

THE SOCIAL CREDITER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

Reporting publicly to our masters last week, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that he was continuously engaged in "Watching the needles on the dials." But what dials? The dial of his petrol gauge? His bakery's thermostat? The sun-dial on his lawn? Production has increased. What production? Production of things you can wear? eat? use as you wish? Production of means to produce means to produce means to produce useless things? If Mr. Butler is watching the indicator of this sort of measuring instrument, it is a bad look-out for everybody, for, if you take a glance at the social credit dial, you will see the reading has fallen to an all-time low, and that the efficiency of the destructive planning, work-making, servitude-enforcing enterprise (private or public) is mounting steadily and threatens the very globe with extinction.

We know that even the most commonplace of scientific terms are mere metaphors, but there should be a limit set to the sort of picture-writing indulged in by those who pretend to be disseminating the facts of economic life, whether economists or Ministers of State. The fact that the bankers themselves invented this jargon of blizzards, dials, expansions, frosts, doldrums, etc., and uses it without check or restraint is no reason why those whose practical interest is directly opposite in the money-lending game should fall in with a practice so fraught with deceit and personal disaster.

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Not, of course, *The Times*, but newspapers less securely "in the right hands" are beginning to tear the veil from the fraud of our national accounting. Witness the *Sunday Times*, which this week held up to ridicule the fact that "without attracting remark," the Chancellor could say: "A modern Budget . . . is designed to release or control spending in this or that part of our complex body economic, so that we can expand without the evils of inflation or deflation."

In other words, the national accounts are camouflage.

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It is said that there is not the slightest prospect of thirty or forty years of *cold* war.

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Having just seen an official letter from a British University to "Mr. X. Y. Z., Esquire," we concur in the

suggestion (made at public expense) by the Director of Public Relations, Ministry of Labour, that there may be "some jobs being done by young people more suitable for your older employees." In the form of a question, the proposal is one of many on the back page of a pamphlet introduced by a "Message" from Sir Walter Monckton, the Minister. It is based on the first Report of the National Advisory Committee on the Employment of Older Men and Women set up by him.

Considerable if unostentatious ingenuity has been displayed in the public press to explain that the Committee's recommendations are *not* part of a cradle-to-the-grave scheme of compulsory employment—but what else is it? "What can be done about the ever-increasing number of older persons in our population?" In 1911, one in fifteen was aged 65 (if male) or 60 (if female). That one became two in 1951 and will become (optimistic prophecy) three in 1977. The 2½ millions of these ages in 1911 were 6½ millions in 1951. "It may seem strange," says the pamphleteer, "that we should be trying to make it possible for people to postpone retirement at a time when longer holidays and shorter working hours are bringing more leisure to most of us." It is strange, and stranger still it seems if you consider that the phenomenon is a sign of increased wealth—increased wealth which must somehow be dissipated and hidden from view. Had it not been for the various Socialisms—the Labour Party's Socialism, the Liberal Party's Socialism and the "Conservative" Party's Socialism—organised bureaucratic destruction and waste of wealth and energy—this superabundance would have been greater still, and in addition genuine savings (not "post-war" savings) would have accumulated to give leisure and freedom to those who had earned it; *i.e.*, in nearly every case those over 60 or 65, as the case may be, whose further employment is even now considered desirable: "the test for engagement should be capacity and not age" (*vide* the pamphleteer).

What, we should like to ask, would happen if the competent members of the population now over 60 were in enjoyment of the average security of fifty years ago?

They might, of course, just amuse themselves without doing much harm to anybody else. Or they might "have time" to consider some of those small matters affecting themselves and their descendants which an active life had shown to be worth while though not, perhaps, immediately profitable in a money sense. It does not seem to matter much which of these possibilities we favour. It rather looks as though the Ministries and the Powers behind the Ministries were sufficiently sure that the existence of a leisured class of any age would be highly dangerous not to take any risks. "Older people often excel in accuracy, judgment and patient attention to detail."

"The Committee want the Report to be discussed by employers, workers and the public generally. They want to know the reaction to their suggestions and recommendations. The practical response and criticisms that may be made, will help the Committee in their future deliberations, and may give some new directions to their work."

That gives the readers of this review a chance.

Meanwhile, have you noticed the "under-twenties" commentaries on the "B."B.C.? Is this 'child labour' back again, or merely an exploit of Moscow-in-our-midst?

(continued on page 2.)

Review

The Church of England Today by Cyril Garbett, Archbishop of York. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 3/6 net.)

Our concern with this work of an Archbishop of the Church of England "near the end of his active ministry" must be political, though political in the broadest (which is to say the truest) sense. With some of Dr. Garbett's interests we have little to do. If we have any fundamental disagreement with him it is easily stated: the 39 Articles of the Church of England, "drawn up in relation to contemporary controversies were deliberately ambiguous on many matters." If there are such 'deliberate ambiguities' in what Dr. Garbett has written here, we shall not hunt them out; but we condemn them every one. In matters of life and death (the subject-matters of Religion), you don't prevaricate, and deliberate ambiguity is prevarication. Ambiguity has its uses in satire, among legitimate activities; and obviously in economics; but not in Religion, which is directed towards Truth. The issue of Anglicanism *versus* Romanism is outside our province entirely, dominated as we are by the conviction that if there is a Christian Church at all there can possibly be only one Christian Church; and the discovery of it would be a great service to mankind in general. A correlative conviction is that there is a Christian Religion (but only one), and that Social Credit is the only technique available in modern circumstances for preserving it and liberating it from the historical entanglements it has suffered, sometimes with patience but never, we hope, with tolerance. A Church Militant on Earth whose means of militancy are given or withheld at the discretion of a Rothschild, or of any other dispenser of credit not his own; whose buildings, pews, vestments, books and 'livings' can be secured only by permission of "the world" is not a tolerable proposition. "... the financial anxieties of the great mass of the clergy and the imperative duty of removing from them their crushing burdens have forced upon the Church the necessity of appealing again and again for money. Everywhere the call for more money has had to be made..." We do not suggest that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York should have the right to print the notes they require for their religious purposes; what we suggest is that the general shortage of purchasing power in the community is a matter of more than sentimental concern to them, and that the 'social justice' of current prices can be assessed only if price-construction is understood more than superficially.

The phrase "the retreat from Religion" stands, for us, for "the retreat from effective means for binding-back to reality the procedures of our society." They are not so bound-back. When we say our condition is not realistic, we are saying that our condition is irreligious. Dr. Garbett sets out to enumerate the causes. He says they are three in number. The least important is "the disturbance, loss and general interruption caused by the two wars." He says that if there had been no wars the decline in Church-going would have come, though not so quickly. The wars accelerated a movement which had already started. There were deeper causes.

Lyell, Darwin, the Higher Criticism, discoveries in Comparative Religion, Anthropology, Astronomy and the natural sciences led to a wide-spread belief that "religion had been proved false." Rightly, we believe, Dr. Garbett thinks the part played by intellectual argument in 'the retreat from religion' has been exaggerated. "... the arguments of the

intelligentsia rarely reach the man in the street, and unfortunately the arguments of the intelligent are almost equally slow in doing so."

Dr. Garbett adopts the opinion of Professor Casserly ("The Retreat from Christianity") in saying that Christianity plays no part in the life of modern man "because it plays no part in his inherited culture pattern. The task which thus confronts the Church in the twentieth century is not the relatively light one of rebutting anti-Christian arguments, but the much more difficult one of reversing prevailing social trends." To this end, the Archbishop thinks himself justified in making what he describes as a Call to the Nation. Doubtless he does this with complete sincerity; but is he quite so sure that he is not himself "rending his garment rather than his heart" (and still more his head) in borrowing his diagnosis of 'prevailing social trends' second-hand from the hear-say of Socialist politicians (Professor Tawney) and fellow-travellers (*The Times Literary Supplement*)? Repentance is a highly individual matter, and it may be quite useless for "the Church" to be vicariously penitent for the crimes of 'the ruthless English' and the "predatory capitalists" of the past and impenitent for participation in the greater crime against the much-abused English of false witness and illegal conviction. If an excessive expansion of industry has pushed the Englishman out of sight of the Church, perhaps it has also pushed the Church out of sight of economic society, so that while, out of the goodness of their changed hearts, ecclesiastics can say some very amiable things, they can no longer frame their denunciatory indictments correctly or direct them to the right quarter. Maybe "the last word in human affairs" *does* "always belong to the spiritual power that transcends both the order of nature and the order of culture," and maybe that does give human life its ultimate meaning; but a charge of 'economic egotism' against workers pressing their claims for increased wages "without apparently considering the hardships they may bring upon their fellow citizens" is only the last word in ineptitude. Pontius Pilate possessed a more realistic moral sense. He didn't merely suggest improvements in the phraseology of the false indictment. He washed his hands of it.

The struggle of the underprivileged for a just participation in the fruits of enhanced skill and power in the modern community is abortive. But it is not *itself* the "malignant force thwarting and destroying all men's attempts to reach a higher level," and anyone who lends his advocacy to the misrepresentation will have something to repent in good time. "Only as a penitent Church have we the right to call the nation to repentance." Very well. Mere repetition of the current propaganda of 'private enterprise' does not constitute repentance. Dr. Garbett says the individual's loss of freedom "is not the result of deliberate policy, for men of all political parties are united in their hatred of the degradation of the individual under Nazi or Soviet rule" (*petitio principii*). What *is* "the malignant force," for it is not, whatever it is, merely an abstraction?

FROM WEEK TO WEEK— (continued from page 1.)

Now if only the Nobel Prize electors had awarded Sir Winston Churchill the Peace Prize, he might have retired from politics.

"Mr. Rudyard Kipling never thought much of me, whereas Mr. Bernard Shaw has often expressed himself in most flattering terms" (Churchill)—so they both knew their man.