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THE DECLINE OF MORAL RELIGION (2.)

"Perhaps the first step to an appreciation of the forces active in the modern world is to be gained by a consideration of the decline of moral religion."

—C. H. Douglas in *The Monopoly of Credit* (p.7.)

In any review of the situation in which the Social Credit movement finds itself at the moment it would certainly be wise to give consideration to Douglas's latest observations. The most significant of his final dicta or directions are undoubtedly contained in the Social Credit Chart, [*] issued in *The Social Crediter* not long before his passing. First in this comes the statement that "Social Credit assumes that Society is primarily metaphysical." And then, in addition, what might be termed his last word, a pencilled note in the margin of a Secretariat memorandum accompanying a revision of the well-known article, first published in *The Australian Social Crediter*, "An Introduction for New Readers."

It was this:—"Politics is the art of the possible." *Something* is demonstrably possible under the name of Social Credit. What is it, and is it Social Credit? Alternatively, what is not possible is not interesting."

As Social Crediters and followers of Douglas—students of the nature of co-operative confidence and social integrity—it is possible that we did not give sufficient attention to what he had to say on this metaphysical aspect of the matter. Although it was the one to which he himself gave by far the most attention, I think it is safe to say that it was, and possibly still is, the least appreciated side—in every sense of that word—of his message; the one likely to rouse most opposition, as the history of Social Credit in Western Canada bears witness. I have always been an admirer of the Scout Movement desk-card which affirms that "the only difference between the difficult and the impossible is that the impossible takes a little longer." If Douglas's definition of politics as the art of the possible is to be accepted as correct, it follows that political possibility is, in fact, only limited by the individual politician's vision, his understanding of the real nature of the problems involved. If, as may have been the case, the members of the movement as a whole, for whatever reason, have not given enough consideration and weight to the metaphysical aspect of the task before them—the one to which Douglas gives first place in his Chart, it would seem inevitable that that fact should have adversely affected the form of our strategy and set a strict limit to our possible political achievement in the first round of our fight.

There are at least two elements essential to the successful practice of prophecy as a profession. The first, of

course, is vision—the ability to see beyond and behind the veil of appearances. The second is probably timing; for Truth, although it can never be legitimately or successfully concealed, should never be blurted. That surely is the meaning of the warning regarding feeding pearls to the swine, that have no digestive capacity for them. Douglas cannot personally be held responsible for any failure here. He certainly never under-estimated the material size or resources of his opponents, though he wasted no time in dwelling negatively on the fact. All his energies were directed towards lifting the strategy of the movement on to that higher, more metaphysical plane, where the mathematics of size and numbers—what we call space-time—do not count against scientific correctness and certitude. And it is just in this respect, I feel, that we, his followers, must study to understand his intentions as clearly as possible. But first we want to be quite sure that we have grasped correctly the precise picture that a mind such as his would hold of this higher plane. We can be sure it was not the conventionally moral one of Peace Pledges, or Protest Marches, or any sort of emotional crusade; least of all what is known as a Religious Revival. Coming from a pen like his, an observation such as that regarding the decline of Moral Religion must be taken merely as a statement of fact; whether the observer approves it or deplors it, is entirely beside the point. And equally in the case of his statement as to the metaphysical nature of Society, and the higher plane of strategy he advocated.

For the really scientific mind in pursuit of the truth of the matter, the question of moral goodness or badness has no more relevance or meaning than his own personal preferences have. The metaphysical plane is, in its true sense, the plane of amorality, of realistic commonsense, on which the Ten Commandments are translated, drawn up, out of their negative, prohibitory form into one where the Natural Law is fulfilled instead of enforced, and the fit and appropriate constitute the only *right* recognised. It is from a creditable, if very distant, approach to these conditions, especially under the British Flag, that every material influence to-day—and among these I place the modern pseudo-scientific education of our universities foremost—seems designed to force the individual mind, Western Civilisation—Christendom: approximate Christianity—appears to be abandoning the plane of real substantial judgment, for one where the human brain instantly tackles all and every

[*] Editor's Note:—Douglas preferred the description 'Specification' to that of 'Chart.'

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From Week to Week

Consumer credits (*i.e.*, hire-purchase) now "restricted" by the British Government, in principle are the same thing as wages paid for capital development and public works, but more obviously point to the fact that *current consumer* production does not distribute sufficient *current* purchasing-power to buy that production.

Since the collapse of the insatiable market of global war, the situation of a genuine glut of production has been drawing steadily closer. Restricting consumer credits will hasten it. Since financial depressions as an explanation are "out" (the dog has learned that trick, as Douglas said) it will be interesting to see what the new trick will be. If it is to be the uplifting of the under-privileged countries—the under-privileged begin at home.

Reviewing *Debates With Historians*, by Pieter Geyl, the great Dutch historian, (*Sunday Times*, August 21, 1955), Hugh Trevor-Roper says that Professor Geyl is "thank God, an unregenerate Westerner," who utterly rejects those "Prophets of Doom" who maintain that the West is finished. Among these is included Professor Arnold Toynbee, the the subsidised subversive who directs the Royal Institute of International Affairs. "Toynbee's fundamental hatred of Western civilisation" writes Mr. Trevor-Roper, "is to him as contemptible as the 'arguments' which nourish it: by his method Toynbee 'usurps the name of historian' and his message is a blasphemy against Western civilisation.

In case Mr. Trevor-Roper is unfamiliar with it, we quote an extract from a speech made by Professor Toynbee which was reported in *International Affairs*, November, 1931. It appears to be a fair example of the sort of thing Professor Geyl means.

"If we are frank with ourselves we shall admit that we are engaged on a deliberate and sustained and concentrated effort to impose limitations upon the sovereignty and the independence of the fifty or sixty local sovereign independent States.

"The surest sign, to my mind, that this fetish of local national sovereignty is our intended victim is the emphasis with which all our statesmen and our publicists protest with one accord, and over and over again, at every step forward which we take, that, whatever changes we may make in the international situation, the sacred principle of local

sovereignty will be maintained inviolable. This, I repeat, is a sure sign that, at each of those steps forward, the principle of local sovereignty is really being encroached upon, and its sphere of action reduced and its power for evil restricted. It is just because we are really attacking the principle of local sovereignty that we keep up protesting our loyalty to it so loudly. The harder we press our attack upon the idol, the more pains we take to keep its priests and devotees in a fool's paradise, lapped in a false sense of security which will inhibit them from taking up arms in their idol's defence."

We don't think Sir Anthony Eden would like Professor Toynbee to consider him a "priest and devotee."

According to Sir John Cockcroft, reported in *The Times*, August 20, 1955, by the year 2000 "the world was likely to require the energy equivalent of 7,000 or 8,000 million tons of coal compared with our present 1,700 million tons a year."

When one considers what has been done in the way of capital expansion since industrialisation started, which, in its early stages used relatively small amounts of energy, one wonders what the world of 2000 will be like. *How* is all that energy going to be used? *Why?*

Does 'science' so befuddle its exponents that they lose all sense of proportion? What is the relation between the *genuine* requirements of human beings for healthy, happy, self-developing life, and this astronomical consumption of energy? How many 'slaves' per head does 8,000 million tons of coal represent? How many slaves did the Greeks need?

"Buggins did it. It was Buggins who, once he got some power, thought he understood things which his dim little mind was never meant to even consider. The bloody little Labour M.P.'s, Bill this and Sam that, with their mouthings about the exploitations of the native peoples. What do they know about the work we've done? About five years it might take to win over an African Chief to the idea of giving up some barbarous and revolting custom or other, or about the other things in India. About roads, railways, hospitals, schools, hygiene. But Buggins has no use for that. It was done by gentlemen, so it is no good. Buggins hates the gentlemen because the gentlemen know the value of good things. Buggins is trying to destroy the good things we have done."

Gerald Hanley: *The Consul at Sunset*.

"The modern economic system as controlled by Finance at one and the same time saves labour, and exalts Labour into a religion and a virtue. In consequence, it condemns man to perpetual bondage."—C. H. Douglas in *Whose Service is Perfect Freedom*.

THE FIG TREE

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THE DECLINE OF MORAL RELIGION—*(continued from page 1.)*

task set before it by its masters more in the indiscriminating spirit of the Light Brigade, than of reasonable adults, capable for instance, of digesting a letter from a mind like St. Paul's or of recognising the futility of any attempt to cast out Beelzebub in his own name, or with his own weapons. To the average university student of to-day, a profound statement of fact like that last, instead of being so obvious and convincing that no one could conceivably waste any time in attempting it, any more than a yachtsman would try to sail into the wind with his spinnaker set—such an elementary truth as that, has become no more than a figurative generalisation out of a "religious book" called the Bible; so abstracted and unrealistic has this generation become.

What then, at this particular juncture in the life story of the Social Credit movement, is our first problem? Always, of course, it will be further to consolidate our principles by the study of the Social Credit text. Beyond that, however, is it to be a new tactic? Or should there be a change of strategic objective—a difficult manoeuvre to perform when we appear to have failed to capture our first. The threat of atrophy, either in individuals or organisations, is to be recognised, not so much, if at all, in tenacity of Principle, as in strategic rigidity. To the very end Douglas never showed any signs of this, but remained sensitive to the least alteration in the climate of opinion. If as Social Crediters, the enlightenment of this metaphysical entity we call society as to the prevailing financial obliquity and injustice, is to remain our specific responsibility, then we must follow Douglas's latest advice, and study how best to manoeuvre the issue on to the higher, metaphysical plane, where the individually disintegrating influences (pressure) of dialectical materialism, the worship of applied physics and assorted gadgetry, in place of scientific Truth, cannot easily follow us, or at least is less overwhelming.

One struggles to find the right terms to express these subtleties; words that do not suggest a clinging to that moral religion we see declining all about us, to which the backers of the Billy Grahams of this world would like to see society return. If Douglas had any fears for the fate of his discovery, which I don't believe he had, for he knew that Truth can look after itself and is ultimately invincible (and that applies equally to any movement that should constitute itself, in the correct way, responsible for bringing it to light), it was merely for the integrity of the movement that he was careful. Undoubtedly he attached immense importance to that balance of head and heart in the individual which enables him, while rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, to reserve his worship, his love, for the invisible Truth.

Douglas's gospel, or message, is the same as that of the New Testament; the primary need for applied metaphysics to counter-balance applied physics, specifically in his case in the problems of financial credit. What we have learned from our first attempt—and how little it appears to be!—is that before we can even begin to get down to this vital task, there is a particular psychic resistance to realism of any kind, financial or otherwise, to be broken down. It

is this that is at the core of these "psychological obstacles" that Douglas mentions as being in our path; a complex built up by an unbalanced mental diet of more or less undiluted physics which, it would appear, our initial efforts have just failed to overcome. It may sound trivial, but I cannot help that it has been exceptionally unfortunate that fate (I use the term in my own ignorance) has seen fit to attach to the particular quality of scientific objectivity which realism requires, that most abused, confused, and confusing term Love. It would be difficult in the whole dictionary to find a word in itself more weighted down for the modern sophisticated world with associations of a more conflicting kind than this, for the sentimentalist no less than for the cynic. The fact remains, however, that the Bible, the most valuable store of practical wisdom and philosophical experience the world possesses, for those who will take the trouble to dig it out, has come down to us in its final and fulfilled form, as the Gospel of Love. As a result of this label, it tends to be stupidly misunderstood and sentimentalised over on the one hand, and ignorantly despised and discounted on the other, to the great impediment to those with any concrete message, such as Social Credit contains, to make known.

NORMAN WEBB.

*(Concluded.)***Party Politics**

A political party is, if you come to think of it, something fantastic. The House of Commons is, or is supposed to be, an assembly of men and women, representing the British people, for the purpose of governing the country. To get them there, the country is divided into constituencies, each of which sends a representative to the Commons, the M.P. The M.P. for Eastbourne represents the people of Eastbourne, or should do. He is in duty bound to stand up for their interests. Similarly the M.P.s. for Birmingham, Chester, Scarborough, Wigan, and so on. Where then does a party come into the picture? Why should, say, Birmingham and Wigan combine against the other three? Looked at like this it should make any thoughtful person suspicious of political parties.

Curiously enough for many years until comparatively recently a two-party system worked reasonably well, no doubt owing to the peculiar genius of the British, particularly the English, in adapting, what appears illogical, so as to serve their ends. It may be as well to mention here that many of the great issues of the past were based on misunderstanding and misrepresentation, the corn laws, women's suffrage, free trade or protection, and many others. But the two-party system worked so long as the party leaders in power could be thrown out as soon as it became evident that they were incompetent or were breaking their promises. This was of benefit to the people only so long as the *policies* of the two opposing parties were fundamentally different, the electorate showed some degree of political sense, and the representatives of the electors were reasonably honest men anxious to please their constituents.

Nowadays all three of these conditions are either lacking or apply only partly. The British public have shown a deplorable lack of political sense in returning to power in 1945, and on many other occasions, the very men whose

dictatorial rules and regulations, introduced under cover of alleged war necessity, everybody was sick and tired of. Our present M.P.s. having voted themselves a commercial salary and tax-free expenses, are mainly careerists with no idea of service and rarely any interest in their constituents. As for the policies of the two parties they agree in all fundamentals; a "controlled" inflation, the work-state, penal taxation, welfare benefits to undermine the character of the British, subservience to U.S.A. especially to the dollar kings of Wall Street, denigration of every aspect of the British way of life, bleeding Great Britain white economically *via* rigged exchange rates and the export racket, *etc.*, *etc.* The only difference is that all seek to conserve their own party.

That all this happens without the violent reaction one might expect from the British is perhaps all due, certainly mainly due, to the power of the Press, the power of the Press to suppress, and the fact that the Press is controlled by the very men who control the money system and also control the H.Q. of both parties. Quite apart from boasts made by international financiers it is only necessary to watch the occasions when the party whips are cracked to persuade M.P.s. to vote against their own consciences and against the interests of their constituents. Modern education is largely designed to make people susceptible to propaganda and no M.P. can under present conditions hope to retain his seat at the *next* election—important to a careerist—if he loses the help of propaganda forces resident in the controllers of Press and Party. He has, therefore, serious threats over his head should he act other than on party lines, *i.e.*, as ordered from above.

Many Social Crediters seem to think that most of these aspects of modern politics are a good reason for starting a political party of their own. *They* are honest, *they* won't be bribed, threatened or blackmailed, *they* will represent their constituents and not Jewish financiers, *they* will take their oath of allegiance to H.M. the Queen seriously and not regard it as a formality as so many of our present M.P.s. do. These things are so obvious to Social Crediters that they expect the electors to see the point too. Unfortunately they don't. The power of propaganda *via* the Press with a few local exceptions, the B.B.C. and other broadcasting systems, even largely the pulpit, to the Churches' everlasting shame, is much too great. To build up a new political party, even if successful in the end, would take at least 50 years from now and we haven't 50 years. The Powers of Evil have had over a century of experience of using party machinery, we have none. They are experts at exploiting the evil and weak sides of human nature and are quite ruthless. For us to try and fight them through a party is merely to attempt to beat the enemy on his chosen ground with weapons in which he is an expert and at a time of his choosing.

The greatest asset of the Social Credit movement is its fluidity. The greatest assets of the enemy are all rigid organisations. To hem the Social Credit movement into a party political organisation is to atrophy it. The danger to every organisation in history has been twofold. Most of them start as a means to an end and many very soon degenerate into being an end in themselves. This is most marked where leadership of the organisation confers power. Sooner rather than later some power maniac will come to the top. His very qualities will help him to get there and at once

the real objects of that organisation take second, third, or no place at all. It doesn't even need a power maniac to achieve such a result. If at the head is a man who, to remain at the head, allows himself to be browbeaten, threatened, or persuaded, that is enough. We have as the classical example the present government of Alberta. There, and in British Columbia, the government, nominally Social Credit, has declared it as its policy to leave all attempts to pass Social Credit legislation or any legislation clearing the ground for Social Credit to someone else. The fact that the rank and file of the Social Credit party there has accepted such a policy shows how superficial the mass of electors are, how unable they are to view anything realistically, and how little the Social Credit spirit is in them.

Let us Social Crediters leave the dirty game of party politics, sham fighting, severely alone. Major Douglas was right when he gave this advice, as he was right in every one of his major utterances.

H. R. PURCHASE.

The Control of Power

" . . . we have to ask ourselves here, and this without trespassing beyond experience, is what the notion of temptation means and in what circumstances it may become active. My view is that it is invariably bound up with power. The moment that we are endowed with power of whatever sort we are exposed to the temptation of abusing it. . . .

" . . . The exercise of any sort of power should by rights be accompanied by the exercise of control over this power itself—this is a sort of 'power at one remove.' But in practice such concomitance of strength and control over that strength is by no means inevitable. We find, on the contrary, that the more suddenly power is acquired—or at any rate the less the conditions of its acquisition are like those of natural growth—the more does it tend to behave like a *parvenue*: like a self-made man who believes (always quite wrongly) that he is in no man's debt, it rejects, as though it were an unwarrantable intrusion or encroachment, any form of limitation or control over itself.

" . . . the activity among all others which can most truly be described as power at one remove is reflection. . . . Already we see logico-mathematical neo-positivism, a philosophy which denies the role of reflection altogether, gradually invading England and a part of the United States; to the philosophers of this School, the idea of a philosophy of reflection is utterly alien, they almost put it aside as a sort of mysticism."—Gabriel Marcel in *The Decline of Wisdom*.

"Whose Service is Perfect Freedom"

The Fig Tree (New Series: No. 4., March, 1955), now in the press, will be devoted to republication of "Whose Service is Perfect Freedom," the uncompleted work of the late Major C. H. Douglas first printed in *The Social Crediter* before and during the second phase of the World War. A brief Foreword gives an account of the history of the work and of what is known concerning the author's intentions for its completion. Prospective purchasers are asked to place their orders early in the hands of K.R.P. Publications, Ltd., 11, Garfield Street, Belfast.

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