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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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The Social Structure

A SUBSCRIBER HAS SUGGESTED THAT WE PUBLISH SOME POINTS ON A CONSTITUTION AS A GUIDE TO THOSE ENQUIRING INTO THIS SUBJECT.

FROM OUR ISSUE OF AUGUST 28, 1948, WE REPUBLISH THE FOLLOWING FROM A LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT TO A CORRESPONDENT:

“ . . . The appearance of ‘The Light Horse’ was ‘the unobtrusive launching of a political vessel of . . . unascertained displacement’ (*T.S.C.*, p.5., March 16, 1946). It began with a major question to our readers and two consequential questions. Taken together, these questions were an invitation to assess the value of our political system and, from the starting point of the answer to that question, to analyse it. A correct analysis could only reveal (a) the nature of the political structure familiar to us in relation to (b) the nature of a satisfactory political structure. Parts II and III, therefore, short circuited the discussion by assuming, in part, that someone had answered Part I correctly (according to our interpretation of the matter).

“What was our interpretation of the matter? That, hidden in every Constitution, implicit or explicit, was a *structure*, which Major Douglas designated ‘tripodal’ or ‘trinitarian.’ If this was, at least pragmatically, understood, the society which possessed that constitution worked satisfactorily; if it was not understood, or, if understood theoretically but not made effective in practice, the association did not work satisfactorily. If there should be anything in this, what we must do first is to understand a Constitution, actual or inherent, accordingly; and therefore we must go to the roots of the ‘tripod’ idea, and, having mastered it, see how it applies to human society.

“At each stage in the development of Major Douglas’s ideas, he and to the extent that they are aware of it, his followers, have been obstructed by the same difficulty, which may be stated broadly to be the pronounced disinclination generally to give credence to the proposition that the value of any individual judgment depends very largely from a realistic appreciation of the matters judged—by the judger. *The Social Crediter* speaks often in almost the same breath about elections, ballot boxes, majorities, Members of Parliament, Officials—matters of which everyone has some direct knowledge—and the structure of society, policy, the ‘price-structure,’ which are matters which are understood, if at all, by very few. We by no means assent to the proposition that anyone may join these few unconditionally. We should agree that anyone may join these few providing that certain essential conditions are fulfilled. Broadly, the conditions are

definable; but that, in its turn, is by no means to say that definition of them automatically secures understanding of their nature. In this particular matter of the proposition that the structure of human society is ‘tripodal,’ anyone who handles the idea successfully must, we should say, have some familiarity with available mechanisms for abstract thinking, be or become reasonably skilful in their use, and apply them honestly and intelligently to the matters which are in dispute.

“The idea that human society has a ‘structure’ at all is, of course, an abstract idea. An engineer’s notion of a building structure is, probably, quite a different thing from a photographer’s. The engineer sees something in a building what is, strictly invisible; he sees lines of force which would not be present if the building were absent, but which, nevertheless, are not the building, which is a material thing, while they are not, yet they cannot be present without it. This notion of structure, as a complex of forces, is only by analogy made applicable to the state of society, the Nation, the Kingdom, *etc.*

“It is at this point that the difficulty of following what Major Douglas has been saying lately enters—that is to say, at the very start. The difficulty arises from confusion of the engineer’s notion and the photographer’s: the ‘pattern’ for the photographer is one of red and green paint, or of vertical and horizontal lines of great clearness or pleasantly moulded shading, or patches of sunlight filtering through the leaves of trees; while for the engineer they are not these things at all, nor are they even hidden rods of steel or the cement encrusting them, nor the bricks, or stone, or girders, or carved woodwork. But common to both conceptions, there is, somehow or other, something that materially isn’t there, but is, nevertheless IT—the structure. Without this essential ‘structure,’ no photograph, no rooms, no life within the rooms would be possible. Yet it is a purely abstract conception. Now the question arises, how far does this notion itself apply to human society?

“To go far, except on purely experimental lines, with this conception necessarily entails self-discipline and patient individual effort to master first the elements and then the whole idea. The ‘feet’ of the tripod are nothing familiar to popular understanding—they are not truly King, Lords or commons; Policy, Administration, Power; Politics, Economics, Culture: they are and are only ‘feet.’

“How is the ‘switch-over’ from mechanical to the social aspect effected: by intuition, or by experience?

“Probably both. Experiment (experience) is the test universally on this plane of the sufficiency of ideas. ‘Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.’ It is Douglas’s

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The Study of Social Credit

THE "ART" OF GOVERNMENT†

The existence of an "Art" or "Arts" of Government is in itself a recognition of the claim that some or all individuals may exert a measure of control over the use and development of human associations.

The Arts of Government are known to and practised by some *individuals*: that is to say, they are not known to and practised by "Allah" or "Fate" or "*Die Gestalt*." The Art of Government includes the Arts of Government, and may be defined as the means whereby all the members of a community (in the result) are constrained to accept an objective entertained by less than the whole number.

Doubtless briefer though less detached definitions might be and are formulated.

The word "objective" calls for examination. It illustrates a dilemma which has frequently shown itself in the development of the natural sciences. It is all very well to say "10 lbs."; but what is a pound? Remember that we are chiefly interested in the power of human beings to produce intended results, and in the first lecture we dismissed the closing phrase of the definition "in terms of their satisfaction" with a brief indication that this was merely the standard of measurement to be adopted. We thus asserted, by implication, the measurability of objectives, and stated the term of measurement. Satisfaction, as we have shown in Lecture IX, can only be truly revealed if there is a sufficiency of freedom (Douglas: freedom to choose one thing at a time"). If there is this degree of freedom, satisfaction can be measured and expressed as a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of people who reveal by their actions (cessation of demand) that their needs are satisfied, and the denominator the total number of people concerned. We need not, therefore, be concerned with any difference between what people think they are about to get and what they actually do get. There are two totally different meanings of "objective." The true or real objective is satisfaction.

† Being Lecture XI in *Elements of Social Credit*, an introductory Course of Lectures published with the authority of the Social Credit Secretariat.

The Art of Government, therefore, is an art exerted to falsify the Social Credit—to substitute a false standard of satisfaction for a real standard; to represent the objective as being attained when it is not, in fact, attained: to deflect the aim of individuals in their attempts to reach their objective: to alienate policy from individuals: to tyrannise—all these paraphrases are useful, and doubtless many others. The aim of government is control of policy, and the Art of Government is chiefly concerned with the development of skill (exerted by individuals) in the control of policy. In a true democracy this skill would be developed and devoted solely to the end of securing that the real objective of association was correctly expressed (not necessarily in words or formulae: better still in *fact*: *factum*=the thing done).

It is important to observe that skill of the kind described, like all knowledge of how to do things, contains a large element of cultural heritage.

Thus we find that those individuals in the community who may be given opportunity of displaying skill in the Arts of Government are so trained that they may develop skill and use it to the greatest advantage with the minimum of trouble to themselves. It is even more widely recognised that a requirement of successful government is the evocation of a minimum of conscious resistance in the governed.

It has already been stated (Lecture X) that the resources in regard to power available to those who control the progress made towards the attainment of any given policy are all those resources available to effective demand. The ability to develop inventions to assist in the special technique of government is only one of them.

Observe that the evocation of a minimum of conscious resistance implies that the Art of Government should be, as far as possible, an art which conceals art: if it were concealed from the governor as well as the governed, both would be influenced by the conviction that they were largely the passive instrument of action and reaction. On one hand Art plus action would be opposed to Reaction without art. Since the Art of Government has exercised the ingenuity of rulers throughout history, we should expect a detailed understanding of it to be hard to acquire. Modern society reveals the volume of effective knowledge in THE RESULT: namely, an association in which the associators (individuals) do not effectively determine policy: at least the acquisition of a sufficiency of freedom is a pre-requisite to their doing so. What cannot be shown to be done, cannot rightly be said to be done.

While the field is one of the greatest importance to students of Social Credit, it must be emphasised that it is a dangerous field to potter in. If the objective method of induction is applied to its problems, it must be applied rigorously. Our remark concerning the evocation of a minimum of conscious resistance is alone sufficient to suggest that the associations we may light upon are capable of generating emotion. Responsibility undertaken unsuccessfully for the attainment of an objective is likely to be confused with culpability. It is within the province of students of Social Credit to assess the objective effect of moral qualities in increasing or diminishing the Social Credit: but such an estimation implies, again, a sufficiency of freedom.

The following expressions used in praise of a deceased British Statesman by another will show that statesmen are

not condemnatory of each other concerning the exercise of a high degree of skill in the Art of Government. He was:—

Completely disinterested,
Perfectly loyal,
Sincere above everything,
Sympathetic,
Attentive,
Courteous,
Understanding,
Respected,
Self-sacrificing,
Generous to a fault,
Fair,
Determined,
Influential,

In his company nothing unworthy in public life could live.

He was courageous and upright. To be asked to speak about him was a treasured privilege.

Admitting that some of these terms are arbitrary, and that all of them are by no means exhaustive of the qualities which may find effective expression in any individual's actions, it is clearly useless to look for the source of social conflicts to the *qualities of esteemed individuals*. But the objective method is not easy of application, without, as has been suggested, engaging the emotions of at least some individuals. Every effort should be made by the student to connect results with apparent associations at every stage. It is necessary to avoid cynicism, and the appearance of cynicism, more than the thing itself (which is rare in all true students) if it is the object of the individual to increase rather than to diminish Social Credit. Niccolò Machiavelli's "The Prince" is relatively unpopular in governmental circles, not because its indications have been surpassed by modern technique, but because of its satirical effect, which is repugnant to those who are themselves conscious of trickery in their dealings with others. We must bear in mind, too, that an *objective* grasp of any considerable field of events may be within the capacity of relatively few people. The division of labour applies; and as each individual becomes more and more proficient in performing a part of the total process, the other parts, and even the finished product, may be increasingly strange to him. Politicians themselves sometimes foster the tendency to cynicism, perhaps purposely (*e.g.*, Sir Josiah [later Lord] Stamp's assertion to the effect that the resources of modern psychology suffice to induce people to LIKE higher taxation); but, broadly, any inducement to depart from the objective method operates to deflect the aim of a serious study such as our own.

(To be concluded)

"Whose Service is Perfect Freedom"

by

C. H. Douglas.

Foreword by Tudor Jones.

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Automation

The following letter appeared recently in *The Daily Mirror*, Sydney:

Sir,

"The more the maintenance of life can be shifted from the backs of men to the backs of machines the more important it is to find a creative outlet for the human energy released," thus wrote the late Major C. H. Douglas in *Credit Power and Democracy*.

We would only be begging the issue to disregard the effect of "Automation" upon the "Wages System;" and we have every justification in asking "Is there any other just claim to an appropriate share in production beside wages?" for it is upon the solution of this problem our future development rests.

If the engineers have banished the "Curse of Adam" is it not well within the realm of accountancy to evolve the means whereby all men can share this freedom? With the advent of automation, we are about to witness what has been stated so often that, in the course of time, the wage and salary system must be replaced by the National Dividend.

Yours,

K. W. MARLOW.

Sydney.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE—

(continued from page 1.)

constant claim that, by some special good fortune rather than by conscious design, the English (not, in this connection, the Scots or the Welsh), hit upon or developed by a process of growth, a rational, consistent and workable Constitution, that Constitution which is now the object of such ferocious attack. But what was it that they had hit upon? They don't seem to know. Possibly this is related to their special qualities which are inseparable from their special defects such of the English as have contributed anything considerable to metaphysics have had a strong mechanistic bias: they are 'practical,' and their accomplishment is a practical accomplishment; but the *nature* of the structure they built up belongs to the sphere of metaphysics. They don't understand what they did, nor, evidently, how to prevent its being undone.

"It would doubtless be unfair to say that, for the English, when the Word becomes flesh it ceases to be the Word; but the general tendency is to fall short of the full idea of the Incarnation. We have no experience of principles operating *in vacuo*: mechanisms are needed to express them. But not all mechanisms are molecular; and social mechanisms are an outstanding exception.

"Now, in the mechanical case of a camera tripod, or the metallic construction to hold a lamp or brazier, the identification with the rods which support the object with the 'structure' is so apparently complete or close as to lead to confusion. In the social analogy this is not so, and when Douglas says that we have discerned an essentially trinitarian principle running through the whole universe (as, less explicitly, has the Christian Church), it should be clear that identification of the elements of experience with the elements of the abstract structure is less self-evident. But

let us start with the simple, mechanical tripod. In the first place, it is fairly easy to see that we can replace one of the 'feet' by 'foot' of another shape or material without affecting in the slightest degree the structure at all. This in itself proves that it is not the material 'foot' but something real invisibly associated with it that is the 'foot' of the structure, the real foot. To do this in practice is very instructive. For example, suppose we replace a straight ash rod by a curved or a spiral rod of steel, the total length remaining the same. In the first case the 'foot' does not even lie where the rod lies, though it passes through both ends, and in the second it passes through each turn of the spiral and again cuts both ends. There are secondary consequences of this substitution, it is true: the new 'foot' is more 'springy' than the old, which could only be shortened by great pressure diminishing its total length by compression along it. But even this familiar tripod is not the only kind in experience. We might replace one or two of the 'feet' by a point of suspension instead of one of support, in which case there is no *physical* point of application of one or two of the 'feet'; but the whole earth supports the 'point of support' by means of some accessory structure, without in the least affecting either the stability or indeed the actuality of the tripod. This illustration should prepare us for hidden features of those tripod structures of a less material nature which we are suggesting as existent realities, as real and possibly more fundamental than a mere prop for a camera or anything mechanical of the sort.

"It would take too long here to substantiate the argument that the analogy between the mechanical system we have been considering and its social or moral counterparts holds. The chief point for us is: does the notion work, and can it be employed with advantage? We say 'yes.'

"But there is at least one other point arising from our consideration of the camera-stand: we can do other things with the 'feet' besides place them in their correct positions on the ground; we can tie two of them together so that they behave as one, or introduce worm into the wood so as to destroy the stability of this 'foot' in its material 'incarnation.' In either case the camera will come tumbling to the ground sooner or later, proving that the 'structure' is stable only so long as it adequately reflects the tripod principle. Further, we might mount our camera on a large granite rock, which might or might not be as stable a foundation for it as the tripod; but, in that case, we have disguised our tripod by, as it were, filling in the spaces between any three 'feet' you like to imagine with unnecessary masses of useless granite. This has an important application to our problem, for it shows that we are not aiming at the construction of something new, but are only trying to gain a mastery over what is old and indeed, universal, through a correct understanding of what it is. It is not a case of the Christian conception being something desirable to realise in nature, or the Judaic, monotheistic, conception being something it is desirable to destroy: the real structure is the same; but the Christian understanding, we allege, is a correct understanding of its essence and the Judaic a false understanding of its essence. If you act as though the Judaic, monotheistic, conception were true, and tie the 'feet' together, the camera will fall; if you use the tripod principle correctly it won't.

"But now we come to a difference between the mechanical structure and the cosmic structure: in the material

case, each 'foot' is, in some respects like each other 'foot': it is (1) elongated, (2) rigid, (3) convergent geometrically with the rest, and so on. In our higher Trinity, this is not so, and the 'feet' are different in all respects but that which happens to be its tripod essence. So the 'Confession of our Christian Faith'—the *Quicumque vult* (whosoever wishes) of St. Athanasius—says: 'Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold . . . this faith, *i.e.*, the faith that things stand in stability in the universe in this way: there must be understood to be underlying everything an indivisible substance, not three Gods but one God, of three persons, and the Persons must not be confounded, nor the substance divided. But this, so far as Athanasius could, carries us to the highest level of understanding of the creation and of its nature and structure. Between this level and the purely mechanical level is an infinity of other levels, and, important to us, the level of social structure. At all levels the same principle is exemplified—or so it is our contention; and at each level 'the persons must not be confounded nor the substance divided.' A writer who has very interestingly and powerfully supported this view is Miss Dorothy Sayers in her book, *The Mind of the Maker*, than which I cannot think of a better introduction to the whole subject. The 'Maker' she has in mind is the maker of things—at his best the artist. She shows how there are 'Persons' of widely different attributes universally associated with each artistic production—*e.g.*, the conception, the idea; the arduous execution and at last the realisation, the accomplishment, the whole which could not be but as itself the outcome of all three. Further she shows what happens when one of these elements is perverse or defective. We think you might start with Miss Sayers' book.

"The 'bricks and mortar' of the Constitutional tripod were in the pre-Cromwellian order in England, though doubtless imperfectly. We should retain such features as we still possess, restore others and doubtless improve some of them."

BOOKS TO READ

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