

# Seed

## 'Wanhope'

Josef Pieper quotes Baudelaire as saying in his *Journal Intime* that "one must work, if not from taste then at least from despair. For, to reduce everything to a single truth: work is less boring than pleasure". Putting aside for the moment the question-begging word "pleasure", we should remark Baudelaire's curious identification of "despair" as the motive for "work". Though in perhaps another sense than he intended, the French poet's observation is true of most "work" today: it is an expression of despair.

Such an assertion will probably be regarded as unexpected, if not untenable. We are so habituated to the clichés of the work ethic — if not to "The devil still finds work for idle hands to do", then at least to Ben Franklin's "Time is money" — that we tend to associate only idleness, or laziness, with despair. Work, on the other hand, is associated with "zeal", "industry", "enthusiasm" — all, ostensibly, signs of "faith". However, examination of our work as often as not reveals it to be frenetic functional activity unrelated to any valuable or delightful end besides "making money" or "passing the time". (Vocational counsellors and other propagandists for the employment system can usually concoct more appealing phrases than these to mask the real nature of "work".)

The middle ages knew better. Certainly, they deplored idleness, which they called *acedia* or *taedium cordis*, as Aldous Huxley has pointed out in his essay "Accidie". Chaucer's Parson describes the sin of "accidie": "it forsloweth and forsluggeth," he says; it binds men so that "they ne may neither wel do ne wel thynke". From accidie comes sloth, the "dredde to bigynne to werke any good werkes". Thence follows wanhope, or "despeir of the mercy of God" — the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost. Thus, *acedia* is a condition of the soul inimical to faith and to the "good works" which express faith — but not necessarily to "work".

In fact, as Pieper explains, there is a kind of "work" which is a category of *acedia*. *Taedium cordis* is the opposite not of "effort" or "activity", but of "man's happy and cheerful affirmation of his own being". *Acedia* is a kind of restlessness characteristic not only of bored inactivity (or idle "pleasure") but also of work for work's sake. The true opposite of idleness (and worldly sorrow or *tristitia* as well as despair) is leisure; the incapacity to experience leisure — a kind of existential ease or delight in being — is common to both idleness and compulsive "work". Pieper says: "It is only in and through leisure that the 'gate to freedom' is opened and man can escape from the closed circle of that 'latent dread and anxiety' which a clear-sighted observer has perceived to be the mark of the world of work where 'work and unemployment are the two inescapable poles of existence'".

Baudelaire is correct: work can be an expression of despair. This fact should be remembered by a culture which has elevated "full employment" into a social ideal. Not only as a denial of "grace" as a source of wealth, but also as a system for externalizing justification through functionalism is "full employment" a policy of despair.

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## Our Policy

SEED aspires to fulfil a unique role transcending the functions of other magazines and journals.

Our purpose is neither to propagandize in the sense of promoting some fixed point of view or body of thought nor merely to comment on current events.

Our partisanship does not extend beyond two considerations. Firstly, we believe that reality does exist: it is not a matter of opinion and will assert its authority over all opinions that contradict it. All sanctions reside in reality; opinion has none. Secondly, we believe in the desirability of extending human freedom. Genuine freedom is contingent upon our comprehension of reality, since to the extent that men disregard reality, they court personal and social disaster.

In other words, far from conforming to the modern view that value judgments are to be avoided, SEED will intentionally consist of a succession of value judgments, which will constitute the principal criterion of its success. Man cannot approach truth without rigorous formation of value judgments and perfecting of definitions. Discovery and refinement of the correct principles for human action and association will be the focus of our attention within the field of reality. If we carry our investigation of the nature of reality far enough, we shall illuminate the way to the formulation of sound policy.

We have no delusions about the facility of the course on which we are embarking. It is possibly the most difficult course open to us. However, its value should be proportional to the efforts it requires. If the distractions to intelligence and will which characterize contemporary society are, as we believe them to be, fundamentally unsatisfying, we are confident that some seekers of truth will involve themselves in the experiment that SEED represents. Such persons are the only ones capable of responding to such an experiment.

We approach our undertaking in the spirit of making an offering that will call forth latent creative capacities. If the ideas that SEED disseminates have validity and settle in good soil, they will grow. Moreover, their growth will be progressive and cumulative. SEED will serve as a medium permitting the cross-fertilization of adventurous intellects, thereby diminishing the effects of the entropic phenomenon that paralyzes development by compelling men to struggle to find truths that they have lost sight of and had to rediscover repeatedly during the past.

If our project is conducted correctly, it will at the least generate a new conceptual vigour among a segment of the community — and perhaps even result in the formation of new men.



("Money", continued from p. 8)

more likely to be mildly left than right of centre" (354). But one can hardly disregard it entirely.

In any case, the book makes clear that one of the cardinal rules of Treasury activity is that control over the administration of government revenues should be as monopolistic as possible. One form in which this policy is expressed is Treasury opposition to government revenue being derived from any source other than taxes. The threat of raising taxes is one of the big sticks wielded by the Treasury, and the inroads it is making seem to be consistent with the preoccupation to maximize its bargaining clout.

They are also unquestionably encouraged by the separateness and narrow loyalties engendered in various branches of the public service.

The one inescapable theme in virtually every interview we conducted is the vital importance participants place on personal trust for each other. By trust one is speaking of personal dependability, 'soundness', a feeling that here is a person in whom one can reliably place confidence and confidences. Mutual trust is considered paramount by officials who know they will have to continue doing business with each other year after year on issue after issue: they believe that, if professionalism means anything, it means knowing how to treat members of one's own group (15).

Most participants in the expenditure process are professionals in community, amateurs in all else. The future effects of policy must seem far more uncertain to them than the present deterioration of their relationships. . . . Left to its existing inclinations the Government will, for the most part, put community above policy (366).

This development of a group allegiance and confidence is a natural—indeed, indispensable—development in any ongoing organization. What the authors fail to stress, however, is the exclusiveness that tends to grow with it. Retaining the esteem of those in one's immediate circle and defending one's own corner against outsiders supercede all other considerations—including that nebulous quantity, "the public interest". Only the man who has proven his reliability measured against these criteria will be admitted to the inner circle; and, of course, this is the man whose thinking cannot disrupt the status quo (or who, at least, is prepared to make his thinking subservient to his ambition). The potential renegade—even the man whose thinking is original in unsanctioned directions—has virtually no chance of passing through this corporate sieve.

R.E.K.

<sup>1</sup>(New York, 1936), 376, 378.

(Concluded next month)

## The Way the Money Goes

A recently-published book by Hugh Heclo and Aaron Wildavsky entitled *The Private Government of Public Money* (London: Macmillan, 1974) offers a uniquely penetrating account of the expenditure process in a parliamentary system. Their research reveals not only the techniques involved but the even more important cultural climate of the institutions. The study offers considerable enlightenment on a subject which — though it lies at the very centre of government activity — is familiar to only a handful of persons.

### A Suggestive Title

The title of this book is suggestive of many things other than its actual subject matter, for there is a sense in which "the private government of public money" is the most important issue of our time. However, the study makes no reference to the fact that, since the heritage and activity of the community as a whole give it its only value, money is by its very nature the rightful property of the members of the community. Nor does the book question the creation of the money supply by an exclusive group of private institutions on their own terms and for their own benefit. If one is beguiled by the title into looking for arguments of this sort, one will look in vain. Nevertheless, a number of other significant matters are dealt with by the authors.

Their expressed purpose is to describe the expenditure process of a central government — specifically, of the government of Great Britain. They concentrate upon the relations between the people who allocate public monies and those who spend them. Their attempt "to penetrate the work-a-day world" of the persons involved is based mainly upon interviews (about 200 of them) of senior government officials having first-hand experience of the procedures. Why the British system was selected for analysis calls for some explanation, especially as one of the authors, Aaron Wildavsky, is a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. The choice seems to have been conditioned by their opinion that this system is in some respects the most sophisticated in the world.

The potency of the word "public" to many persons is amazing: it possesses a mystical power of sanctification. Its attachment to a noun magically transforms the latter into the embodiment of perfect impartiality and infallible rectitude. The effect is deceptive, of course; and *The Private Government of Public Money* will be an excellent corrective for anyone afflicted by this delusion. The book demolishes the myth that the

sins of the world are visited upon "private" interests alone. Herein lies the meaning of its title. It is clearly intended to convey the idea that such factors as personality and emotion and self-interest customarily exert a determinant influence in the public domain. Men—susceptible to the same failings and temptations as any others—are the executors of public policy; and their actions much resemble those of men in different fields.

### Parliament and Spending

Of necessity, a substantial part of the book is devoted merely to describing the mechanics of the British expenditure system. As these are brought into focus, it immediately becomes apparent that Parliament itself lies on their periphery and bears a purely ritualistic connection to them.

Parliament plays little direct part in expenditure decision-making. ...supply estimates are considered and approved virtually automatically. In the modern era of party discipline, any other outcome is likely to be considered by the government as cause for resignation. So automatic has this approval become that the fiction of Supply Days for approving departmental estimates has been dropped and renamed Opposition Days to signify the set-piece partisan debates that take place between Government and Opposition on any and everything other than finances. When even the British constitution drops a fiction, it is a telling sign (243).

The rigidity of the party system, coupled with the overriding obsession of Members for nothing more than creating an 'effect' on the public, has reduced the role of Parliament in the spending procedure to meaningless pretence. It neither participates in, nor effectively scrutinizes, spending decisions. Indeed, the authors report that, even when the Treasury has deliberately encouraged certain types of Parliamentary involvement, Members have not responded. Perhaps their seeming indifference is a disguise for their ignorance:—

No matter how often Treasury officials appear before the House Select Committees, patiently explaining [spending procedures], they never seem quite able to overcome the puzzlement of Members (215).

We need hardly wonder that the full-time administrator tends to regard the elected Member as a rank amateur—and a nuisance. Moreover, in any dispute, the professional Treasury man has the advantage of more complete information and, therefore, more convincing arguments. These considerations apply even with respect to the Cabinet. One former Chancellor of the Exchequer (the Cabinet member who heads the Treasury) recalled how in his relations with other ministers he sometimes felt as though he were dealing "with small boys and you had to warn them that if they weren't good you would tell the Prime Minister"(166); a top Treasury official said that, "By the nature of the system the Chancellor is facing a group of brigands"(185).

## Basic Procedure

The basis of Treasury decisions about departmental spending is arrived at as follows. In June the Treasury submits to the Cabinet two estimates: one is a forecast of trends in investment, employment, private consumption, and other so-called "economic indicators"; the other, a projection of government spending for several years assuming the continuation of existing policies. By October or November the Cabinet will have made its cuts or increases and received 'bids' from different departments for increases in their allotments of money. Despite the fact that the "ability of forecasters to predict demands for goods and services, exports, investment and other crucial variables has not been exactly overpowering,"(173) "the Treasury expenditure judgement *is* the given factor around whose centre the official and ministerial bargaining takes place"(174). Once the overall figure has been submitted, the Chancellor (or, more probably, his Chief Secretary) negotiates bilaterally with the various departments on their particular budgetary needs. Again we find the politicians constitute a front for the back-room negotiators.

Once the Treasury and a department bilaterally agree, whether through ministerial or official bargaining, one can be 95 per cent sure of only perfunctory Cabinet discussion; for the Cabinet to reopen more than one or two such agreements in any one year would violate most political administrators' view of how business gets done. Hence our discussion has only skirted around what most would consider the key arena where politicians collectively decide—the Cabinet(169).

The minister's part in these negotiations is essentially that of a supplicant. He will be briefed by his departmental staff on the points to make in arguing for

an increase in his budgetary allotment. His personality will probably play as important a role in determining his success as will any policy considerations. This is the time, more than any other, when he establishes his worth in the eyes of his subordinates.

## Keynesism Becomes Orthodoxy

One of the authors' principal purposes is to identify the changes that these procedures have undergone since the Second World War.

Whether one calls it the Collectivist Age, Welfare State, or positive government, a general consensus has grown up in post-war Britain that is favourable to spenders .... The minister faces an asymmetrical political environment inasmuch as spending and cutting are not equivalent alternatives for obtaining public favour. .... The minister or government undertaking to deprive citizens of their customary indulgences can expect few rewards (134).

When attention is first drawn to this phenomenon, it is treated as a spontaneous development. However, that it is also a conscious *policy* becomes evident later in the discussion.

As the public expenditure side of the Treasury fell into eclipse, its economic side became more prominent. After the war the weight of the Treasury shifted into managing the national economy. The new concerns were not expenditure control but full employment and stabilizing the trade cycle and balance of payments. Keynesian doctrine had taken hold. Under that system, however, there was no mechanism for integrating traditional expenditure control and modern macro-economic management. The old pre-Keynesian view had been very easy to work for expenditure purposes: you balanced the budget. If you wanted to spend more, you put 6d on the income tax. Post-war acceptance of Keynesian economics meant that expenditures were not to be measured immediately against revenues but later against unemployment (204).

In fact, it would be fair to state that the Keynesian remedy for economic ills turned on the control of spending. In his *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, Keynes attacked the concept that saving is the basis of economic prosperity and quoted approvingly a selection of views on the superior benefits of economic extravagance and indulgence. One of the chief policies he advocated was that "the State will have to exercise a guiding influence on the propensity to consume," controlling individual savings by means

... of direct taxation which allows the intelligence and determination and executive skill of the financier, the entrepreneur *et hoc genus omne* ... to be harnessed to the service of the community on reasonable terms of reward.<sup>1</sup>

As Keynes (and the Fabian Socialists who applauded

(continued p. 7)

## Freedom and Evil

Writing in *The New Age* in 1912, G.K. Chesterton observed: "Christianity believes in Original sin: so do I: so does the 'man in the street'. It is the only quite self-evident truth in Christianity."<sup>1</sup> That "Original sin" is a "self-evident truth" is an assertion which many would want to challenge; nevertheless, few would deny that the issue—whether human nature is basically good or has a propensity to evil—is of fundamental significance. It is important not merely as a matter of philosophical speculation, but as a matter having serious practical implications. And perhaps in no area is this question of more pressing concern than that of politics, as, for example, Frederic Muckermann has noticed: "In discussing how men should be governed, it cannot be a matter of indifference whether we consider human nature as being radically bad as Luther did, or as radically good as Rousseau maintained"<sup>2</sup>.

The issue is relevant to politics in at least two ways which may be epitomized by the following questions: "What sort of system do we want? What can be done to achieve it?" Obviously, our philosophy of human nature will determine the type of political dispensation we regard as appropriate: we will want our institutions to reflect our beliefs about the human condition. However, our evaluation of human nature will also determine the strategy we adopt in pursuing our political objectives. This second point in fact deserves priority, for the postulation of political change is idle unless one can demonstrate that the means are available to effect such a change.

### Two Kinds of Change

Usually, the question of political strategy resolves itself into a controversy between those who advocate some sort of technical reform (generally economic) and those who maintain that a "change of heart" must precede such reform. Thus, as T.S. Eliot has observed, there are two kinds of "revolutionists"—those who see a technical or administrative adjustment as a panacea, and those who feel that the moral nature of man must be altered.<sup>3</sup> Both these strategies tend to depend upon a perhaps unjustifiable confidence in the essential goodness of man, or at least of some men.

The major problem with the "change of heart" school of political strategy is, of course, that if it really hopes to be effective, it must assume that most people are good or capable of becoming good: it seeks a consensus of goodness. If, on the other hand, evil tendencies are a permanent trait of the majority of people, or even of those who have power, then "reform" based on a "change of heart" is in fact impossible. Eliot, who himself claims that an ethical change must precede a political or economic change, admits this: insisting upon the reality of "Essential Evil" and the persistence of the effects of "Original sin", he points out that "the spiritual itself cannot hope to affect directly any but a small spiritual elite". This leads to two possible conclusions: (1) in order to achieve reform, the "spiritual elite" must seize power and impose its ethical system on society as a whole, must become in effect a "benevolent tyranny", or (2) since ethical reform is possible for only a very few, those few can at best hope to salvage a few other souls, but not to effect any genuine political reform. The apparent in-

adequacy of the "change of heart" strategy tends to lead its advocates into what Eliot calls "Indifferentism" with respect to practical politics.

However, as Eliot points out, the alternative strategy—a technical change as cure-all—is also in danger of underestimating the power of "evil" in human nature. "At some point," he says, "human nature, unchanged in its fundamental passions and weaknesses, will be handling the controls." This is a just *caveat* against the reformer who says, "I have the key. Give me power, and I will unlock the door of your political prison." As likely as not, he will use his "key" as an instrument of control. The point is that technical changes must be administered: Who will be the administrators? Can they be trusted to be "good" men? What kinds of restraints will they be subject to? Once again, unless we can be sure of the benevolence of the administrators, reliance on technique alone places us in danger of becoming the victims of immoral technicians.

### Political Consensus

Thus, the two traditional questions posed by political strategists—namely, "How can we make people virtuous?" and "How can we find good men to govern us?"—are woefully untrustworthy, depending as they do upon assumptions about the goodness of human nature that are certainly not "self-evident". Thus, unless one can believe that human nature is fundamentally good, that human faculties are not radically impaired, the political outlook seems bleak. There is, however, a third question that might be asked: "Can we agree on one objective—namely, the retention of sufficient sanctions by each of us to guarantee his moral autonomy?" If we cannot all agree to be good (or even arrive at a common definition of "good"), if we cannot discover a paragon of integrity to whom we can entrust the power to administer our affairs, can we not at least insist upon the right to make our own moral choices (to the extent that these do not interfere with the same right for others)? If not, then we might as well join those who say that—politically and economically—there is nothing to be done. If, on the other hand, we can come to this type of political consensus, then we can begin to think about what kind of "system" will accommodate our shared objective. This brings us back to the question of human nature, against which we must evaluate our "system".

### Two Views

Traditionally, there have been two apparently opposite extreme views regarding the moral nature of man and its political implications. One of these might be labelled "Calvinism" or "pessimism", the belief that the vast majority of mankind are totally depraved; the other, which could be called "Rousseauism", "optimism", or "romanticism"<sup>4</sup>, maintains that human nature is essentially good but has been perverted by the environment. Paradoxically, when translated into political dispensations, each of these philosophies tends to issue in tyranny.

That interpretation of the doctrine of Original Sin which holds that most people are utterly depraved supports tyranny in a number of ways. In the first place,

the doctrine of predestination characteristic of Calvinism is a deterministic belief which denies the possibility of moral growth: thus, political provision for moral autonomy is irrelevant. The elect are saved; the reprobate damned. Second, of course, the postulation of a great mass of radically evil persons implies the need of a strong central government—suitably buttressed by stringent "laws"—to control and chastize these evil persons. Even the "just" must submit to tyranny, for temporal suffering can be regarded as a sign of "grace". This leads to a third aspect of this type of belief—the dissociation of the temporal from the "spiritual", encouraging both temporal amorality and a form of quietism in the face of injustice. The argument is that suffering, poverty, etc., are somehow good for people and that the *status quo*, however intolerable, should be tolerated.

## The Optimist Delusion

The Rousseauist doctrine that man is basically or naturally good leads to the same consequence—albeit in a much more insidious manner. In the first place, once more, this doctrine is in fact a form of determinism, implying that man is determined by the environment. A typical formulation of the belief is the Marxian one: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness"<sup>5</sup>. Aside from the apparent logical inconsistencies in this view (If men were originally good, how did "evil" classes of men arise? If men's consciences are socially determined, why are revolutionaries always so self-righteous?), it is ultimately a deception.

Invariably, "Rousseauism" seems to follow this path: promising that a change in the social environment will result in the release of the essential good in human nature, it advocates some form of revolution. In the name of this revolution, it entices people into relinquishing their personal sanctions "temporarily", promising that after the revolution, such sanctions (for example, property and the protection of "law") will become obsolete. The problem is that the millennial day seems never to materialize and the temporarily-relinquished personal sanctions remain in the hands of the "revolution". Marxian revolutionism is the most obvious example of this. Making an appeal to the simple-minded optimism of more or less pubescent idealists, and promising a communistic Utopia in the cloud cuckoo-land of a nebulous future, it persuades persons not only to give up their personal sanctions to the "leadership", but also to tolerate the vilest kinds of barbarity—which should in itself be enough to convince them of the speciousness of the romantic view. The "dictatorship of the proletariat" which follows the revolution generally takes the form of an authoritarian regime administered by a "central committee" which has effective political control and promptly proceeds to make people "good" according to its own notion of what is "good". Those who refuse to be re-programmed are eliminated.

The "democratic" notion of "majority rule" is merely a variation on this theme. Again, it seems to suppose that most people are good—that, by some kind of logical alchemy, the "greatest number" embodies the "greatest good", and that "truth" can be established by counting anonymous bits of paper connected with periodical sideshows called "elections". Again, in the name of the "democratic process" (an abstraction) persons are seduced into surrendering any real political sanctions

they might have for the privilege of becoming units in irresponsible mobs. Again, the tendency of ballot-box democracy is, by claiming that evil resides not in the nature of man but in the environment, to centralize power in bodies whose personnel are more likely than even the population at large to manifest the effects of human imperfection.

It seems clear that neither the notion of total depravity nor the idea that man is fundamentally good is an adequate philosophical basis for a political economy of freedom. Each, in fact, appears to imply a kind of philosophical determinism antithetical to philosophical freedom; if philosophy bears any relationship to policy, then it is logical to assume that philosophical determinism will imply political determinism. Even the sentimental democratism which we live with today is a smokescreen for the centralization of the apparatus of power—a tendency which leaves us fewer and fewer safeguards against the misuse of that power and exposes us more and more (as Eliot has noticed) to manipulation by radically-flawed persons.

## The Question of Sanctions

In this regard, C.S. Lewis has enunciated what seems to be a crucial principle:

...there are two opposite reasons for being a democrat. You may think all men so good that they deserve a share in the government of the commonwealth, and so wise that the commonwealth needs their advice. That is, in my opinion, the false, romantic doctrine of democracy. On the other hand, you may believe fallen men to be so wicked that not one of them can be trusted with any irresponsible power over his fellows.<sup>6</sup>

Far from the doctrine of the goodness of man being the only philosophical rationale for "democracy" (although it is for "majority rule"), and far from the doctrine of Original Sin leading logically to tyranny, a recognition of the evil potential in human nature is the only realistic basis for effective political freedom. Lewis's assertion that fallen man cannot be trusted with any irresponsible power over his fellows is the central one: a realistic doctrine of freedom will guarantee to the individual sanctions against the exercise of power over him by others.

The task of political science is not, therefore, to construct "models" or plan Utopias; it is to identify, elaborate, and secure sanctions which will maximize the political autonomy of imperfect men. What these sanctions are has been suggested elsewhere in these pages: they are intimately allied to a conception of "law"—not as a system of administration or of forcing the "morality of the majority" on the population at large—but as a guarantor of personal sovereignty and responsibility.<sup>7</sup> The economic aspect of this protection of sanctions is the recognition of property, which has been described as "decentralized sovereignty"<sup>8</sup>. The question of property, of course, raises the issue of the source of wealth—an issue which has been falsely elaborated (at least in "official" circles) heretofore.

This is not to suggest that economics determines ethics in any absolute sense. However, economic techniques can be, and are being, used as instruments of political coercion. In so far as "character is the policy of the individual", external control of personal

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("Money", continued from p. 4)

and propagated his writings) expected, acceptance of the principle that current revenue need not limit current expenditure led to exaggerated departmental expectations and short term excesses. Increased latitude in expenditure necessitated new guidelines and controls. In Britain the new institutions established to bridle governments in the context of the Keynesian "revolution" are designated by the acronyms PESC, PAR, and CPRS.

**Working of New Machinery**

The first two of these organizations are agencies of the Treasury, although some departmental representation is provided for. PESC, the Public Expenditure Survey Committee, prepares projections of levels of government expenditure over the coming five years on the assumption that current policies are preserved. PAR, or Programme Analysis Review, singles out major issues in new and old spending programs for sustained study to assist officials to make decisions within the margins of expenditure. CPRS, the Central Policy Review Staff (headed by Lord Rothschild) provides the Cabinet with "independent non-departmental analyses of major issues". The relationships of this last-named body to both the Treasury and the Cabinet are less than clear. About all that is known is that it is "deliberately empowered to make contact with City financial interests, industry, the academic world and others outside government" (315) and is concerned with advising in the areas of "strategy, priorities, alternatives and the long-term"(308).

If the purpose of these new groups actually was to contain a threatened flood of public expenditure, they have been less than successful. Between 1964 and 1968, during the early years of PESC, the proportion public expenditure represented of Gross Domestic Product rose from 46 percent to 52 percent. Moreover, the effect of the extended PESC projections has been increasingly to institutionalize expenditures.

PESC has enshrined incrementalism with a vengeance. It is incrementalism to the *n*th power. If PESC helps prevent departments from going beyond established bounds, it also commits the Treasury in public to keep their expenditures going at the projected rate. .... "It's harder to get new items injected under PESC but its easier to keep old ones from being ejected", reported a permanent secretary (238).

Thus, more and more of the weight of the past is car-

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**To Those Who Share  
Our Concern**

The publication of SEED is an enterprise which we feel is of cardinal importance to the revitalization of our culture. This endeavour represents the concern of a few individuals sensible of their responsibility to reverse, where possible, what they perceive to be the deterioration of the ideological and practical bases of this culture, and prepared to make personal sacrifices in the accomplishment of this objective.

However, our success can only be in proportion to our resources, which — particularly in their financial aspect — are quite limited. We are determined to proceed, even within those limitations. But we would like to do more.

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policy is a form of moral control. The person who depends upon the "beneficence" of the state or an employer for survival may feel that it is inexpedient to speak out against injustices perpetrated by his benefactor; a person so fatigued and demoralized by some meaningless job may not have any energy left for self-development. The point—which we have made before—is that only limited moral progress is likely under conditions of constant constraint or coercion: thus, for example, both Thomas Aquinas and Richard Hooker have observed that freedom from material necessity is generally a condition of spiritual self-realization. Such freedom need not await a "collective" change of heart; in fact, it is only under conditions of moral autonomy (an aspect of which is personal political sovereignty) that such a 'change of heart'—by definition a personal or internal matter—can proceed.

D.R.K.

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Wallace Martin, *'The New Age' Under Orage* (Manchester University Press, 1967), 216.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted by Anthony M. Ludovici in *The Specious Origins of Liberalism* (London: Britons, 1967), 66.

<sup>3</sup>"A Commentary", *The Criterion*, XV:55 (January, 1935), 262.

<sup>4</sup>T.E. Hulme defined as romantics "all who do not believe in the Fall of Man". See Martin, 225.

<sup>5</sup>William M. Chace, *The Political Identities of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot* (Stanford University Press, 1973), 31.

<sup>6</sup>*Transposition and Other Addresses*, quoted in *A Mind Awake*, ed. Clyde S. Kilby (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1968), 53.

<sup>7</sup>See "The Sphere of Authority", *Seed*, I:7 (August, 1974).

<sup>8</sup>C.H. Douglas, *The Social Creditor*, February 17, 1945.

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ried over into the future; and the establishment becomes ever more established.

## Cultural Conditioning of Centralization

The changes have bolstered the bureaucracy's predominant position and extended its range of control. The role of the Treasury has been steadily extended on the excuse of making an obviously deficient system more operational. In 1968 a "great symbolic phrase" suddenly emerged in the Treasury—"planning the path as well as the whole". This meant "laying down a publicly proclaimed path, year-by-year, for each department"(213).

The logical extension of PAR from PESC, which Treasury men like to cite, means that the Treasury can undertake a much more far-reaching conception of control, a conception aimed at discussing what departmental objectives are, how expenditure relates to them, and whether such objectives are in fact being achieved. The successor of a Treasury interested only in details is a Treasury becoming much more interested in the worth of the department's own policies (351).

So the direction in which the system controlling public expenditure is moving is clear: it is becoming increasingly centralized. How is this to be interpreted? Is it merely a response to environmental factors, or is it the result of conscious purpose on the part of the administrators involved?

Many observers dismiss the latter suggestion out of hand. However, it warrants serious consideration. As has been shown above, Keynesian economic principles are being pursued as a policy in virtually every advanced nation of the world. Furthermore, concentration of power at the disposal of non-elected officials has long been a basic Socialist objective, and the famous Fabian tactic of 'penetration' has been applied in Britain for years. It would be a mistake to think that the personnel in the institutions in question are being forced along a path they do not want to travel. One should not, perhaps, read too much into the following aside dropped by the authors in their concluding chapter: "for what it is worth, our impression is that Treasury officials are

(continued p. 2)

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