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VOICE

INTEGRITY
FREEDOM
RESPONSIBILITY

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VOICE

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Spiritually Disinherited

In our introductory article in the first number of this paper we said: "When we speak of individual liberty we speak of a spiritual necessity." And "It is only on this spiritual basis that any action taken to defeat the Satanic forces so powerfully working for the enslavement of mankind can succeed."

Action of any description involves two factors: a motive to act, and a technique of action. The motive can be by exterior compulsion or it can be by inherent impulsion; the impulsion can be purely selfish or it can partake of the love spoken of in the two greatest Commandments. It seems to be assumed in many quarters that liberty for the individual is a state which can be won and preserved as a purely material objective for the satisfaction of selfish individual interests. This is a delusion; and it is so in the sense of G. K. Chesterton's statement that a man who is insane is a man whose reason is without roots. If there is a spiritual necessity for individual liberty, it is because, as in the Christian belief, a spiritual motive should guide the vital life of men and women on earth and because this motive can only work when we are mentally and physically able to exercise freedom of choice. It ought to be clear that the one reacts on the other: that where the spiritual motive is not present operative freedom dies; and that where there is no freedom the link between vital life and the spirit becomes attenuated, if not broken. This is the gravity of our present situation: a dilemma into which mankind has slipped through the universal failure of the churches to recognise that a mental climate can be produced in a material form of living brought about by the secular will-to-power of predominant groups—a mental climate utterly lacking in spiritual awareness. It is a climate in which men and women have lost all the aids to spiritual guidance.

We have not seen anywhere, on the plane of philosophy, a better analysis or description of our plight than is to be found in Gabriel Marcel's little book *The Decline of Wisdom*. Notwithstanding that this generation has a physical heritage far greater than any previous one, it is clear that all but a small minority are spiritually disinherited. The notion that man is purely a creature of the present, without roots, exist-

ing to live out his years in service to a system, a process, or a society: a functional unit to be equipped by education merely to serve a function, with a smattering of something to enable him to while away his leisure hours, is one peculiar to a Planner and a planned society. The planned are to have no notions other than are necessary to their function. They are parts of a social machine geared to other parts of the machinery. Their social life is part of an agglomeration in an industrial city, serviced by mass amusements, propaganda and doctored information. There is an inevitable effect on mental attitudes, which will be dominated by abstractions, because they come from a rootless mind. Specialisation and concentration on technical education are producing a type of mind which has lost touch with the sense of life and living realities. Success and the output of a material product are the dominating motives of thought and effort.

A writer in a Sunday newspaper recently poured scorn on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's prophecy that by 1975 our standard of living would be raised by 50%. The scorn had reference to the obvious ingratitude everywhere evident for the great physical improvement of amenities achieved during the first half of this century. A correspondent has written to ask us whether, before seeking the enhancement of present liberties, we should not concentrate on making the best of what we already have. While neither of these statements is helpful in itself, both contain an element of truth, we might almost say a principle, which we consider to be important. This is the virtue of gratitude. Marcel has aptly said, "between grace and gratitude there exists an intimate connection. This is expressed in the French *action de grace*. It could be said that a gift as such is inseparable from its recognition, and so true is this that the recognition itself can in a sense be described as gift."

In our last issue we stressed the trinitarian nature of the reality underlying the Christian conception of society, in relation to which the realistic function of the Church is by communion with the State and the people, to express the Law. Does a clergy which utters at the conclusion of Worship: "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore," ever give thought to the *practical* conditions in which its congregations may be capable of receiving grace? It has been remarked that the state of the present generation is not one of ingratitude, but of non-gratitude, *i.e.*, it is incapable of receiving grace. —The visible evidence of the presence of Spirit in bygone ages is in our cathedrals. They bear witness to a Spirit which had presence in gratitude at the time, and demonstrate by their character the recognition of an obligation to keep the past in memory as an inheritance and of a trust for future generations. The atmosphere of mediaeval cathedrals is without exception one of serenity, and no such creation could come from communities which were not themselves characterised by it. "The chief sign

of wisdom" said Montaigne "is a constant rejoicing. Its state is like that of things above the moon: always serene." So that, if there were no other evidence, there is the evidence of the cathedrals that the generations which built them and revered the ideas which they enshrine possessed wisdom. The cathedrals testify to the continuing authority of the Church. And be it noticed that the communities thus possessed of wisdom and contentment and recognising the authority of absolutes outside their selfish interests were organic communities. The environment was not the soulless environment of tenements and factories, but a humanised environment. If education and culture of the mind were confined to a small part of the community, nevertheless the sense of quality went much wider in a craftsmanship which saw and completed the whole of its creation. The power which knowledge of technique gave was confined to small groups and mostly to single persons. The skills that were practised were mostly by the hands of individual men using their own tools, employing a raw material obtainable locally as a rule, and the objects fashioned were not only made from beginning to end by the craftsman, but in the main were of service in the local community of which he was a part. The ideas which inspired work therefore were localised, and had a close, organic relationship to the needs, tastes and personalities of the craftsmen and of the community of which they were members and which they served. There was a consciousness of *growth* from the past through the needs of the present for the service of the future. Man was part of an organism instead of a plan; the growth-sense was conscious of obligations to past and future—there was an inheritance to receive from the past and to pass on to the future. The organic relationship at lower levels bred common-sense, and at higher levels wisdom. Reason had roots.

Consider then in contrast Helmuth Gollwitzer in criticism of Soviet man:

"This system neither recognises any subject as confronting it nor as a result does it allow the development of any such subjects, whether individuals or groups, and this means exactly here nothing is allowed to grow. If life is unfettered growth in conformity with its own laws, this is surely the gravest accusation that can be brought. And indeed, for the life of the community, both the spiritual and economic consequences of this fact are terrible. There is room for nothing but pre-established plans and manufactured objects: anything that grows is suspect."

Consider also Cardinal Newman's idea of development:

"This process is called the development of an idea, being the germination, growth and perfection of some living, that is, influential truth, or apparent truth, in the minds of men during a sufficient period. . . . It grows when it incorporates, and its purity consists, not in isolation but in continuity and sovereignty."

Nothing but harm can result from a refusal or failure to grasp that we are confronted by an infinitely grave and complex situation, which strident political pressure groups are more likely to exacerbate than otherwise. This is not to say that political pressure of the right kind is unnecessary. Likewise, the creation of a transcendentalist religious emotion could do great harm in blinding people to the issues.

If it is certain, as we believe, that only the adoption of correct techniques in politics, finance and economics can take us on the right road, we agree with Marcel that the inditing and espousal of an ambitious programme would fail, and in doing so cause more harm. Correct action can only proceed from a correct attitude to a problem, and that attitude is expressed in the lines of Piers Plowman: "Love and lowliness, and loyalty, these shall be Lords in the land, truth to save." If a Christian social order is to be restored it can only be done by a group of people which in the first place has these qualities, and in the second place, recognises the true nature of the situation as it is and as it should be. Can such a group be found which will grow and come to predominate in the Church? If it can, it may be able to breathe into the community a love of neighbour sense which will insist on the rights of individuals and minorities being honoured; and it may be able to impress the nation with the idea that in a Christian social order technics, machines and solar power in alliance have *only* a place to provide men and women with an abundant leisure, for only in this leisure, can an organic life be recreated. And only by the restoration of an organic life can the present spiritual malaise be cured. If the people are enabled to see that the Church really has their most fundamental interests at heart in a *practical* way, they will take an interest in what the Church has to say, not otherwise.

Division of Power and Liberty

"Men like Mr. Rowntree and Mr. Lavers have to explain how it is that the medieval centuries, when the church's influence was at its height and totalitarianism possible, were in fact the great centuries of constitutionalism, of rights and liberties, the centuries in which parliaments took their rise, and in which the civil power was not merely respected by the spiritual, but was itself so subsided that by mixed and balanced constitutions Churchmen sought to ensure the reign of law. It is tragically true that all this balance was in the end upset and much of it destroyed because one element, the civil executive, the Kings in Europe, became too strong; but Kings were able to make themselves the effective, absolute masters of so much very largely because the Church made such an exalted position for the civil ruler, and respected such immense prerogatives in his great office. Whether or no this was the capital mistake of medieval Church statesmanship, it was the very opposite of a totalitarian conception of power. It was based upon ideas of the division of power, of separate spheres of activity, each with their appropriate rights and duties. In the same way the Catholic respect for reason produced the universities and the great proliferation of specialized studies, whose exponents then, in turn, sought to magnify their functions and to use their studies to supplant and displace theology."—*The Tablet*.

The Integrity of Authority

(From a letter to a clergyman.)

The basis of all that we say in this paper is that in regard to MAN and REALITY there are two cardinal factors: (1) POWER of Man to think, decide and act (2)

(Continued on page 4.)

To What End?*

by JAMES GUTHRIE, B.Sc.

It must be obvious that once you concede the need for total planning, or central planning as it is usually called, *i.e.*, the planning by a tiny minority of the industrial, financial, economic, educational, cultural and therefore religious activities of the vast majority, you have automatically sold out the entire Christian heritage of freedom.

Hayek quotes Lord Acton as follows:—"Whenever a single definite object is made the supreme end of the State, be it the advantage of a class, the safety or the power of the country, the greatest happiness of the greatest number or the support of any speculative idea, the State becomes for the time inevitably absolute."

This statement of Lord Acton's may be amplified thus: Once the individuals of a State can be persuaded to have the main arteries of life-giving energy, spiritual, psychological and material, cut off from their local needs and activities and diverted to a single purpose, then the central government, *ipso facto*, has received sanction for a State of War and can logically introduce the entire apparatus of a military type of organisation with absolute power at the apex and complete subservience at the base. Furthermore, any person whose criticism does not subserve the central purpose will most certainly be excluded from all organs of publicity, "over the air," on the ground and "underground."

It is remarkable that although some alleged Christians see the danger in the centralised power of the Socialist or Welfare State and object to the loss of their freedom of choice, they nevertheless are quite willing to see their favourite reform made the "supreme end of the State," thus introducing those restrictions in practise which they so much resent in principle.

Young architects are very prone to fall victims to the central planners who dangle in front of them pictures of grandiose structures of concrete and glass; the export industries are given special privileges when the Government embarks on an export drive; directors of the bureaucracy have a special interest in the restrictions of the Welfare State as each restriction enhances their power and increases their staff: without restrictions there is no justification for a bureaucracy; most of the police force, and taxation and excise officials are kept in full employment by those maniacs who believe they can create a Utopia by law.

Once the State propaganda agencies have mesmerised us into the belief that we must export or perish, instead of what is more likely to be the truth—export and perish—then we are in a position where the "experts" can say the following:

- (1) That all exportable articles used at home, instead of being exported, are practically wasted;
- (2) That those who use articles which could be exported are (in England) robbing children of necessary food, or (in Australia) upsetting the balance of trade, and therefore the "full employment" of the population.

The exporting of surplus production is a legitimate basis for export trade, but the financial transactions of most of

the export trade are suspect. If we take the case of Australian wheat in 1954, although there was a large "surplus" available for export the price of this wheat was so high that it was unprofitable for Australians to use it for producing eggs, and therefore eggs were scarce, although wheat was plentiful. Between the mountain of wheat and its use for poultry, was one effective barrier—price.

The following is a newspaper editorial written in September, 1954, which represents official thought in most countries:

"Australia must lose no time in showing its deep concern at the suggestion of an official advisory committee that huge surplus stock of American food—butter at this stage—should be dumped on the world markets.

"The situation of primary production in the United States is a striking illustration of the difficulties which can arise when a system of price subsidies gets out of hand, and factors of supply and demand are entirely ignored.

"The programme of price supports for producers (not consumers) has loomed large as a political issue in recent years. As a result the American Government is now the embarrassed owner of £1,750,000,000 worth of foodstuffs kept in silos, storage plants, and caves all over the country. Storage costs alone are £125,000,000 a year.

"Part of the goods in storage consists of a thousand million lbs. of butter, which, it is proposed, should be sold to the world outside. As the United States would be glad to get rid of it at almost any price, this would amount to dumping, with grave consequences to all other dairy exporting countries, including Australia and New Zealand.

"The problem America has built up for itself must be solved by America—but domestically. It would be a shocking example of unfair trade practice if America sought to relieve her problem by crippling the export industries of her friends, one by one. Australia should make its objections immediately and strenuously."

Here the writer is saying that by making the growing of butter remunerative the government can produce such an abundance of food that it becomes embarrassing. This abundance of food is obviously most embarrassing to the politico-economic set-up of the world today; this has been known for many years (at least since 1920), but it is tragically obvious that alleged Christian scholars have not been able to give us its philosophic significance.

It should be noticed that Great Britain and Europe had to sacrifice much of their political, economic and cultural freedom in order to get food. I suggest that a scarcity of food was centrally organised for that purpose.

The editorial quoted above admits that the overabundance of food came into existence by means of a financial stimulus, namely, subsidies. This is obvious enough. What does not seem obvious is that subsidies given to the consumer as well as to the producer would very quickly rid the Americans of their surplus butter. Major Douglas was excluded from the world Press for suggesting this.

Do you think this suggestion is very terrible? After all, is it not a fact that butter is made to be consumed? Is not that the justification, and the only justification, for making butter?

*Reprinted from *The New Times* (Melbourne) (abridged).

The late Dr. S. L. Frank Hibbert, writing on "Utopian Heresy," warns against trying to realise "Christian perfection through a compulsory social organisation." He further states: "in so far as it (Socialism) aims at subordinating to the State all economic life and inter-social relations, making them fit in with a definite plan enforced by the State, it degenerates into the despotic idea of bringing about a moral reformation of society by the methods of 'grabbing and holding fast.'"

The champions of this type of socialism lose sight of the fact that life is not an artificial rational construction but organic creativeness, and that all creativeness, including the moral, can only take place in freedom; hence every suppression of freedom paralyses life and with it the powers of goodness, apart from which there can be no way of bringing life to greater perfection."

The central planner, working downwards from his blueprint to the individuals who have to be fitted into his plan, never has accepted the uniqueness of the individual—indeed, he dare not. Without mass uniformity the central planner cannot plan. . . .

"The uniqueness of the individual" is essentially a Christian conception, and is anathema to the "Planners." Organisations of men demand uniformity and a legal rigidity which is the chief enemy of that organic growth so essential to self-development. So writes Mr. B. A. Fletcher in the *Nineteenth Century*, June, 1949, who goes on:—

"Total planning produces a selection of leaders in which low characters gain the upper hand. Totalitarian discipline demands uniformity. This is most easily achieved at the lower spiritual and moral levels. The lowest common denominator contains the greatest number of people. Paramountcy is in the hands of the malleable and the credulous, whose vague notions are easily led, and whose passions are easily whipped up. Unity is most simply attained in hate and envy. . . ."

If the individual is to fit into any social organisation he must naturally submit to the discipline peculiar to it, but the submission must be voluntary; and unless he can contract out of any organisation without victimisation he is not a free man, and if he attempts to free himself he is entitled to some moral support from the Christian Church.

The voice of the Church on this question has been very vague and halting. We have found in religious circles the same attitude as in the political sphere—an incredible uniformity of all parties in favour of social experiments supporting the centralisation of power. . . .

"What Are Kingdoms?"

"From all this sprang a new force with which kings and barons and even the Church had to reckon: that of national opinion. It was hard to define, but easy to feel. It was based both on Christianity and on the love of liberty and open-speaking which the English had inherited from their remote ancestors. It was fostered by a common sub-

ordination to the Law and of thankfulness for its blessings. At its core lay a strong belief in justice: of fair dealing between Lord and vassal, prince and subject, neighbour and neighbour, of a rough working balance in keeping with divine law and human conscience. 'Take away justice,' St. Augustine had written, 'and what are kingdoms but dens of thieves?' The English felt this in their bones."—From *The Story of England* by Sir Arthur Bryant.

THE INTEGRITY OF AUTHORITY—

(continued from page 2.)

AUTHORITY in Reality, called Law—sometimes Natural Law or God's Law.

Man can think, decide and act in obedience or in disobedience to Law in Reality, *but not with impunity, i.e.,* whether obedient or disobedient, 'good' or 'bad' consequences ensue.

If Man *knew* and knowing was *always* disposed to obey Law in Reality there would be *no need* for government in society. But, as Man has never yet attained perfection *either* in knowledge or obedience, in regard to Man-in-society and Reality there is a third factor: an Administration, which makes and executes enactments called laws. These laws are necessary to restrain one man or a group of men, whether from ignorance, foolishness or evil purpose, from doing harm to another man or group of men. In so far as they do this they truly reflect the Authority of the Law in Reality underlying society, and in doing so increase *real* freedom. But all power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. There has always been a *tendency* for those who have the power to make and execute laws to increase that power: those who enjoy the exercise of power *tend* to gravitate to positions of power. Vain men, ambitious for power, especially if they have great mental abilities and oratorical skill, have always been a menace to society. When there is a 'power behind thrones' such as is today incarnate in the existence of a group of International Financiers whose operations are not understood, the menace is even greater. The evil is endemic in society.

As freedom, within the terms defined above, is the essential means by which individual man may reach a higher life, the true rôle of the Church is, as it always has been, to be identified with the Authority of the Law in Reality, *not* with Power. In this connection Her duty is to express Authority both to Government and people so as to constrain Power to the limits of the Law.

The clergy cannot *with integrity* at one and the same time tell the people only to use their power in obedience to the Law, and at the same time themselves support and urge others to support a candidate or a party which is committing grave breaches of the Law. If they do so, they immediately compromise Authority, and destroy the means by which it can become effective. This is what is happening now, and it has been going on for a long time. We have been sliding for many years and are now close to the edge of the pit which is bottomless.