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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

There are some curious points about the message which *The Times* printed on October 30 from its Vancouver correspondent. Before discussing it, we set it out in full:—

“The British Columbia Social Credit League tightened the reins on the provincial Government during its two-day convention which has just ended. Delegates almost unanimously voted to prohibit any member of the Legislature from holding executive office in the league and decreed that the Government must take instructions on policy direct from league officials. It demanded that the Government consider lifting the control of housing and rents though the Government recently decided to retain control and Mr. Bennett, the Premier, had stated that the matter was not under consideration. Mr. Bennett said he would follow the recommendations ‘with great interest and carry them out when it is feasible and possible and the time is ripe.’ Mr. Solon Low, M.P., national leader of the party, added that Social Credit destinies rested with the rank-and-file, not with the elected representatives.

“Many thousands of electors who voted for Social Credit candidates do not belong to the league, and the removal of their representatives from league offices and the league’s attempt to control Government policy has aroused misgivings. It is feared that the right to self-government is threatened.”

First, in view of Mr. Bennett’s evident distaste for the Convention’s demands, the fears entertained by someone not specified by the correspondent would not appear at first sight to have strong ground. Mr. Bennett gave other signs of sympathy with them besides his lack of enthusiasm for the chains it was suggested he should wear.

Further, six years have elapsed since an attempt was made in Alberta to introduce for discussion at the Social Credit League convention a resolution which, if adopted, would have excluded politicians from holding office in the League. Mr. Manning’s influence was then thought to be responsible for the suppression of the resolution, which did not reach the convention at all. If so, what he then rejected, Mr. Low now advocates. Mr. Bennett is to accompany Mr.

Low to the meeting of the Alberta League’s convention in about a week’s time.

Comment

Much greater liveliness is reflected in recent letters received by ourselves and by correspondents, one of whom asks for comment upon the following:—“With the greatest respect for the courage and ability of [an author], I cannot feel sanguine as to the prospect of his succeeding where the Secretariat and the [a publishing company not K.R.P.] have failed, namely in opening the eyes of the people of this country to what is going on. The latter do not want their eyes opened”

COMMENT: From the conjunction explicitly mentioned, we judge that the attributed failure concerns what may broadly be termed ‘the plot theory.’ “The eyes of the people of this country?”—Ninety-million eyes? Let it pass.

“ . . . In my own small circle I do not think I have persuaded anyone of the truth of the Douglas analysis. I have certainly made more enemies in the past eight years than in all the rest of my life”

COMMENT: By a subterfuge—the introduction of “Notes” to the text of a standard text-book which virtually contradicted the text—Newton’s gravitational theory was introduced to students for degrees at Cambridge nineteen years after he published them. It is doubtful whether any demonstration of the truth of a scientific theory can be effected against psychological resistance unless the demonstrator and his pupil are equally familiar with the data and their position in the proposition under dispute. Subordinate propositions—e.g., in this case, that acceleration in the rate of improvement of process does not result in a corresponding broadening of choice at lower financial cost to the chooser—may sometimes be demonstrated more easily. Always, the ruling condition (the truth of the proposition in each case being assumed) is free exercise of a competent judgment. It should not be impossible to satisfy anyone who wants to know why one is oneself a Social Crediter without alienating his friendship. It not, the question arises: which is more important, persistence in fruitless exposition or retention of a particular friendship.

“ . . . I suppose that it is the Lord’s will that we should be stripped of all our possessions and all our freedom before we turn to Him again; but until and unless there is a divine intervention in our affairs in some such manner as we cannot at present visualise, the world slave state is inevitable—indeed it is not far from being an established fact now.”

COMMENT: There are those who say that freedom is, in the last resort, inalienable from the individual: that, so long as life lasts, one may still *choose*. There is a restriction of freedom to choose—or, in other words, heavier and heavier

penalties are attached by Power to choice. The phrase "Turning to Him," in a Social Credit connection, means (we suggest) progressive *dis*-covery of The Law, in association with continuous resolution to act accordantly. "The Law" covers association for a common objective. Until experiment has exhausted all opportunities for its exercise, it cannot be said that *dis*-covery has failed. Furthermore, should it appear to have failed it is still not in individual competency to say that it has failed, much less to predict that it must do so "inevitably."

"Of what use is it to preach to (a) the converted, and (b) the inconvertible? . . ."

COMMENT: Social Crediters, of all people, should not preach: preaching is not their function. Substituting 'speak to' or 'teach' for 'preach,' and omitting the inconvertible as at least unpromising, the converted obviously offer a hopeful field for the enlistment of *dis*-coverers of The Law not so far *dis*-covered and of associates in applying discoveries to the task in hand. In the present extremity, such activity is of paramount importance, and it has just been recommended to our supporters. Irresponsible rejection of such advice for any but clearly enunciated reason is under grave suspicion of treachery to the cause of Social Credit.

" . . . Why is practical action never advocated—*e.g.*, a national strike of taxpayers? That, I suppose, is 'unconstitutional.' But the social order has been so manipulated that effective obstacles to enslavement are impossible so long as 'constitutional' means are adhered to. It seems to me that what Molotov meant, when he said that Social Credit was the only thing they feared, was action on S.C. lines: 'Words are one thing, action another'—(Stalin). They haven't the least fear of Social Credit so long as we confine our activities to talking and writing about it."

COMMENT: Mr. Molotov's friends would not be so desperately interested in us as at the present moment they are unless they envisaged 'action' in quite different terms from those implied—and indeed used—in this interesting passage. The West-end of London has just been outraged by a display of quite scintillating 'action' by some of our future bureaucrats, educators, artists and technicians. Several 'converts' to Social Credit (now dead) gave the greater part of their leisure to 'starting a national strike against Income Tax payments.' With better results, many people in this country are building their own houses of such materials as they can wrest from the sequestered abundance, and others (or perhaps the same) are evading the pressure to grow food on chemical dumps. The history of the Social Credit movement since the Buxton Address of Major Douglas has been one long series of experiments conducted with genius behind them to apply the inductive method to the problem of effective action. In the religious sphere, an elaborate enquiry by very able Roman Catholics has been conducted, and the results published (and summarised in *The Social Crediter*), concerning the point when *may* and when *must* the individual in society revolt against its rules. So far as we are concerned, the answer is *not* when, by so doing, he imperils the ultimate triumph of an idea which is not *his* idea to confuse or to destroy.

A QUEER TASTE: Swarms of *Coelopa* flies have reached London from the South coast. They simply love the smell of chemicals allied to trichlorethylene, among them dry-cleaners and chloroform.

The Meaning of Money

by BEATRICE C. BEST.

Nothing is more fruitful of misunderstanding and in consequence more useful for purposes of deceit than the separation of a word from its meaning. For then the true purpose of the thing the word was intended to denote is lost sight of, and can be replaced by one both false and illegitimate.

It may be said that no word has suffered more from this act of separation, of dissociation, of disincarnation than the word 'money.' The very nick-names it has acquired might be cited as witness to its loss of any real identity. At any rate since money affects the lives of us all misunderstanding of it must be regarded as of universal and primary importance.[*]

An example of the effect of this act of dissociation and the consequent confusion of thought that results may be found in the following quotation: "The bourgeois' most fantastic creation, the most unreal, the most fantastic and horrible in its unreality—is the kingdom of money. And this Kingdom of money in which all substance disappears, possesses a terrible power, holds a terrible sway over human life, sets up governments and overthrows them, makes wars, enslaves the labouring masses, gives rise to unemployment and destitution, renders the life of people who are successful in this kingdom more and more fantastic. Leon Bloy was right. Money is a mystery, there is something mystic in the power of money."

This farrago of nonsense occurs in Berdyaev's "Slavery and Freedom." Leon Bloy's dictum, approved of by Berdyaev, may be regarded as its inevitable conclusion; for the misuse and misappropriation of a word must lead, when unperceived, to some kind of obscurity and mystification.

The frightful results outlined by Berdyaev may be said to prove his understanding and sense of reality. On the contrary, however, his conception of money, or the "kingdom of money," as the "fantastic creation" of the bourgeois invalidates altogether such a conclusion. For money is, strictly, a device invented by man as the simplest means to facilitate the exchange and distribution of goods. It may be regarded as part of the transport system, enabling goods to be transported from the manufacturer to the wholesaler, from him to the retailer, and from him across the counter to the final consumer. A breakdown in it would cause a block, and therefore a stoppage of transactions as serious or inconvenient as would one in the rail or road system.[†]

Failure to perceive this led Berdyaev to a conclusion that invalidated and nullified all his ideals of freedom and independence and took him straight into the totalitarian camp with its gospel of 'equality' and a 'classless' society, actually of a levelling and a one-class society.[‡] This conclusion is implicit in his statement, following closely his

[*] "The lack of independence is the ruin of everything, everything depends upon money . . ."—Kierkegaard.

[†] Indeed such breakdowns, when not deliberately contrived, occur frequently under the titles of slumps, depressions, recessions due to a disequilibrium in the system as at present constituted; it is, one might say, as though a railway company allowed its rolling stock to run with faulty brakes, and so with consequent and continuous disasters.

[‡] "Levelling is not God's work and every proper man must have moments in which he is tempted to weep over that work of desolation."—Kierkegaard.

diatribe against money, which declared that "... personal property is property that belongs to labour and is authentic property."

Berdyayev's unequivocal statement implies that money, earned by labour, is the only kind that can authenticate property; so property acquired by unearned money must be regarded as inauthentic and may, in a sense, be said to be stolen. The purpose and meaning of money is thus changed from a simple means of distributing property, into a means of distributing property solely by the earnings of labour, and thus acquires a kind of moral content and character.

Such a misunderstanding constitutes nothing less than an apotheosis of the wage system, the exaltation of the 'worker'—the person with the paid job—the employee, and gives firm and solid support to the policy of "full employment" pursued by all governments today by fair means or foul. Thus Berdyayev's misconception of the meaning and purpose of money invalidates not only his belief in freedom and independence, but also the value he placed on personality, and on the status of man regarded primarily as that of a person.

This, it may be contended, assumes that Berdyayev confined the idea of labour to the paid worker in the industrial field, and that without doubt Berdyayev would consider a person who spent his time learning to play a musical instrument, or to paint, or in writing a book, as being a labourer in the cultural field. But if so we are confronted by a dilemma from which there seems to be no escape. For either the cultural worker must be in possession of unauthentic property—otherwise an unearned income—while he learns to play, paint or write; or he must seek work in the industrial field to enable him to live while, with what leisure remains, he can pursue his cultural activities; or he must look to the patronage of the State. This last, however, spells the end of all true culture as André Gide discovered when, attracted by the idea of communism, he visited the U.S.S.R. and returned, disillusioned.

It should be plain, therefore, that in Berdyayev's estimate the value of man, cultural or industrial, depends upon his ability or opportunity to lay claim to 'authentic property,' otherwise to earn a living. This is to regard man primarily and essentially as a functionary and not as a person; personality appearing then more in the nature of an adjunct or ornament.

In an age when scientific discoveries and inventions have reduced and are reducing the need to rely upon the individual worker in industry and industrial development, the policy of Full Employment is not merely stupid; it is evil, and diabolical in its results. For the Government alone can create the jobs necessary to implement such a policy, since only it can have recourse to methods beyond the scope and power of individuals to employ. These, to name a few, are extravagant and unnecessary industrial development, the creation of a swollen bureaucracy, rearmament and, in the last resort, war. But this whole disastrous economy can be traced to man's misconception of the meaning of money, his obstinate conviction that its proper purpose and function is to distribute payment for work and thus render the goods claimed by that work 'authentic.' Hence the presumed need for Full Employment, and hence the devil to pay.

Actually, all property is 'authentic,' Berdyayev's distinguishing adjective is meaningless. The fact that it is increasingly due to *past* efforts and achievements does not

destroy its authenticity; but it does reveal it as being more and more in the nature of an inheritance, which cannot in justice and in fact be distributed by payments due to current labour, but must, to an increasing extent, be distributed by means of a dividend.

This fact Douglas discovered at the end of the first world war, and showed why, if we were to avoid disaster, the distribution of a dividend must accompany and progressively displace the wage. He also showed how the correction of an error in our supposedly sound accountancy rules would make this distribution simple and easy to administer. Subsequent events—depressions, destruction of real wealth and property and restrictive measures against its production, and in the end a second world war proved Douglas to be right. But when he made his discovery he came up against an idea so fixed and so formidable and a power so malignant and so relentless, that the truth he revealed was ridiculed and implacably opposed, and the sneer against 'money for nothing,' and the question 'where is the money to come from?' still operate!

How was it Berdyayev came to see this "Kingdom of Money" as "the bourgeois' most fantastic creation;" of all Berdyayev's statements perhaps the most absurd? For the bourgeois, though ready to rally round if told to fight for freedom, desire nothing better than to be left to follow their occupations, chosen or not, in peace. They do not enjoy the depressions that ruin their businesses, nor the inflations nor the penalising taxation that reduce their incomes. The sight of unemployment and destitution, if and when they consider it, merely worries them and gives them no pleasure. Hence, though they submit to the rules of this kingdom with the brains of a donkey and the patience of an ox, they cannot be said to have created it.

This Kingdom of Money, this "terrible power of the purse" as someone has called it, belongs to those who have gained control of the purse and alone hold the purse strings, drawing them tight, or opening them, according to their own will and purpose, with a sinister disregard of the consequences to humanity at large. But even they have not created this Kingdom, they have filched it, with an ease that amazes, but would have been impossible apart from the blindness and credulity of those from whom they stole it. Therefore, deceit being essential to the maintenance of their Kingdom, it is of the utmost importance that this blindness and credulity should be maintained and misunderstanding of the meaning and purpose of money fostered; any attempt at enlightenment is fatal and arouses instant opposition. As the holders of the purse strings can control every avenue of publicity this is easy.

Berdyayev's definition of money as a 'mystery,' having mystic power, must have been a gift, as behind this façade of 'mystery' the powers bent on world dictatorship can make and mature their plans, the most effective of these and the simplest being the plan or policy of 'Full Employment.' For in this they are supported not alone by the several governments—their paid agents—but alike by the man in the street, the scientist, the economist, and the philosopher in his study. There is none to say them nay. Almost, with directions here and there, they can sit back and let things take their course. For as science discloses more ways of dispensing with man's labour—and talk of the use of atomic energy in industry points in that direction—more jobs must be found for the displaced labourers and hence

increasing power and control put into the hands of the government.[*]

Plans for defensive warfare are, of course, a great help to the policy of Full Employment, but do not mean, necessarily, that a third world war is intended, since today it might have the most unpleasant consequences for the promoters themselves. But the threat is useful as inducing a spirit of fear and submission. There remain other fish to fry however, other fields for the employment of paid labour; the development of 'backward countries,' for instance, of which one hears more and more. Nevertheless that cannot last for ever, and one may be excused for entertaining the fantastic notion that plans for rocketing to the moon may be designed eventually to take its place! For the policy of Full Employment is a long term policy of which one cannot see the end.

The light thrown by Douglas upon this situation, in which he showed that the complete reversal of this policy and the recognition of the fact that the dividend must increasingly replace the wage was necessary and urgent if civilisation was to be saved, came as a revelation, fatal to the plans of those bent on the complete subjection of man. For it disclosed the way to man's freedom and illuminated the direction he would have to take. By so doing it also disclosed the real nature and meaning of money.

Berdyaev declared money to be "a symbol of impersonality"; but, if things are to be understood as symbols then, in the light of Douglas, money may be regarded as a symbol of man's personal sovereignty, bestowing upon him the freedom to choose or refuse, and thus giving him sovereign power over his own life. In real terms, however, money remains, as already stated, the simplest and most ingenious method devised by man to facilitate the distribution of goods. The forms of its instruments are various—coins, paper, figures—but its meaning and purpose are one. It is essentially neutral and cannot be said to have a moral bias in favour of the 'worker' or the 'paid job.' It can be used for the purpose of production and consumption and can therefore be claimed as a wage or dividend or both. It is enabling and beneficial in its effects, and is subject to no decrees beyond the law of facts and the rulings of sound accountancy.[†]

It has been said that governments fear only one thing more than their financial masters and that is the voice of the people. But the voice of the people, where it has not been skillfully directed to reflect and endorse the intention of these masters, is dumb; or else it is heard as a confusion of tongues with no real focus or intention, and in which truth is obscured or drowned.

It would be useless to *request* governments or parties

[*] Another pointer in the direction of a cradle-to-the-grave scheme of compulsory employment is the one to which *The Social Crediter* of October 24 drew attention in its comments on the Report of the National Advisory Committee on the Employment of Older Men and Women. In *The Yorkshire Observer* of October 28 it is stated that members of the committee "expressed the opinion that if pensioners could draw wages without deduction they would be glad to go on working . . ." a tempting bait which could lead eventually to making the receipt of a pension contingent on the keeping or taking of a job!

[†] With regard to this last, *The Social Crediter* of October 31 points out that Douglas appealed to "the fact that the name 'money' is the name of a mathematical concept (ratio) and is not the name of a physical concept (substance)."

to save us, for they know too well which side their bread is buttered, and besides you do not call upon Beelzebub to cast out Satan.

Therefore the people must *demand* their inheritance, not by clamour or rebellion which merely play into the hands of the powers that be; but by opposing the cold war of a lie—which, so long as it is not exposed gives every appearance of winning—by the spoken word of Truth which is invincible.

Social Credit Groups

In 1951, Major Douglas's opinion was sought concerning the advisability of reviving the group system of organisation and of resuscitating moribund groups still existing. His reply was clear: "Do as you like; but if you do that you will have the same troubles as we have already experienced all over again." A further pointer (1950) is contained in the following: "They think it is very important to keep all converts together. The exact reverse is the case." It had already been indicated (1949) that "to test the continuing usefulness of groups, a report will in future be expected by the Director of Organisation from each affiliated group at least annually" (S.C.S. Statement). This ensued upon the suggestion of Major Douglas that the terms of affiliation should be stated more realistically than had previously been the case. The Director of Organisation, Mr. Hewlett Edwards, therefore issued the well-known form "To all Social Credit Groups and Associations, Home and Overseas" still current. This defines an Association as "three or more Social Crediters" who (1) signify their desire to act in accordance with the advice of the Secretariat, and (2) supply their names and addresses through the mediation of a Deputy who signs the form.

A three-line paragraph records agreement of all concerned "not to discuss with others, without authorisation, the details of special advice received from the Secretariat."—*i.e.* advice additional to that contained in *The Social Crediter*.

The clause envisages cases where confidential information, on one or both sides, may be involved. The substitution of a Deputy for a Chairman established the principle of mediation: the Deputy was the servant, not the master of the group, and that purely for purposes of communication. In all other respects he was one among equals, whom he could not exploit to transfer the meaning of pressure politics to a function when it is intended to be applied to a policy.

The arrangement has worked well in one or two instances abroad. At home, its underlying principles have been applied insensibly, by a process of slow change of emphasis, in one outstanding case, and there significant results may ultimately be obtained. Wherever a like evolution has *not* occurred for whatever apparent reason, those concerned are enjoined to restrain any temptation to attach undue importance to the difficulties they experience. The days of the professional or *quasi*-professional agitator, if Social Credit ever knew such days, are definitely over, and the battle passes to a superior function. To sustain that, all available energy is necessary. It should therefore be conserved.