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VOICE

INTEGRITY
FREEDOM
RESPONSIBILITY

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VOICE

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Materialism Run Mad

Sir,—Suddenly almost every newspaper and publication is devoting a great deal of space to a development which has become known as 'Automation,' so much so that one might suppose that it had only come into being since last Easter. It is in fact a development of many years standing, and so far as its material potentialities are concerned, in the provision of all necessities and a generous measure of physical comforts and luxuries for the whole population of industrialised countries with abundant leisure for all who want it, it does not add *in principle* to what was possible in the years following the the first World War. At that time the inherent possibilities of mass production were distorted and destroyed. And now it appears certain that a determined attempt is to be made to distort and to misuse the new dynamic so that the wonderful possibilities, inherent in the position before, and doubly so now, for the release of human beings for cultural and spiritual development, are sabotaged.

Most ominously the refrain runs through nearly all the publicity that the Full Employment policy is not jeopardised and that jobs in the service of the Industrial machine will be found for everyone. Speaking to a brief which appeared to have been largely provided by P.E.P. (Political and Economic Planning) the President of the Institution of Production Engineers, Sir Walter Puckey, said at the Conference on the Automatic Factory that he wanted "to dispel an erroneous impression that the main purpose of Automation is to displace labour." That large part of the popular press which is known to be controlled directly by the Planners, and which day after day has devoted pages to the new development has sought to impress the same mistaken idea on its readers. It was the journal *Planning* which in 1938 said "only in war or under threat of war will the British Government engage in wide-spread planning," by which they meant socialism under duress. That Plan did enormous harm, but has recently had a severe check. But the Planners are still active and dominant. Faced by a new dynamic situation, which they hoped to forestall, these same Planners

are now intent on planning the public out of leisure for self-development and the education that is needed for it.

There are a number of important questions raised once more, and with increased urgency, by these ingenious modern methods of production, but the basic one is: who is to decide to what end they are to be put? Is it the business of the Production Engineers or Planners to do this? Or is this the rightful, because natural, function of the general public? This question was once answered in the words, "He who is greatest among you let him be your servant." A good servant is competent to decide how to do a thing, but is told what to do, and it would seem a duty of Christians to remind engineers and planners of this fact.

A vast amount of ink and paper has to be spent by the propagandists of interests which are determined to keep the public tied to the productive machine in a hitherto successful attempt to persuade them that leisure is neither a desirable nor possible result of modern methods of production, and Sir Walter Puckey states that "by 1984 I do not anticipate a great reduction in the working week" and "workers are consumers too, and must earn to consume. A series of Automatic Factories with men sitting idle at home is, therefore, fantastic." There is no basis in fact for any of these statements, although it is not intended to argue them here. But what is behind all this urge to keep people tied to the Industrial machine?

There are two answers:

One is that men freed from dependence on the Industrial machine by the necessity to *earn* their living are free men. What use has a Planner for a free man, or a free man for a Planner?

The other is that if Industrial expansion and capital outlay are stopped and we are content to rely on what the present plant can turn out in the form of consumers' goods and services, the fault in the present accountancy of the financial system is immediately exposed for everyone but simpletons to see. That fault is that there is nothing like enough purchasing power in the hands of consumers to buy what is produced. The exposure of this fault would immediately stimulate an irresistible demand that the fault should be corrected so that the deficiency of purchasing power was remedied; and that would finally and for all time deprive the Financial Monopoly of its power.

Here in these two answers is the reason why in this country there has been a sudden release of information concerning Automation, with its self-evident capacity to save labour on an enormous scale, *accompanied* by the extraordinary phenomenon of a campaign to persuade us that it is neither desirable nor necessary to substitute a Leisure policy for a Full Employment policy. The whole thing is inspired. Unless saner elements in the community can assert themselves effectively, the materialist obsessions which we have up to now experienced will take a new plunge to mad-

ness. Sir Walter Puckey urged his hearers to devote their attention to "the development and production of novelty." One paper has called for "directed efforts to make products systematically obsolete by bringing out better ones on a pre-set schedule."

Automation can be a very great blessing, in the *release* of people from the Production Machine for their own individual development in their own self-chosen pursuits and employments. In this way there can be a great renaissance of individual craftsmanship and the development of cultural pursuits which foster our innate aesthetic sense, however obscured it may now be by narrow educational methods, by the deplorable effects of the work for work's sake policy and by the obsession with 'making money.'

In the past the churches have continually decried the materialism of our times. But their official support has always been for materialist economics; and from materialist economics springs materialism. Unless effectively checked the Planners are now plainly determined that we are in for an orgy of materialism. Publicity campaigns will be intensified to create appetites for novelties of every description, and the minds of the rising generation will be narrowly trained to Technology.

Culture is a manifestation of the spirit, and springs from creative activity. And for this we need not only educational methods which serve it and release from 'full employment,' but most certainly Leisure economics. We have a great material heritage, which can become a cultural inheritance, but only if the machine is made to pay a dividend as well as a wage. Who will speak up? What are the churches going to do about it?

Yours faithfully,

JOHN MITCHELL,

Deputy Chairman for the U.K.
The Social Credit Secretariat.

New Boondoggle

IFC is a new set of initials in Washington. It stands for International Finance Corporation, which the Eisenhower Administration has asked Congress to approve. The IFC is to be set up as a completely controlled World Bank subsidiary. *De facto*, IFC will be merely a new department of the World Bank, making equity-type investments in private and semi-private businesses in underdeveloped countries. IFC will be equipped at the start with 100,000,000 dollars, some 35,000,000 dollars of it contributed by the U.S. And IFC will be empowered to sell its debentures in Wall Street and elsewhere. . . . When the original IFC proposal was made by the World Bank and endorsed by the UN, the Truman Administration gave it a cold shoulder because it meant putting Government in businesses abroad. Today, by contrast, the Eisenhower Administration, widely regarded as "business-minded, is backing IFC." However, an important business body, the National Foreign Trade Council, strongly opposes IFC. The NFTC calls the IFC "wrong in principle"; says that industrial development should be left to private enterprise using private funds. . . . NFTC sees no need for "yet another international financial institution." . . . —*Human Events*.

Materialism and 'The Make Work' Policy

" . . . it may be advisable to glance at some of the proximate causes operating to reduce the return for effort; and to realise the origin of the specific instances, and it must be borne in mind that the *existing economic system distributes goods and services through the same agency which induces goods and services, i.e., payment for work in progress*. In other words, if production stops, distribution stops, and as a consequence a clear incentive exists to produce useless or superfluous articles in order that useful commodities already existing may be distributed.

"The perfectly simple reason is the explanation of the increasing necessity of what has come to be called economic sabotage; the colossal waste of effort which goes on in every walk of life quite unobserved by the majority of people because they are so familiar with it; a waste which yet so over-taxed the ingenuity of society to extend it that the climax of war only occurred in the moment when a culminating exhibition of organised sabotage was necessary to preserve the system from spontaneous combustion.

"The simplest form of this process is that of 'making work'; the elaboration of every action in life so as to involve the maximum quantity and the minimum efficiency in human effort. The much-maligned household plumber who evolves an elaborate organisation and etiquette probably requiring two assistants and half a day, in order to 'wipe' a damaged water pipe, which could, by methods with which he is perfectly familiar, be satisfactorily repaired by a boy in one third the time; the machinist insisting on a lengthy apprenticeship to an unskilled process of industry, such as the operation of an automatic machine tool, are simple instances of this. A little higher up the scale of complexity comes the manufacturer who produces a new model of his particular speciality, with the object, express or subconscious, of rendering the old model obsolete before it is worn out. We then begin to touch the immense region of artificial demand created by advertisement; a demand, in many cases, as purely hypnotic in origin as the request of the mesmerised subject for a draught of kerosine. All these are instances which could be multiplied and elaborated to any extent necessary to prove the point.

"In another class comes the stupendous waste of effort involved in the intricacies of finance and book-keeping; much of which, although necessary to the competitive system, is quite useless in increasing the amenities of life; there is the burden of armaments and the waste of materials and equipment involved in them even in peace time; the ever-growing bureaucracy largely concerned in elaborating safeguards for a radically defective social system; and finally, but by no means least, the cumulative export of the product of labour, largely and increasingly paid for by the raw material which forms the vehicle for the export of further labour.

"All these and many other forms of avoidable waste take their rise in the obsession of wealth defined in terms of money; an obsession which even the steady fall in the purchasing power of the unit of currency seems powerless to dispel; an obsession which obscures the whole object and meaning of scientific progress and places the worker and the honest man in a permanently disadvantageous position in comparison with the financier and the rogue. It is probable

that the device of money is a necessary device in our present civilisation; but the establishment of a stable ratio between an available quantity of wealth and the money available to purchase it, is a problem which demands a very early solution, and must clearly result in the abolition of any form of incentive to the capitalisation of any form of waste.

"The tawdry 'ornament,' the jerry-built house, the slow and uncomfortable train service, the unwholesome sweetmeat, are the direct and logical consummation of an economic system which rewards variety, quite irrespective of quality, and proclaims in the clearest possible manner that it is much better to 'do' your neighbour than to do sound and lasting work.

"The capitalistic wage system based on the current methods of finance, so far from offering maximum distribution, is decreasingly capable of meeting any requirement of society fully. Its very existence depends on a constant increase in the variety of the product, the stimulation of desire, and in keeping the article desired in short supply"—C. H. Douglas in *Economic Democracy*, published in 1920.

Here and There

The French language fortnightly, *Vers Demain*, the organ of The Institute For Political Action in Quebec Province, has during the past year increased its circulation from 50,000 to 100,000 in the Province. *Vers Demain* expresses the same view in regard to economics that we do. The Institute does not seek power for itself, but exists to provide guidance for others on the correct use of power in accordance with the Christian philosophy.

We greatly regret to learn that the founder and Director of The Institute For Political Action is seriously ill, and we warmly wish him a speedy recovery.

A member of a Vancouver group which supports this paper has ordered five thousand copies of *Voice* Nos. 1 and 2, Vol. 2.

"The following 'Open Letter' by the Rev. Norman Hill, Anglican Vicar of St. Mark's, Fitzroy, has caused a sensation in the Victoria Election campaign. The letter is being distributed by the League of Rights, and it is estimated that approximately 200,000 copies will have been distributed before the elections take place."—*The New Times*, Melbourne. We quote passages from the letter below:

Dear Fellow Victorians,

This letter is a special appeal to Victorian electors who call themselves Christians, irrespective of denomination, to vote according to principles on May 28, and not to be swayed by evil propaganda, much of it stemming from Communists, and some, unfortunately, from sectarian bigots who indirectly help the Communists and betray their Christian heritage by claiming that the Roman Catholics are at least as great a menace as the Communists.

As an Anglican clergyman I am, of course, not in agreement with the Roman Catholic Church on many matters. And there are also many differences of opinion between my own Church and other non-Roman Catholic Churches.

But the freedom which enables all Christians to practise their own religion, and to differ from one another, is now challenged by an international conspiracy which seeks to destroy the basis of a genuinely free society—the Christian religion. Christians of all denominations must therefore unite against their common enemy and not allow themselves to be divided.

Because of successful Communist strategy in Asia, Australia is facing the greatest crisis in its history. The Victorian elections are directly related to this crisis and any Christian who allows his vote to be influenced by sectarian propaganda is helping to betray his country, his children and his Church.

As Christ said, freedom can only be derived from Truth. I believe that it is the duty of the Christian Churches to concern themselves with the Truth as it affects politics as well as other aspects of material affairs. The claim that politics should be divorced from religion suits the Communists and other totalitarians. *They are fundamentally anti-Christian because they reject the idea that material power should be subject to the Moral Law.*

While it is not the function of the Christian Churches to concern themselves with party politics as such, I do state that it is the responsibility of the Churches to ensure that our social, political and economic organisations are governed by principles which are in accordance with God's laws. *Communism is completely contrary to God's laws and all genuine Christians must therefore reject those Evatt Labour candidates, whom the Communists are supporting.*

I am well aware that Dr. Evatt and those associating with him are now loudly claiming that they are opposed to Communism. *But Christ said that "the tree is known by his fruit"; also that "they say and do not." We can only judge Dr. Evatt and his associates by their ACTS, not by their WORDS.* We do not retain our freedom by merely stating that we believe in freedom. We must take appropriate action as individuals to oppose all policies which threaten our freedom. The policies supported by Dr. Evatt are those of the Communists. This truth cannot be disputed.

I therefore feel it my Christian duty to recommend that all Christians, irrespective of which Church they support, should act with integrity and responsibility on May 28 by withholding their power as voters from all Evatt Labour candidates. They should place all these and Communist candidates last on their ballot papers. It is outside my province to suggest which candidates electors should support, but I do recommend that responsible citizens should question all anti-Evatt candidates and vote only for those whom they feel will support policies in accord with Christian principles.

Catholic Interpretations

The Editor, *Voice*.

Sir,

In answer to Mr. T. V. Holme's question, "Is the voice of Maynooth and of its organ *Christus Rex* the voice of the Church or is it a travesty of that voice?" Although "travesty" may not be quite the right word, the answer to the former alternative is decidedly in the negative. There is but one authoritative Voice, that of the Pope. To the latter one cannot give a direct 'yes' or 'no.' With insuffi-

cient "intelligence" in the military sense it could be, and in this case is, a perversion of papal teaching. Writers on these subjects often overlook the "detestable economic imperialism" mentioned in *Quadragesimo Anno* and its implications and the unfortunate result is a sell-out to Caesar. Such statements are rarely corrected, partly from the general apathy of this slothful age and partly because those most competent to do so are overburdened with administrative pressure. In addition the Catholic press in general suffers from the same ailments and does not bear high ecclesiastical authority.

A higher status is accorded to books which bear an "imprimatur" and "nihil obstat." In such works were an error discovered, one could take it up first with the author and then go further if still dissatisfied. Such action would be worth while remembering that it requires considerable training and equipment in the moral, economic and social field. *Christus Rex* and speeches from the clergy are of too ephemeral a nature to waste much time on.

One has to remember from one's own experience how difficult it is to shed the false values and philosophy of our age. How many acclaiming the inspiration of C. H. Douglas's writing have fallen by the wayside and how few survivors can rise above a mere repetition of his words,* being unable to adapt the light of his factual dry-as-dust analysis to day-to-day events. The clergy are afflicted in the same way, generally speaking being years behind authentic papal direction.

The great Cardinal Newman confessed "pride ruled my will." Everyone must be prepared to be as little children and "go back to school" as Douglas said, and so far as I can see, not only to-day but to the end of our days.

Yours faithfully,

W. P. Langmaid.

Leisure Economics or Work Economics?

The Planners' popular newspaper, *The Daily Mirror*, has for a full week carried a double page feature article on what it terms "the robot revolution," and summarises its conclusion in monster headlines: "Political Planning Or Chaos?" It quotes the Socialist M.P., Mr. T. C. Pannell:

"Now is the time to prepare, If automation comes in with the speed which is prophesied, the dock strike, the rail strike and the seamen's strike will be as chicken feed compared with the trouble at that time."

The *Daily Mirror* asserts that "if we go wrong, mass unemployment and the dole queue will be back again."

The answer is quite simple, and we are happy to tell *The Daily Mirror* and others what it is. It is that if an automatic factory produces the same amount of goods with the labour of five men where fifty were employed before, then the forty-five men who are displaced from work should have the goods and services, which they previously enjoyed, *without the work*. In other words the automatic factory should pay a dividend in lieu of a wage. The millions of workers who are thus released from paid employment, and who are alleged to be so keen to help the backward countries will then have paid leisure, which, if they so choose, they can use to go to these countries and help the backward peoples to develop their own factories.

*How many try?—Ed.

The Church and Power

"The problem of power is the greatest problem confronting our age. The Church has the responsibility of guiding to the solution of that problem, as of every spiritual problem. To discharge this responsibility we must get back to fundamentals in our thinking, and in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity proclaim in terms which men today understand the implications of the biblical affirmation that power belongeth unto God."—From a sermon preached in London by the Rev. Dr. C. A. Simpson, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford.

"... When so many people had lost the inspiration for work, the Church had to help them find the inspiration for their leisure hours.

"The Church, in the years to come, has got to restate its Gospel of Redemption in terms of human society in its small and larger groups. What we ought to be doing in these coming months is to frame an ideology for a country such as ours. Nazism had its ideology, Marxian Communism has its ideology, democracy has, on the whole, no ideology. People are not really sure what it is about.

"And unless the Church can express its faith in an ideology which embraces every aspect and facet of our social and national life, we are in danger of seeing the State becoming more secularised than hitherto and the Church being relegated more into a stagnant background than hitherto."—The Bishop of Stepney at the Winchester Diocesan Conference, June, 1955.

"There is, however, one aspect of mass production that I deplore; the debasement of taste in our homes by badly designed, badly fitting furniture and fittings. The horrid rotundities, the coarse carving (routed grooves), the vulgar veneers, the treacly treatment of surface, the flashy lighting fittings, the over-stuffed three-piece suites now, owing largely to T.V.; on the way to limbo, do not, it is true, arise out of the system of manufacture, automatic or otherwise, which is only an accessory after the fact: the act being purchase by people of uninformed taste; aided and abetted by manufacturers who sell hire-purchase terms rather than goods."—Mr. Frank G. Woollard, at the Production Engineers' Conference.

A Time for Action

The letter published on the front page of this issue has been sent to newspapers and periodicals throughout the country. We should be grateful if our readers would let us know if they notice publication in their local paper.

Now is the time when new ideas are forming; now is the time when our readers can help people form the right ideas. Put your shoulder to the wheel. Make the effort. Write to your local papers. Try your hand at writing short articles for periodicals. Ask your local clergy to give a lead on the Christian aspect of Leisure versus Work economics. Is he for materialism? Call discussion groups, now, while ideas are fresh.