

For the INDIVIDUAL.
For the MINORITY.
For COUNTRY.
UNDER GOD.

VOICE

INTEGRITY
FREEDOM
RESPONSIBILITY

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VOICE

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The Bishops of London and Chichester

One of our clerical correspondents who writes "It is good to know that someone sees clearly the difference between Power and Authority" has misunderstood us to the extent of suggesting that we are trying to encourage a separation of the two. This is not the case; as we said in our last issue, we are trying to induce a recognition of the *distinction* between the two. The same correspondent utters the significant warning that the "dichotomy between power and authority is going to paganise the last vestige of responsibility out of power, to relieve it of all moral control whatever."

We agree that such a dichotomy not only would, but is having just this effect now; and it has been achieved by that very abstractionism which drains the meaning out of almost every field of thought to-day. It largely accounts for the common inability to recognise the fake from the genuine article, the inability to distinguish between what is erroneously on the label and what is in the bottle.

In matters of public policy, Church and State have become one in name and in reality, and in becoming so the *representatives* of Authority have become servants of Power and the State. But *in these matters* authority has ceased either to be recognised or to be sought. The dichotomy is almost complete. So far from the Church baptising Power, infusing it with responsibility, Power *has been* divorced from responsibility. This is evidenced in the bureaucracy, in such incidents as the Criche Down affair, and the absence of responsibility in the exercise of the franchise, the consequences of evil policies falling equally on innocent and guilty alike, and even the guilty sheltering under a cowardly anonymity.

At a time when the State has so widely usurped the right of the individual to choose for himself, we note the opinion expressed to us that "judgment has been delivered by the people against the Church, and on the right ground." Even when popular instinct may be right popular judgment (reason) may be wrong. But what is the ground? Why has the Church lost authority? Speaking to the Founder of Christianity a centurion said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority,

having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth. . . ."

In the great iniquities that have been inflicted on men and women in this century, scourging poverty amidst plenty and devastating wars, the Church has spoken with an uncertain voice. In the absence of the clear voice of authority, men and women have turned in their despair and ignorance with dull apathy to the false leaders of politics, whose words contradict their deeds.

In his book *What the Church of England Stands For* the Bishop of London devotes four out of ten chapters to "Authority." It is remarkable that not only is he unable to distinguish power and authority, but the power of the State is even referred to as "authority"—"The authority of Church and State might seem identical." And yet in the same paragraph the Bishop can refer to the teaching of Jesus: "He taught as one having authority." "All authority is given unto me." "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The Bishop is not alone. Once clear, the distinction has been blurred and what is vital is forgotten.

Religious authority, says the Bishop, is not "Of the same nature as State authority." Here is the dichotomy between power and authority. Where there is only one *Authority* there is said to be two 'authorities.' But there is only one Reality, only one Law. Religious authority, says the Bishop, "must be compatible with individual freedom of choice. . . ."

"Freedom is an even more fundamental postulate of the Gospel than is authority [?power] . . ."

And if State 'authority' determines that individual freedom of choice is forfeit, where then stands Church 'authority'?

Authority, would attach to Power a sense of responsibility. The Bishops of the Anglican Church have not been invited by the Christian Campaign for Freedom to enter the political arena but to advise those who have power and responsibility how to exercise it according to authority. The Bishop of Chichester may be responding. The *Church Times* of June 18 reports that when he received the freedom of the City of Chichester he remarked:

"While the nation, generally speaking, is content to see the State increasing the scale of benefits to the people, irrespective of party allegiance, there is a real danger—lest, in the State's steady incursion into departments of life hitherto uninvaded, there should be a loss both of a spiritual stimulus

CHRISTIAN CAMPAIGN FOR FREEDOM

Penrhyn Lodge, Gloucester Gate, London, N.W.1.

Funds for the Campaign are urgently needed.

and of encouragement to individual initiative. The Church has a duty here, the fulfilment of which is of immense importance to the well-being of the people. It has a duty to stand for a measure of independence and to witness to an authority higher than the State."

Perhaps the Bishop will now define in *concrete terms* what he means by "a measure of independence," and advise those with electoral power how to act in accordance with authority, for "The Kingdom of God is not in word but in power."

With the Bishop of London we say that "spiritual reality is associated with the physical means when rightly employed under the authority of Christ." Let it be so. We look to the Church. J.M.

Render Unto Caesar

Unfortunately we are being forced to render far more unto Caesar than is Caesar's. All Government is of necessity an encroachment on the liberty of the individual. The less Government we have the better for the individual. The more Government there is the higher will rise taxation, and *vice versa*. From the point of view of the individual both should be kept to a minimum. Conditions as they are today tend towards a maximum of both.

Taxation is under the form of either direct or indirect taxes. Both forms will in time have to be abolished. Both of them represent a diversion of purchasing power from the rightful owner to some other person, bureaucrat, or politician, to spend according to his ideas and not according to the ideas of the owner of the original income. We have during the last few years experienced some of the most amazing ways in which our money has been spent, ranging from sheer waste, to crazy experiments such as the ground nuts, and similar schemes. To judge the two types of taxation from a moral point of view, we must come to the conclusion that indirect taxation is more indefensible than direct. Direct taxes can be, and are, selective. For instance, much of the direct taxation has been so designed as to discourage distribution of profits among shareholders, and to encourage the manufacture of capital goods and goods for export, both of them waste from the point of view of the British citizen. So long as the imperfection of the financial and economic systems make taxation indispensable, any tax payable should be in direct proportion to a person's total income, *i.e.*, his ability to pay. This clearly cuts out all indirect taxes.

There are various indirect taxes, and practically all of them are selective. Petrol and vehicle taxes are a fine imposed on those who run cars privately and who buy goods, into the price of which road freight has been charged. It definitely limits the ability of some people to run a car.

Excise Duty levies a contribution on those who like something stronger to drink than water.

Entertainment Tax suggests that it is wrong for the individual to relax and enjoy himself, however harmlessly.

Those who get a thrill out of putting a few shillings on the dogs, horses, or some football team, have to pay not only for the hazards—carefully calculated by their book-maker in his own favour—but a Betting Tax as well.

Probably the worst of all indirect taxes at present is the Purchase Tax. This is the most arbitrary and selective

of all. It makes an interesting study to wonder what were the various considerations which entered into the decision to put a large tax on this article, a lesser tax on another. What is amply clear is that the interests of the consumer were never one of the considerations. These vary, and sometimes are to encourage exports and the shadowy interests that are making money out of these exports, to favour or penalise some particular industry and so on. Nearly every Finance Act has one long schedule or more imposing or modifying Purchase Tax on various articles, and some of these modifications introduce fantastic complications. It is obvious that by these arbitrary and selective applications of Purchase Tax it is possible to influence which articles are to be sold readily and when. Some articles can be raised in price so as to make that price prohibitive to all but a few people. In this way the consumer is influenced and has his choice severely restricted.

National Insurance Contributions are of course also a tax. In so far as it is a genuine insurance there can be no objection to it so long as the Government keeps its pledges and those of its predecessors. Government promises and pledges are of course nowadays not taken seriously. It is already many years ago that solemn pledges were made that the Vehicle Tax would go into the Road Fund and that this Road Fund would be used for nothing other than the improvement of the roads. It was only a short time before the Road Fund was raided for other things. In the same way, although the Insurance contributions are compulsory there have already been put forward suggestions that the resulting pension shall be subject to a means test. If one of our large Insurance Companies took its customers' money and then refused pay out on the policy someone would go to gaol. That is not so when it comes to Government obligations. There are no "post war credits" to private industry, adjustable at the will of the debtor.

The National Health Acts impose considerable restriction on the individuals who register with a Doctor or Dentist. They impose still greater restrictions on medical practitioners as to the time they can spend on a case, what medicine or treatment to prescribe, and so on. There are already indications that, like all other Funds under Government control, it will never meet its liabilities and become insolvent. This has almost become a habit. Services tend to drop and contributions to increase. The power to impose taxation, if taken out of the control of the taxpayers, has the same effect as a drug.

In all these considerations it will be seen that the emphasis is always on the encroachment on the liberty of the individual to choose and do what he wants, to spend his own income in his own way. This is the touchstone by which we can recognise whether a system is just or not—to examine whether it works for the benefit of the individual or against him.

H.R.P.

Authority Checks Power

"... When in 1222 the justiciár, Hubert de Burgh, tried to enlarge the revenue, he was sternly rebuked by Archbishop Langton for restoring 'evil customs.' In its embarrassment the Government had to resort to every shift . . ."—From *The Story of England* by Arthur Bryant.

Mr. Wyndham Lewis's Questions

Extracts from *Left Wings Over Europe* by Wyndham Lewis (Jonathan Cape, 1936):—

Section 1.

Are you for the Super-State or are you for the Sovereign State?

How long will the stock of post-Christian emotionality hold out?

. . . In the matter of 'religious' manifestations, the peculiar godless christianity of Anglosaxon communism is entirely meaningless: in effect it is an exploitation of the automatic christian responses and reflexes which have survived the extinction of Christianity among the western proletariat, or intelligentsia. It is concocted out of the refuse of discarded emotions, engrained in Christendom, and which cannot at once be extirpated—emotions of 'decency,' of 'charity,' of 'kindliness,' of 'compassion,' and of 'selflessness.'

All these things possessed until yesterday the authority of the dogma of a great religion. But *without* that authority they are meaningless, and can only survive for a relatively short time. For there is no *rational* basis at all for the cultivation of those feelings.

. . . As an animal, instinct teaches him to be the reverse. . .

As a way out of the religious impasse, Judaism has been suggested as a solution. There would really be no obstacle, it has been contended, to a *simplification* of Christianity, in that sense. But that solution would, of necessity, leave out Christ. There is far too much marcionism[*] in what is left in Christianity and post-Christianity, for that not to present difficulties. And even an arrangement by virtue of which Jesus remained there with the status of a prophet—which He has always occupied among the Mohammedans—would probably be unacceptable to-day to a majority of christians; though in fifty years time it is possible that that may no longer be the case.

However, the religious issue lies ambushed at the centre of all politics to-day. Religious *emotionality*—a mystical apparatus—is employed at this moment, everywhere, as an indispensable auxiliary of every political movement. . .

The only question is—*How long will this world-stock of the raw material of religion hold out?* . . .

. . . in the old parliamentary democracies there is still a full complement of bishops, there is still the uneasy shadow of a God: and so the politicians are able to enlist the religious machinery of the feudal ages, in combination with the diluted and secularised christian moralism of the Socialist Parties.

It is upon these post-christian, semi-christian, and state-christian foundations (the Church of Rome holding somewhat aloof—neither, it seems, for God nor for his enemies, but attempting to make the best of both worlds) that the 'new world' of President Wilson and Karl Marx is being built: the world of Class-war and World-peace. . . The Bishops have come to be little more than great State Officials; and

the State, as represented by the Baldwin Government, is so unsatisfactory an affair that the Church must suffer, at such a crisis, for it is unavoidably contaminated. And, unlike the Ancient Hebrews, we have no 'prophets'—except dear, kind, old Mr. Lansbury.

So now I turn, with more confidence of carrying you along with me, to a consideration of that super-state centred upon Geneva, which is being floated on a tide of pseudo-christian and communist 'idealism'—our lords and masters gone suddenly all Wilsonian, and hobnobbing with the disciples of Karl Marx.

Section 2.

Are you for Centralised Government, or for Non-centralised Government?

The authority of Great Britain at present in Europe, I started by saying in this part, was no longer its own authority, but that of an international order. It rests upon a "collective," communal, authority, rather than upon the authority of the individual Commonwealth of Great Britain, which shrinks every day into less and less importance. . . . At the present time, if you are a democratic statesman, you have to decide whether you are going to stand on your own legs, or whether you are going to become a part of a theoretic, universalist centipede. You cannot have it both ways. And, . . . the British Government has chosen the latter course.

I will now return to the question, which, for many years to come, the whole world will be busy answering, in one sense or the other; the question, namely:—'Are you for the Super-state of Internationalism, or for the Sovereign State of non-International Politics?'—this question can be put more generally as follows. 'Are you for centralised government, or for decentralised government?'

. . . But in a very general way you will be compelled to declare yourself an adherent of one or other of those two theories of government. For people have started legislating for the world at large, under our very noses—'so careless of the single life' as to alarm even the least self-assertive peoples.

Our childlike rulers, with this new internationalist toy of theirs, have plunged headlong into a policy in which the concrete and manageable 'nation' is to be neglected, in favour of that abstraction, Mankind. They have begun thinking and talking in terms of 'the nations.' And already 'the nation' is forgotten.

In this universal policy of 'indivisibility,' to which they have succumbed, the *individual nation* suffers the same neglect—and almost opprobrium, especially should it pipe up and draw attention to its individual needs—as other mere individuals. Those who protest against the neglect of the latter are indignantly called 'individualists'; those who protest against indifference to the former are scornfully dismissed as 'nationalists' . . .

The destiny of England, perhaps for centuries to come, is to be decided in a Swiss city by a motley collection of gentlemen whose names most of us are unable to pronounce—'led,' or is it in reality *followed*, by Mr. Eden, whose name we can pronounce, but which we many of us wish we had never heard, except in connection with the tree of good-and-evil, and the symbolical courtship of Adam and Eve: and these decisions are to be arrived at without anyone

[*] Marcion (circ A.D. 160), a gnostic, one of those who attempted to interpret Christ in terms of heathen philosophy. (Editor.)

taking the trouble to consult England about it—indeed as if England had lost its identity, in this ‘wider,’ ‘indivisible,’ issue, and so could be passed over as a nameless ‘anachronism.’

Yet, if the people of England *were* consulted, they might very well decide that some form of local—if you like parochial—government would, for the moment, secure their interests best. Who knows? They might, if they were given the opportunity of judging, mistrust and repudiate an international parliament—irregularly assembled, and freakishly conducted—for whom ‘England’ would be a mere geographical expression—not the home of forty million highly important people.

Section 3.

Are you for The Part: or are you for The Whole?

These forty million odd Britains have attained to a high degree of material comfort; but they are defective in reasoning power, since it has been somewhat at the expense of their horse-sense that all the increased mechanical horsepower at their disposal has been supplied to them.

So this spot of thinking they have to do must be made as soon as possible. The problem they are up against has to be stated to *some* extent in abstract terms: yet it should not be impossible to explain the meaning of these antagonistic principles—that of *centralised government*, and that of *de-centralised government*.

The problem is one of the fundamentals of all civilised, free institutions. It was, of course, the problem that so perplexed the revolutionary politicians whose task it was to fashion the new France, about to emerge from the convulsions of the French Revolution. The same problem came up for solution—as, under such circumstances it must always come up—when the North American colonists had to manufacture a constitution for the seceding dominions, after the War of Independence. And they finally settled upon that admirable triangular association of power, of (1) the Federal Government, (2) the State Legislature, and (3) the Judiciary (that nice balancing of power which recently has proved so very distasteful to that typical *centraliser*, President Roosevelt—‘a born Communist, but he doesn’t know it,’ according to Mr. Shaw: and so favourable to the crude ambitions of the late ‘Kingfish.’

No Englishman has any right to vote, at the present time, who has not firmly laid hold of the political principle governing the constitutions of France and the United States, but specially the latter; for any vote cast in an English election to-day is a vote that will be utilised by those who are monkeying about with the entire world, and deciding what constitution shall be given to its patchwork quilt of subject peoples, black, yellow, and white. And it is the duty of the voter to intervene, in his small way, on the side of those who wish to retain the maximum freedom for *the parts*; and to withhold unreasonable and too oppressive power from the *whole*. For the *whole* would be only a verbal figment: it would mean government by a handful of individuals. . . .

Your answer to this question will not mean that you are for, or against, co-ordination of effort. It means—Are you prepared to allow the power to regulate your private (in this case your ‘national’) affairs to pass out of your hands for ever? Will you hand yourself over, body and

soul, to a roomful of gentlemen whom you will never see, in some place of which you may never have heard; or do you prefer to see—and if necessary *kick*—the gentlemen who rule you? The latter is of course the more satisfactory alternative.

A march was stolen upon ‘modern man’ as regards that highly unsatisfactory evolution, into a world of bigger and ever bigger business, was it not? We all know that now. No one to-day can do anything about it, however. But in this other matter—that of politics, which have come to be to-day, make no mistake about it, world-politics—at least there is still *the vote*, for what it is worth. And there are other ways. *No way* should be regarded as too unorthodox to obstruct and prevent this transfer and translation of our hereditary freedom, from within the frontiers of a recognised and homogeneous state, over into the keeping of some abstract international arcanum.

Our freedom, or such as remains of it, is *incarnated* in our language and in the soil within the hereditary frontiers where it has been bred and developed. And ‘the frontier’ of Great Britain is not, and never can be, ‘the Rhine.’ That is the frontier of some internationalist abstraction, with which the less we have to do the better.

Section 4.

. . . There are plenty of men who would not relish the idea of being governed from a world-centre, situated at New York, or at Rome, or at Moscow, who are nevertheless not jingoes or ‘My country-right-or—wrong’ uns.’

With Candour

We have been taken to task for lending such weight as we have in support of the restoration of a whole series of freedoms which have been lost almost exclusively during the present century, and for not confining our support to just one or two of them. We have seen section after section of the community singled out and isolated and then lose its freedom to the centralisers. Had they themselves not been self-centred, had other sections not been self-centred, they would have stood together and survived. There are still groups standing out for particular freedoms: freedom from foreign interference with our sovereignty, freedom from interference with marketing, freedom from interference with bread and water and so on. Most of these groups, too, are self-centred, trying to get everyone else to support their freedom objective, but not willing to help each other. *VOICE* is not like that; it stands for freedom as a principle. It may be seen that *we* are supporting the objectives of other sections of the community even if *they* are not supporting each other.

We have been pleased to notice that *Candour*, edited by Mr. A. K. Chesterton, whose particular freedom objective is freedom for Great Britain and Empire from interference by foreign influence, has in its columns accorded a friendly reception to *Voice*, while dissociating itself from some of our “tenets.” We do not know whether this means some of the freedom objectives we have published. We are certainly whole heartedly in agreement and support of *Candour’s* objective, so ably sustained by Mr. Chesterton’s pen.