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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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"The Coming World Civilisation"

*An Open Letter to William Ernest Hocking, the author of a work so entitled.**

Dear Sir,

I have read with great interest and much agreement your book on *The Coming World Civilisation*. The subject is of such momentous importance that I feel impelled to point to an omission in dealing with it so crucial that failure to recognise and declare it must lead inevitably, and indeed is leading, to a World Dictatorship destructive of all we mean by the word Civilisation, and of all the values that should attach to it.

To come at once to the nature of this omission, I find it in a phrase of Tertullian's which you have quoted on p. 160: "And this is the highest reach of wrong—the unwillingness to recognise what it is impossible to ignore." This unwillingness, taken literally and not as interpreted in the context—*i.e.*, as an unwillingness to recognise a knowledge that we cannot know—but as the unwillingness to recognise a knowledge that we can know, a fact, a reality that "it is impossible to ignore" can surely also be accounted as the highest reach of wrong. And if, as you have stated, "God is the heart of fact," such "unwillingness," such wilful blindness, must also be regarded as little short of blasphemous. And to-day such an unwillingness to recognise what it is "impossible to ignore," is seen in the demand, and the supposed need for Full Employment, in an age of mechanisation in which industrial production is requiring less and less labour to secure its legitimate objectives.

In a note on p. 54 you refer to the sub-commission engaged in formulating the Declaration made by the United Nations, and its attitude when it came to consider the "right to work"—the "right to work," in the frame of reference under consideration, meaning the right to work for a remuneration, whether for a wage-salary, or whatever the chosen designation, in short the right to work for a living. The Soviet delegate favoured "an unrestricted assertion of that right, whereas Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt . . . demurred as representing the American view that economic conditions may not always allow everyone to be employed. The Soviet urged that the Declaration must present not the actual but the right! The Soviet view prevailed." That was a base and shameful concession. Moreover, it is, in a sense, meaningless, for separating, as it does, the 'actual' from the 'right,' and treating them as mutually exclusive, it renders them both unreal. Henceforth, therefore, the 'right' torn from its proper relationship to the 'actual,' that is, to reality, is turned into a purely ideological abstraction made subject to governmental decree. No more powerful agent

of dictatorship can be imagined. Thus one cannot help wondering why Mrs. Roosevelt's more realistic attitude to the question of the 'right to work' was set on one side in favour of the Soviet view. Only on the supposition that the aim of the United Nations was designed to establish a dictatorship can one regard the Soviet view as in order, because valid for that purpose. For by means of grandiose schemes and spectacular if worthless projects, and by increasing the growth of a parasitic bureaucracy, it can ignore the 'actual,' and create the 'right' to full employment as fast as technological progress, by displacing the worker, invalidates this right. Thus what you say is the "one ground of prophecy which continues to hold good: *the unreal must yield to the real*," is ignored, and in practice contradicted.

Dealing with the question of rights in relation to an individual's claim on them (p. 16) you say: "The loudest right-claimers are today often those who have some private interest to 'protect';" and you regard this as a 'spreading menace.' But has a man no right to protect his private interests? Indeed is it not his duty and responsibility to do so? Unless, of course, you assume, *ipso facto*, that a man's private interests must be purely selfish and looked upon as harmful to his neighbour, and should therefore be regarded as communal, the right to decide on them being vested in the State. Yet it is precisely in that conclusion that many today perceive this "spreading menace," which may account for the loudness of their claims as they see, one by one, these interests being nationalised and taken over by the government. Nevertheless, this conclusion is hardly sustained by you when you say: "The liberty of going wrong is the seamy side of the priceless privilege of going right by free choice rather than by compulsion." (Tho' why going right by "free choice" should be regarded as "a priceless privilege" is not clear.) But the liberty of going wrong does not give the individual the right to encroach upon, or limit the liberty of his neighbour. Western law, in two cardinal instances at any rate, recognises this, and frames laws against theft and against murder, to ensure the right of the individual to his property and the right to his life. This limitation of liberty should be the pattern or principle of a working legal system which should not be affected whether the "volume of abuse" of such liberty be "minor" or not.

Such considerations touch closely upon the economic "problem of distribution" which, you say, is still unsolved,

* George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1958.

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From Week to Week

U.S. News and World Report conducted a poll among U.S. federal judges on their opinions concerning the report adopted by the Conference of State Justices at its annual meeting in Pasadena on August 23 (see *T.S.C.*, October 18, 1958).

The result, published in *U.S. News and World Report* in its issue of October 24, 1958, showed that 36.5 per cent. of those polled (by post) replied, and that of these, 46 per cent. expressed agreement with the conclusions of chief justices of State supreme courts, and 39 per cent. disagreed.

The following is from the report in *U.S. News and World Report*:

“*Critics of criticism.* The *New York Times* is reported to have made an effort through its own reporters to dissuade judges from participating in the poll. *Times* reporters called by telephone a number of judges and, some of these judges say, argued with them that they should not reply.

“While the poll by *U.S. News and World Report* was in progress, the *New York Times* printed a story under a headline: ‘Judges Angered by Poll on Court, More Than a Score Express Indignation over Magazine Survey on Critical Report.’ This story said that *New York Times* reporters had ‘sampled’ federal judges in ‘several cities.’ The article expressed the opinion that not a quarter of those polled would reply. In Washington another newspaper, the *Post and Times Herald*, also polled some of the federal judges about the *U.S. News and World Report* poll. The *Post and Times Herald* predicted that ‘less than a 20 per cent. return’ would be received.

“The *U.S. News and World Report* poll was conducted in confidence, and judges were not asked to sign their names. A substantial number, nonetheless, did sign their names after checking the answer. . . .”

“Jews have too frequently been victims of man’s inhumanity to man not to remain unmoved by such human

tragedies wherever they may occur. . . .”

—*The Jewish Chronicle*, November 21, 1958.

Racial Strife

American Communists are moving heaven and earth to promote racial strife in the South—that is the conclusion reached by Negro author Manning Johnson in *Colour, Communism and Common Sense* (The Alliance; 200 E. 66th St., New York 21; \$1 per copy; lower rates for bulk orders). Behind most racial agitation, Johnson says, are modern carpetbaggers, most of whom “are either Communists or persons who have been, or are now, associated with the Communist cause as a frontier, endorser, or fellow traveller.”

Johnson, himself an ex-Communist, declares that “under the circumstances, it becomes the bounden duty of every Government agency, in the interest of internal security, to reveal to the American people the record of each individual, regardless of race, creed, religion, position or rank, who is involved in inciting white and Negro Americans against each other.”

—*Human Events*, October 27, 1958.

Dimensions

“Plato . . . speaks of some men living in such a condition that they were practically reduced to be denizens of a shadow world. They were chained, and perceived but the shadows of themselves and all real objects projected on a wall, towards which their faces were turned. All movements to them were but movements on the surface, all shapes but the shapes of outlines with no substantiality. . . . He says that just as a man liberated from his chains could learn and discover that the world was solid and real . . . so the philosopher who has been liberated . . . can come and tell his fellow men of that which is more true than the visible sun—more noble than Athens, the visible state.”

—C. Howard Hinton, *The Fourth Dimension*.

THE COMING WORLD CIVILISATION—

(continued from page 1.)

and rightly affirm is an “issue of justice, and in consequence, must be decided in reference to an ethic even a metaphysic.” Also, I suppose you would allow, it must first be decided in reference to fact and reality before these other considerations can be understood or thought of as referring to it. But, in fact, there is no real problem of distribution. What is presented as a problem of distribution is, in reality, a dilemma of production: the question of the producer being how, and by what means, can he get people to buy the things that they want, and that he can, physically, supply in abundance. It is, of course, a mutual dilemma and can be seen as: “How can I sell you?” on the one hand and: “How can I buy from you?” on the other, in short a producer-consumer dilemma, both willing to oblige the other, but prevented from doing so. Why? What is stopping them? Clearly the problem is not the physical one of transport, since the problem of distribution, by sea, road and air, has been solved, and any breakdown therein

can be located and repaired. Where, then, must one look for the breakdown in distribution that, apparently, defeats all efforts at repair?

The answer is so simple that one expects to be accused of stating the obvious. For the means necessary to bridge the gap between the seller and the buyer, which constitutes "the still unsolved problem of distribution," is money—*i.e.*, I cannot as a consumer buy all the goods I want, which you, as producer can supply in abundance, unless I have the purchasing power, otherwise money, to do so. Thus the consumer and producer are left high and dry contemplating each other across the gap that divides them. In so far as this constitutes a problem it is a money or financial one—*i.e.*, the question of the additional amount of money necessary to bridge the aforesaid gap, is a question of the means to adopt for distributing the necessary money.

In equity, the right to this money constitutes a cultural inheritance because based upon, or arising from, the ever-increasing displacement of human labour by means of man's inventions and discoveries. As this process is age-long, this inheritance cannot be assigned to any particular section of society, but must be regarded as a communal or national inheritance, *i.e.*, as an unearned increment of association. Hence, since money has been designed as the most convenient means for the purpose of laying claim to goods, that part of production attributable to this inheritance should be monetised and distributed as a national dividend to all, without favour, allowing complete freedom of choice to the consumer in the matter of the goods he may wish to claim. Seen thus, 'the problem' is, in reality, a matter of accountability, and should properly be so regarded. True, it is also a matter of justice, and the only concern of the government would be to make sure that the accountants engaged in assessing the amount of the dividend and the money necessary for its distribution were competent and honest.

After the first World War the reason for the failure of distribution was discovered by Major Douglas, and the means necessary to correct it were devised by him and set forth under the title of Social Credit. The scandal of so-called over-production, of poverty in the midst of plenty, of the destruction, and of laws to restrict the production of real wealth became so marked between the two wars that the subject began to gain, through the press, a certain amount of publicity, which began to draw attention to the anomalies of the situation, and the remedial proposals of Major Douglas. The reason why this publicity and, in consequence, public interest declined, is not far to seek. For the proposals of Social Credit strike at the very heart of the International Money Power, which, by reason of its monopoly can control all the channels of publicity; thus the task of suppressing knowledge of the truth is an easy one.

Small wonder the Soviet view of 'the right to work' prevailed, and the gleam of light shed on the situation by Mrs. Roosevelt was quickly extinguished. For the right to work, politically understood, is the right to paid employment, in reality the obligation to work for a living which, in an age in which human labour in production is being progressively replaced by scientific and technical knowledge, becomes increasingly onerous and anachronistic. Not that the Soviet is alone in its view. Our present Prime Minister, Mr. Macmillan, recently announced that 'Full Employment'

would continue to be the government's major purpose, and our Labour Party has gone one better, it being reasonable to suppose that it is behind the T.U.C.'s contention that one of the objectives of the money system should be "to maintain Full Employment." No greater travesty or misuse of the function of money could be devised, but also no greater or more complete surrender to the money power. For although the sole function of money, and the one for which it was intended, is to facilitate the production and distribution of goods, in the hands of this power it can be made to serve the end of Full Employment; thus what could become an inheritance of leisure and freedom from compulsive work can be perverted and transformed into the pattern of a slave state.

It is interesting to reflect that the power of respective governments, whether open or avowed dictatorships, or masquerading under the title of 'Free Peoples of the World,' is fictitious and purely permissive. For by means of their lethal weapons of debt and taxation the money power can manoeuvre the ruling governments in directions to suit its own purpose, though within that limit governments are free to make their own laws and rulings—this giving them the illusion of the freedom to manage their own affairs, and to be masters in their own house.

The irony of this situation is surely without parallel, and the question arises as to how, within it, can the coming "World Civilisation" be other than a World Dictatorship destructive of all Christian values, leading to the complete subjugation of the individual and what you have termed the "desolating prospect" of "undifferentiated identity."

In the section of your work in which you consider Christianity, and the question of its universality, you identify the Christian ethic as "the will to create through suffering." But that statement must be challenged. Suffering is not an essential concomitant of the will to create; but the point to observe is that Christianity is more than an ethic, and those who claim its universality do so on other grounds. You are nearer the mark when you assert that the faith which "Christian ethic requires" is "*a faith in fact*"; and the fact which is the basis of the Christian faith is an act undertaken and accomplished for all time and for all people, and faith in the redemptive power of that act made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ, hence in Jesus Christ as Redeemer and Saviour of the World. Redemption is therefore the essence of Christianity in which lies its claim to perfection and universality, and on which is based its ethic; for only absolute perfection rooted in absolute love has power to redeem, since absolute perfection alone can realise the true nature of wrong, or error, of unrighteousness, summed up in the word sin, a word so repellant to many today. A spontaneous and instinctive recognition of this truth is expressed in the common enough phrase, "I can never forgive myself." For man cannot forgive himself, indeed self-forgiveness is an impossibility. Nevertheless man may feel the need for forgiveness, and that need can only be met by absolute redeeming love incarnate in the Person of Jesus Christ. This faith in the need for, and in the advent of a Redeemer was foretold by the major prophets in the Old Testament, often in words of great eloquence; but when the word was made flesh—became *fact*, it was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks

foolishness. It is the same today. Yet it is on this faith in Jesus Christ as Redeemer that the Christian rests his claim to regard Christianity as the Only Way—the World Religion. This claim will not be accepted by those who, in the words of Vivekananda that you quote, cry: “Sinners! It is a sin to call men Sinners,” though they may be prepared to patronise the Christian ethic. But religion that strove and claimed to please and command the assent of all men would be, as you say, no more than a “Syncretism” —“an electric whole, devoid of any principle of coherence.” And, one may add, devoid of integrity.

Your assumption that “religion, and especially the Christian religion, is committed to the thesis that the will of God is to be done in this world,” and also your statement: “that a religion pertinent to human life, in order to be universal, must be particular—it must be a concrete universal,” would appear to endorse a belief in truth as one, whole and indivisible, incarnate on all planes of human life, material as well as spiritual. And one might go so far as to say that to be spiritually minded consists in the power to perceive the presence or absence of truth in any given situation. In particular is this the case in the sphere of economics, touching, as it does, so closely and in so many directions on the material life and welfare of man. And it is precisely in this sphere that the Christian has accepted, and allowed himself to be ruled and governed by, a ‘law’ of unrepayable debt, diametrically opposed to the one of redemption that he confesses and is committed to on the spiritual plane. This dichotomy must result in a fatal loss of integrity, impairing the powers of discretion and discernment. “For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light,” and the Powers that be are winning because they know what they want, and how to get it, and it is to their interest to foster this dichotomy and lack of integrity in those they wish and intend to dominate, for a “house divided against itself must fall.”

There are signs today that this fall is imminent. One sign and perhaps the foremost, is the undue emphasis placed on science and scientific training in the sphere of education. In dealing with the subject of education at the recent Conservative Party Conference, Mr. Macmillan said: “The key to success in the modern world is education.” Though why particularly in the *modern* world one may reasonably ask. Has not education always been considered a key to success? But we are soon enlightened, for we are told: “We mean to have by 1970 twice as many scientists and engineers coming from the universities and technical colleges as we had in 1955!” Thus, by implication, education in the modern world is to be comprised in and confined to a training in science and technology. It is possible to see in this emphasis a policy, conscious or not, aimed at discouraging faith as a ground for belief, and substituting a demand for scientific certainty and proof. Thus your interpretation of Tertullian that: “to know that we cannot know may be our most significant knowledge, *the item most perilous to repudiate,*” (my italics) will be ignored, and religion discounted as a possible obstacle to scientific ‘progress,’ whatever direction that ‘progress’ may take, or whatever demands it may make on man’s allegiance. In particular, as already suggested, by the inauguration and encouragement of grandiose and pretentious schemes the services of this growing army of scientists and engineers

can be employed by the politicians and misdirected to further their policy of forced labour, euphemistically entitled ‘Full-Employment.’ Also the invention and multiplication of new gadgets and new designs can be made an excuse for displacing existing methods, and an unbroken ‘progress’ of sabotage and replacement—for which ‘progress’ war and preparation for war are the ablest exponents,—can continuously supply new jobs—to which, incidentally, can also be added the consequent increase in disfiguring and unsightly advertisements.

A line from a traditional song of the Bengali boatmen quoted by you “O Friend, End of all endless movement,” can be thought of as no more than a pious hope, since an ‘end’ of ‘all endless movement’ would be regarded as a calamity. The constantly reiterated demand for ever-expanding trade gives support to this contention, as though saturation point must *never* be reached, and the tragic conflict between the demand for Full Employment and technological advance in labour saving must go on. “The eyes of the fool are on the ends of the earth,” only today they are fixed beyond—on the moon, on the planets, which must be roped in to assist in the policy of expansion and ‘Full Employment,’ which policy predicts the form and character of the ‘Coming World Civilisation.’

Social Credit is the reversal of this policy. It is a binding back to reality—to truth—to freedom and *the right to contract out*, it is therefore the implacable enemy of the power that would keep men in thrall. Although its criticism of the money system, and the proposals designed to correct it are open to mathematical proof, it is, as Douglas was concerned to show, as the policy of a philosophy that its claim to pre-eminence rests. Hence the change in its economic proposals must be designed to embody that policy, and are so designed. It is neither occult nor esoteric, and knowledge of it, although discouraged by every means, is easily ascertainable.

So long, however, as man clings to the irrational and senseless fetish of ‘Full Employment’ in an age of mechanisation, and the further ‘menace’ of automation, it can have no more than an academic interest. But, although its title and its terms may be filched and distorted for purposes of deception, its reality can never be feigned.

Yours, etc.,

B. C. BEST.

Spare Copies Required

Dr. Basil L. Steele would be grateful if any reader who could spare one or more copies of *The Social Crediter* for November 15, 1958, would kindly send them to him at Penrhyn Lodge, Gloucester Gate, London, N.W.1. 78 copies are urgently needed.