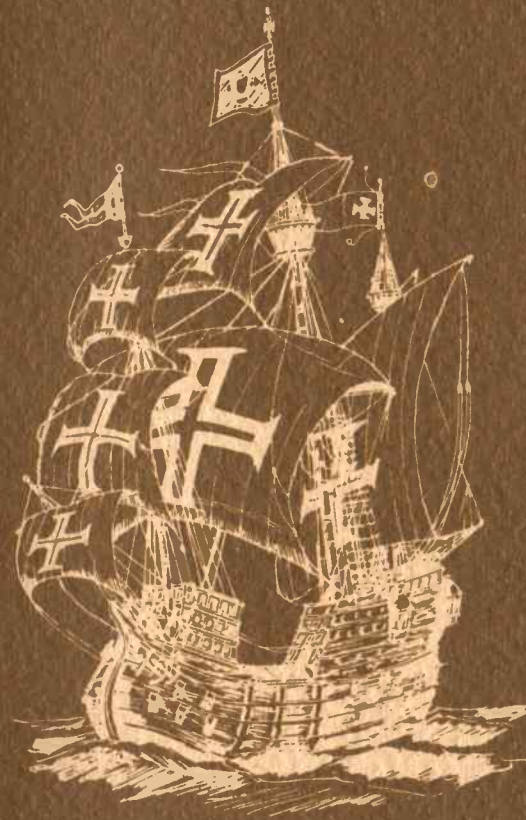


Conscience Voting



by
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Motto "By Love Serve One Another"

When Rome fell like a writhen oak
That age had sapped and cankered at the root.
Resistant, from her topmost bough there broke
The miracle of one unwithering shoot.
Which was the spirit of Britain — that certain men
Uncouth, untutored, of our island brood
Loved freedom better than their lives; and when
The tempest crashed around them, rose and stood;
And charged into the storm's black heart, with sword
Lifted, or lance in rest, and rode then, helmed
With a strange majesty that the heathen hord
Remembered after all were overwhelmed.
There were so few ... we know not in what manner
Or where or when they fell — whether they went
Riding into the dark under Christ's banner
Or died beneath the blood-red dragon of Gwent

Francis Brett Young.

“Blessed are they that do His commandments,
That they may have right to the tree of life ...”

verse 14

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words
of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add
unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues
that are written in this book”

verse 18

— from the last chapter of the book of Revelation.



Historian Edward Gibbon – a detailed picture of Rome's decline and fall.



Rome being sacked; a few years before the fall.

On August 23rd, 1976, TIME magazine commemorated the 1500th anniversary of the final collapse of the Roman Empire in its feature essay. The United States was, in that same year, celebrating the 200th anniversary of its birth.

The writer drew attention to the signs of decay evident in both civilisations. The similarities were startling:

"...The echoes of the Old World and this one are chilling. In the final days of the Empire, military catastrophe drained the national morale and the public treasury. Inflation grew rampant; unemployment burgeoned and citizens complained about inequities in the imperial tax structure. Complained Salvian, a 5th century presbyter at Marseille: 'Taxation, however harsh and brutal, would be less severe if all shared equally in the common lot. But the situation is made more shameful and disastrous by the fact that we all do not share the burden together.' The consequence, observes Grant, was that thousands of disaffected peasants and slaves went underground. 'These guerilla groups' he reasons, were 'the equivalents of today's drop-out terrorists, likewise thrown up and thrown out by social systems they find unacceptable.' Corruption infected a swollen bureaucracy and licentiousness became the ordure of the day The massage salons of American towns are versions of Petronian ritual; 'Penthouse' and 'Hustler' proliferate on New York newstands; Pompeii had its pornography memorialised in frescoes"

In the end, Rome suffered less from barbarians, less from civil strife and debt than from a failure of its collective imagination and spirit. The Empire that built the ancient world's greatest roads, that created a profound system of laws, that gave the world a culture, a language and a sustained peace succumbed at last to a deficiency of energy and will Reflecting on the collapse of Rome, Edith Hamilton, one of the most eminent classical scholars of this century, observed: "It is worth our while to perceive that the final reason for Rome's defeat was the failure of mind and spirit to rise to a new and great opportunity, to meet the challenge of new and great events"



Two types of Hedonism: Roman Banquet

*Bottomless Bar in Los Angeles
Photo: TIME, August 23, 1976.*



THE NEW FLAME

Even as Rome was moving towards collapse, within the very ashes of decay a new flame was burning in an almost unnoticed outpost of the Empire — Palestine. The guiding star over the Bethlehem stable, the heavenly host praising God and heralding peace on earth were the prelude to three world-changing years of ministry by our Lord Jesus Christ.

He taught that the policy of love — compassion, concern, justice, honour, forgiveness, charity — could change the world and was His Father's will.

He showed that worldly power was “of the Devil” and incompatible with God's gift of freedom.

He made it clear that there was a place and need for Caesar, although a clear distinction lay between the things of Caesar and the things of God.

He stressed that faith was more than an idea and had to be made effective in action; that faith without works was of no account; but that a combination of the two could “cause the mountain to be moved.”

“When asked by His disciples how to pray, He taught them to ask that His Father's will “be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

And, finally, by His death, he bought the redemption of each soul who would in faith accept Him.

After His resurrection, even before His followers had grasped what He was about, the Holy Spirit endowed them with a power greater than their own with which to overcome evil and achieve the goal for which Jesus had commissioned them. They were to be the salt in the world, preventing for ever the “failure of mind and spirit” which had marked the last days of Rome.



The seal of Archbishop Stephen Langton, courageous Christian leader who led the fight for Magna Carta . . .

FAITH AND WORKS

Civilisation's dark periods since then have always coincided with a retreat from applied faith. Its advances have always been marked by the actions of one or two faithful people.

For a while many believed that the Gospel was exclusively spiritual, having no bearing on this world and particularly Caesar.

But then men saw that, if peace was to prevail on earth, and they were to love their neighbours as themselves, every sphere of human activity and endeavour should be subject to the precepts established by Christ Jesus.

This realisation led to many mistakes. Attempts were made to produce a Christian society by force. Crusades were launched, and dissenters were burnt at the stake.

But it also led to some marvellous advances. Perhaps the greatest of these was Magna Carta, wherein Caesar, for the first time, was challenged to retreat from realms that belonged to God. The idea of limited government was seen as conforming to the example of Our Lord when tempted with power in the wilderness.

Christ's teachings on the Sabbath were applied to the idea that all systems were only valuable insofar as they served the individual. English Common Law was built on the Christian faith. The functions of law-maker and judge were separated. Government was bound by restrictions and finally divided into the three separate spheres of Crown, Lords and Commons, with its counterpart in Australia of Crown, Senate and Representatives. Government was seen as a necessary evil, whose function was to make only those laws which would allow all men to lead, in St. Paul's word's: "a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty."

It was only after the necessary restrictions and divisions on and within government had been carefully established according to Christian precepts that the idea of voting was later introduced. This gradually developed the idea that good government, while being responsible to God — still evident in the prayers that precede each day's procedure — was also answerable to the people it was established to serve.

DEMOCRATIC VOTING

The democratic concept was born before Christ's ministry on earth — in the time of the Greek civilisation. 'Demos' is the Greek for 'the people'. The Greeks trusted their politicians even less than we do today. Thus the first political representatives were commissioned by their electors, and warned that they would be beheaded if they failed to "represent" their people. In one State in Greece — Locria — any politician who wished to introduce a new law was required to stand in the forum with a rope round his neck. If the law was accepted, he was acclaimed. If it was rejected, he was strangled! Harsh though this may have been, it ensured that laws were kept to a minimum, and that those operating were widely approved.

The parliamentary representative in Britain originally followed the same principles. There were no political parties for hundreds of years. The politician for a long period in history gave his services voluntarily, like sections of Local Government today. Parliament met infrequently, and passed few laws. Members voted on conscience, and had ample opportunity to consult those whom they represented about any proposed legislation. They were thus respected as leaders imbued with the ideal of service, and the laws they passed made for a better society. As Christ taught: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Thus, while mistakes were made, Christian civilisation flowered and expanded. The British parliamentary system became the model which other nations attempted to copy.

Surely it can be seen that faithful Christians were responsible for the gains made, **JUST AS INACTIVE CHRISTIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CURRENT RETREAT FROM CIVILISATION?**

THE FAILURE OF SPIRIT

The imperfect, but nonetheless challenging heritage left us by earlier Christians contrasts with the current breakdown. Until recently, the salt had lost its savour, and loyalty to God had been replaced with worship of Caesar — the most monstrous “idol” of all time. This was due to “the failure of mind and spirit” in Edith Hamilton’s words. It culminated in the infamous “God is Dead” era of the ‘sixties, depicted for all to see on **TIME**’s cover.

The Body of Christ had become a second-rate social institution which brought its missionaries home in many cases, and had confined its attention to officiating at births, deaths and marriages. Its impact was purely historical, and dwindled day by day. To the young, lost in the suburbia of materialism, it offered neither threat nor challenge. It was simply irrelevant.

Caesar became rampant. No longer confined by the resolution of faithful men, he waxed as never before. He even entered the field of charity and missions. The volunteer church aid bodies, which had once done such marvellous work, withered. Missionaries were replaced by social workers and peace corps officers. Huge international bureaucracies managed “aid programmes” which somehow never alleviated suffering — all in the name of Caesar rather than Christ.

The loss of confidence in government has now become so widespread in the West that it is on the edge of collapse. A considerable number of political leaders have drawn attention to the situation, even though they themselves are caught, powerless, in the very floodstream towards disaster.

UNLESS THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH STIRS ITSELF, ITS VERY INACTION WILL HERALD IN A BREAKDOWN WHICH IS SATANIC! THERE IS NO CHRISTIAN WHO CAN DISCLAIM SOME RESPONSIBILITY IF THIS HAPPENS! IT IS NEITHER INEVITABLE, NOR IS IT THE WILL OF GOD! IT IS THE RESULT OF GOOD MEN DOING NOTHING!

POLITICAL WARNINGS

Historians and parliamentarians throughout the West have drawn attention to what is happening. A number in Australia have described the position graphically.

Fourteen years ago, the retiring Liberal Member for Franklin in Tasmania, Mr Charles Falkinder, made some pertinent comments in his final speech. He said that the relationship between the executive and the parliament was gradually but surely militating against parliamentary democracy. Members were giving away their right to express their views on what became law. The trouble was that “members sublimate their minds to the wish of the Party.” Once elected, Members of Parliament are bound to vote on Party lines — “the fate of the man who tries to pursue an independent course is pretty certain.” The result, said Mr Falkinder after 20 years of the system, is that “Parliament as such has lost its real touch and ability to be a law-making force.”

One year earlier, in 1965, the former Clerk of the House, Frank Green, warned: “With increased party organisation and discipline the initiative of the private member has gone . . it has divided parliament into two disciplined forces, a major force whose primary objective is to keep the government party in office, and a minor force whose aim is to discredit and replace it. Because the Opposition will seize every opportunity to discredit the government, the government party must swallow its objections to government policy and support it, abdicating the duty of frank and candid criticism. That debate is unimportant, because whatever is said, that the division will be on party lines is well understood. But there is a deeper implication — the futility of modern party debate in itself . . . neither party is anxious to discuss the issue fully for fear that such discussion would reveal its own divisions . . .”

As Professor Bland, former Liberal Member for Warringah, once put it, parliamentarians could save their electors a great deal of money by staying at home, merely sending a telegram when their votes were needed.

In 1977 the former Tasmanian Senator R.J.D. Turnbull wrote: "... There are very few individuals in Australia who do not believe that politicians are 'out for themselves', and personally I have yet to find a politician not prepared to change his political opinion if he found it would otherwise affect his re-election, upon which he is dependent for the 'goodies' of political life ..."

In April 1978, another Tasmanian, Senator Rae, wrote: "... The Parliament has permitted itself to be starved of power, status and even of money to carry out its functions. It has permitted the Executive, and particularly the administrative executive (the bureaucracy) to substantially avoid accountability. It has permitted even the necessary knowledge of what is happening in the country to be kept from it ..."

In February 1980, the former Queensland Treasurer, Sir Gordon Chalk, said: "Parties of all political persuasions are ready to promise cradle-to-the-grave security, redistribution of wealth, equality instead of equity, less work and higher standards of living ...". He added that parliamentary elections had become just public auctions.

In September 1980, the retiring Federal Labor MP Mr Clyde Cameron, stated: "We've got an elected dictatorship, we haven't got a parliamentary democracy in the proper sense of the word. The parliamentary system has been completely castrated by the need for parliamentary expediency and mere survival ..."

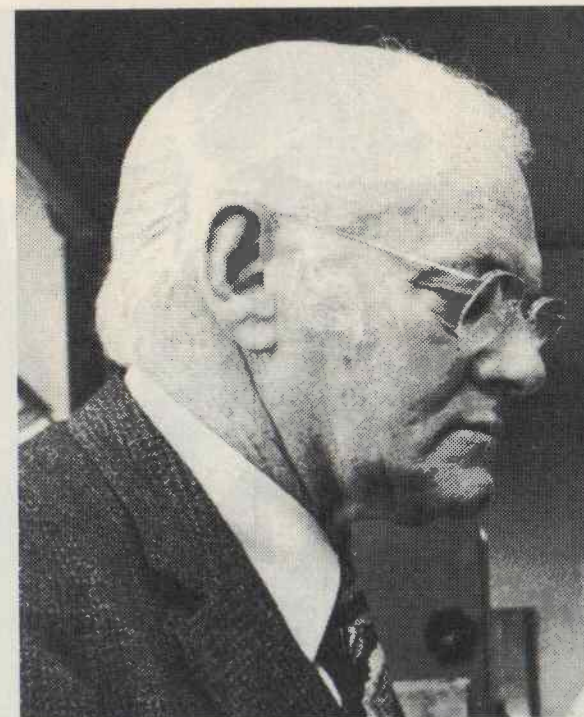
As the authority of Parliament has given way to the unlicensed power of the Executive, law-making is more and more in the hands of men who never face an election, and who accept no personal responsibility for the effect of the many regulations they enact.



Senator Peter Rae: "The Parliament has permitted itself to be starved of power, status and even of money to carry out its functions."

The **BULLETIN** (7/5/77) described it thus:

“From 1901 to 1905 Parliament passed an average of about 20 Acts a year. In 1973, using practically the same format, it passed 221. The acceleration of legislation did not necessarily mean Parliament worked harder. It did mean more politicians had to vote on measures they did not understand . . . ”



*Former Australian Minister Clyde Cameron:
“... an elected dictatorship . . . ,”*



Former Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam — attempted to subvert the Australian Constitution

... TO HELP SWALLOW HIS PRIDE ...

By courtesy of Paul Rigby Productions



"... and please, just bang their rock solid hands together."

NEW ZEALAND

The situation in New Zealand is similar, although even more dangerous in that there is no Upper House to check the power of the Executive.

In July 1979, Professor Geoffrey Palmer, of Victoria University, said: "... Democracy in New Zealand is on a slippery slope which could eventually remove the need for Parliament at all." He was commenting on a demand by the Prime Minister for the right to alter tax levels without parliamentary approval. Professor Palmer said that New Zealand Governments already had a range of powers with which any economic dictator could regard himself well served. "It is possible to nationalise the banks and insurance companies by controlling all their funds; to control the price of every commodity and set the level of wages without resort to parliament. It can be done by regulations — regulations are not passed by Parliament or properly scrutinised by it. The regulations are done by the Executive Council, consisting of Ministers and the Governor-General. Three is a quorum. This regulation-making ability is a power which has been much abused in New Zealand . . ."

The former New Zealand Prime Minister, Sir John Marshall, dealt with the same subject in a recent address to the Otago District Law Society:

"... The concept of the Welfare State has become firmly established and almost uniformly accepted. With that development comes the need for governments to take more and more of the national income to maintain it. That, in turn, leads to governments taking greater powers to control the economy which produces the wealth needed to feed a welfare state. As power accumulates in the hands of the State, and those who carry out the functions of government, so the area of freedom of the individual citizen is more and more



*Former New Zealand Prime Minister, Sir John Marshall:
"... power should be curbed . . ."*

prescribed, limited, controlled and restricted. As the functions of the State expand, so the complexities of administration grow, and the laws and regulations and orders which those who act for the state believe they require, grow in number and complexity too. The accumulation of power and the proliferation of laws demands that excessive power should be curbed and legislation given such powers should be subject to the closest scrutiny . . . ”

“RENDER, THEREFORE, TO CAESAR THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR’S, AND TO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD’S”

or, as Pope Pius XI defined it:

“it is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, fixed and unchangeable, that one should not withdraw from individuals and commit to the community that which they can accomplish by their own enterprise and industry. So, too, it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and a disturbance of right order, to transfer to the larger and higher collectivity functions which can be performed and provided by lesser and subordinate bodies . . . ”

Sir John Marshall, in his maiden speech in Parliament in 1947, quoted from a speech by Sir John Curran, Lord Mayor of Dublin, July 10, 1790: “The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance, which condition if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt . . . ”



Pope Pius XI (1922-1939)

— *Systems for men,*

CANADA

In Canada the struggle with Caesar has exploded into a confrontation which could conceivably end in civil war. Like other British Dominions, Canada was endowed with a Federal system based on Christian principles. Huge rallies are now being held in the Provinces, in an effort to forestall the Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, from forcing through an amended Constitution giving the central government absolute power.

Originally, a conference between the Provincial Premiers and the Prime Minister was designed to resolve the format of the new Constitution. But this collapsed when it became obvious that the central government required vastly increased powers.

On October 6th, 1980, the Prime Minister introduced a Bill into the Canadian Parliament disregarding the Provinces completely. One of his ministerial colleagues, Federal Health Minister Monique Begin, commented that unless "political leaders develop a way to make it possible for citizens to tell us what they want, I can tell you now that not only will there not be a renewed Canadian federation, there well may not be a federation at all..."

Her statement, however, made no impression on the Prime Minister.

Canada's national newspaper, **The Globe and Mail**, strongly condemned, in its editorial on October 6th, 1980: "...Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's bid for unilateral patriation of the Constitution on terms that offend the Provinces and place new strains upon the threadbare fabric of national unity..."

The brilliant Canadian economist and writer John Farthing, in his book "Freedom Wears a Crown" said:

"It is in fact true that we in Canada now possess but the empty shell of a constitutional democracy bereft of all sense of governmental authority and reducing all to the level of mere power-politics.... Our national affairs are now determined by the secret deliberations of ministers who present to parliament and people only a tiresome succession of **fait accomplis**, all to be justified by counting votes on a single day in every 1,825...."



Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada: seeking to centralise power in Ottawa;;

GREAT BRITAIN

Shakespeare's "royal throne of kings" and "sceptred isle" now hovers on the edge of massive breakdown and disruption. It was once the home of a concept described by Blackstone as "the trinitarian concept of government."

Sir Lewis Napier, the historian, once wrote: "In England since the disappearance of the villeinage none of the three elements of democracy was ever altogether absent. At the root of English democracy lies the right of every man to life, liberty and property. To secure it was the first purpose of self government; of trial by jury and taxation by consent. The individual rights of the free-born Englishman have retained their place in the political code of the nation, but in time they have come to be considered sufficiently secure not to require constantly jealous watching..."

However, the great parliamentarian Edmund Burke warned:

"Whenever Parliament is persuaded to assume the offices of executive government, it will lose all the confidence, love and veneration which it has ever enjoyed whilst it was supposed to be the corrective and control on the acting powers of the State. This would be the event though its conduct in such a perversion of its functions would be tolerable, just and moderate; but if it should be iniquitous, violent, full of passion and full of faction, it would be considered as the most intolerable of all the modes of tyranny."

That situation has arrived: As long ago as 1914, A.V. Dicey, Professor of English Law at Oxford, wrote:

"...During forty years, faith in parliamentary government has suffered an extraordinary decline, or as some would say, a temporary eclipse. **This change is visible in every civilised country....**" (emphasis added)



Britain's Lord Hailsham: "Parliament . . . could be the most oppressive instrument in the world. . ."

That change has become a disastrous collapse. Writing in 1960, Lord Hailsham said:

"It is the Parliamentary majority that has the potential for tyranny. The thing that courts cannot protect you against is Parliament — the traditional protector of our liberties. But Parliament is constantly making mistakes, and could in theory become the most oppressive instrument in the world...."

In July 1977, the historian Sir Arthur Bryant wrote:

"....This country, and others with us, may revert to the only other form of government known to history and compatible with human nature — an autocracy of some kind or other, marxist or otherwise... As a people, we are drifting, and a large, and possibly major part of a whole generation is growing up without moral purpose, without discipline, without the will to work or the ability to concentrate, and without standards of behaviour, craftsmanship or even elementary reasoning. The creed of egalitarian levelling-down, seedy permissiveness and welfare state mass pauperisation which our fashionable socialist and so-called liberal idealists and mentors have so long advocated is depriving our society of the means of its own preservation and regeneration..."

In August 1979, a just-retired British parliamentarian, Mr. John Pardoe, wrote: "...The majority of M.P.s have shown no stomach for controlling the executive. They have steadfastly refused to do the job they are there to do, and have occupied their time with other things.... the first and the most important reason for this defection of duty — politicians being what they are — is that there do not seem to be any votes to be gained from controlling the executive. It is great stuff for academic discussion and learned articles by the more serious commentators, but it has little or no appeal for the

average voter... even if an M.P. does try to do his job of controlling the executive, there is the full weight of the Party against him. If he seriously embarrasses "his" government by questioning its actions he will soon be told that he has been elected to support his Party and not make life difficult for it..."

In the same year the English commentator Peregrine Worsthorne wrote:

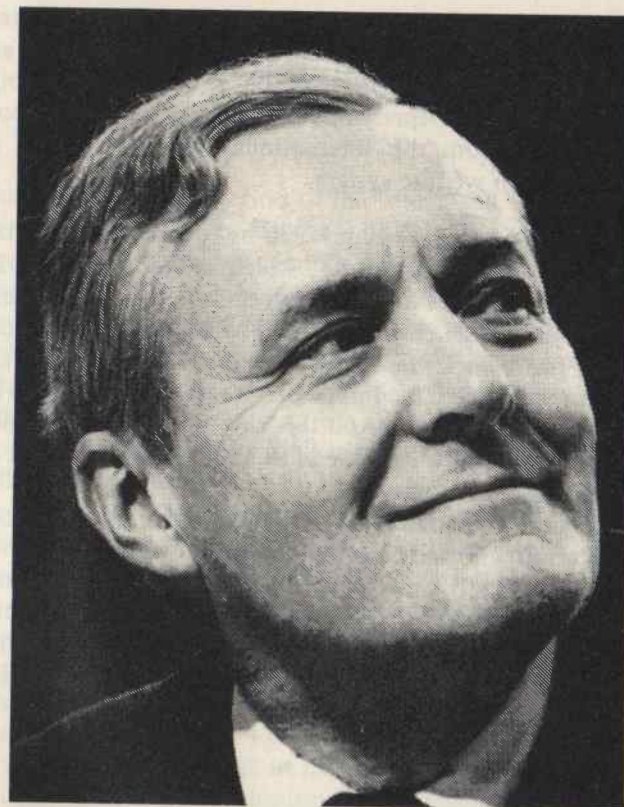
"Nothing is so notable about recent political developments in this country than the extent to which the power and authority of the bureaucracy and the trade unions has vastly increased, and the power and authority of parliamentary government have sensationally decreased... so ubiquitous nowadays are the operations of the bureaucracy, central and local, and so absolutely dependent is almost every social, economic and even cultural activity on the co-operation and support of civil servants, that their strangle-hold on society is even greater than that of organised Labour."

The English journalist, Nesta Wyn Ellis, in her book **"Dear Elector — the Truth about M.P's."** concludes:

"... The power of the Executive has reached its ultimate point. It is recognised that the individual Member of Parliament is powerless in the face of the government, and that powerlessness is related to the power of the Whips..."

The former Labour Cabinet Minister in Britain, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, as long ago as 1969 wrote:

"Britain is now a medium-sized power whose security depends on NATO, whose economic future may lie within the expanded European Market, whose prosperity is conditioned by the World Monetary system, and whose industrial future is being partly shaped by huge international companies with headquarters in Detroit, Eindhoven and Tokyo..."



Britain's Anthony Wedgwood Benn: — Prosperity is conditioned by the World Monetary System ...

THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH

Since then, Britain has retreated from disaster to disaster. NATO is almost impotent. Britain's once-great industries are in disarray. Poverty is widespread, unemployment is the biggest since the Great Depression, and Britain has at times borrowed money from the International Monetary Fund to finance her own welfare system.

To conclude, an evil sickness can be found in each of the old English-speaking countries, which at one time offered such an inspiring example to others. The parliamentary system is but a shell of what it used to be, while power and authority has been increasingly transferred to a new Caesar which was once called the Public Service. It could now well be called the Public Master. And this new Caesar's ascendancy has been marked by a "failure of mind and spirit" — just as in the last days of Rome.

What is the Christian answer to this tragic and dangerous state of affairs? That is the most important question of the 20th century. For if it is unanswered, the barbarians without will pervade the homes, churches, schools, cities, farms and the very institutions of power in our once Christian nations. The answer, by God's grace, lies in the hands of Christian men and women. We dare not pass by on the other side!

The "god is Dead" period of the 'sixties led inevitably to the very opposite — a re-discovery of God and a resurgence of evangelism, springing mainly from outside the main denominations. Billy Graham became an international figure, his huge rallies and fundamental message indicating a deep hunger for a spiritual revival. The artificial ecumenism of the World Council of Churches had its counterpart in a real growth of faith in hundreds of different forms, which, through the 'seventies gradually strengthened into what is usually called the Renewal Movement. New names began to make their impact — Derek Prince, Bob Mumford, Agnes Sanford, Francis McNutt, Basilea Schlink, Merlin Carrothers, Larry Christensen, Colin Urquhart and many others. In Australia, men like Leo Harris, Alan Langstaff and Howard Carter gathered huge support. In New Zealand Peter Morrow and others led a new evangelism that directly involved one third of the population — over a million people. In England, Michael Harper's Fountain Trust made an extraordinary impact — not least in his own Church of England. Throughout the West the charismatic movement caused enormous controversy and dissent in traditional circles, with eminent Church leaders taking strong stands both for and against the issue. Whatever else is said, the "God is Dead" period had gone. Christianity was on the move. God was alive, and Christ just as relevant in the 20th century as ever. More and more individuals discovered a Power which they could tap — a Power which shifted things.

Some of the manifestations were enormously impressive — David Wilkerson's work amongst drug addicts being one, eventually leading to the Teen Challenge centres in Australia.

The establishment and growth of Radio Rhema in New Zealand another, and Paul Kauffman's **Asian Outreach** a third.

While the old-hide-bound denominations continued to wither, there was no lack of growth or zeal in the Renewal movement — its growth was astounding. In many areas it began to overlap traditional denominations, and whatever the reaction, it could hardly be ignored.

On the philosophical side, Francis Schaeffer's centre at L'Abri in Switzerland produced some of the most profound material of the century, now beginning to have a world-wide impact. The work of Wurmbrand's "Christian Mission to the Communist World" and Popov's "Underground Evangelism", while not lacking internal dissension, became an irritant and finally a goad to the W.C.C. "co-existence" line with Communism.

But this huge and inspiring expansion of evangelical zeal was at a loss — bewildered and without guidelines — when it came to government.

There were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, there had been a reaction against the "social gospel" advocates, products of modernism, which co-incided with the "God is Dead" era. Most of these rejected traditional spiritual beliefs, and had perverted the Christian faith into a social action programme closely allied with Marxism. The reaction led to the position that there was no meeting point between the Church and politics. Then again, the scriptural teaching to "seek ye first the Kingdom of God" was seen as a vindication of the belief that changing mens' hearts would solve all social evils.

THE CULT OF PROPHECY

But, above all, the massive stream of prophetic material which co-incided with the evangelical expansion neutralised thousands of Christians who might otherwise have taken a stand. The undoubted tide of evil sweeping the world slotted readily enough into the signs given in Daniel and Revelation, as well as by St. Paul and Our Lord Himself. Those who suggested that the Christian should stand fast, with faith, against evil in all spheres were either sincerely pitied, or opposed by their "brothers and sisters in Christ."

Books like "The Late Great Planet Earth" and "Mystery 666" had a massive distribution in the West, the former selling not only in Church bookshops but on many secular newstands. Deyo's "Cosmic Conspiracy" could be found all over Australia and New Zealand. A section of Myers, the giant supermarket combine, in its Perth branch, was devoted to its sale and promotion.

The result was that many Christians, while not actually naming the day and the hour, had firmly fixed the TIME of Our Lord's Second Coming in their minds, and consequently felt excused from the traditional battle against evil on this account.

But it was not against this very ATTITUDE that Christ counselled "No man knoweth the day or the hour..." Indeed, His words suggest it would occur when **least** expected, rather than when hundreds of thousands were waiting in anticipation.

W.D. Chalmers, head of religious programmes on South African Radio and Television, has summarised the issue very well in his excellent booklet "The Conspiracy of Truth.":



David Ben-Gurion proclaiming the new State of Israel, May 14, 1948, beneath a portrait of Zionism's founder, Theodore Herzl . . . only a tenuous continuity with Biblical Israel.



"Related some way to the ascendancy of the octopus is a conviction, rapidly gaining ground in certain Christian circles, that the end of all things is upon us. Great play is made, in a selective kind of way, with the prophecies in Isaiah, in Daniel and in Revelation. Swords, chariots, kings and ancient place names must not, it seems, be taken literally, but the return of Israel must.

For the re-establishment of Israel is a king-pin of the scheme. There results a kind of dispensationalism which maintains that the Gentile interlude is over and the action now returns to the chosen land and people. Before the final cataclysmic conflict, the faithful will be snatched away to Heaven. After Armageddon, Christ will rule the world through a spiritual aristocracy of Israelites who have at last accepted Him as the Messiah.

There are many variations, but that is more or less the theme. It may sound somewhat far-fetched, but one should not underestimate its power or its appeal. Christian people are swallowing the story in thousands. Reputable ministers and scholars are backing it and writing books. Personally, I think it is a big red herring — in more senses than one.

Christ Himself has said that we know not the day or the hour — that He Himself does not know the day or the hour; and I cannot understand what earthly or heavenly use it is to draw up schedules for the end of the world. I can see that it produces an almost superstitious fascination with modern Israel, which has only a tenuous continuity with Biblical Israel.

It also produces a susceptible frame of mind with regard to world events and their interpretation which causes many people who should be rolling up their sleeves for battle to stand on the sidelines watching for signs.



*Newsweek's cover at the time of Carter's election . . .
a sardonic comment*

In short, it engenders an attitude which the enemies of Christianity would find it in their interests to cultivate and promote...."

Some leaders have acknowledged the need to tackle political and economic issues. Derek Prince, in his sermon on praying for the Government, has suggested responsible voting must come under Christian consideration.

Agnes Sanford, in her "Healing of the Nations" showed that prophecy is conditioned rather than inevitable, and would never displace applied faith.

David Wilkerson's "The Vision" — a picture of apocryphal gloom — was answered by George Otis's book "The Blue-Print" which called on Americans to apply their faith to the healing of America. David Wilkerson himself later modified his conclusions in "The Vision".

But there was still lacking a mature statement of principles which Christians could pursue in their approach to government. This led to some sad errors. It was assumed that anyone who was "born again" would be twice the leader of anyone who was not. Jimmy Carter's claim to born again status swayed hundreds of thousands of Christians behind him. One booklet appeared in evangelical circles claiming Carter was a "miracle from God". **NEWSWEEK** sardonically featured a toothy "born again" Jimmy Carter on its newscover in 1977.

The latest presidential election has produced the "Moral Majority" — a big enough coalition of Christian voters to affect the result. Both candidates wooed this vote, with Reagan gaining favour. While an encouraging growth, there is some danger in the emphasis on collective impact rather than personal responsibility.

But the important thing is that a motivated Christian growth is looking at government with faith rather than with fatalism. If this growth increases in knowledge, wisdom and faith — and will APPLY it — no evil can stand in its way.



President Reagan: Will he vindicate Christian support...?



PART 2

PART 2 CONSCIENCE VOTING

The average person, asked the type of person he would like to have represent him in Parliament, would come up with something like this:

Firstly, I would like an honest representative — a person who would judge each issue — each Act and Bill — with a clear and unfettered conscience, voting accordingly. Such a person would NEVER vote on an issue which he had not had time to study and consider from all angles. He would regard any attempt to interfere with his conscience as an unlawful and an immoral intrusion — an improper interference with his duty.

My ideal representative's conscience would be tempered by two all-important things; firstly, his own belief in what is right and wrong; secondly, the will and requirement of his electors. If it was clear that a majority of his electors wanted something he considered wrong — and no reconciliation of views could be achieved — he would feel it his duty to resign. He would allow no party, pressure, force or inducement to interfere with his total commitment to these two factors.

My ideal representative would have a clear understanding of those things which are not the province of Caesar; and would resist the temptation to involve government in areas where it does not belong.

My ideal representative would undertake to resign if an agreed percentage of his electors petitioned him to do so.

My ideal representative would refuse to fix his own salary and expenses by voting on them in parliament, but would seek means whereby his electorate had some say in what he received.

My ideal representative would act impartially for ALL those he represented, refusing to unfairly penalise — or favour — some individuals over others.

My ideal representative would consider himself the servant of his people, which, in its right context, is the most honourable station to which anyone can aspire.

My ideal representative would seek the best means possible to meet and consult with all interests in his electorate as frequently as possible.

My ideal representative would, at this stage, be much more interested in repealing the mountain of conflicting, confusing and often oppressive regulations resulting from years of over-government, rather than adding to what has already been passed.

Above all, my ideal representative would insist that the bureaucracy had NO PLACE in policy making — either in the political or economic field — and returned to its true function of administration.

Now it's quite clear, from the many examples given earlier, that our politicians no longer act in this way. In fact, they do the opposite. Conditional on their preselection is the demand that **they will sell their conscience to their party!**

And, what's more, they claim that this is the only way the country can be run.

Thus, they have — perhaps without even realising it — made a mockery of the principles undergirding our Christian institutions.

For example, every word spoken and every vote taken in Parliament is printed in Hansard. This stems from the belief in the right of every voter in the land to know what his representative had said and how he had voted. **It was a means of making each member accountable, by publicly recording his performance.**

Originally, political parties did not interfere with the member's conscience. While generally abiding by the philosophy of his party, his conscience was his own, and he could cross the floor if he felt it necessary.

But the corruption of the party system robbed the member — and the electorate — of his conscience. The real debate was moved from the public forum of parliament to the secret privacy of the party room. The individual member of parliament is now expected to swallow his conscience and abide by the secret vote in the party room, however wrong he may feel it to be.

The elector has thus been robbed of accountability. Day after day the recording of votes in Parliament lines one Party in the "Ayes" and another in the "Noes". Each member is told how to vote before even entering Parliament.

To rub in the perversion, occasionally the government allows a conscience vote — usually when it has no vested interest in the outcome. For a brief and all-too-rare moment the fresh breath of integrity enters and the real feelings of the members can be expressed — and then the ban on conscience is re-applied again.

However, voters who abhor this state of affairs and would prefer an honest representative have no-one to blame but themselves. For, by voting in candidates under these conditions, they have directly sanctioned the very evil they profess to oppose. They cannot expect honest representatives until they are prepared to vote honestly themselves.

Today's elector votes, in the main, in a spirit of fear. He has confined his role in government to a brief attendance at a polling booth every three or four years, where he apprehensively selects the name which he imagines will do the least harm. This has led to a modern — and shameful — cliché; that governments are voted OUT rather than in.

The present situation can never be changed until a few electors exchange fear for faith and hope.

Please consider, then, the following proposition:

The right to vote, and the very idea of individual participation in government, is something the first Christians never had. Death or imprisonment was the only alternative to strict obedience to Caesar. Only the faithful struggle of Christians since that period has endowed us with our present rights and liberties. We have, in our vote, by God's authority and as part of our Christian heritage, a responsibility which, **if we fulfill it correctly, can be used to God's glory.**

In other words, the way we use our vote is just as much a Christian responsibility as everything else in our lives. A small minority, using its vote differently, could change the politics and economics of the world!

The Christian should now consider dedicating his vote to Christ's service, as he should with all things in his life.

This is an awesome responsibility. For the Christian who consecrates his vote to Christ's service **can never vote the same way again.**

Under no condition may he vote for evil — whether it is a choice of the lesser or the greater. Quite simply, each voter must bear some responsibility for what those he has voted for subsequently do.

The moment of realisation for me came in 1974, when I heard a Senator speak on China at a dinner in Brisbane. It was a brilliant word-picture of the real China — a land of terror and persecution, where the family and the Christian faith were suppressed.

The first question at the end of the address was something like this:

"Tell me, Senator, if your Party becomes the Government, what will be its policy on China?"

"I'm ashamed to say," the Senator replied. "That my Party is committed to the recognition of China, and non-recognition of Taiwan."

"Well, then," he was asked. "How can you stand for Parliament on a policy which you believe to be wrong?"

"That's politics," replied the Senator. "Compromises have to be made."

(Perhaps it should be noted that on Oxford Dictionary definition of the word 'compromise' is "to modify one's principles")

After the meeting was over, a heated debate took place in the street amongst departing members of the audience. Some said it would be wrong to vote for a Senator who was standing on a policy he knew to be wrong.

Others said: "We must vote for him, because the other party is even worse!"

The real truth was that a vote for that man was a vote IN FAVOUR of continued and increased persecution in China, and its probably extension to Taiwan. That was no less true because of the Senator's personal views on China.

We all have moments where a vivid truth is driven home. That night was such a one for me. I couldn't get it out of my mind. What would have happened if that whole audience had unanimously told the Senator that they could not vote for him unless he promised to vote on conscience on the China issue? It might have been enough to encourage him to take a stand.

And if in each electorate a significant minority was also prepared to withhold its vote on similar matters of principle, might this not spark a move back to conscience in Parliament? Where could one find that "significant minority" in each electorate? Surely the fellowship of believing and practising Christians was the ready-made catalyst for a return to honesty and integrity in our government?

It is an awful but true thought that each one of us is to some extent accountable for the actions of the members and governments we vote for. **But that is the truth we must face.**

While Church leaders should think twice about becoming involved in party issues, they should have no compunction in emphasising basic principles of integrity when it comes to Caesar, exhorting members of their flocks to become conscience voters in the service of Christ.

A conscience voting campaign should — to begin with at any rate — be reluctant to become involved in specific issues. The time for that will come soon enough. It should concern itself purely with a personal challenge to as many Christians in all denominations as it can reach.

"Will you now make a conscious choice to commit your vote — whether in a Federal, State or Local Government sphere — to be used only as you sincerely believe Christ would have you use it?"

The individual who so decides should be invited to join an "Association of Conscious Voters" in witness of his decision. Perhaps a lapel badge or a brooch could be struck for those who are so committed.

A Code could be established as a Conscience Voting Manifesto — perhaps something like this:

"I believe that my vote is a right I have been granted by Almighty God, to be used in His Name and His Service."

"I believe that my vote should not be used on any account to sanction evil — great or small."

"I believe that my vote is my own responsibility, and I therefore believe that any attempt to cajole, buy, pervert or restrict my vote is an attack on my God-given liberty."

"I believe that I have not only a right but a duty to withhold my vote completely if I feel that the choices I am offered do not conform to what I believe is God's will."

"I believe it is my lawful right to voluntarily associate my vote with the votes of others in seeking right choice and good government."

"I believe that I can only use my vote to its fullest potential by humbly relying on God's grace and guidance for my actions."

"I believe that my prayer for those in authority should be matched with my action in seeking good government, and that to do so is a responsibility which God expects me to fulfill."

"I believe that my committal to a lawful and right use of my vote is not a vain one, and that God will at all times and in all places comfort and help those who seek to serve Him."

In the name of Jesus Christ Our Lord — Amen.

I am sure that such a campaign, launched now, would find itself in the right place at the right time. For while I am a strong believer in freedom of choice as God's gift to man, I also believe that God **does** raise up men and movements in accordance with His purpose; — and that, in retrospect one can see that events in the Church over the last 20 years was a process necessary to make way for this next step — and a fulfillment of our particular mission. There is a consciousness now of the need for Christian action toward Government which was dormant five years ago.

Coinciding with a direct personal challenge to Christians on conscience voting, a body should be established to guide and minister to conscience voters. Right from the start, this body should reject any attempt to create a mass Christian voting block. It should be a service body.

I have a real fear of an intensely zealous Christian campaign, all voting at the behest of one or two dynamic leaders. That is what is happening in America, and while anything is better than nothing, the monolithic Christian block behind Reagan may yet prove as abortive as that which saw Carter as a "miracle from God."

A Christian Conscience Voting Secretariat, guiding a conscience voting campaign, should adopt from the beginning the position that it is there to **serve**. It should provide information and co-ordination. It should provide a well-produced paper, with a high standard of research, humour and literacy. It should be bold enough to print differing viewpoints within a framework of agreed principles. It should be resolute without falling into the error of personal judgement. It should not fear controversy. But the secretariat should never direct people how to vote. It should continually stress personal responsibility. While dedicated to God's service, it should never assume the mark of infallibility.

And finally, where sufficient conscience voters are able to sustain them, it should seek independent Christian candidates wherever existing representation rejects the essential principles that are essential for good government.

Over the next few years, it may well be possible to enrol 5% of the voting electorate into a conscience voting campaign. Such a minority, served by a committed and dedicated Christian leadership, could transform the current disastrous situation, re-establishing participatory democracy within a lawful and constitutional framework. For five percent is sufficient to ensure or deny a party's entry to government. One can imagine a position where branches of the conscience voting campaign were established in each electorate. Each candidate would have to start from the point where it was necessary to **earn** the votes of conscience voters in his electorate.

One can envisage a point where local churches, or Christian conventions, sought speakers from the Conscience Voting Campaign, and that from this grew a situation where Christians increasingly took the lead in arranging forums where farmers, businessmen, workers and professionals as well as Local Councillors and service movements could gather to hear and question prospective candidates. Political parties could be invited to put forward a number of candidates instead of one, with the ultimate choice going to the electorate instead of the party executive.

Behind all this, it would be essential for any party or government to earn the assent of conscience voters, who would thus exercise an increasingly vital and significant role in the behaviour of Caesar.

Honest voting must start in the electorate before we can expect it in parliament. But we can, in the period ahead, retrieve and add to our Christian heritage if enough of us will dedicate our votes to Christ's service — **NOW!**

RECOMMENDED READING

Those interested in the concept of conscience voting should realise that this responsibility requires at least some knowledge about our system, our institutions, and the principles which undergird them.

The following books are especially recommended:

YOUR WILL BE DONE — by Arthur A Chresby. A simple, non-technical, beginner's book on the true legal functions of the Queen, Governor-General, State Governors, Parliament, Parliamentarians, and the people. **\$3 posted.**

OUR SHAM DEMOCRACY — by James Guthrie. A graphic picture of the way our democratic system has been perverted. **\$1.40 posted.**

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IN A FREE SOCIETY — by Geoffrey Dobbs. An excellent essay on the true nature of government, and its relationship to the individual. **80 cents posted.**

FAITH, POWER AND ACTION — by L D Byrne. A thought-provoking appeal to all Christians. **\$1.20 posted.**

THE CONSPIRACY OF TRUTH — by W D Chalmers. Should be read by all concerned Christians. **\$1.40 posted.**

Available from —

The Christian Institute for Individual Freedom (A division of The Australian League of Rights) P.O. Box 89, Mitcham, Victoria. 3132.