

# THE SOCIAL CREDITER

## FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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### From *Hilaire Belloc*

#### No Alienated Man

by Frederick Wilhelmsen (Sheed and Ward, London, 1954).

(Ch. I. No Alienated Man: Natural Humanism).

. . . The first alienation of man from himself was healed in an ancient world by the Incarnation. Aristotelian Man, like St. Thomas the Doubter, could put his fingers in the side of his Creator; and Platonic Man, like the mystic John, found the Word, but it was the Word made Flesh. Revelation restored to man the unity that was himself. *Anima naturaliter Christiana*. This unity was achieved as a reality both personal and corporate for a period of time in that small segment of the globe known as Western Europe.

Human unity was gradually lost, and a new man came into being. This man has his life neither in the rooted things of the world nor in a heaven beyond. Nor is the Christian Man reconciled to himself. This new man has neither outward and above nor outward and round about him. He looks within, and attempts to find his salvation by a penetration and purgation of the hidden depths of his own personality. This is Modern Man, man twice alienated from himself, and he has not yet found his soul. "*Je est un autre*," said Rimbaud. "I IS an Other." And yet the Other which he is, is shrouded in darkness, and it is in this crucifixion of himself that Modern Man has come to see, without knowing that he see, the hidden irony of the Cross.

. . . A whole body of literature has grown up within the last seventy-five years devoted to exploring and understanding the estrangement of contemporary civilised man. That this body of art, chiefly found in the novel, should deal with the expatriate seems extremely significant of the crisis facing man today. One need only recall the world of Henry James to find an apt symbol for the modern dilemma. This New Englander left his American home to find himself in a Europe that existed chiefly in his imagination. Some of his best work is an attempt at penetrating into the restlessness and homelessness of the Western soul. James is full of trans-Atlantic crossings. . . .

. . . If Belloc is almost completely incomprehensible to the post-war intellectual (even the post-war Catholic intellectual), the lack of understanding can be traced to the amazing personal integration of the man, and to the lack of a comparable integration today on the part of those most representative of the modern spirit. . . . Above all else, Belloc is an unalienated man: a representative of a rarely achieved ideal, that of the integrated Christian humanist.

The integrated man achieves himself by making his own these dimensions of human personality and perfection which when isolated from one another seem mutually incom-

patible. Integration is a steady struggle. It is not usually characterised by any sudden and dramatic affirmation or negation; it does not lend itself easily to artistic depiction. Integration grows from within, and if it flowers in grace and the supernatural order, it has its roots in the hidden depths of natural man. . . .

. . . One can describe the Bellocian world no better than by saying that it is the total opposite of the world of Brunner, Barth, Kafka, and Kierkegaard. . . . Grizzlebeard:

. . . The contemporary Intellectual of the Western World has come out of the same past as Belloc, but he rejects that past as he rejects its religion. . . .

. . . Christopher Dawson stated once that the modern soul is at bottom anti-ontological. It hates being. Hilaire Belloc has said that the modern soul hates proportion and limitation. They are both affirming the same truth, because the condition of all being save God is limitation. . . .

. . . Belloc's prophecies were successes in the only way prophecy can succeed. There is more than irony in looking back thirty years to that superman of the Wells school of thought: that uninhibited, traditionless blank who was to be the term of the march of liberal progress; that dull abstraction "the man of the future," who was to inherit the earth. Who is he today, and where is he? He is the industrial slave of an impoverished and spiritually bankrupt Europe—Heidegger's faceless "one" who neither owns nor can be said even to be.

. . . The future can never be predicted with certitude because causes operating at the present moment in time are contingent. They can be replaced, diminished, checked, or rechanneled. Nonetheless, to have an insight into these causes is to possess an instrument for predicting a possible or even probable future. No historical theory grounded in a mere *Weltschaung*, nor any history deduced from a philosophical system such as the Hegelian and Marxist, is of any practical utility in understanding what might happen.

. . . Writing in 1924, before the New Deal was even a dream, Belloc calmly announced that a great increase of Presidential Power would be effected in the near future (*The Contrast*). . . .

. . . It is largely due to the Bellocian polemic that the old-fashioned Whig history, although taught as a matter of course almost everywhere, is no longer the accepted dogma of serious historical scholarship. . . .

. . . World historians frequently fail to grasp even the story of their own nations. They are within nothing at all, but are self-estranged cultural strangers looking at the world from an academic outside; hence they fail to grasp the spirit of anything that has ever moved men to common action. These historians tend to succumb to the facile temptation

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of writing history synthetically; they perpetually find meetings between an East and West, where there is only conflict; they fall into the trap of treating history cyclically; they build vast structures in the air that reveal nothing to a man searching for his own antecedents. A Christian comes away from Belloc knowing his own soul.

The *Weltschaung* historian must fail in the end because no "world view" has ever acted to cause anything historically. History is caused within cultures, and the clash of civilisations occurs when two cultures in act meet on the field of battle, be it economic, military, or spiritual.

The final objection that the "world historian" has against Belloc is that he takes sides, and the final answer to that objection is simply this: to refuse to take sides is to refuse to enter history. A historian who does not see that rather brutal fact will never see more than the surface of things. . . .

. . . The Bellocian concept of history, as set forth (*Europe and the Faith*) . . . might well be called Anselmian: historical understanding follows Faith. . . . The historian who views the European story as a series of "phenomena" external to himself must either fall into the Aristotelian conception of history as mere chronology, or he must superimpose on this series some conceptual framework to render it intelligible. He simply cannot enter into its spirit and see with the eyes of the men he would know, or feel with them as they erupt into common action. He is alienated from them. . . .

. . . Belloc keenly grasped the tendencies at work within the Western intelligentsia, which insisted on fencing itself off from the world by weaving round itself fabric upon fabric of theory. He had nothing but contempt for the scholar who lives in a world of images, unrelated to existing things. The typical intellectual inevitably commences to think in terms of, let us say, maps coloured this way and that; he judges peoples and ideas according to the standards of textbooks and fashionable opinions; he sees the human person in the light of statistical tables (what Belloc could have done with the American School of Education mentality!); he measures reality by rulers on pads of paper. This sort of thing, typified and caused by idealism, breeds jingoism, pacifism, internationalism, and other brands of ideologies unrelated to reality, and conformed to nothing but systems of phantasy and imagery.

Belloc's historical attack against German *Historismus* must be coupled with his social satire. . . .

. . . Belloc's whole historical practice cannot be understood if it is viewed simply as a reaction against Whiggery. It is more pointedly a reaction against Historicism. . . . (Ch. II. "Grizzlebeard: History from Within.")

(Ch. III. Christendom: "*Esto Perpetua*.")

. . . There is no consciously articulated "philosophy of Christendom" in Belloc. . . . Christendom was an historical fact in his eyes; you do not theorize about the possibility of that which is; . . . Belloc's failure to elaborate a *philosophical* defence, as well as an historical defence, of the theory of Christendom has left the whole position in jeopardy. Today many highly reputable minds are questioning the validity of the very *idea* of a Christendom. . . .

. . . In the abstract there is no question but that the Faith is culturally neutral. But historically it is simply false to say that the Church has always been, and could always be, neutral to any given civilisation to which she has come, or will come, preaching salvation. The Church could never have sanctified Carthage with its human sacrifice to Moloch; the Church could never have concerned itself in those border cultures that produced the Mystery Cults and flitted with the pantheisms of the East. Belloc fingered a profound historical truth when he declared that as Revelation incarnates itself the better in a man in proportion to that man's natural perfection, so too Revelation has always embodied itself in any culture in relation to the degree of corporate perfection achieved by that society.

If certain cultures as well as certain men seem better disposed to receive Faith than others, it is still true that Faith comes to them as a pure gift. Catholicism did not have to fix itself within the boundaries of the Græco-Roman world. But the historical fact is that it did so. . . .

. . . Grace not only crowns nature but causes nature to flower in its fulness. . . .

The old European Christendom that Belloc loved so well may never come back; its rich diversity, its personal individualism and patchwork of small property, its shrines, its liberating chaos—these things can have no place in a world committed to the principle of technological and collectivist barbarism. The European way of life died, not because it had to, but because there were not enough men left with the will to keep it alive.

Belloc had the will, but his prayer, "You shall not die" seems a trifle remote in this fifth decade of the century. It seems more and more probable that the Christian community of the future will resemble Communist cells lost in a world given over to the barbarism of faceless men. The Faith may, at some future date, arise out of the new catacombs and will be faced with sanctifying a society that is neither humanist nor humane. But should a Christian Order commence to arise out of a mechanical and industrial desert, it will work again to the erection of a genuinely human order. And should the men of the new age wish to know that freer and broader vision of their half-forgotten fathers, they could do no better than to turn to the work of this last of the rooted men.

If the old Christendom is dead, then a new Christendom will be built in time. Christendom may be considered an "outmoded concept" by some thinkers who consider the

modern world to have been a necessity. These intellectuals fail to see that Christendom is rather a fundamental urge, deep within man, grounded in an ontological need for the complete integration of man's spiritual and temporal destinies. . . . Today probably all would agree that Christendom is largely a state of mind; but with Belloc the writer of these pages asserts that Christendom *must become a place*, because man is a material as well as a spiritual creature, existing in space, ending in time. . . .

In one sense, a Christian is always an exile. In another sense, he is an island, and it is in *this* that is to be found the heart of the need for Christendom—a *corporate* theocentric humanism—a *place* so penetrated by the Faith that a man who was there could say that "Jesus Christ was in the morning skies." . . .

. . . A change in fashion partially accounts for Belloc's decline in popularity, but there is something deeper than mere fashion. If Belloc is not understood today, it may be because his own brand of Christian integration has become almost impossible of achievement at this late date in the disintegration of the Western World. Most of us are not rooted men; we do not live in a traditional culture, and to pretend to do so would be to fall into an archaic lie. . . .

### Wavell on Power

" . . . and Doyne Bell remembered an evening when Wavell had dined with us at the Saville Club, and startled our table with his comment on some excesses of the time. There had been talk of authority's growing taste for authority, of the concentration of power in political hands and the politicians' excessive demand for power. It was not, in essence, a political debate, but rather a moral discussion: it was no political doctrine that was deplored, but only political excess. And Wavell, leaning forward, heavy-shouldered, listened in silence until, by infection, silence grew general. And then he spoke. Kipling, he said, had noticed such a tendency in our times, and deplored it. He had, indeed, propounded a drastic remedy for it. Did we remember *Macdonough's Song*? he asked. And in a very gentle voice, with a gentle smile on his desert-graven cheeks, he recited:

'Whatsoever, for any cause,  
Seeketh to take or give  
Power above or beyond the Laws,  
Suffer it not to live!  
Holy State or Holy King—  
Or Holy People's Will—  
Have no truck with the senseless thing.  
Order the guns and kill!'

"Silence returned—but only for a moment—to our table. It was, indeed, more than an ordinary silence, more than mere lack of words. The little currents of thought and apprehension that usually clatter in worn runlets through the mind were stilled as if by a sudden frost; and in the hush of a winter morning we looked, and blinked, at the ice-glare on that cold conclusion. It was Wavell himself who broke the silence and found an easier topic."—From *A Year Of Space* by Eric Linklater.

### From Week to Week

#### THE CANON:

"And, incontrovertibly, we experience something of the sanctifying power of Beauty when we subject ourselves to the impression which great art or natural loveliness makes upon us. Holiness signifies wholeness. And great Beauty has a unifying effect upon the personality. During the time that we are under its sway, the ordinary limitations of our nature are expanded, and we become free of another world. Have we sufficiently examined and pondered the meaning of the psychological reaction which any of the Ultimate Values induce in us? In the normal day-to-day activities of life we suffer from tension, the sway of contending appetites, the restlessness of unsatisfied hearts, and all the thwarting of human finitude; but when under the dominance of Beauty we become unified and feel released. Pressure relaxes. 'A bolt is shot back somewhere in the breast.' Then a conviction of 'rightness' possesses us. I cannot describe that feeling; but you have known it. It brings with it an assurance of harmony—not only with yourself but with the universe: the sense that things are (as we say) 'all right.' The dreadful tyranny of solitude is ended for the time being. We are emancipated from the temporal and transitory. The sense of sequence is abolished (as in the moment to which Faust cried 'stay!') and we have a fleeting notion of Eternity: a 'Now-forever' baffling speech and explanation. At least momentarily we experience 'salvation.' Self is transcended and swallowed up in the larger whole."—Bishop Lumsden Barkway, in *Theology*.

On the morning of Appotomax, when an officer who opposed surrender said, "Oh General, what will history say?" General Lee replied, "That is not the question, Colonel. The question is, is it right to surrender this army? If it is right, then I will take all the responsibility."

A clergyman has written expressing the opinion that "things have now gone very far indeed, and the threat of the H-Bomb has two psychological effects (1) a still greater centripetal force making people wish to be even more closely organised for safety's sake, (2) A possible feeling that anything would be better than the threat of complete extinction."

There isn't any doubt in the minds of many of us that society is in the grip of demonic psychological forces, against which mere argument is unavailing. Whether General Lee was right or wrong in his decision, his mind was at least exercised by the right question. His mind was concerned not with expediences nor with other peoples' opinions, but with Ultimate Values.

If there is anything in this world which can defeat the force of demonic psychology it is the psychological reaction to Ultimate Values: God is our judge. In practical terms how can the Church be induced to test Bishop Barkway's question seriously in society?

"No-one would wish to deny or under-estimate the critical urgency of the present time. Never was there an age in which it was more imperatively necessary to implement the Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the

Truth. . .”—Report of the Social and Industrial Council of the Church Assembly on Moral Rearmament.

“Broadly speaking it is true that every heresy is a distortion or exaggeration of a neglected truth. If Adventist sects abound, it is because the Church had neglected the truths in the traditional Christian eschatology.”—*Ibid.*

“Christianity has always understood that evil is resident not only in individual men, but also in the ‘powers of this world,’ in ‘thrones, dominions and principalities’—in institutions, groups, social structures. Without the profounder analysis of the nature of the structure, institution, system itself, it is even possible that palliation may do more harm than good.”—*Ibid.*

“It is for these reasons that Christian social thinking does believe in wise patching up of social systems, except in those cases where Anti-Christ himself is in power, or where any social change is made impossible by tyranny. Christian social thinking does approve of compromise, negotiation, and concession on almost all issues.”—*Ibid.*

“Christianity sets the challenge of perfection. . . We should therefore be distrustful of perfectionist thinking. . .” —*Ibid.*

PERFECTION: *vide* St. John XVII, 23.

If the Church is distrustful of perfectionist thinking, it is distrustful of Christianity, and it is therefore not surprising that the world has lost faith in Christianity and turns away from the Church; the Church has ceased to be sanctified, and lost its psychological influence. And with its loss of sanctity it ceases to be the Mystical Body of Christ and becomes just part of the world.

The adjective ‘absolute’ comes from the latin ‘absolutus,’ meaning ‘loosened or freed from’; and absolutio is a freeing from. It is only when we reach the Absolute that we are absolved of our cares and sins.

If the Church can again be brought to be true to its Founder, standing fast and fearlessly in defence of absolutes in our society (not merely the half-truth of Moral Rearmament), the Demon in our midst will meet its match and vast numbers of people experience with Robert Bridges,

The highest of all these occult influences  
the quality of appearances that thro’ the sense  
wakeneth spiritual emotion in the mind of man.

Can Christianity again flame in the Church?

“Modern man has for some time been puzzled by the dominance of the body collective and the loss of his liberty, and notes with dismay that he is being overrun by the ‘masses’ without being able to explain the advent of the procedure. In fact, it is not happening at all suddenly, but represents only the last stage of an historical process which began with the Italian Renaissance, and is being rapidly pushed by the crisis to its end. . . . Western man has passed once more under the compulsive dominance of the collective body, from which Christianity freed him when it placed him as an individual before God.”—Hanz Zehrer in *Man in this World.*

“We are about to witness a gigantic struggle between the gospel of love and the commandment of Jesus which it contains on the one hand, and on the other the process of de-sublimation and neuroticisation which tends to draw mankind down into selfishness and destruction, making individual members of a crowd, and destroying the spirit of love.”—Oscar Pfister in *Christianity and Fear.*

Sectional pressure politics involving policies which are not related to an integral policy for the whole of society and based on only a fragment of truth have a disintegrating effect on society. A dis-integrated society is a necessary stage to a synthetic society.

The fragmentation of the Social Credit Movement has for long been an aim of the Money Power. One thing is certain, and that is that the Social Credit Secretariat was brought into being to give practical effect to Douglas’s intention that, not only should the Social Credit Movement have a policy which integrates means and ends, but that it should also have a single policy, and a single direction of strategy. All the ‘fragment’ groups which have broken away from or are separate from the Secretariat in policy or strategy are disloyal to the Douglas idea. The existence and activity of some of the ‘fragment’ groups is based solely on misunderstanding, some on the vanity and conceit of people who want to be ‘generals’ in their own right, and some are consciously mischievous.

The constitution of the Secretariat was designed to secure both during and after Douglas’s lifetime the integrity of direction of Social Credit policy.

The discussion which goes on about Douglas’s advice to ‘take one trench at a time’ misses the point, which is: who is to decide which trench? The word ‘trench’ in a military context has tactical implications. But it is being interpreted by some of the ‘fragment’ groups in a strategical sense.

At the present time there is a new drive behind our enemies’ fragmentation efforts. We hope that those who are loyal to Douglas, or whose desire is to be loyal to Douglas, will take note of the foregoing remarks. And, incidentally, we advise them to be particularly on their guard against those who shout loudest and most eloquently about International Finance and the Jews. A battle has never been won by shouting.

Having received from several readers conclusive evidence that Mr. R. A. Butler is a member of the Church of England, we apologise to Roman Catholics for the error in our last issue in saying that he was one of them.

Although not asked by Mr. H. Winckles to say so, we noticed too late for correction that his name had been omitted from the foot of his article in our last issue, *The Battle Through The Centuries.* J.M.