

"All that is necessary
for the triumph of
evil is that good
men do nothing . . ."
— EDMUND BURKE.



THE NEW TIMES

SURVEY

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Contents

Letter to US President Reagan from a Russian Patriot.....	3
Alexander Solzhenitsyn was tragically misunderstood by Americans by Donald Hank.....	3
The Meaning of "Render Unto Caesar" by Robert Klinck.....	5
The Threefold Commonwealth - Editorial from "The Social Artist" Winter 2014.....	7
A New Proposal for Guild Organisation by Philippe Mairret.....	7

A Blessed Holy Week to All our Readers



"At present we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face." - **I Corinthians 13.12**

"The Canon of Rightness: There is running through the nature of the Universe something that we call a canon. It is the thing which is referred to in the Gospel of John as the logos or the word. The engineer and the artist refer to it when they say that they have got something right. Other people mean the same thing when they talk about absolute truth or reality. Genuine success only accompanies a consistent attempt to discover and to conform to this canon in no matter what sphere our activities may lie.

There is one single test which can be applied to any financial scheme which is put to you for consideration, and that is, whether it represents reality..."

-- **E.D. Butler from "Social Credit and the Christian Philosophy"**

"Words cannot convey the truth alone. They can only point to it, like signposts, but unlike them, they are unattached, not firmly fixed in the ground pointing the right way. It is the hearer who has to pick them up, as you might a fallen signpost, and fix them correctly in the ground of his experience with the real world. To drop the analogy, the truth in words can be found only by seeking the sense in which they are true — and discarding the many interpretations in which they are not..."

-- **Geoffrey Dobbs in "Trinity and Reality" 1983**

The Seen and the Unseen - And what of the healing of the man who was blind from birth?

John 9.25: "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know.

One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

Just as John Newton, the former captain of slave ships could write: "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found,

was blind but now I see." It is a spiritual insight - and we all need to seek it. "Amazing Grace" is one of the most recognizable Christian hymns in the English-speaking world.

The text by English poet and Anglican clergyman John Newton (1725–1807) was first published in 1779. The words describe in first person the move of a "wretch" from a "lost" to a "found" state by a merciful act of God."

-- **Wikipedia**

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazing_Grace)

God clothed the lilies of the field

I am reminded of Geoffrey Dobbs' words when I read the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:28-30: "And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe* the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not more clothe ye of little faith?"

Surely as one considers the lilies of the field, one has to: reflect on; think carefully about; give careful consideration to; look at attentively; analyse carefully; see. But what is it that we are seeing? Remember words cannot convey the truth alone – they can only point to the truth. Are not Jesus Christ's words pointing to God clothing the lilies of the field before the very eyes of the onlooker?

Raiment is what human beings are concerned about; that is, the physical/material world we can see and touch and feel. But it is God who continually forms the lilies of the field, giving them shape, structure, substance, colour and fragrance. We cannot 'see' God continually creating and forming and structuring, but we can see the effects! Just as God 'clothes' the lilies of the field He also 'clothes' us: "Shall He not more 'clothe' ye of little faith?"

(continued on page 2)

(continued from 1)

*Take a look at some of the Time-Lapse photography on the Internet... and then you might begin to 'see' the truth taking shape before your very eyes

L. D. Byrne left a word picture of what C.H. Douglas could 'see' which has inspired Social Crediters down through the years: "There is running through the warp and woof of the Universe the law of Righteousness - Divine Law - which C.H. Douglas termed the Canon. Because of the higher intelligence and freewill accorded to him, Man cannot rely on instinct to guide him in his adherence to the Canon. He must seek it, and to the extent that he finds it and conforms to it, he will achieve harmony with the Universe and his Creator. Conversely, to the degree that he ignores the operation of the Canon and flouts it, he will bring disaster upon himself.

Byrne continued: It was inherent in Douglas's writings that he viewed society as something partaking of the nature of an Organism which could 'have life and life more abundant' to the extent it was God-centred and obedient to His Canon... Within it (this organism) the sovereignty of 'God the Creator of all things visible and invisible' being absolute, there must be full recognition of the sanctity of human personality and, therefore, of the individual person

as free to live his life, and within the body social, to enter or contract out of such associations as, with responsibility to his Creator, he may choose. And no person may deny to another this relationship to God and his fellow men without committing sacrilege.

This concept, reflecting the ideal of Christendom as the integration of Church and Society which was the inspiration of European Civilisation for centuries, involves adherence to a policy in every sphere of social life, economic, political and cultural. *This* is the policy, which Douglas termed 'Social Credit'. Looking out upon the world with a clarity of vision which was unique in his time, Douglas saw a Civilisation doomed to the opposite policy, stemming from a conflicting policy, a philosophy which defied Man and sought to subjugate the world to him..."

Comment by editor: At this most holy time in the Christian year, it is not for a layman such as myself to do more than refer to the Mystery of Golgotha, but I do know that as I spend time in contemplating the events, it is impossible to think of the Mystery of Golgotha without thinking of the Risen Christ. It was St Paul who profoundly uttered the words: "If Christ be not risen then all our faith is vain." And as the Christian Church joyfully proclaims at the culmination of the Holy Week services:

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

CONSULTING THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF THE 'ON TARGET' ARCHIVES

(<http://www.alor.org/Volume2/Vol2No6.htm#1a>)

The editor had a sense of humour and we can see how little times have changed.

ON PINK PAGES: We recently had to correct an escapee from the East European Communist prison camp who thought that consulting the pink pages meant a glance through the daily newspapers.

A Story With a Moral

You have probably heard the story of the very tolerant Le Blanc. This Frenchman, so the story goes, had a friend Beaucaire who constantly abused his friendship. Hurt and bewildered, the not-very-bright Le Blanc delivered his ultimatum: "I take you into my home to feed you; you steal my money and my goods; you ridicule me to my children and my associates; you punch and kick me without provocation; you seduce my daughter and my wife; and now you threaten to throw me out. Look out,

Beaucaire, you don't go too far."

"*The Australian*" of March 4 reported: "The US said today it is reviewing its aid to Indonesia. This is one of the few avenues left to express growing indignation over increasing Anti-American incidents. Aid to Indonesia was about 833,000 dollars for the last six months of 1964." Look out, Beaucaire, you don't go too far!

Intelligence and the Labour Party (please pardon the oxymoron!)

The recent Labour conference featured a call by Mr. Gough Whitlam, the Fabian Socialist Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, he said, "This party needs intellectuals and intellectuals need this party."

Melbourne Age 5.8.65.

We have no doubt there is a great need for intelligence in the Labour

Party, which is completely missing under the present leadership. To equate the intelligence supplied by Mr. Whitlam, Mr. Cairns and others with integrity, which must complement intellectual ability, is in our opinion impossible in the rigid party structure of which Mr. Whitlam is a member. To further impute that the Labour Party is the only organisation offering political intellectualism is snobbery of the worst kind.

Socialism as it Really is: Mr. Abdel Rhaman Bazzaz, Prime Minister of Irak commenting on the state to which past socialist governments had degraded Irak. "Past regimes believed that rigid government restrictions and taxes would lead to a fairer distribution of the national wealth, but all they found left to distribute was poverty."

Letter to US President Reagan from a Russian Patriot

Alexander Solzhenitsyn recognised the fundamental need for a national spiritual renewal, not only among his own people but recognised the western world was also involved in this great spiritual battle - and was losing. A spiritual renewal, he believed, was how a sick society gained the path to moral soundness. Material well-being, intellectual accomplishments, technological

breakthroughs, captivating new ideologies would not cure the sickness.

In some quarters, Solzhenitsyn's uncompromising vision didn't win him any friends. But he had often laid his life on the line for what he believed, and the carping of the intelligentsia was a small thing. Anyway, prophets aren't interested in popularity contests.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn was tragically misunderstood by Americans by Donald Hank

<http://laiglesforum.com/>

Solzhenitsyn is known as a writer who addressed issues like the lack of freedom in the USSR, for example, in his novels "Gulag Archipelago" and "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich". But few are aware that his greatest contribution to the world was his thorough fact-finding research on the early years prior to the Russian Revolution and the first years thereafter.

Solzhenitsyn would go to the local library and ask for copies of pre-revolution newspapers. He would laboriously copy out passages that contradicted the Soviet revisionist histories. He also frequently checked out any items of interest in this regard, making library officials suspicious. He was soon tailed by Soviet agents, who interrogated him and ultimately had him arrested.

He was able to hide much of this copied information from them and later use it in his novels. Thus Solzhenitsyn was much more than just a novelist. He was a chronicler and historian. And he was the only living Soviet who did this to such an extent. He filled a dark void and it is hard to imagine a world without his contribution.

Solzhenitsyn admitted that he was, initially, just another Soviet citizen who hardly questioned the regime and its motives and agenda. Yet, his curiosity led him to knowledge, and knowledge ultimately led to freedom.

But it was a long hard journey, and few understand the sufferings he went through. Even fewer understand his sufferings in America, where he lived for a few years while employed by Harvard University. Here he was snubbed by those who should have befriended him. And he was snubbed - ultimately - simply for being a

Russian patriot. President Reagan's advisors wrongly categorized Solzhenitsyn as an extreme nationalist, when he was nothing but a man who loved his country.

No wonder then that he returned disillusioned to Russia and became reconciled with some of the people who were once his persecutors. Who knows what direction Russia would have taken if America had befriended Solzhenitsyn instead of marginalizing him?

And it didn't have to be that way. American conservatives must divorce their feelings about evil regimes from their feelings toward the people who have suffered under those regimes. How can God bless us if we do not?

I had stumbled across Solzhenitsyn's letter to Reagan, and had long wrestled with the idea of translating it but was thwarted by 2 considerations:

1-Perhaps the letter had already been published in English;

2-Perhaps it would not change any minds or produce any tangible benefit for Americans.

But now that our dear friend of freedom is gone, I decided to investigate and found no mention of the letter in English anywhere on the Web. And I thought perhaps someone may benefit from reading it. Not that I wish to highlight the failure of those Americans responsible for offending the writer. It is rather my desire to help Americans of our generation to learn from our past mistakes.

I am not a "nationalist" at all - I am a Patriot

(Continued on page 4)

Thought for the week from the first issue of 'On Target'

5 February 1965. Thought for the Week: "All power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Lord Acton

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Letter to President Reagan - published in the book "Aleksander Solzhenitsyn", Yaroslavl, Verkhnjaja Volga, 1997, translated by Donald Hank.



*Former US President
Ronald Reagan*



*Russian Patriot
Alexander
Solzhenitsyn*

Cavendish, May 3, 1982

Dear Mr. President,
I am delighted with many aspects of your activity, and am happy for America that it finally has a president like you. I never cease to thank God that you were not killed by those malicious bullets.

However, I have never had the honour of being received at the White House — neither in the Ford administration (the question arose there without my participation), nor later. In recent months, roundabout inquiries have come to me through various routes asking under what circumstances I would be willing to accept an invitation to visit the White House. I always responded that I was willing to go for a substantive discussion with you under circumstances providing the opportunity for a serious effective conversation, but not for an open ceremony. I do not have time in my life for symbolic meetings.

However, I was offered (in a telephone call from advisor Pipes) not a personal meeting with you but a luncheon with the participation of emigrant politicians. The same sources announced that this would be a luncheon for "Soviet dissidents." However, an artistic writer in the Russian sense does not belong to either of these groups. I cannot allow myself to be assigned a false rank. Further, the fact, form and date of the reception were sent and released to the press before I was informed myself. To this day, I have not received any information on even the names of the persons who were invited along with me for May 11.

Still worse, the press reported various hesitations on the part of the White House and publicly announced that the White House had not refuted the statement of the reason why a meeting with me was considered undesirable, namely, because I was "a symbol of extreme Russian nationalism." This statement is offensive to my countrymen, to whose suffering I have dedicated my entire literary life.

I am not a "nationalist" at all. I am a patriot. In other words, I love my country — and that is why I also understand why others love theirs. On more than one

occasion, I have publicly stated that the vital interests of the peoples of the USSR demand the immediate cessation of all global seizures by the Soviets. If people who think as I do came to power in the USSR, their first step would be to pull out of Central America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe, leaving these nations to decide their own fate. Their second step would be to stop the murderous arms race, devote the country's efforts to healing the internal nearly century-old wounds of an already moribund populace. And, of course, they would open the doors to those who wish to emigrate from our hapless country.

Amazingly, none of this suits your nearest advisers! They want something else. They call this [my] program "extreme Russian nationalism," and some American generals are proposing selectively destroying the Russian population with an atomic strike. It is odd that in the world today Russian nationalism evokes the greatest fear both in the potentates of the USSR and in the people around you. Here is evidenced the hostile stance toward Russia herself, the country and the people, independently of government forms, which is characteristic of a substantial segment of American educated society, American financial circles and, sadly, even your advisers. This attitude is harmful to the future of our two nations.

Mr. President, it is with heavy heart that I write this letter. But I think that if a meeting with you somewhere were considered undesirable because you are an American patriot, you would also be offended. Once you are no longer president, if you are ever in Vermont, I will be sincerely happy to meet with you at my home.

Since this entire episode has been subjected to a distorted interpretation and it is quite likely that my motives for not travelling there have already been distorted, I feel that I will be obliged to publish this letter. Forgive me.

With sincere respect,
Alexander Solzhenitsyn

The Meaning of “Render Unto Caesar” by Robert Klinck

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/dallairl/1/RenderCaesar.htm>

For anyone who regards the words and life of Jesus as being authoritative guides, I offer the following exegesis as a corrective to what I believe to be a widespread misrepresentation of a specific aspect of his message. Unfortunately, the confusion flowing from this misrepresentation, which has given societal institutions a respectability that everything in the story of Jesus belies, has led many who aspire to follow Him to acquiesce in manifest evil; that is, to be of, as opposed to merely in, the world.

It should not be assumed that all people who openly associate themselves with “Christianity” are desirous, much less capable, of renewing their minds as Christ would have them do. Nor, of itself, does having heard his warning about the blind leading the blind preclude his advocates from falling into the pit.

The words Jesus uttered whose significance I contend has been gravely distorted are “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s”. Normally quoted tout court, without reference to the situation that elicited them, and thus received uncritically as simply one of many inspired teachings, this sentence has become the foundation of elaborate theories about the separate fields of the secular and the spiritual. As Jesus never directed the words to the broad audience that now is claimed for them, it appears as if all this intellectual energy has been expended on an illusion.

The harm done, however, has been more than wasted effort. The single-mindedness that Christ came to instil in men and women has been undermined by the inculcation of irreconcilable concepts: the premise that the Father has created all things through the Son fits badly with the contention that certain things lie beyond Their sphere of interest. Just as “A house divided against itself cannot stand” (Mark 3:25), a mind motivated by contradictory ideas cannot function effectively.

Jesus proclaimed that he was the Truth. It is safe to assume that an aspect of being the Truth is that one speaks truly. In other words, Jesus never lied, nor even slightly deformed the truth. This does not mean, however, that he expressed his thoughts indiscriminately. Indeed, a consistent feature of his discourse was that it was attuned both to the capacities and needs of his audience and to the most effective achievement of his purpose in coming to us.

Indeed, no one has ever had a more vivid sense of the importance of the context of events to the understanding of them*. Hence, when he spoke to an individual, his counsel was specifically for that person. For instance, the advice to the rich young man that if he would be perfect he should sell all that he owned is not advice that one ought to assume Jesus would give to all rich young men; it was directed to a particular person whose development was being hampered by the influence of his possession of great material wealth.

In any particular case of Jesus’ teaching, there may be a lesson for us to apply critically to our own condition, but we should never assume that a statement He has made to a particular person applies in the same way to all.

As with individuals, Jesus also conformed his speech to various group audiences. Thus, He explained to His chosen disciples concepts that in his public speaking were couched in parables. Asked by his disciples why He spoke to the crowds in parables, Jesus replied, “To you it has been granted to know

the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted” (Matthew 13:10). Of some, He said, “while hearing, they do not hear” (Matthew 13:13). Some people were distinguished by having “ears to hear” (Matthew 11:15), the implication being that others were fundamentally unequipped to grasp the meaning of what he was saying.

In the latter class evidently there were people whom his words could not reach because their minds were fixated on evil. There was simply no place in their thinking where goodness could enter in. It was to these He referred when he declared, “Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn on you and rend you” (Matthew 7:6).

He counselled his chosen acolytes: “I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16). This also clearly implied that they should use speech wisely; i.e., selectively, in the manner he himself demonstrated.

Therefore, for true comprehension of Jesus’ pronouncements, it is always essential to consider the context in which they were made. This is of critical importance in interpreting what he had to say about “rendering unto Caesar”.

The situation here was as follows.

Jesus had angered the Jewish hierarchy. His hints about his being the Messiah and his startling claims to a unique status, such being master of the Sabbath and possessing power to forgive sin, puzzled and infuriated them. Moreover, because of His teachings and miracle-working He was growing increasingly popular and seemingly posing a growing threat to the authority of the establishment. Their fear of how the populace might react to an attack on Jesus was also galling. Used to holding power and defining ‘right’ behaviour, they were panicked by teachings about the greatness of service to others and the meek inheriting the earth. Division was menacing their own elites, as even some scribes and Pharisees were being won over by Jesus. “Many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God” (John 12:42-3).

He further provoked the elders, chief priests and Pharisees with excoriating denunciations that they, who were used to inspiring fear-based deference in their social inferiors, could not abide. “You brood of vipers”, He told the Pharisees, “how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart” (Matthew 12:24). “You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44).

The Jewish leaders repeatedly questioned Him, sometimes out of genuine curiosity and sometimes deviously. When He perceived their queries to be insincere, He answered in a way that both exposed their falseness and frustrated their ulterior purposes. For example, when the chief priests, scribes and elders asked Him by what authority He worked his miracles, he responded with a question He knew they would not answer,

(Continued on page 6)

and when they replied with silence, He said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things" (Mark 11:33).

The Gospel of Luke summarizes the "render unto Caesar" incident as follows (Jesus had just told the scribes and chief priests, in a parable, that they would kill Him and in turn be destroyed by His Father because of their evil deed):

And the scribes and Pharisees tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, but they feared the people; for they understood that He spoke this parable against them. And they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so as to deliver Him up to the rule and the authority of the governor.

And they questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach correctly, and You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

But He detected their trickery and said to them: "Show me a denarius [coin]. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" And they said, "Caesar's". And he said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's".

And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people, and marvelling at His answer, they became silent. (20:19-26)

What had occurred is evident: Jesus had frustrated their knavish scheme, knocked away their intended weapon of murder, by turning their words back upon them. It was a very simple tactic to stymie evil, and a device he had used previously in dealing with those he identified as hypocrites.

Yet, as human rationality has mulled over the naked words about rendering unto Caesar, what a monstrous edifice of cards has been erected on Jesus' reply!

From the above-quoted passage a Catholic writer concludes: "...the words go deep.... Caesar has powers, of course: he can take what he wants. But now we hear from the words of the Man who was God that Caesar has rights. Whatever the civil authority requires for the proper conduct of society, to that it has a right--Christ says so; in the truest sense, therefore, it is a divine right"**.

As farfetched as such extrapolations may seem, they have become more or less the standard interpretation of the passage. Indeed, such views have become so ingrained in theological thinking, that nowadays they are hardly open for discussion.

Yet what a leap is required in order to arrive at such a position! In essence, one must conceive that, to this band of murderous conspirators, in the midst of their foul plot, Jesus pronounced a homily for the general edification of mankind. Surely a more implausible scenario is hard to imagine.

Moreover, for Him to have spoken thus would contradict His previous behaviour. Jesus did not preach to unreceptive people, and these fear- and hate-filled miscreants were definitely lacking "ears to hear".

The assumption we should make is that His words were appropriate to the unworthiness of His listeners.

Why has He who warned others not to cast pearls before swine been assumed in this one instance to have violated His own precept? Who can swallow such a blatant incongruity?

Yet theologians and church authorities have developed (no doubt with the encouragement of the civil power) elaborate

theories about how "render unto Caesar" is a dictum gravely relevant to the 'Christian' life.

Indeed, the blind still lead the blind. Indeed, those who would lord it over others still find self-imposed blindness to be useful to their ambition.

Since Jesus uttered the words, they must be true. The real issue is: for whom are they true? Those to whom He addressed them--scribes and Pharisees, people with filth-laden hearts, liars and murderers--should attend to them***.

On the authority of our Saviour, looking at his public life as a whole, these words do not apply to His faithful.

Not surprisingly, of course, our modern-day equivalents of the scribes and Pharisees have persevered in their lies by universalizing the application of this ridiculous 'teaching'. The result is that ordinary people have been deceived into co-operating with corrupt governmental regimes-- paying taxes for enterprises they believe to be wrong, while the hypocrites who frame the law largely exempt themselves from these burdens.

What Jesus actually taught consistently, and categorically, was that we should not involve ourselves in matters that are not the will of God. Caesar, with his phoney bookkeeping debts, taxes, invasive law-making, political divisiveness, and economic and military wars, hardly has a conspicuous association with Godliness****.

There is an old saying, now neglected, that the devil himself can quote scripture for his purposes. The prince of this world has surely benefited enormously from the misuse of this passage in scripture.

Observing the world today, is there any reason to believe that Jesus' reappearing in it would not threaten establishment institutions exactly as He did two millennia ago and that, if they had their way, the ecclesiastical and political hierarchies would not be driven to deal with Him as they did then?

*When questioned by some Pharisees about marriage and divorce, He said that Moses gave the possibility of getting a certificate of divorce to the Jews of his time because of the hardness of their hearts, which made them unsusceptible to having the best attitude toward marriage. In the context of the kinds of hearts Jesus was forging, this would be changed.

**F.J. Sheed, *To Know Christ Jesus*, Sheed and Ward Ltd., 1962, pp. 307-8.

*** Perhaps the essence of the pronouncement is that, in their depraved state, the best such people deserve in this life is to render unto Caesar. And perhaps the key to the attitude He had, which then we should adopt, to this matter of rendering unto Caesar is in the following words he spoke on another occasion to his followers about the Pharisees: "Let them alone. They are blind guides of the blind" (Matthew 15:14). In other words, "Pay no attention to their perverted preoccupation with Caesar".

****On the matter of taxation, Jesus asked Peter: "From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?" Peter answered: "From strangers". Then Jesus said, "Consequently, the sons are exempt. But lest we give them offence, go to the sea, and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a stater" [coin worth enough to pay the poll-tax for both of them]. "Take that and give it to them for you and Me" (Matthew 17:24-27). As this was spoken not to men actuated by corrupted hearts, but to Peter, there is undoubtedly some lesson, seemingly small, here for Jesus' followers. (Make of it what you will). ▲

The Threefold Commonwealth

Editorial from "The Social Artist" Winter 2014

During the 1920s, when Clifford Hugh Douglas brought his Social Credit theories onto the public arena, a great number of works were being published within the broad category of 'alternative' thought on social, economic and political issues. At that time, mainstream economic orthodoxy was still establishing its authority within the universities, and 'alternative' books and periodicals circulated across the broad spectrum of educated people.

GK Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc brought their powerful pens into play in support of their 'Distributist' ideas on rights of access to land. The writings on Arts and Crafts, and on notions of good work, farming and the countryside by William Morris, John Ruskin, Edward Carpenter, Thorstein Veblen and many others were reprinted and widely discussed among the common people. Guild Socialist books ran to many editions, and *The New Age* was available through newsagents throughout the UK. It is in this climate that Rudolf Steiner's book, *The Threefold Commonwealth* first appeared in English.

Originally published in German under the title "Die Kernpunkte der Sozialen Frage" by Rudolf Steiner Verlag, (Dornach) in 1919, it was translated into English and published by a mainstream publisher, George Allen and Unwin, London, in 1920 under the title "The Threefold State: The True Aspect of the Social Question". Subsequently it has been reprinted many times by Anthroposophical presses in London

and New York, under a range of different titles. But it has rarely (if ever?) been the subject of study on university courses or outside the narrow confines of Anthroposophical organisations. Nevertheless, Steiner's *The Threefold Commonwealth* was for a while the subject of discussion in Social Credit and associated circles. Noting the common ground between the themes expressed in the book and his own writings, Clifford Hugh Douglas quoted from "*The Threefold Commonwealth*" in "*The Control and Distribution of Production*", published by Cecil Palmer, London, in 1922, (and variously reprinted by mainstream publishers over the next decade).

The connections between the two schools of thought was made explicit by Philip Mairet, a leading Social Creditor, in a series of three articles entitled "A New Proposal for Guild Organisation". Published in three parts in *The New Age* July 23, August 27 and September 3, 1925, the articles can be read on (<http://douglassocialcredit.com/>). In his article "Joseph Beuys: Pioneer of Radical Ecology" David Adams demonstrates the power of Beuys's lifetime's work to bring Rudolf Steiner's work to life in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The article provides a valuable resource for all who are seeking to break the boundaries between creeds, cultures, belief systems and sectional interests in the quest to create common ground in the fight for ecological, social, political and economic common sense. As such it merits wide circulation.

A New Proposal for Guild Organisation by Philippe Mairet.

The New Age August 27, 1925

Part II: It is essential to the conception of the Threefold Commonwealth that the political and the economic lives should be clearly separated one from the other. In the present social crisis nothing is stranger nor more characteristic than the fact that people do not readily see the urgent necessity for this. Politics and economics are entirely different in their origins and essence, different in their historic roots and never, probably in the world's history, so strangely confused and mixed together as they now are. If we ask why these two things, which God has put asunder, have been by man most unlawfully joined together, we may find the answer in recent history.

It is not long since President Wilson, in an unbiased and very well-informed criticism of the development of democracy in the United States, showed how completely the organisation of the economic life has there outgrown the power of politics and jurisprudence. His conclusions hold good for Europe; since the development of steam power and modern technical production, life has been entirely changed by the formation of the great companies and the financial combines that have grown up with them. These bodies, with their secret councils and purely economic interests, were quite unforeseen by the ages from which we have inherited our instruments of law, politics, and culture. They are strong enough to use law and politics and culture in their own interest.

It is a natural result that, whereas in pre-industrial ages the economic powers held their charters and rights to exist from the political, and the political – in theory, at all events – held its rights from the spiritual powers, the order is now exactly reversed – Economic power is the supreme power. As citizens of the world we find this to be the fact. But it remains unforgivable that so many thinkers and theorists have accepted

it as the everlasting truth about human society, which it certainly is not. Our very idealism, which is Socialist, and our Socialism, which is all more or less Marxian, is based upon the assumption that economic power is the supreme power, and that a just and equitable system of economy is all that is needed to give birth to a new life and culture. Distribute the loaves and fishes and all else will be added unto you! And yet, when we try to represent this new and just economic system, we must perforce fall back upon a political; and not an economic, idea. We have nothing to suggest but the organisation of industry upon political lines. All Socialist schemes for the common, or the National or the proletarian "ownership of the means of production" boil down to the same thing – the political management of production. And political management kills production. The attempt to run the economic life politically kills production, as surely as the entrance of industrialists and financiers into political life is killing politics. Few people any longer really believe in Parliaments, because they are run by rings of economic interests. And the most determined Socialists can now hardly keep their faith in the idea of running factories by democratic committees.

Steiner's "Threefold Commonwealth" has been naturally opposed in Labour circles because it completely condemns this idea of democratic economics. Yet it is in truth a defence of democracy. Steiner declares the democratic idea to be the essence of true politics; for the political life is that in which every adult human being has equal rights and duties; the political life exists to define and vindicate them; it is founded upon that aspect of society in which every one is the same.

(Continued on page 8)

But while the political life is thus expressive of the sameness of men, the economic life exists in virtue of their differences. Every man or woman, by merely having attained a reasonable age, is entitled or even in duty bound, to form an opinion upon public policy. Humanity itself gives a man rights and duties as a citizen, but humanity alone does not entitle anyone to an opinion upon agriculture or to a share in the control of any industry whatever. Only special knowledge and experience create rights in the economic sphere. Whilst the political life proceeds from what we have in common, the economic life is made up of what we cannot possibly have in common – namely, specialised skill and capacity in different functions.

For this reason politics and economics need different organisation. In life, they are mutually corrective. Their amalgamation is really impossible, for the one will inevitably swallow up the other. Now that the economic life has obtained control of the political – which is the Nemesis of the unified State – we are threatened with a terrible reaction, when the economic will be oppressed by the political. This is the mechanically necessary result. It may be that everywhere, as in Russia, something of this disaster must be experienced before the lesson can be learned. But no healthy equilibrium can ever be attained until the life political and the life economic are secured against each other.

Readers of *The New Age* know well enough how dangerous the Parliamentary system is under the influence of the rulers of our economic life. But others, not so well informed, may perhaps ask, "What, exactly, is meant by the separation of the economic and political spheres? They are already separate in appearance, if there is undue influence of the one over the other, what further and completer separation do you propose?" Now, quite apart from the backstairs, the fact is that finance is too openly and visibly organising itself into the life of politics. Much might be said about this, but it would not be to our present purpose. Certainly, it is true that the human Commonwealth is Threefold already, in fact. Human society is eternally threefold in fact. The mischief is that we have begun to think of it as a unity, and if this thought is long continued, as it already has been, there will be an actual coalescence into chaos. The idea that human society could be expressed by the Unity-State is a social insanity. The appearance of this idea ought to alarm us for the health of the State, just as much as a man's having the idea that he was a tea-pot would concern us for his reason. The further "separation" that we would propose, therefore, is a separation in thought. For the real value of a work like Steiner's "Threefold Commonwealth" is that it is founded upon thinking in accordance with the realities of life instead of upon operations with abstractions.

What we need is not so much to propose new organisations – though this is also necessary in its time and place – as to understand the primordial ideas which always find expression in the three main types of human association. This is not a reactionary thought. Such thought about human realities can alone transfigure society, and, at the present crisis, it would give birth to social new forms, different from any which have ever been. To show how it would work upon society, revolutionising the economic life as well as the political, an instance can easily be given. For as soon as the demand was felt, that politics must really be politics – must truly define and realise Universal Human Right – it would become clear why modern economic life is felt to be an intolerable burden to the workers. The free discussion of human rights as such would speedily reveal the truth that labour is not a commodity. Labour is human life in action; it produces commodities, indeed, but cannot genuinely exchange itself for them. If anyone thinks that this is merely a verbal difference, I am sorry

to say that it is only an evidence of the prevailing inability to think upon these subjects in accordance with reality.

The difference between labour, performed as a social function duly recognised and recompensed, and selling one's labour in the open market at its market price, is a vitally important difference in Human Right; hardly short of the difference between honourable service and slavery. In any State where equality found its due expression in a Parliament of Rights, this truth would inevitably become a truism.

Steiner makes some carefully guarded suggestions as to the form which this renewed economic life must take. He is not advocating a Utopian scheme, but knowledge of vital principles gives him a degree of prophetic ability to foresee some things which are necessary and possible; and they are of considerable interest to students of *The New Age* economics. He does not advocate the total abolition of Capitalism. He is well aware that, without some form of private capitalism, there can be no free enterprising activity in a State. But all the workers in an enterprise should have a living relation to its success or failure. Steiner also suggests associations of both producers and consumers, to define the common needs and to fix prices. These are things which must arise out of the self-organisation of a sound productive system. To prevent the tyranny of capital, Steiner requires some arrangement by which money values should "wear out" at a certain speed, representative of the speed at which capital commodities themselves become outworn. He tentatively proposes that all money might be called in, and reissued at a lower rate from time to time, in order to effect this.

Not being familiar with *The New Age* economics, he was unaware that this necessary objective can only be scientifically brought about by subsidising the consumption of needed production, at the expense of the communal Credit. I believe he would have been more than interested to know that it is now quite easily possible so to "water" the capital without "watering" the currency. Slight, and merely suggestive, as are Steiner's remarks upon finance, he understood that the financial organisation is the arterial system of the economic life; and that, as the political life must produce a Parliament, regulating the common life of right, so the economic life must produce, through the higher associations of its producers and consumers, a credit system, with Banks, to regulate the economic life in its own economic way.

While modern thought is dominated by the conception of the Unity-State, it is impossible for the life of economics to be organised upon its own true principles, in its own way. For if the economic forces capture and dominate the State, they prepare revolution. If the State dominates economics, as the Socialists will have it, poverty is the result. Without the collateral liberation of the spiritual and political lives, the life of economics cannot be saved from disintegration.

The idea of the Unity-State, and the endeavour to force all three departments of life into one central administration, does not tend towards social unity. By being obliged to co-habit, the three lives only become more divorced in spirit, and lose touch with reality. Paradoxical as it seems, to minds nurtured in the dogmas of the Unity-State, the Threefold organisation, far from disintegrating the social life, is the only means by which it could find its true unity. For every individual, through the activities of life itself, plays a part in each of the three divisions of the Commonwealth. In each of these he should experience an activity which is independent and real. Then the unity of the Commonwealth would be in himself, in every individual. Here only is the true Centre and Unity of human association, and not in the State. The State is an intellectual abstraction. ▲