

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

VOICE

INTEGRITY
FREEDOM
RESPONSIBILITY

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VOICE

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"Freedom consists in the ability to choose or refuse
one thing at a time."

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The Editorship of Voice

The Rev. H. S. Swabey is editing *Voice* for
the time being.

Does Work Come First?

An Interim Report on Diocesan Bishops' Replies.

Of the forty-three Diocesan Bishops, our thanks are due to twenty-three who have so far kindly replied either to letters asking their guidance on the position of work in the Christian life, or to the invitation to support the Bishop of Oxford's statement on work and leisure.

Eleven of these Bishops, however, have as yet no comment to make, and one is reported as having sent a short non-committal reply. Of the eleven, only one gave no reason at all for not wishing to comment, the second much regretted that he felt unable *at the present time*. Lack of time prevented five from commenting; one said simply, "I have not time," another described himself as "pressed with business"; another does not *at present* "command the leisure"; the fourth said, "I am so busy with Church affairs that I am afraid I cannot give sufficient thought to these wider issues to make my judgment at all worth while." The fifth, although he could not himself spare the time to "undertake personally any research or writing on this subject," recommended a treatise by Professor Alan Richardson and a pamphlet by Miss Dorothy Sayers. Of the remaining four who did not comment, one thanked us and would "have it in mind"; the second stated that he was interested to have his attention drawn to the statement but that it was not his practice to send comments on far-reaching subjects "in answers to enquiries of this sort." Another might be able to comment when he had seen the Bishop of Oxford's complete article, and the last hoped to deal with the matter shortly in his Diocesan notes.

The Bishops who have agreed briefly have done so as follows: three (one of whom had previously asked to be excused from commenting, referring to the "somewhat detailed theological discussion" required) have simply signed the prepared statement: "I agree with, and wish to support

the Bishop of Oxford in what he is quoted above as saying in regard to Christian doctrine." Another "has no objection to his name being added," and a fifth says, "You can say he has my wholehearted agreement." Another Bishop writes: "I agree with all the Bishop of Oxford has written which is much fuller than the quotation which you take from it would indicate. I commend to you the whole article for your consideration." Another, whose agreement had earlier been reported to us, writes, "Work and leisure interplay. Man is not a slave, but has a God-given duty to work; though work has an object and includes a proper use of leisure."

There is one Bishop, who may perhaps write more fully later, who says that it is no good his giving his name as in his opinion the Bishop of Oxford over-simplifies the problem. . . . "a radical change in our social and economic life would be involved."

We are grateful to four Bishops who have sent us considered letters in answer to our appeal for their guidance. These have certain points in common, but unless in the meantime permission is received to publish them in full, which would be far more valuable, we will refer to them briefly separately. It will be understood that what we say here is simply to let the nature of the contents be known and does not in any sense imply that we consider the letters "dealt with" or that we have dismissed these letters from further and fuller consideration.

Referring to them in the order in which they arrived, the writer of the first says he believes *it is of urgent necessity that the Christian doctrine of work should be restated and interpreted in the light of circumstances and conditions of to-day*. He speaks of the unique contribution each man has to make to the life of the world, saying that to-day this may not always be made through the work for which he is paid; he may be enabled to make it through his leisure. "What really is fundamental is man's attitude to his own purpose and destiny, and towards the community in which he is set."

The second writer (who had previously written in reply to a supporter who had sent him a copy of *Voice* that although in sympathy with the general objective "of strengthening the moral fibre of the nation by relieving it of a bureaucratic stranglehold," he was not clear about the practical steps which were being advocated) said it was desirable that drudgery should be reduced; that in earlier forms of our civilisation the creative urge had found expression for most people in "daily work to earn a living," but that now more valuable ways could be developed if there were greater leisure. He referred to some of the problems which could arise as liberating machinery introduced new conditions in industry, and to the difficulty of avoiding a policy of "full-employment," yet thinks that hours could well be reduced and that education for creative leisure should be encouraged.

The third of these Bishops wrote briefly but vigorously that he thought the Bishop of Oxford's statement put the Christian position as far as it could be done in a short paragraph. He pointed out in simple terms the confusion in regarding work as an end rather than a means. The kind of work a man does and the object of it were extremely important from a Christian point of view. To our question "Is it *right* that liberating machinery should cause fear?" he replied (the only Bishop who clearly refers to this) that it was very *natural* (though possibly short-sighted) that simple men might have the fear that liberating machinery might cause unemployment. This is quite true in the sense in which he intended it. It may be that he thought our question arose from an unrealistic state of mind, but we hope he may consider that a state of things in which this use of the word "natural" is so understandable is one which should cause us such disquiet that we should have no thought of taking rest. He recommends Dr. J. H. Oldman's *Work in Modern Society*. (S.C.M. Press.)

Then there is the very thoughtful letter from a Bishop who thinks we have swung from the Puritan position, which tended to suggest that any kind of leisure was a moral failure, to one in which work is regarded as an evil and something of which the less we have the better. He stresses the primary importance of the *end*. He thinks that a *Christian philosophy of work is badly needed* (he too, recommends Oldham's book) and that the fundamental principle for the Christian is his responsibility before God for his job: "work is sanctioned and made religious by an end beyond itself and by the spirit in which it is undertaken." (This is surely holy, Trinitarian teaching, showing the antithesis of the unholy concept of work for work's sake.)

"Worth"?

"If you owned everything of value in the United States—all the land, farms, city property, houses, buildings, schools, hospitals, railroads, steamships, electric power plants, battleships, weapons, planes, everything of value in America—it would be worth roughly 275 billion dollars.

"And 275 billion dollars is the amount of money Uncle Sam borrowed and owes—almost all in the last 20 years. . .

"Where and from whom did Uncle Sam borrow all that money? When you know the answer to that question, you will know why a ride on the subway costs 15 cents instead of a nickel, why a bottle of milk that once cost 10 cents now costs 23 cents, why the house you could buy for 3,000 now costs 10,000 or more. . . . In 1933 there were only 38 million jobs. Now there are over 60 million. . . .

"There is no doubt Keynes turned the attention of collectivist economists to the theory that national prosperity could be induced and sustained by the generous use of public debt. His treatises and books made a profound impression on certain Harvard economists. One of them, Dr. Alvin H. Hansen, . . . was brought to Washington as the economic adviser of the administration . . . off we went on the grandest, most incredible boom in history, built wholly on the great discovery of Lord Keynes, Dr. Hansen, Henry Wallace, and their disciples."—(From "Our National Debt," John T. Flynn, in *The American Mercury*.)

A Christian's Schizophrenia

"The *first* fact which has to be faced is that the State today is immensely more powerful and influential than it has been before, both because the people will to have it so, and because modern techniques of mass education and propaganda enable it to exercise a subtle and all-pervading influence. This constitutes a very real threat to some of the values which humanity has so precariously achieved, amongst them, in particular, the freedom of the individual. Freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of association, these basic freedoms are all under threat by the Social Service State, for the State does not operate in a political vacuum. It operates in a world of power politics and economic uncertainty. As I said earlier, most men prefer security to freedom. Yet we believe that man's highest and noblest achievements have been due to those who preferred freedom to security. It is at this point that it becomes vital that the Church shall see that her own corporate existence is threatened with the threat to those fundamental freedoms. The Church in the Social Service State represents the voluntary principle and is its main guardian. The Church cannot acquiesce in any infringement of these basic freedoms without inviting attack upon herself."

These words are from a lecture called "The Function of the Church in the Social Service State," the middle of three now printed under the title, *Caesar the Beloved Enemy*, and they constitute the Reinecker Lectures delivered at the Virginia Theological Seminary last February by M. A. C. Warren, published by the SCM Press.

Their author, Canon Warren, has been secretary of the Student Christian Movement, and his words in favour of freedom carry some authority. Unfortunately, he had just previously hauled down his flag. He told his audience that the nineteenth century idea of the State which saw the function of government as consisting in the preservation of order, the administration of justice and the encouragement of free enterprise on the part of its subjects by leaving them alone, was almost dead everywhere and *in articulo mortis* in the United States. We elsewhere quote Congressman Gwinn to show that all Americans would not welcome or admit the Canon's thesis, or his saying that such ideas were "now an anachronism."

Mr Warren continues: "In its programme of social services, the Church unwittingly created the conditions which brought into being the Social Service State. I am not one of those who deplore this development. . . . [The Church's] sudden transition from freedom to servitude or to a strictly limited sphere of opportunity is bewildering.

"The Social Service State is the new guise under which the central authority for government accepts a wholly new range of responsibilities. . . . The State determines the pattern of education. The price of freedom will have to be eternal vigilance." The Public Health Act of 1875 marked "the systematic entry of the State into the field of medicine."

"The depression of the twenties and thirties convinced statesmen and economists that . . . Britain must plan her national life and not leave it to unco-ordinated private enterprise. The choice was indeed between a peaceful and a bloody revolution."

Educated men have written nonsense before. But the danger in this nonsense, disseminated presumably over the whole mission field, consists in the assumption that only reactionary old people could hold any other view. The choice before the war, and after the war, was and is between on the one side poverty, slavery, bureaucracy, and on the other freedom based on the realities of abundance. Under cover of the war, the first set of undesirables was stealthily clamped down on a people who were supposed to be resisting them in arms. We may say that the writer's schizophrenia or assent to the two mutually exclusive ideas of Freedom (in the opening quotation) and of Control from Above, is due to his inability to separate the figures of the financial system from the realities of the productive system. Otherwise it could be a denial that Christian freedom is workable. Yet it was the competence of free enterprise alone that gave bureaucracy the goods and services to control, restrict and generally to batten on.

Immediately after the war, he continues, the "Social Service State emerged." The three planks of the new platform were full employment, a national health scheme and extended opportunities for education for all. "There is no essential divergence of view between either of the main political parties on this programme . . . no one doubts the need for planning."

This very broad statement, which reduces thousands of thinking people to nobodies, should not pass unchallenged. For it enunciates a wholly unconstitutional view of power. Any constitutional system, not least the American, recognises that power needs checking and balancing, and that no one organ of power can ever be allowed to become absolute, without corruption and disaster. Further, the *rightness* of what the power intends to do calls for the assent or dissent of Authority. We believe that departure from the Truth is wrong, and the restrictive and inflationary world in which we are now herded bears little relation to physical realities. And to sanction this centralised control and misuse of power, which only perpetuates the unreal system of financiers' figures, can hardly be compatible with Christianity that *sets men free*.

Christian Freedom of course does not set men free from the Law of God, but this very law enunciated in the Gospel secures the validity of the individual—he is not a nobody—while giving him every encouragement against the exalted coteries who had planned just what a Christ ought to be like and just how far religion should go. Planning involves planners, who imply backers; and by what divine right these people can claim to arrange the lives of others of their species demands explanation in the new theology of planning. As for politicians, even of the main political parties, a reference to "that fox" might clarify their category.

Anyone who has travelled from Canada to England will at once notice the exorbitant price of tobacco and of petrol (gasoline). This is due to *tax*. I went to order a new heating unit for the church today, and was told that it might cost £7 more than when the project was first discussed, owing to a *new tax*. When I said that heat was a necessity, not a luxury, the salesman said, 'There is no difference nowadays.' Such is planning, the right to charge what they will pay. The relationship between this consummation and a just price—a doctrine of the Church now and then—would be hard to establish. I wish I could shake the misplaced

faith of the Rev. M. A. C. Warren and of those somebodies, none of whom doubts the need for planning.

The author is at great pains to establish the difference between a theology and a demonology of imperialism, as he calls them. He says, "Only the most naive view of the contemporary scene would allow of the validity of the claim that imperialism is a political experiment that has failed and therefore no longer constitutes a threat . . . the imperial factor, barely disguised, is a more powerful factor in the world of today than it has ever been before."

The short answer would be the contrast between the British idea of a decentralised empire under the Crown and the finance and slave imperialisms that would dismember the former system. He asks, "Can we seriously believe that the uninhibited pursuit of juju and witchcraft would have prepared the African for the middle of the twentieth century? . . . It is clear to anyone who investigates the facts which of the European nations in Africa today is most energetically pursuing the goal of independence for its colonies." He goes so far as to admit that a good deal of the trouble ahead in Africa is due to accustoming the African to welfare state provisions. The African wants, it is said, to stand on his own feet, but needs the prop of a welfare state.

Yet there is no objection to the Briton or the American having his education, his job and his medicine fed to him; presumably the Briton will not be demoralised by what has already demoralised Africans.

I doubt whether the canon really believes that Christ came in order that we might have planning and have it more abundantly. Most of the supermen of the modern world—except the chosen planners I suppose—have come that we might have death more abundantly. The canon would not approve of them. I should have thought that the Church's vocation was to exalt neither death nor the death of liberty; but rather to exalt life and the freedom to live it according to the law of God with which, he would be the first to admit, planning has interfered *elsewhere*. In short, he would appear to yield the lion's share to Caesar.

"Over to You"

"On that morning, Morgenthau wasted no time in discussing the tragic disaster which had plunged the nation into war.

"'What I wanted to tell you people was this,' he began. ' . . . I am giving Henry White the status of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in Charge of Foreign Affairs . . . I want it in one brain and I want it in Henry White's brain. . . He will handle China. . . There has to be one brain cell and not as it is now.'

"On February 22, 1943, White's jurisdiction was expanded. . . 'What we would like to do,' Morgenthau told White, 'if you think you could take it, is just turn the whole thing, lock, stock and barrel, over to you.'"

(From "The Amazing Innocence of Mr. Morgenthau," by Willard Edwards, in *The American Mercury*.)

Yet people today still hold it consistent with sanity to hand over ourselves, our children, our liberties and most of our money to a super-bureaucrat of this or of any other type!

WITH ONE VOICE
WHICH IS TO GUIDE SOCIETY?

CHRISTIAN TRUTH OR A GODLESS MATERIALISM?

There are three alternatives:

1. The Church can completely ignore and abandon any responsibility towards social, political and economic policies, and leave society at the mercy of selfish power-mongering materialistic forces. If they do this an increasing pressure of technology will more and more dominate education, thought and people's habits of life.

2. The Church can continue as at present, a Body with many differing and uncertain voices—another Tower of Babel—at the best a very inefficient brake on catastrophic trends.

3. The Church can be one in the Truth, crying it "from the roof-tops"—an Authoritative guide to the public, not on technical matters, but on what are Christian social policies.

If the bishops and clergy will now speak with *one* voice in agreement with the Bishop of Oxford, they will give a new and true direction to men's thoughts on the proper place of work, how leisure may be constructively and creatively used, what steps are necessary to prepare people for it; and at the same time provide society with a central guiding Truth which all can recognise as something to which economic and financial policies should be subordinated.

As a first step to this end we invite the bishops and clergy to tell us that they agree with what the Bishop of Oxford has said, as quoted below, and to sign their agreement.

What the Bishop of Oxford said:

" . . . The introduction of shorter working hours has given a larger amount of free time to a whole section of our population, though at the same time social changes and the shortage of domestic help have deprived others of some of the leisure they would normally have expected forty or fifty years ago. . . . Provided that enough work is done to sustain the common life of the nation, I do not see any reason to regret these changes, in so far as they have brought more leisure to more people. Work for work's sake is not a Christian maxim. We work in order to live. To reverse this principle would be to suggest that man is a mere producing or organising machine, which must indeed have a rest sometimes, but merely as a biological necessity, in order once again to go to work efficiently. Man's life, on any Christian view is something far greater and more profound than his capacity to produce goods or organise their production. Freedom from unnecessary work is something to be welcomed and even extended as far as possible. But this, like all forms of freedoms, brings its responsibilities. If leisure may be defined as the time we have free from prescribed duties, we have to give some thought to how this time is to be used. Our time is given us on trust; there is a limited amount of it; this is one of the conditions of our life here as God has given it.

" Perhaps the danger to-day is that so many people are thinking of life solely in terms of work and amusement. . . . "

The following bishops have signified their agreement with the Bishop of Oxford:

- The Bishop of Liverpool.
- The Bishop of Chichester.
- The Bishop of Bath and Wells.
- The Bishop of Sheffield.
- The Bishop of Chester.
- The Bishop of Ely.
- The Bishop of Birmingham.
- The Bishop of Carlisle.
- The Bishop of Gloucester.
- The Bishop of Exeter.
- The Bishop of Lewes.
- The Bishop of Buckingham.

A number of other bishops have expressed full agreement with the Bishop of Oxford, but we are not yet in a position to publish their names.

I AGREE WITH, AND WISH TO SUPPORT THE BISHOP OF OXFORD IN WHAT HE IS QUOTED ABOVE AS SAYING IN REGARD TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

SIGNED..... PARISH.....