims, whether of society as a body or of individuals, will be intimately linked with the universal teleological order, and as a consequence we shall be led by progressive stages to the final end of all, God Himself, our highest and lasting good." (*Quadragesimo Anno*.)

And through the voice of an American Bishop in 1955: "Man does not exist for the sake of production but production exists for the sake of man . . . No wonder people are sick and tired of it. They feel that all they do when they work is to make money in order that they may eat, and then eat in order that they may have strength to go back to work again . . . Coffee is thrown into the ocean, milk poured on the ground, grain stored, bananas thrown into the sea . . . And why? Because the maintenance of an economic price has become more important than human life. (*Life is Worth Living*, Second Series, Bishop Fulton Sheen, 1955.)

And finally from a French Christian Philosopher in 1952: ". . . the aim of an economic regime is not to increase production for production's sake, nor to increase capital . . . its aim should be to make it possible for man to dwell on this earth at ease, in harmony and brotherhood." (*Towards a Truly Christian Society*, Daniel Rops.)

He may well have said: "Its aim should be to make leisure possible." Will the possibility be ever attained? In one sense the question is outside the scope of this essay and yet in a fundamental sense it is pertinent. Listen to the last words of St. Augustine's *The City of God*:

"There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end."

Whether we realize it or not that is to be our final leisure. To the Christian it is a glimpse of Heaven.

## THE FEAR OF LEISURE

By ERIC D. BUTLER

In spite of the fact that it can be easily demonstrated that it is possible for a small and decreasing number of people in a modern industrial society to produce all the physical requirements for the whole community, and that the most important potential of the semi-automatic production system is increasing leisure time for all, any suggestion of a policy which would enable the individual to obtain a financial income, however small for a start, without first being compelled to engage in economic activities, or in filling in forms of some description in the growing Government bureaucracies, meets with widespread opposition. Both Communist and non-Communist Governments are in complete agreement on a policy of "Full Employment" as the only means through which the individual is entitled to life. And, as every policy must derive from a philosophy, it is clear, as a number of outstanding Western thinkers have pointed out, that although the West is referred to as the free world, it is progressively retreating from freedom. Lip service is still paid to freedom in the Western world, but in fact the individual is being increasingly subjected to centralised direction of all aspects of his life. Many express concern at the effects of this centralised direction but at the same time endorse the policy of "Full Employment" which makes these effects inevitable. The Anglican Archbishop of York, (England) in his book, *The Church of England Today*, points out that the modern, planned industrial society takes "*responsibility and incentive from individuals who soon feel that they are impotent in a mass-organised society which provides for their livelihood, arranges their work, and caters for their amusement . . . The result is dangerous, for the individual loses the power of independent judgment . . . We are drifting toward the formation of a mass society in which the individual becomes sub-*

*merged.*" Similar statements have been made by other leading Churchmen, but the Christian flocks are given no guidance on policies necessary to prevent the development of the mass society. Christian chaplains in industry may help minimise some of the effects of the mass society, but can make no basic contribution to the growing threat to individual freedom and the human personality so long as it is accepted that the economic system exists, not to provide the individual with the production he requires with the minimum of human time and energy, but to keep him at work. The unfortunate fact must be faced that Christians generally, who should be more concerned about making freedom a reality than other people, share the widespread fear of leisure. Whether or not this fear can be overcome will be one of the decisive factors in the ultimate outcome of the clash between two philosophies: that of freedom and that of totalitarianism.

When we consider the efforts by large numbers of people to gain economic independence for life by purchasing tickets in lotteries or by guessing the number of goals football teams will kick, it does appear contradictory that there is such general fear of leisure. But it is significant that individuals are not afraid of having economic independence and leisure *for themselves*. There have been no recorded instances where any of those winning a substantial lottery or football pool have refused to take the prize because they have been afraid of having leisure time! In fact surveys taken of those winning big lottery prizes reveal that very few have used their money foolishly. No, people do not fear leisure for themselves. It is the *other fellow* they are concerned about. The purpose of this paper is to make an examination of the basic causes of the fear of leisure and to indicate how the re-orientation of society towards a policy of increasing leisure and freedom for the individual may be obtained.

It is essential for our examination that we first clearly

define our meaning of the two words "Leisure" and "Work." Words are one of the principal media through which individuals attempt to convey their ideas to one another, and even when there is no conscious attempt to pervert the meaning of words in order to distort the conception of reality, it is easy for different people to obtain different ideas from the same word. Leisure to many people conjures up a picture of passive idleness. The very fact that many people are repulsed by the thought of individuals being little more than vegetables, neither engaging in any physical activities nor in conscious thought or contemplation indicates that the normal man, no matter how much he may have been depersonalised by an environment which stifles his individual initiative, is basically creative. We can term a man of leisure as one who possesses sufficient economic independence to enable him to choose how he shall express and develop his creative powers. A man of leisure does not have his activity, whatever form it may take, forced upon him. We can therefore define leisure as free, voluntary or unenforced activity in contrast with forced activity which we call Work or Labour.

In order to clarify still further our conception of Leisure, we do need to look a little closer at what we mean by work. Douglas pointed out that physically there is no basic difference between one man expending energy in playing football and another man expending energy in some economic activity. But there is a tremendous psychological difference. The man playing football is prepared to put up with a great deal of physical discomfort, even risking injury, without any offer of material reward, simply because he is acting voluntarily. He enjoys expending his energy in this way. But the man working in a factory may be there only under the compulsion of obtaining a financial income with which to purchase the necessities of life.

It cannot be pointed out too often that the normal man is creative and, if freed to do so, will express his creativeness in accordance with his natural abilities and desires. The individual desires not so much to be employed, or "set to work," as to be able to *seek his own employment*. In his address entitled *The Approach to Reality*, Douglas said:

"Most people prefer to be employed — but on the things they like rather than on the things they don't like to be employed upon. The proposals of Social Credit are in no sense intended to produce a nation of idlers—and would not. There never was a more ridiculous piece of misrepresentation than to say that as a class the rich are idle. They may be wrongly employed, but they are not idle. The danger to the world does not come from the idle rich — it comes from the busy rich.

"No. Social Credit would not produce idlers; it would allow people to allocate themselves to those jobs to which they are suited. A job you do well is a job you like, and a job you like is a job you do well. Under Social Credit you would begin to tap the amazing efficiency inseparable from enforced labour, and the efficiency of the whole industrial system would go up."

While many will readily grasp that the man possessing free time can develop himself through physical activities of his own choosing, it is easy to overlook the important fact that a man with leisure may also develop himself through contemplation. This important aspect of the subject has been dealt with beautifully in the following extract from Professor Thomas Robertson's great work, *Human Ecology*:

"To expand the individuality . . . is the chief end of man, but growth in reality requires proper conditions, such as are almost unattainable in Occidental society, where visible activity alone is a measure of efficiency.

This is evident from the common English idiom about 'doing nothing.' Thus, to sit and feast the eyes on nature is 'doing nothing.' One of the most serious sources of human dissatisfaction today is the confounding of physical inactivity with inaction. Unless we are to admit the need for 'doing nothing,' we dethrone the human and make man no better than a beast of burden. Life becomes futile the moment we forget the end of existence, and permit activity for any other end, or even for its own sake. This is precisely what, in ever-increasing degree, the financial mechanism imposes on us. Life becomes an empty round of doing things which are meaningless. In Upton Sinclair's description, 'We go to work to earn the cash to buy the bread to get the strength to go to work to earn the cash to buy the bread,' and so on.

"To live properly, it is the significance of experience, even of the humblest and most commonplace, which is of vital importance to man. This significance cannot be grasped without time and opportunity. Putting it another way, we are so busy doing things that we have no time to utilise experience. The pace is too hot. Leisure is rightly understood as free time from occupation. It is commonly used for purposes of play and sport, but there is another variety of use which assumes importance as maturity and age approach. It is contemplative leisure, which is the unique human technique of browsing on events, of chewing the cud of experience, to digest out the virtue of living. It is the tragedy of European and American culture that in it there is no place for contemplative leisure, which, far from being a doing of nothing, is a doing of the one thing which pre-eminently separates man from animals. At one end it is a simple turning over of events in quiet seclusion. At the other it represents the highest activity of man in contemplation of 'reality.' It is a phase of creative

quiescence, the very antithesis of inactivity, which is vital to human welfare and satisfaction. It represents the solitary aspect of development in distinction to all other phases of activity which are best carried out in fellowship with others."

In examining the fears which prevent the acceptance of increasing leisure, it may appear waste of time and merely perverse to suggest that there is a fear of scarcity at a time when there is talk once again of "over-production" and automation. But it is true that there is still a deep, subconscious fear in the mind of man that the threat of scarcity is never far away and still a reality. Man's history does partly account for this fear. There have been approximately 7000 years of recorded human history and it is only one-seventieth of that time since Faraday invented the dynamo and the industrial revolution got under way. Insidious propaganda keeps alive the idea that life is a permanent and grim struggle, and that any widespread leisure must inevitably lead to decadence and disaster. History is perverted to attempt to show how leisured classes in the past became "soft" and passed under the control of vigorous barbarians. No reference is made to the fact that leisured classes and the civilisations they helped build were destroyed by policies of financial and economic centralism.

The class-war propaganda of the Communists and Socialists, which insists that those enjoying a degree of economic independence only do so at the expense of the poor, also helps create the impression that there is a limited amount of real wealth and that there must be a levelling down. The idea of leisure and economic independence for the individual is repugnant to the Communist, who is dominated by the false doctrine that "Labour produces all wealth." The Communist is at one with the puritan who preaches that work is "good" for the individual. A number of competent observers of Russian society

have commented upon the dominating puritan atmosphere.

The subconscious fear of scarcity is strongly reinforced by present economic and financial policies, which foster economic sabotage on so vast a scale that most people are unaware that much of the activity in which they are engaged is unnecessary and robs them of potential leisure. The very complexities of the system make it difficult for the individual to realise that what he thinks is most essential is in reality nothing but a waste of precious human lives and a squandering of economic resources. Think of the thousands engaged in fantastic advertising, much of it designed to stimulate support for the ever-changing models in motor cars, washing machines, refrigerators and other mechanical appliances. All this feverish activity is designed to "make work." Even women must in increasing numbers leave their homes to enter the production system. Economic "experts" now state that it is "impractical" for women to stay at home; the production system would collapse without their services. As Douglas pointed out, the perversion of technological development merely resulted in more work being done, not in the freeing of the individual. The urgent appeals for still greater increases in production ignore the fundamental question of whether the increased economic activity does serve the genuine requirements of the individual or whether it is part of a never-ending programme of making work. It is undoubtedly true that many do find some satisfaction in the unnecessary activities in which they are engaged. The transport engineer striving to solve the problem of moving an increasing number of people to and from their places of work considers that he is spending his time and using his talents creatively. And there can be no logical quarrel with this attitude so long as no questions are asked concerning the alleged necessity for moving people and production around. Enormous numbers of very competent

people are harnessed up dealing with effects. Until there is sufficient clarification of the perversion of means into ends in the economic field, it will always be difficult to present to people the vision of the Leisure Society that is physically impossible. The perversion of the money system and the misrepresentation of the true nature of money have also had such a deep psychological impact upon most people that, even when there is some grasp of economic realities, they shrink from the prospect of receiving money without first participating in some form of economic activity.

While it is true that there has been a widespread exposure of the Money Myth over the past 40 years, nevertheless the belief still persists amongst large numbers of people that money of itself is important. In his *Policy of a Philosophy*, Douglas pointed out that most policies today "have no relationship to Christianity." "Our policy," he said, "so far as it can be defined . . . is related philosophically to the adulation of money. Money is an abstraction. Money is a thing of no value whatever. Money is nothing but an accounting system. Money is nothing worthy of our attention at all, but we base the whole of our actions, the whole of our policy, on the pursuit of money; and the consequence is, of course, that we become the prey of mere abstractions. . . ."

The great Francis Bacon appealed for a just relationship between the mind and things. It is because there is no such just relationship today that the worship of abstractionism, which prevents the emergence of reality, is so prevalent. One of Christ's major crimes in the eyes of Jewish Sanhedrin was that He attacked the religious abstractionism which had been developed to the stage where it took precedence over the real needs of individuals. It is not money that is the root of all evil, but the *love* of money. The reference to the love of money is a condemnation of the worship of abstractionism, as was Christ's

famous statement that it is impossible to worship both God and Mammon. So long as the worship of the abstraction money continues and its true nature is obscured, there will be fear of any proposal to pay individuals a financial dividend in order that they may enjoy genuine independence and leisure.

Directly linked to the worship of the abstraction money is the carefully-fostered idea that "something for nothing" is morally bad for the individual — and, of course, can only be obtained at the expense of other individuals. One of the fundamental philosophical cleavages between Christianity and Judaism concerns this very question. Judaism repudiates the Christian conception of unearned grace and criticism of "something for nothing," so widely prevalent amongst those who call themselves Christians, demonstrates the powerful influence of the very philosophy which Christ challenged.

Douglas related how a Jewish millionaire stated that Social Credit financial proposals would save Western Civilization, but that that Civilization was not worth saving. It is not without significance that a number of historians have drawn attention to the fact that there are many striking similarities between Judaism and Marxism.

The Christian God is one of love. Whose abundant universe offers the life more abundant. The philosophy underlying the doctrine that "Labour produces all wealth" logically elevates man into his own God and infers that he alone is responsible for the basis of life. But the truth is that, to use Douglas's words, "The laws of the universe transcend human thinking." If these laws are discovered and obeyed, they provide the individual with increasing freedom. The truths of the Universe are gifts to the individual; "something for nothing." Man is an heir to a heritage which his forefathers built up by their discovery and application of the truths of the universe. Rejection of this fundamental fact

is one of the major barriers to the creation of the Leisure State.

It is appropriate that we mention here that, contrary to what might be reasonably expected, the modern Trade Union Movement has both directly and indirectly opposed the leisure idea. Instead of demanding that "the wages of the machine" be paid to the individual who can be displaced by technological advances, Trade Union leaders have consistently attacked both profits and the dividends arising out of profits. They fear the independence which an extension of the dividend system would bring. Douglas drew attention to this matter in *Social Credit*, in which he said:

"Now it is fair to say that Labour leaders are, although they may not consciously know it, amongst the most valuable assets of the financial control of industry — are, in fact, almost indispensable to that control; and the reason for this is not far to seek. They do not speak as representatives of individuals; they speak, as they are never tired of explaining, as the representatives of Labour, and the more Labour there is, the more they represent. It is natural that employment should be represented by them as being the chief interest of man; as the representatives of the employed, their importance is enhanced thereby."

The insistence upon forced work as the only means to a financial income makes the production system an instrument of government. High-sounding references to the alleged virtues of work cannot completely mask the fact that the economic system, dominated by financial policy, has been developed into a system through which the will-to-power of those controlling policy is expressed. Those seeking complete power over all others fear leisure and independence more than anyone else. There is adequate evidence to indicate that it is those seeking complete

power who foster and encourage all the other fears which prevent the realisation of leisure.

The deliberate elevation of the production system into a system of control, and the consequent subordination of the individual to functionalism, is a manifestation of the growing dominance of the philosophy of materialism and collectivism. The situation is a deadly challenge to Christianity and the Christian Church. The Church could and must give a lead to remove the fear of leisure by stating in unequivocal terms the true purpose of man and his systems. If it is prepared to stand passively by and allow the growing knowledge of God's gifts and truths, as demonstrated by the growth of automation, to be described as a "problem," then the victory of the anti-Christ is certain. If the Church believes that freedom is indispensable for the moral and spiritual growth of the individual, then it should be giving an authoritative lead by insisting that the individual be permitted full access to his heritage of leisure.

There are, of course, legitimate grounds for the view that a too sudden access to leisure and economic independence may result in some undesirable developments. We all know that the habits of some of the new-rich are not very pleasant, a fact which Social Credit recognises. But if we accept the Christian view of man, that he must express his sovereignty through *himself*, and not through *others*, then a *start* must be made towards placing him in the position where he can develop that sovereignty. The Welfare State is undoubtedly the most insidious barrier to the creation of a society of genuinely free, independent individuals, because it guarantees the individual a minimum of the material requirements of life in exchange for the loss of freedom of choice, the only real freedom.

The much-publicised Four Freedoms are provided in any prison. In some American prisons today prisoners

## BOOKS ON MONEY

are given the best possible food, entertainment is provided, they can earn money at some trade, and even sexual intercourse with their wives is permitted. The question then arises, "Well, what constitutes the punishment in these prisons?" And the answer is that work, play and breeding is all done at the behest of those who have sovereignty over the prisoners. *The real punishment is the lack of free choice.* Man does not live by bread alone. It is what free time the individual possesses after providing bread, and what he does with that time that is important. Increasing leisure for self-development and the spiritualising of his life is today possible for all individuals. Is fear going to be used to deny man his God-given heritage? No real Christian can ignore this issue.

How, then, can fear of leisure be overcome? The brief answer is the application of the Christian teaching concerning love. The foundation of Christian teaching is love. The tremendous implications of this teaching have unfortunately been blurred by the modern mania for sex, which many people mistake as the same thing as love. The Christian teaching is that "Perfect love casteth out fear." The Social Credit policy of growing leisure and financial dividends for all is based upon this type of love. It is a policy stemming from love of, and faith in, one's fellow human beings. It is the antithesis of policies based upon fear of what one's fellows would do if they had genuine leisure. To fear leisure for others is a manifestation of distrust; it denies the divine nature of man. A society whose members were dominated by the Christian conception of love would be transformed into one in which individuals would freely and voluntarily associate in expanding leisure for all in order that they could know God, love God, and serve Him more completely.

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