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The Christian Approach to Politics

by JOHN MITCHELL

Many, perhaps most, good men have an aversion from politics. This is not surprising having regard to the general character of politicians and the reputation their profession has acquired. But, as the actions of politicians and their creatures, the bureaucrats, now directly or indirectly control or interfere with so much of our lives and thoughts, if good men are going to leave politics to the not-so-good, it is self-evident that matters will become worse. As Burke said: "For evil to triumph, it is enough that good men should do nothing."

If we look at the political world we find men called Christians taking part in all manner of movements and parties, supporting every kind of ideology; and the only possible conclusion from this state of affairs is that there is no recognised Christian approach to politics. It might be said that Christians "don't know their own business."

Is there one, single, correct approach to politics?—not a multiplicity—and if so, what is it?

One of our greatest thinkers said: "Christianity is either something inherent in the very warp and woof of the Universe, or it is just another set of interesting opinions . . ." In other words Christianity is an expression of Law in the universe. If we ask how we can find infallibly the Christian approach to politics, we are asking what is the Law we have to look for and obey.

It is not a bad thing to study success as well as failure. In one great realm of the universe, mankind has achieved something which seems to approach mastery, namely in the physical sciences. The physical and the metaphysical are parts of one world, created by God. They are both governed by law. How have the scientists succeeded in discovering law in the physical world? It is worth enquiring, because science is the only sphere of human activity where the technician and the public automatically apply the Christian maxim "a good tree does not bring forth bad fruit" and *vice versa*.

The scientific approach is an attitude of mind, which is said to have started from the advice of Francis Bacon, who said in effect that what is required is a just (that is to say a realistic) relationship between the mind and things. The hallmarks of the scientific approach are objectivity, humility and an unwillingness to accept anything as fact until it is proved. The results have been spectacular. What the scientists have not done is to go to a problem with a pre-conceived theory and see if it fits the facts (or try and make the facts fit the theory).

It has been noted by many people that, emanating from somewhere, is "an unmistakable force endeavouring to restrict and concentrate us on one plane, the materialistic-industrialistic plane." There is also a no-less-significant idea being pressed in many quarters that the Christian religion

is only truly concerned with a transcendental approach to God and personal human behaviour. An example of this is contained in the speech of a politician in a London Borough recently. He said: "The New Testament is the revelation of God's personal relationship with man. It was not intended to be a revelation of God's will regarding the organisation of society, which had already been made to the Jews."

If these two ideas are allowed to go unchallenged, the most important field of human relations—the question of the relation of the individual to the group—is left as the concern of neither the scientist nor the Christian, but is a free field in which an evil power can operate unchecked. It is the field covered by legal formulae, finance and economics. These three spheres of human activity are notable for the irreverent way in which facts are ignored, in which ideology and theory run rife. One of the former high priests of Finance, Lord Stamp, gave personal witness to the accuracy of his own words when he said "You can dodge facts; but you cannot dodge the consequences of them." He was killed by a bomb in Kensington.

Law, finance, and economics are as inexorably bound to the Law inherent in the Universe, as is physical matter or personal human behaviour. It is a fact, which anyone can check, that error in human actions proceeds from a remote connection between cause and effect. From which it is easy to see that the first cardinal principle which should form any social structure is to bring the two, cause and effect, as close together as possible. That which prevents a man from jumping off the top of the Eiffel Tower is a certain knowledge of the consequences. In this simple act there are present and operating almost in an instant the man's power of choice, his personal responsibility for his actions and the *natural* consequences that will ensue from them. These matters are instinctively if not intellectually clear to the would-be-jumper. By their collectivist philosophy and perverted outlook, what the modern politician, financier, lawyer and economist are doing is to take a group of men to the top of an "Eiffel Tower," clouding their vision so that they cannot see clearly the consequences of jumping, taking a majority vote on whether to jump or not to jump and then making them all to jump when the majority decides to do so. The natural consequences of jumping off the political "Eiffel Tower" are usually delayed and blamed on the wrong cause. If that fails the politician responsible takes a back seat for five years while his opposite number repeats the sorry business in another way.

Now, it is clear that in any society group decisions have to be taken, and it should be clear that in a Christian society, that is, a society which recognises God's will in natural law as it affects society, it is essential: (1) that the individual should have power of choice in the group's decision, and he hasn't got it if he hasn't got power to contract

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From Week to Week

The Japanese fishermen taken to hospital with 'atomic' burns said: "Ye little fishes"—and no "Ye Gods" about it!

The law-makers are considering Acts to prohibit little fishes from swimming out of their restricted areas. (Pity those beastly little elvers are so indoctrinated with Communism.)

Devotees of Full Employment will congratulate Mr. Weak-an-takit, who has got his old job back again on radio and screen and in the pulpit. And yet another major objective of the war has been gained:—

"This morning [last Monday morning] members of six of the City's most venerable firms meet at Rothchild's, in New Court, E.C.4, to decide the price of gold. It will be their first meeting since the London gold market was suspended during the war.

"One firm—Mocatta and Goldsmid—was founded 10 years before the Bank of England came into existence in 1694. The senior partner, descended from the founder, is Mr. Edgar Mocatta.

"The old procedure, which is to be revived, is characterised by its complete informality. It takes place in a room which has recently been hung with some fine old German paintings.

"These are of the 18-century Princes of the Palatinate who gave the Rothschild family its first chance.

"One of the brokers who will be at the opening to-day tells me that the resuscitation of the London gold market is unlikely to have sensational results. It will probably remain quiet, at least as long as exchange control lasts." (The *Daily Telegraph*.)

The *All England Law Reports* for March 18 contains a report of an interesting case heard before Lord Goddard, C.J., in the Court of Appeal on February 22.

The appellant was the secretary of a company, received cheques signed by two directors which it was his duty to fill up with the payees' names, counter-sign, and pay to the company's creditors. He used a number of cheques to pay his own creditors, by making a cheque payable to the creditor's bankers and handing it to the creditor. He was convicted of "the larceny of moneys (the proceeds of the cheques), the property of the company, as a clerk or servant." The appeal was allowed as to this part of it. Here Lord Goddard:—

"For some reason or another the indictment charged the appellant with stealing all this money. That could only have been done, I think, because throughout this case there was a misapprehension, under which everyone seems to have been, with regard to the more or less elementary principles of the law of banking and the law of larceny. There was no larceny here because in larceny there must be an asportation [a carrying-away]. I think the fallacy that led to this charge of stealing was this. It was thought that, because the master's account became debited, that was enough to make a theft, but, although we talk about people having money in a bank, the only person who has money in a bank is the banker. If I pay money into my bank, either by paying cash or a cheque, that money at once becomes the money of the banker. The relationship between banker and customer is that of debtor and creditor. He does not hold my money as an agent or trustee . . ." The "clerk or servant" did not steal *the company's* money.

"Eric, or Little by Little." May we hope that judges will soon see a further point?

The objection of Social Crediters to this aspect of banking procedure is, of course, not the claim to ownership of the means of exchange; but to monopoly of such ownership, since what is in all cases exchanged should not pass to the ownership of those who have merely the means of exchanging it.

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Berlin: The Republican Yalta?

by FREDA UTLEY*

Trying to find out, in Berlin, what was really going on at the Berlin Conference was like reading *Pravda* and *Isvestia* with a view to ascertaining the facts behind the verbiage and propaganda.

Outwardly, the Western Foreign Ministers were acting in complete harmony and all of them made some very fine speeches. Molotov, for his part, gave back as good as he got. To judge from appearances, Dulles was leading a united Western front, and neither America, Britain nor France seemed any more disposed to make dirty deals with the Communists than Molotov was to do business with the "capitalist imperialists." In a word, the actors on the stage clearly enunciated their incompatible positions and aims while the audience was left wondering what was going on behind the scenes.

In the corridors of the International Press Centre on Potsdammerstrasse, where some 1,200 foreign correspondents kicked their heels waiting for the official handouts, at the Maison Francais on Kurfurstendam, where journalists congregated in the evenings, and in other bars, restaurants, and hotel lobbies, rumours and "inside stories" of disagreement in the Western camp and of secret back-stage deals with Moscow made much conversation.

An American friend of mine who is sympathetic to the British viewpoint, told me—when I arrived in Berlin—that he knew from both reliable British and close-to-Eisenhower American sources, that before the conference, under cover of atomic talks, Dulles and the Soviet Ambassador had worked out a compromise in Washington. According to his sources, the U.S. would accept "the fact" that we have no alternative short of war but to recognise the Red Chinese Government. Soviet Russia for her part was to recognise that she had no alternative but to give up East Germany, and permit the reunification of Germany, provided that it was agreed that a united and free Germany was not obligated to join the European Defence Community.

This "inside information" was rendered credible by several facts. There was, in particular, Ambassador Arthur H. Dean's statement on the eve of the Berlin Conference (reported in the *New York Times* on January 23) that we ought to take "a new look" at Red China and "be prepared to admit them to the family of nations" in about two years. And, last December, one of the leading German Social Democratic members of the Bonn Parliament, Fritz Erler, had told me that a "swap" of this nature was the hope and aim of the German Socialists.

In this connection, it was not without significance that German official circles in Bonn complained about High Commissioner Conant speaking mainly, if not only, to the Socialists. On January 25 the Socialist paper, *Hannoversche Presse*, had an article saying that the U.S. was now cooler toward Adenauer, and that Washington had shown an "obvious intention" to strengthen United States' ties with his opposition, the German socialists.

At the beginning of the conference there were two positive factors: (1) Dulles' rejection of Soviet Russia's pro-

posal for a Five Power conference; and (2) Molotov's demonstration that the Kremlin had no intention of relinquishing its hold over East Germany for any price. These seemed to me to discredit the prophesy of Leon Dennen, reporting for the Scripps-Howard newspapers, to the effect that the Berlin Conference would prove to be the Yalta of the Republican Party. But, when I left Berlin, at the end of the second week of the Conference, my pro-British American friend, who had close contact with White House advisers, assured me the deal had not fallen through, but was only postponed. I did not believe him.

In the final outcome both of us seem to have been proved wrong. Soviet Russia has got her *pro quo* without giving us any *quid*. Molotov had made it clear all along that the Kremlin's main objective in coming to Berlin was agreement on a "Five Power" conference with Red China. This was finally agreed upon. But we failed to win any agreement on either Germany or Austria, which was supposed to be the purpose of the Berlin Conference.

Mr. Dulles' brave little attempt to represent the Berlin Conference as a victory for our side, because we still formally refuse to "recognise" the Red China Government, cannot change the facts. Our agreement to join Soviet Russia in inviting the Red Government to Geneva must encourage the U.N. to consider Red China's admission. There is little doubt that Senator George of Georgia was right in saying that the Soviets got just what they wanted in Berlin.

One can only wonder what caused Dulles to give way, after his adamant refusal at the beginning even to consider a Five Power Conference with Red China. Perhaps the explanation is to be found in the fact that, as he told a press conference on Sunday, February 7, he had had a two-hour talk (presumably by phone) "with the United States" the day before. Correspondents who were present gathered that this had led to a softening of his attitude on China, for Dulles also said, on that Sunday, he would go along with Bidault on the Far East. And Bidault as early as the Thursday of the first week of the conference had thrown overboard the original Western position that only an agreement on Germany could convince us of Soviet sincerity, by declaring an agreement on Indo-China sufficient. Who in Washington pulled the strings on Dulles?

One had the impression in Berlin that Dulles was another Woodrow Wilson. Undoubtedly, he was sincere in his view of Communist Russia and Communist China as representatives of "evil," but he was no match for his "realistic" French and British colleagues. Moreover, he displayed a lamentable ignorance of the nature and aims of the Soviet Government, as when he stated, in his February 24 radio and television speech, that "we should remain ever watchful for a sign from the Soviet rulers that they realise that freedom is not something to be frightened by, but something to be accepted."

As if the rulers of Russia could be brought to "accept" their own liquidation by giving the Russian people freedom of choice between liberty and slavery!

I do not profess to know what makes Mr. Dulles tick. But, to judge from the type of "advisers" he had in Berlin, one surmises that he was overruled or over-persuaded by Mr. C. D. Jackson, "Chip" Bohlen, Dr. Conant and the other New Deal "Republicans" who surrounded him.

*Reproduced by kind permission from *Human Events* (Washington, D.C.) of March 10. The writer has just returned to America from Berlin.

If there was any "victor" at Berlin besides Russia, it was France. Having performed wonderfully at Berlin, by rejecting Moscow's appeals to France to join Russia in keeping down her hereditary enemy, Germany, Bidault earned Dulles' gratitude. He was considered to have risked his political neck by his full support of America and E.D.C., although the cynics pointed out that he had in reality nothing to lose, either for himself or his party; everyone knew E.D.C. would never be ratified by the French Parliament. However, his bold, brave words at Berlin, and his apparent readiness to support Dulles at every turn, in the give and take with Molotov, earned him what Paris wants as much as Moscow, namely, negotiations with Russia and Red China for an end to the Indo-China war.

Whistling to keep his spirits up, in spite of having been forced, or persuaded, to abandon the bold moral position he originally adopted in Berlin, Mr. Dulles is insisting that—thanks to the Conference—the ratification of E.D.C. (that means German rearmament) has been brought nearer. Both in his report to the Senate and in his radio speech on February 24, as in his press conferences in Berlin, Mr. Dulles insisted that the Soviet "alternatives to Western planning" are so repellent that the free nations of Western Europe, including France, will now recognise the necessity of permitting West Germany to rearm.

Yet, even Dr. Adenauer, who has continued to believe, or hope, against all the evidence, that France can be reconciled with Germany and brought to see reason so that she will stop blocking all plans for European defence, said, after the Conference, that ratification of E.D.C. by France would have to wait until after the Geneva Conference in April. But this conference on Asia, arranged by Molotov, in return for no concessions to the West, will only serve as a further excuse to delay parliamentary debate in France on the E.D.C. treaty. This treaty in fact is no longer believed in or wanted except by Dr. Adenauer and the United States and, maybe, the Dutch.

In a word, the Berlin Conference constituted a resounding defeat for the United States. The British may be satisfied, since they have in fact "won" the solution suggested by the London *Times*, namely, "regulating the peace on the basis of the continued division of Germany."

The Berlin Conference once again proved the sad truth of the statement frequently made by the late Mayor of Berlin, Dr. Ernst Reuter: "The strength of the Soviets consists of the weakness and ignorance of the West. When I visited his widow in Berlin, she told me that when he was dying she had said, "God help us," and his last words had been: "He must, there is so much more to do." "If Ernst were alive," said Frau Reuter, "he might have been able to instil the necessary courage into the leaders of the West to prevent them from giving in to the Kremlin instead of taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by Soviet Russia's present weakness."

It is, however, doubtful whether even the courageous Mayor of Berlin could have changed the outcome of the Berlin Conference. One could not mix with the veritable army of foreign correspondents in Berlin without realising that the British and the French would eventually have their way. True, M. Bidault and Mr. Eden made some excellent speeches. True, Mr. Dulles seemed to have put some backbones into the French.

But the odds against the United States adopting a realistic policy were too great. Not even the Germans were in favour of our risking war now in order to obviate the future certainty of war when Moscow is ready. Much less the British, who want peace in our time at any price, or the foolish French whose views were expounded nightly at the *Maison Francais* to American correspondents by that now ancient bird of ill omen, Genevieve Tabouis: "Our main purpose in Berlin is to prevent the rearmament of Germany." When I asked her whether she did not feel she had been wrong in the past, she exploded: "Wrong, what do you mean? Soviet Russia has never waged any war but a defensive one. It is Germany we have to fear." More significant than the ravings of foolish or positively pro-Communist or "neutralist" French correspondents in Berlin, was the attitude of a large number of American journalists, who longed for the bad old days of our collaboration with Soviet Russia.

The contrast between the "home front" and the front line in the cold war was never more clearly illustrated than in Berlin. The people of that bomb-devastated city, together with the thousands of East German escapees eking out a miserable existence in over-crowded refugee camps, are not afraid of the Russians. They know, as we do not, that the Russian people are the unacknowledged allies of the West, and that it is only our continuing concessions to the Communist tyrants who rule them which prevents the liberation of the world. The people of Berlin and of the Soviet zone are among the few who echo Patrick Henry's words: "Give me liberty or give me death." In the words of their own slogan, "Better a horrible end than horror without end."

THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO POLITICS—

(continued from page 1.)

out of a group whose policy, as decided by the majority, is not his; (2) that those responsible for the decision on policy should bear the consequences and no one else; and (3) that those deciding policy should have a certain knowledge of the natural consequences of their actions.

Any arrangement in the social structure which does not ensure that these conditions are met is not a Christian arrangement, because the society cannot grow organically, and anyone who lends support to arrangements denying these conditions is supporting something not consonant with Christianity, for they are weakening God given, natural checks on people jumping off political, economic or financial "Eiffel Towers." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . ."

This is the Christian approach, and it is of paramount importance that the political arena should be invaded by Christians clearly and correctly informed on these conditions and determined to insist that they be met.

The political arena today is rigged so that the choice is always between a greater evil and a lesser evil, and the temptation for which so many good people fall is to support the lesser-evil-party, simply because there seems to be no earthly hope for the genuine alternative, the gaining of enough support to defeat *both* evils. Well, the answer is that only a true and complete hold on the faith can defeat evil. Ours is a spiritual mission and only a spiritual mission can save England now.