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VOICE

INTEGRITY
FREEDOM
RESPONSIBILITY

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VOICE

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Are They Christians?

We choose from our post-bag two letters attacking *Voice*, one from the Vicar of Ruislip and the other from the Vicar of St. James, Devizes. We quote their criticism below and the reply which we sent them.

From the Vicar of Ruislip:

Dear Sir,

In view of your most uncalled for and ludicrous attack on the *Church Times* in the last issue of *Voice*, I must ask you not to send me any further issues.

To suggest that the *Church Times* is un-Christian and that it does not believe that the world was created by God is too fantastically ridiculous to argue about, and I really cannot waste my time in reading a publication which makes such puerile and irresponsible accusations.

I was at first quite sympathetically interested in the views expounded in *Voice* and even quoted from it in my parish magazine. Latterly however your attacks on the Church and the Archbishop have been so virulent and unfair that I have no further wish to read your paper.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) R. D. Grange-Bennett.

April 8, 1955.

The Rev. R. D. Grange-Bennett, T.D.,

The Vicarage,

Ruislip,

Middlesex.

Dear Sir,

My only reason for replying to your letter of March 31 is that it is representative of the attitude of a large section of the clergy of the Church of England, not that in itself it merits a reply. And, for that reason I intend to publish it with this reply. It is typical of this section of the clergy that they always show resentment of criticism, and, instead of furnishing a reasonable reply to it, try to pass it off with expressions like "uncalled for" and "ludicrous."

Now, the article to which you take exception in *Voice* criticised the *Church Times* on specific issues, described these issues clearly, pointed out plainly enough where that paper was incorrect and gave precise reasons. The article brought us congratulations from churchmen and non-churchmen and an increase in subscriptions from the clergy. But, although we received a number of letters like yours, it did not bring us one reasoned refutation of a single statement made in it. This is typical of our experience since we started publication of *Voice*.

You say that it is "too fantastically ridiculous" to say that the *Church Times* "does not believe that the world was created by God." But the *Church Times* said "The last word lies with God's grace, which can supernaturally transform nature into a divine pattern." If God created the natural order, as we believe, why does He need to transform it in order to make it divine? If God created it, it already has the divine pattern in it; and anyone who says the contrary is saying, even if in different words, that God did not create the natural order, and that is what the *Church Times* is saying.

What *Voice* is continually saying is that the social order has departed from the divine pattern of the natural order created by God, and in so far as it has done this it has become an un-natural order. And, it continues by saying that it is a primary responsibility of the Church to seek and know the divine pattern in the *natural* order as it affects Society and the social order, that it should insistently express this Truth (Authority) to Government and people, denouncing every deviation from it.

The test of whether any 'law,' rule, order or arrangement by any form of government, whether political, economic or financial, is of the Truth is in whether it enhances or diminishes freedom for the individual person—"The Truth shall make you free." Not only do we find that the *Church Times*, the Primates and bishops never apply this test, we find that, although they publicly acknowledge that freedom is continually disappearing, they actually lend their support to political, economic and financial practices which are destroying freedom.

When a bishop was interviewed recently he was taxed with this, and admitted the evil, but excused himself by saying that 'tolerance was necessary.' He was promptly asked whether he would tolerate the Devil, and replied emphatically "No." But, the Devil is only harmful through his works; and anything which destroys freedom is untruth and of the Devil—"Demon est Deus inversus." It is un-Christian, and, in that we have shown conclusively that the *Church Times* and the bishops are consistently supporting un-Truth in social 'laws' and arrangements, are supporting deviations from the divine pattern of the natural order, we can say in regard to the accusation which we have levelled that they are un-Christian, *quod erat demonstrandum*.

Furthemore, the assumption of the *Church Times* and

the bishops and clergy that God will grace either a system or persons who are untrue to His natural order, seems to us to be wanton arrogance, if not blasphemous.

The Church is on trial as never before; the public in large part has already passed judgment on it, and found it wanting. It cannot fail to notice that on both sides of the Iron Curtain the churches, with the exception of an important section of one of them, is always aligned with Caesar's policies, policies which are leading the world straight to disaster. In most, if not all, the educated public recognises that politics is a corrupt, dirty business; and this is where the policies which the churches support originate.

The bishops and clergy claim to be transformed people, in touch with God; so did the Grey Eminence whose instrumentality in European politics wrought such appalling havoc and suffering. In regard to policy, in what way can these 'transformed' people be differentiated from the untransformed or from Caesar? In proportion to their numbers they appear to be about as equally divided between the political parties (including the Communists) as the general public.

We know, of course, that the churches like to pass judgment after the event, and to 'repent' when it is too late to alter anything. The two classic examples concern the two most dire and pregnant events of the past twenty-five years: the Great Depression and World War II. In regard to the first, in which the group of people associated with *Voice* vainly at the time sought the aid of the churches in support of the obvious remedy, the Archbishop of York has just recently said, twenty years too late: "In the past the Church in England sinned grievously in not condemning the prolonged unemployment of millions, the foulness of the slums, and the undernourishment of children." In regard to the second, although the world had already experienced one catastrophic war, it was not until after the second that the archbishops appointed a Commission to study "the moral and theological aspects of peace and war." Again, not until after the event did they condemn the vicious and immoral policy of unconditional surrender, the policy which prolonged the war at enormous sacrifice of human life and treasure, and raised Communism to the great menace it has become. This Commission had the hypocrisy and effrontery to condemn the morally isolated individual in these words:

"It was not uncommon during the late war for men to say that certain things they were called upon to do seemed to them unjustifiable; but that they supposed they must do them. One can sympathise; but it was an abdication of conscience."

Did the chairman of the Commission, the Dean of Winchester, or the Dean of Gloucester, who wrote an appendix to the Report of the Commission advocating complete centralisation of world power, with an international police force stationed in each country, denounce at the time the policy of unconditional surrender? Or, were they guilty, with the Primates who appointed them, of abdication of conscience? On the historical side of their Report this same Commission called upon Dr. Arnold Toynbee for guidance. It was Dr. Toynbee who presided over the Institute of International Affairs, which has the prefix 'Royal,' and who confessed to a foreign audience that he was be-

traying the sovereignty of his sovereign's realms, while "all the time we are denying with our lips what we are doing with our hands."

Are these "puerile and irresponsible accusations"? Or, are they established facts?

The Vicar of Ruislip may deny them, but it is certain that he cannot refute these facts. You are called 'The Reverend,' Sir. Why?

The Vicar of St. James, Devizes, has also written to us. He says: "Clergy probably don't write to you because they don't find anything but destructive criticism in your journal. Much of it is sound, but we can most of us see what is wrong, but not how to put it right. You seem in the same position."

We might be justified in merely replying to him in the words of the Archbishop of York in reference to the sins which he confessed to as reported above: "Even when the remedy was not plain the Church should have prophesied against these social evils as contrary to the will of God." But, we will go a stage further. *How* to put things right is no more the business of the Church than it is of the general electorate. *How* to put things right is the business of the experts. It is the business of Parliament to pass laws to compel the experts to discharge their responsibility, which is to produce results reasonably demanded by the electorate. We have indicated time and time again what is the business of the Church in this matter: it is to express Authority concerning the Moral Law—the divine pattern in the natural order—and to prophesy against all violations of it, against all evils and misuses of power.

But, despite their claim to lead transformed lives, to be reverend men and to revere the truth, the bishops and clergy fail in their special responsibility to Society even more than do the electorate. Instead of restraining power by the constant expression of Authority and by continually prophesying against its misuse, the Church of England through Dr. Garbett, its published Reports and innumerable clergy, is constantly perverting the good sense of the electorate by endeavouring to persuade them to give to Power absolute dominion by concentration in World Government. Before long we shall find the Church of England beatifying the smooth face of Power in the persons of Saint Winston and Saint Aneurin.

What truth is there in the assertion that there is nothing but destructive criticism in *Voice*? In the interests of correct action, that is to say, within the limits of their natural competence and responsibility, we have issued for the benefit of the electorate an exemplary Loyalty Pledge to help them in the use of their power only for Christian ends (see *Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 3). And, for the benefit of the clergy an exemplary Declaration of Authority to illustrate how they could guide the electorate to use their power in accordance with the Moral Law and with integrity (see *Voice*, Vol. 1, Nos. 13 and 14). Although many thousands were asked to do so not one clergyman has refuted the accuracy of even one point in this Declaration. If, when the Church and electorate discharge their respective responsibilities to the point where Parliament forces the Executive to make the experts discharge theirs, and these experts need technical advice (and we know they don't) we are both competent and prepared to give that advice. But we are not willing

to confuse issues or responsibilities by giving it either to the clergy or to the electorate.

What truth, we ask again, is there in the charge that we only indulge in destructive criticism?

In the cause for which Christ said that He came,

I am, Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

John Mitchell (*Editor*).

Transformation—1955 Style, Or Is It Indoctrination?

SOCIAL SERVICES.

People of my generation must often feel a little bewildered by the rapid development of the Welfare State. The clergy particularly must have considerable difficulty in readjusting their parochial charities and organisations both to take advantage of help offered by Government and to avoid overlapping with work now done by the State. I often think that were I beginning as a parish priest all over again I should want to study the whole new situation scientifically and adjust my work accordingly.

I know of course that some opportunity of doing this very thing is afforded to the newly ordained in the courses Prebendary Inglis so carefully arranges for them. But that may mean that the young will be better instructed than the old—a dangerous situation, as every incumbent knows.

Happily veterans who do not mean to be outpaced and outclassed by their assistants are to have an opportunity of going to school with the experts. The Bishop of Stepney and the London Council of Social Service have arranged with the University for a course of lectures on the Wednesday afternoons of May and June at 3 p.m. The lectures will be given at the London School of Economics (New Theatre, single tickets 2/6), and a syllabus can be obtained from Miss K. Proud, 7, Bayley Street, Bedford Square, W.C.1. I have seen the list of lectures and it looks very good to me.

Yours very sincerely and affectionately,

✠ Wm. Londin:

—From the Diocesan Letter of the Bishop of London.

The London School of Economics has been described as the "fountain head of Fabian Socialism." In the early nineteen-twenties it was endowed heavily by the International Financier, Sir Ernest Cassel, "to train the bureaucracy for the future Socialist State," as he put it.

The Right of Freedom of Association

We have received the following letter from Capt. Arthur Rogers, O.B.E. The letter has been abbreviated by us for reasons of space. Capt. Rogers is widely known for his work in connection with the Liberty Restoration League.

"In the issue of *Voice* for the 12th of March, on page 3, column 2, it is written

Its (the moral law's) primary demand on social structure is unpenalised freedom of association, because it is precisely the individual person's power to contract out of an association which ensures that its purpose and activities conform to the wishes of those associating.

"In today's issue, on the front page, clergymen are invited to write saying.

We support the rights of the individual person to enjoy unpenalised freedom of association for any purpose sanctioned by the Criminal Law.

"I myself recognise that these positive and embracing words are modified by what appears at the beginning of page 2 of the issue for the 12th February, where a distinction is drawn between freedom of association and freedom in association, but it is doubtful whether that will be known to readers of the two later passages I have quoted.

"I believe that, at the present time, there is little if anything more important than a proper recognition of the nature of the right of association both as regards the natural law and the present criminal law. I imagine that the writer of the passages was thinking about the enforced association caused by the Farewell State, but there are, of course, other forms of association which might be in the minds of readers—for example, the right of association for commercial purposes.

"Men and women have a natural right to associate together, as responsible persons, for the promotion of their own and the common good. When acting in association, they have no right to employ their united strength in attacking the rights of others. If they do so they are abusing the right of association. As the law stands today, there is nothing to prevent people from banding together to raise prices. If, in doing so, they raise prices to a level above that which is just, then, in receiving the price that is above the just level, they are in exactly the same position as burglars or pickpockets. People are also able to band together to prevent their fellows from obtaining their needs altogether, and this may have even worse results than the raising of prices. I could give a hundred examples.

"One almost classic example has been the way in which those members of the international chemical ring concerned in the production of aluminium prevented the production of magnesium. Those are, or were, the two lightest metals, but magnesium is much stronger than aluminium, which is of no use for aircraft. At the beginning of the last war unlimited supplies of magnesium were really available, but they were unobtainable on account of the cartel agreement. That is why we were so short of fighter aircraft, and that, in turn, is why we suffered so much bomb damage. There is no doubt at all about this. The same sort of thing is happening wherever one turns and is a major reason for the centralisation of industry and of the population.

"In former times, this sort of thing could not have happened. It seems that Alfred the Great and his son, Edward the Elder, were the first to take serious notice of the widespread evils consequent upon abuse of the right of association. The Doms of Alfred the Great drew the attention of the Courts of Justice to the danger (In those days, the King and the Witenagemoot did not enact laws in these matters. They issued precepts or monitions to the Courts, and the latter, comprised of the Bishop and the Earloman, enforced justice). Thus, there grew up a corpus of law relating to conspiracy in restraint of trade, engrossing, forestalling and regrating, which became embodied in the common law. After the introduction of legislation by Parliament, and as occasion required, there were a number

of statutes designed to clarify the common law in these respects and to bring it up to date.

"After the Glorious Revolution, a great change took place. In 1774, the statutes were repealed wholesale, to the great satisfaction of the City. The principles of the common law were undermined by a number of new statutes, and in 1844 an important judgment in the Court of Queen's Bench showed that those parts of the common law directed against abuse of the right of association had been finally abrogated.

"Abuse of the right of association having thus been legalised where the criminal law was concerned, our great and good legislators decided to go a step further by abolishing the natural responsibility of those who acted in association. The Companies Act of 1862 introduced Limited Liability, whereby such persons are able to divest themselves of their personal responsibility and become licensed usurers. The Act also authorised the acquisition of land by limited liability companies, thereby defeating the essential purpose of the Statutes of Mortmain.

"As you may perhaps realise, I have devoted a good deal of time in investigating the reasons for the growth of Big Business on the one hand and the increase of proletarianism on the other. I am quite sure that the changes in the law concerning the right of association have played a vital part. I could give almost countless examples. It is possible that, from the Social Credit standpoint, I am uttering a terrible heresy in suggesting that it is not only the question of the issue of money which requires consideration, but I am afraid that I cannot help that. I feel sure that the two evils go hand in hand.

"Although it is not of primary importance, it is significant that there is an all-Jewish secret society which annually celebrates the introduction of limited liability. I am quite sure of that, and I suspect that the society is the B'nai Zion (the Children of Zion) but I am not absolutely certain of the name."

Church Craftsmanship

St. Mary's Vicarage,
Edmonton, N.18.
February 25, 1955.

Dear Mr. Editor,

Dr. Steele kindly sends me a copy of *Voice* every fortnight; and I am in agreement with its outspoken criticisms. As a priest of the Church of England I am only too well aware of the supine attitude of some of our Bishops and dignitaries. I am very much afraid that the real issue is the Establishment of the Church of England. Most of our bishops seem scared stiff by the thought of any threat of disestablishment and probable disendowment. A recent statement by the Primate, Dr. Fisher reveals the state of things. His Grace upheld the New Testament teaching of our Lord that Marriage was permanent and indissoluble; but went on to suggest that second marriages after divorce might be condoned; "I do not find myself able to forbid good people to embark upon a second marriage." Some months ago in *The Times* there was a threat by Sir Alan Herbert and others that, if the Church of England persisted in its rigid views towards divorcees, disestablishment would come. There are other indications that disestablishment is the *bête noir* of the bishops.

I regret that I must differ from you in the current issue of *Voice* page 4 in which you quote from Jessop's *Before the Great Pillage*. It is quite true that in the middle ages local guilds of craftsmen produced wonderful woodwork and metalwork; some of which still remains in our parish churches and cathedrals. It is also true that there was a great pillaging of the treasures of the Church during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI. But Jessop is writing nonsense when he goes on that "art died out in rural England, and King Whitewash and Queen Ugliness ruled supreme for centuries." No reputable ecclesiologist or historian would uphold such a view. There are hundreds of examples all over England of wonderful church woodwork carved locally *after* the Reformation. Take the wonderful range of Jacobean fittings and woodwork in the Croscombe Church, Somerset, or the beautiful woodwork in the choir of Durham Cathedral made in the reign of Charles II. A reference to Howard and Crossley's illustrated volume *English Church Woodwork* will disprove Jessop's statement. Nor was the Post-Reformation period without great metalwork. The recent exhibition here in London of Church plate shows the skill of the 17th and 18th century goldsmith. The magnificent embroidery on the Charles II Copes still in use at Westminster Abbey shows what was being done after the Reformation.

The real trouble began in the second part of the 18th century when the Industrial Revolution got under way and machinery displaced craftsmanship. The appalling brass vases and candlesticks, and pitch pine choir stalls that were introduced into many of our parish churches during the Industrial Revolution all speak of mass production and competitive cut-prices. The magnificent woodwork in the Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, was all carved in the 17th century by London craftsmen. St. Paul's and its interior furnishings are sufficient evidence to refute Dr. Jessop's talk about all craftsmanship coming to a stop in the reign of Edward VI.

Yours truly,

C. E. Pocknee,
Vicar of St. Mary, Edmonton.

The Editor,
Voice.

Harking Back Only In Years

"We have now before us a view of the powers of man at the earliest point to which we can trace written history, and what strikes us most is how very little his nature or abilities have changed in seven thousand years; what he admired we admire; what were his limits in fine handiwork also are ours. We may have a wider outlook, a greater understanding of things; our interests may have extended in this interval; but so far as human nature and tastes go, man is essentially unchanged in this interval. . . . This is the practical outcome of extending our view of man three times as far back as we used to look, and it must teach us how little material civilisation is likely in the future to change the nature, the weaknesses, or the abilities of our ancestors in ages yet to come."—Professor Flinders Petrie, in *The Independent*.

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