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THE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ORDER:
ASPECTS OF ANGLICAN SOCIAL THOUGHT IN
ENGLAND, 1918-1945

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This thesis is all my own work.

M. K. Browne

Margaret Kaye Browne
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ABSTRACT

The theological grounds for Christian concern with the social order were the major preoccupation of Anglican social thinkers in the years between the wars. For most of the period, social theology was world-affirming: it presented society as part of God's creative purpose and man as a social being who should not be treated in isolation from his earthly environment. It was argued that the idea of a Christian social order, once central to the Church's social teaching, had disappeared with the collapse of medieval Christendom. The recovery of that idea, and the formulation of its key principles in terms relevant to modern society, became the self-appointed task of the Christian social movement in the inter-war period.

In the late 1930s, Anglican social theology underwent important changes as a result of the influence of neo-orthodox Protestantism. The emphases of crisis theology - God's otherness and man's sinfulness - called into question the assumptions that the pattern of God's creation was still discernible in the modern world and that man could work towards the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. Anglican social theology became increasingly existentialist. Its central theme was the duty of the Christian to obey God's will in the context of everyday life; and the attempt to draw the outlines of a Christian social order was regarded with increasing suspicion.

While earlier social theology had treated the social order as part of the sphere of the Church, crisis theology
set the Church and the world in tension. The full Christian message, it was argued, was not strictly applicable to a world governed by secular assumptions; while the conduct of social and political life belonged properly to the State. The Church's legitimate role in social affairs was therefore limited. In a modern, pluralist society, Christian values could only be implemented when Christians fulfilled the normal duties of citizenship in the light of faith - attempting to translate the Christian law of love into terms of justice, its nearest equivalent in a sinful world. This required a sound knowledge of social and economic realities and a clear understanding of alternative courses of action. Christians who worked, with non-Christians, towards the achievement of justice and truth would help to guide society in a more Christian direction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AEGM</td>
<td>Anglican Evangelical Group Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Church Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Chronicle of [Canterbury] Convocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCFCL</td>
<td>Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life</td>
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<td>CFC</td>
<td>Christian Frontier Council</td>
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<td>CNL</td>
<td>Christian Newsletter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copec</td>
<td>Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship</td>
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<td>CSA</td>
<td>Church Social Action</td>
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<td>FBI</td>
<td>Federation of British Industries</td>
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<td>ICF</td>
<td>Industrial Christian Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILP</td>
<td>Independent Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>LKG</td>
<td>League of the Kingdom of God</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMS</td>
<td>Navvy Mission Society</td>
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<td>SCM</td>
<td>Student Christian Movement</td>
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<td>TUC</td>
<td>Trades Union Congress</td>
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<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
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<td>WEA</td>
<td>Workers' Educational Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>YJC</td>
<td>York Journal of Convocation</td>
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<td>YMCA</td>
<td>Young Men's Christian Association</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The social outlook of the Church of England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has captured the attention of several historians. Their work on the mid-nineteenth century has fallen into two main categories: studies of Christian socialism and broader surveys of 'the mind' of the Victorian Church. This division reflects the gap which existed between Christian socialism and the mainstream of Anglican social thought. The distinction was less clear by 1900 because the main principles of Christian socialism were being incorporated in official Church pronouncements on social issues.

Historians of the twentieth century Church have felt


justified in examining the utterances of bishops and ecclesiastical assemblies with the expectation of uncovering the main elements of Anglican social thought. This has resulted in neglect of the broader philosophical framework of Anglican social teaching. Official bodies tended to deal with immediate issues like housing and education, unemployment and industrial unrest, drinking and gambling; they were not primarily concerned with the exposition of theological presuppositions. Yet an examination of sources like journals and monographs suggests that theological discussion was a vital aspect of Christian social thinking in the 1920s and 1930s.

This study aims to correct the balance; to examine the principles underlying social attitudes and to trace the development of Anglican social theory. It is not intended to depict 'the mind' of the Church as an institution, but to treat official pronouncements as only partly representative of a wider consensus which emerged amongst concerned Anglicans after the first world war. A major concern will be to explore the relationship between theology and social criticism. I shall maintain that the Christian social movement and the idea of a Christian social order can be understood only in the light of particular theological assumptions and arguments. By

4. See e.g. Frank William Jones, 'Social Concern in the Church of England, as revealed in its pronouncements on social and economic matters, especially during the years 1880-1940', Ph.D., University of London, 1968; John Oliver, The Church and Social Order: Social Thought in the Church of England, 1918-1939, Mowbray, London, 1968; Norman, Church and Society. This judgment does not apply to Peter d' A. Jones' work.
contrast, E.R. Norman, in *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970*, argues that the Church's social ideas were drawn, not from theology, but from the general intellectual milieu. In writing about the twentieth century, he makes much of the fact that bishops and Church leaders were part of a class which dabbled with social radicalism. I will argue that the importance of the official Church and episcopal leadership of the Christian social movement declined after the 1920s, and that the dominant influences on Anglican social thought in the next two decades, Anglo-Catholicism and the ecumenical movement, resulted in particular attention being paid to the theological grounds for Christian concern with the social order.

The Anglo-Catholic revival reached 'a peak of fervour and confidence' in the 1920s. One aspect of this revival was a growth of interest in social questions and in the teaching of the medieval Church about the social order. The small group at the centre of this social concern had a strong impact on the wider Christian social movement. Under their influence, there was a deliberate attempt to expound the theological basis of Anglican social thought and to define the principles of a Christian, as distinct from an ideal secular, social order.

Social concern in the Church of England developed against a background of increasing interdenominational co-operation on social questions. Accordingly, I have treated Anglican social thought in this broader context, not as an isolated, discrete phenomenon. Ecumenical co-operation was, in its early stages, based on the assumption that theological differences could be buried in the interests of practical collaboration. This assumption quickly proved untenable and the necessity of establishing a sound theological basis for Christian social principles became an important theme of ecumenical social thought. With the decline of Anglo-Catholicism as a conscious movement, in the 1930s, the growing ecumenical movement began to exert a greater influence on Anglican social thinking. As a result, the predominantly Catholic theology of the Christian social movement was challenged by the neo-orthodox Protestantism popular in ecumenical circles. While this led to important changes in the orientation of Anglican social thought, it reinforced the importance attached to the formulation of theological presuppositions.

Because it was essentially theological, Anglican social thought was theoretical rather than practical and Christian rather than socialist. For this reason, the terms 'Christian socialism' and later, 'Christian sociology', were really misnomers. Anglican social thought comprised a set of theological beliefs and ethical principles which were neither socialism as it would have been recognized
by non-Christian socialists nor sociology as understood by academic sociologists. Christian socialism was a moral outlook which sympathized, in a vague sort of way, with collectivism. Christian sociology was a term popularized by Anglo-Catholics to describe a theological view of society. In both cases, a more accurate term would have been Christian social philosophy or social theology.

Christian socialism or sociology was rarely translated into specific policies or political action. This was partly because, until the 1930s, there was no realistic appraisal of how a Christian social policy could be applied in a secular world. But it was also because the agreement on social philosophy which developed during the period was theological rather than political. The social radicalism which Norman finds characteristic of Anglican social thought in the 1920s and 1930s expressed a theological and ethical outlook, not an agreed set of social policies. On the contrary, there were within the Christian social movement some who favoured a collectivist view and others who envisaged a corporatist interpretation of Christian social principles. Philosophical agreement would have disintegrated quickly in the face of any determined attempt to link Christian principles to concrete political proposals.

8. Norman, *Church and Society*, chaps. 6-8.
9. This point is well illustrated by the experience of the Moot, a small group of intellectuals brought together by J.H. Oldham in 1938 to stimulate discussion on the idea of a Christian society. See below, chap. VIII, part 1.
There were three well-defined phases in the relationship between theology and social criticism. Until the late 1920s, the dominant mode of thought was an ethical idealism, strongly influenced by both the liberal theology which spawned the social gospel in America and the idealist philosophy taught by T.H. Green and Edward Caird at Oxford, in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Indeed, apart from a new enthusiasm generated by the war, there was little to distinguish the creed of Christian socialism in the 1920s from that of the Christian Social Union in the 1880s. As a reaction against the individualism of Victorian religion, it stressed the social implications of Christian teaching. Against the self-improvement ethic of capitalism it preached brotherhood, fellowship and service.

Liberal theology emphasized the immanence of God and the ethical character of Christian teaching. It had little appeal for Anglo-Catholics, even as a basis for Christian social theory. As early as 1922, a small, articulate group of Catholics was urging a return to dogma. In the dissolving security of the late 1920s and 1930s, their call for a reaffirmation of the supernatural and the miraculous found a receptive audience. Christian social thinking entered a more dogmatic phase in which the phraseology of creation and redemption, nature and grace replaced that of brotherhood. This theological trend was accompanied by a revival of Catholic social teaching along lines similar to the papal
encyclicals, *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. The Christendom group, as it came to be called, turned to the social teaching of the medieval Church as the authentic Christian social message. The group's ideal was a revived Christendom; a hierachical Christian society based on function and class. This was carefully distinguished from Christian socialism by use of the term Christian sociology.

The belief that it was possible to create a Christian social order was defensible only on the grounds of a world-affirming theology and did not survive the disillusionment of the mean, dishonest decade. During the 1930s, the wave of neo-orthodoxy which was transforming continental Protestantism began to impinge on British theology. The dramatic effect of this on Christian social thought in England has been virtually ignored by historians. Crisis theology cut right across comfortable creation and incarnation theology by emphasizing the depravity of

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There was little formal contact between the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian social movement until the 1940s. But Roman Catholic writers like Jacques Maritain and Christopher Dawson were certainly read by Anglicans and traditional Catholic social teaching, especially on the just price and usury, aroused interest within the movement.
humanity and the gulf between man and God. Its original prophet, Karl Barth, denied altogether the theological justification for Christian social teaching by asserting the utter impossibility of achieving God's will on earth. Few British theologians became Barthians. But they were deeply influenced by the more moderate version of crisis theology preached by the American, Reinhold Niebuhr, who did not sever the link between Christianity and social concern as Barth did. Niebuhr maintained a positive connection between the Christian demand of perfection and man's attempts to achieve justice. But the result of his influence was a sharp distinction between the spheres of Church and world: a denial that theologians could discern God's plan in the natural order and that Christian sociologists could sketch a blue-print of a Christian society. In this latter, ecumenical phase, Christian social teaching stressed that man could endeavour only to make the right decision for each historical moment in the light of faith and current realities.

Paradoxically, the swing to orthodoxy in theology was accompanied by more radical social beliefs. Crisis theologians Barth, Niebuhr and Paul Tillich all espoused left wing political views and in Britain, the interpretation of Christian social principles became increasingly collectivist, particularly during the war years. Part of the explanation for this lies in the new emphasis on the relativity of historical judgements. By denying that a particular historical solution could be labelled Christian,
crisis theology freed Christian social thinking from the dead hand of conservative Catholic teaching. By acknowledging the impossibility of making sound social judgements without technical knowledge, it undermined the Christendom group's insistence that the Christian social solution had been deduced, once and for all, from theology and natural law.

The most important contribution of crisis theology to Christian social thought was a realistic conception of the State and of the authority of the Church in a post-Christian world. Hitherto, the theology of the movement had blurred the distinction between Church and world by presenting the world as part of God's purpose and the State as an instrument of God. Eager to counteract the dualism of the nineteenth century, social Christians, as they might be called, emphasized the authority of Christian teaching in all spheres of life. This position failed to take account of the patent fact that the rulers of the modern State had no intention of regarding themselves as servants either of God or the Church. During the idealist phase of the movement the inadequacy of this theological position was obscured by the natural caution of the bishops and leading churchmen who were the movement's chief spokesmen. They made a clear practical distinction between the legitimate functions of Church and State. The Church's role was to enunciate principles; while the development of particular policies was the work of the State and technical experts. This distinction was virtually
ignored by the Christendom group. Returning in spirit to the authoritarian position of the medieval Church, they disregarded the development of secular branches of knowledge and sources of authority. They seemed to expect that economists would listen when told that their theories were wrong and that politicians would automatically recognize the rightness of Christian policies.

This position clearly did not provide a realistic basis for Christian social activity. Crisis theology, by distinguishing between the order of redemption (the sphere of the Church) and the order of creation (the sphere of the State), made possible a theory of the State relevant to the post-medieval world. The Church must proclaim the full Christian message, including its social implications. But the State could not be expected to make its decisions on the basis of Christianity. Christian social principles must, therefore, be defensible on grounds of reason or natural law. Because natural law was part of the full Christian message, progress might be made towards a truly Christian social order.

Until the late 1930s, there was a reluctance to confront the intractable problem of relating the idea of a Christian society to the reality of a secular one. In the 1920s, the task of translating Christian social principles into practical policies was dismissed as political, and hence beyond the Church's legitimate concern. When some Church leaders did take a public stand during the 1926 general strike, they aroused a hornet's nest of
controversy which stung the official Church into quiescence without solving the vital problem. The issue was raised again in 1932 when George Lansbury appealed through *The Times* for Christian leadership on the problems of the depression. But Christian social thinkers were unwilling to commit themselves to a political interpretation of the principles espoused in official Church utterances over the previous decade. Certainly the Christendom group was not prepared to sully its conception of a Christian social order by working with politicians or pressure groups who were inspired by other than Christian ideals.

The perspective adopted by men like J.H. Oldham and Alec Vidler, after the ecumenical conference at Oxford in 1937, embodied recognition of the fact that Christians lived and worked in a post-Christian society. They believed that the Church would influence social change, not by mouthing abstract principles or by offering an official social policy, but by encouraging the laity to exercise the normal functions of citizenship in the light of their Christian faith. They saw the futility of seeking purely Christian solutions to social problems and argued that the only practical avenue to reform lay in co-operation between Christians and non-Christians dedicated to the concept of a more just society.

The second world war provided the opportunity to put this new outlook and methodology to the test. Disruption of accepted social patterns, the expectation that a new Britain would emerge after the war, and a flood of official investigations of various social problems provided the
atmosphere and the material for serious discussion about social structures. In actively encouraging debate about projected solutions in the light of Christian standards, social Christians were acutely conscious of the possibility that this was their last chance to influence social reconstruction in a Christian direction.

The ideas discussed in this thesis were those of an articulate minority of Christians who sought to reshape the Church's conception of its role in society. In its early stages, the movement for increased social concern was dominated by a handful of radical bishops who used their influence in ecclesiastical assemblies to arouse wider support for a social interpretation of Christianity. The collapse of their leadership in the early 1930s saw the beginning of the dominance of the Christendom writers, a small, predominantly clerical circle which envisaged itself as the intellectual spearhead of the movement and aimed to convert first, the Anglo-Catholic movement, then the wider Church of England, to its version of the Christian social message. From the late 1930s, Anglican social thought was shaped by a small ecumenical group which deliberately modelled itself on Coleridge's clerisy; aiming to function as an intelligentsia which steered society in a broadly Christian direction.

With the possible exception of the early 1940s, it is doubtful whether the ideas of these minority groups impinged substantially on the beliefs of ordinary Anglicans whose
perceptions of Christianity were more likely to have been shaped by the local vicar, or by publicists like Canon Peter Green or Dean Inge. Despite declared intentions, Christian social thinkers rarely took their ideas beyond intellectual journals and church assemblies. Essentially, they were theorists who remained at one remove from parish life and political action.

In the following chapters I have attempted to trace the development of Anglican social thought through its three main stages and to show the influence, at various points, of different groups of thinkers. The purpose of the first chapter is to outline the organizational framework of the movement and to place it in its historical context. I have sought to show that concern about the Church's social witness developed both within official bodies like the Church Assembly and the Convocations and in voluntary organizations such as the Industrial Christian Fellowship and the League of the Kingdom of God, and to demonstrate the interaction between various facets of the movement. Chapters two, three and four examine the theological basis of Anglican social thought and the implications of different theological emphases for the idea of a Christian social order. In the remaining chapters I have analysed the social critique of the movement in relation to both the theological presuppositions of its leaders and the practical social and political issues of the period. It will become evident that although the movement's leaders remained, throughout the years of this study, thinkers rather than doers, their thoughts, by the 1940s, were more often directed towards specific social issues than towards abstract theological formulations.
I. THE SHAPE OF THE MOVEMENT

1. The Bishops and Cinderella

In an address to an interdenominational group, in 1933, Canon A.L. Lilley spoke of a growing Christian social movement in England which was endeavouring to establish the Church's authority and leadership on social questions.¹

The origins of this movement lay in the challenge of the early Christian socialists (1848-54) to the mechanistic theories of political economists. Charles Kingsley, in particular, had criticized the Manchester school's interpretation of economic forces² and F.D. Maurice had argued that 'economy and politics... must have a ground beneath themselves'. Maurice claimed that society would only be re-generated 'by finding the law and ground of its order and harmony' in God, its creator.³

The Christian socialist position was strengthened by the teaching of a new generation of economists, in the 1880s, that the economic process could rightly be judged from the point of view of ethics.⁴ This assumption was

evident in the writings of the Rev. Wilfrid Richmond, a
tutor at Keble College, Oxford (1876-1881) and a member
of the 'Holy Party' which included Henry Scott Holland,
Charles Gore, J.R. Illingworth, and E.S. Talbot. In 1888
Richmond published a collection of sermons on Christian
Economics which insisted on 'the principle that economic
conduct is a matter of duty' and sought to establish 'a
Political Economy which shall be a branch of morals'.
A subsequent series of lectures, published under the title
of Economic Morals, was introduced by Holland, who drew
attention to the growing dissatisfaction amongst some
churchmen with the divorce between economics and Christianity.

The gap between the isolated laws...[of economics]
and the actual living world...is immense. And we
have no bridge by which to pass over it....
We live as shuttlecocks, bandied about between our
political economy and our Christian morality. We
go a certain distance with the science, and then,
when things get ugly and squeeze, we suddenly
introduce moral considerations, and human kindness,
and charity. And then, again, this seems weak, and
we pull up short and go back to tough economic
principle. So we live in miserable double-minded-
ness.... There is...no consistency in our treat-
ment of facts; no harmony in our inward convictions.

5. A group of Anglican priests at Oxford who had met
first in 1875 and who subsequently occupied a small rural
parish for a month each summer while the incumbent was
holidaying. Between parish duties, the group spent its
time in discussion and reading. One of the fruits of this
activity was the controversial volume of essays, Lux Mundi:
A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation (John
Murray, London, 1889) edited by Charles Gore. The group was
also responsible for the foundation of the Christian Social
Union in 1889. See Jones, Christian Socialist Revival,
pp.167-71.

Richmond's work, Holland believed, overcame this dualism by demonstrating that moral considerations were an intrinsic element in the formulation of economic laws.\textsuperscript{9}

The foundation of the Christian Social Union (CSU) in 1889 reflected growing confidence in the claims of moral law. The objectives of the CSU were described as:

1. To claim for the Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.
2. To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.
3. To present Christ in practical life as the Living Master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, the power of righteousness and love.\textsuperscript{10}

Before long, these ideas were being expressed at a more official level. The report of a committee on industrial problems appointed by the 1897 Lambeth conference, made the following comment:

A Christian community is...morally responsible for the character of its own economic and social order. ...Christian opinion...ought to condemn the belief that economic conditions are to be left to the action of material causes and mechanical laws, uncontrolled by any moral responsibility.\textsuperscript{11}

This judgement was endorsed in 1907 by a joint committee of Convocation and the House of Laymen. The committee's report, written largely by its chairman, Gore, drew


\textsuperscript{10} Jones, \textit{Christian Socialist Revival}, p.177.

\textsuperscript{11} Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Communion Holden at Lambeth Palace in July, 1897. Encyclical letter from the Bishops, with the Resolutions and Reports, 2nd ed., SPCK, London, 1897, pp.139-40. The Lambeth conference, held approximately every ten years, is attended by Anglican bishops from England and overseas. The conferences relevant to this study were in 1888, 1897, 1908, 1920 and 1930.
attention to the effect of human factors on the operation of economic laws. It denied, for example, that the level of wages was determined solely by the interaction of economic forces. In reality, the inability of the weak and ignorant to bargain effectively resulted in their exploitation by the strong. The report maintained, as a fundamental Christian principle, that the proper maintenance of the labourer should be the first charge on any industry. This principle of the 'living wage', accepted by Convocation in 1907 and by the Lambeth conference in 1908, was to become part of the stock-in-trade of Anglican social teaching.

By 1914, there was evidence of greater acceptance, in official Church circles, of the idea that the Church had a responsibility on the question of social justice. Much of the credit for this belonged to the CSU which, according to Peter d'A. Jones, had by 1908 'thoroughly permeated the Church of England, especially the hierarchy'. At its largest, the CSU numbered six thousand, including many bishops. In the years 1889-1913, sixteen of the fifty-three episcopal appointments made in the Church of


England went to CSU men\textsuperscript{15}, and their influence is evident in the increasing attention devoted by the Lambeth conferences and the Convocations to questions of social and industrial order.

The trend was reinforced by the experience of the first world war which brought home to many in the Church the ineffectualness of organized Christianity.\textsuperscript{16} In response to representations from a group of laymen, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, agreed to launch a National Mission of Repentance and Hope, in 1916.\textsuperscript{17} The mission, directed 'not at the lives of individual people, but...at the ordering of our national life',\textsuperscript{18} was a call to 'corporate repentance'.\textsuperscript{19} Its relative failure\textsuperscript{20} deepened the mood of penitence in the Church and resulted in the appointment, by the archbishops, of five committees to examine the Church's structure and teaching and its relationship to the nation.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.164.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., pp.206-7. Iremonger suggests that Davidson's agreement was somewhat reluctant.
\textsuperscript{18} William Temple to Guy's Hospital Christian Union, Dec. 1919, quoted in \textit{ibid.}, p.204.
\textsuperscript{20} The secretaries' report, presented to the council of the Mission on 7 Dec. 1916, revealed that throughout the country the church services had, as a rule, been attended only by persons already attached to the normal life of the parish. Iremonger, \textit{Temple}, p.214.
\textsuperscript{21} The committees examined the Church's teaching office, its worship, its evangelistic work, the need for administrative reform and the bearing of Christianity on industrial problems. \textit{Ibid.}, p.215.
The Archbishops' Fifth Committee, after meeting for over a year, produced a report of 147 pages on Christianity and Industrial Problems. Chaired by E.S. Talbot, Bishop of Winchester, the committee's twenty-seven members included three other CSU bishops - Gore (Oxford), F.T. Woods (Peterborough) and J.A. Kemp-thorne (Lichfield); the Master of Balliol, A.L. Smith; G.K.A. Bell, later Bishop of Chichester; Lord Henry Bentinck and W.C. Bridgeman, Conservative MPs; R.H. Tawney, George Lansbury and Fred Hughes, all members of the Church Socialist League (CSL), and Albert Mansbridge of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA).

The report was not the first of its kind but it was important for its comprehensiveness, its acceptance of the Church's social responsibility and its confession of past failures in the Church's social witness. Talbot struck the note of repentance in his introduction:

The Report represents the belief that the time requires a new beginning on the part of the Church in defining its attitude to the economic and social life of the nation. To admit the necessity for a new beginning is to imply that something has been wrong in the past, and to acknowledge a need for repentance. The admission and the acknowledgment are both frankly made in the Report.

The matter for repentance has been in part an undue subservience of the Church to the possessing, employing, and governing classes of the past.... But perhaps the Church's deeper fault may have been a want of faith in its own principles, the principles of the Master's teaching.

....In such matters as those of the living wage, with adequate leisure and security of employment, the status of the worker within the industry in which he works, the provision of full opportunities
for all of education, health and housing, moral principles which Christianity creates or recognises claim to dictate 'first charges', to which the economic process must submit and conform. To get these things conceded, or even adequately claimed, will require all the spiritual strength and courage which the Church can command... But it is the way of faith, and to follow it is... to return to the best tradition of Christian teaching.22

Unsurprisingly, this was not well-received in some quarters. Bishop Henson (Hereford) found it a matter of 'surprise and regret' that the archbishop should have commended this 'dangerous pamphlet' in a foreword which was 'conceived in a very exalted strain'.23 An equally vociferous opponent was A.C. Headlam, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford and later Bishop of Gloucester. Headlam roundly condemned the report in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, and later published as a pamphlet.24 Other critics were to be found, for example, in the York Convocation.25 But there was widespread recognition of the significance of the Fifth Committee's work. The correspondent for the Church Times, while criticizing the report's theology, saw it as, on the whole,

22. Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.(ix)-(x).
a 'bold and courageous' attempt to apply the principles of Christianity to everyday life. The lower houses of both Convocations commended the report to churchmen and the 1920 Lambeth conference's social and industrial committee found itself 'substantially in agreement'.

The report had a notable influence on subsequent thinking. Its central claim, that no aspect of human life lay outside the sphere of Christian teaching, was accepted explicitly by the 1920 Lambeth conference and by ecumenical conferences held in 1923, 1924 and 1925.


28. Conference of Bishops, 1920, p.67. The findings of the committee were accepted by the full conference in the form of 8 resolutions (ibid., pp.45-7).

It should be noted that two of the bishops on the Lambeth committee of forty-eight (J.A. Kempthorne and F.T.Woods) had been members of the Fifth Committee. Kempthorne chaired the Lambeth committee and its report was issued over his signature. Presumably, however, the other forty-six bishops were in fundamental agreement with its contents.


30. Conference of Bishops, 1920, pp.46 (resolution 75) and 67-8.

31. These conferences, at Mürren (Switzerland), Birmingham and Stockholm, were based on the assumption that Christianity was relevant to social and economic life. The Mürren conferences (1923 and 1924) were organized by prominent Methodist Sir Henry Lunn (editor of the ecumenical quarterly Review of the Churches) as a direct response to the call of the Lambeth conference for further co-operation between all communions in the field of social reform. Lunn, co-founder and chairman of the Hellenic Traveller's Club, had also pioneered British tourism in Switzerland and the one hundred or so conference members were his guests at Mürren. Conference of Bishops, 1920, p.31 (resolution 13) and Review of the Churches, vol. I, no.1, Jan. 1924, pp. 10 and 21. The Birmingham and Stockholm conferences are dealt with in part 4 of this chapter.
It was the assumption underlying the attempt of a group of Anglicans and Nonconformists to mediate between miners and owners in the coal dispute of 1926. Many of the report's subsidiary ideas and principles - indeed many of its actual phrases - reappeared in later expositions of Christian social thought over the following decade. Its most ardent propagandist was undoubtedly the Industrial Christian Fellowship (ICF), founded in 1919; but its main emphases were heard frequently in the public utterances of leading Church figures.

32. See below, chap. VI.

33. One of the most obvious examples of this was the work of the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship at Birmingham in 1924. Cf. Christianity and Industrial Problems, chap. 3, with Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity. Being the Report presented to the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship at Birmingham, April 5-12, 1924, Longmans, London, 1924. The similarity between these reports is partly explained by the fact that three people (R.H. Tawney, J.A. Kemphorne and A.G. Little) were contributors to both.

34. The ICF reproduced extracts from the report in its journal and in countless leaflets. Its whole emphasis on co-operation, fellowship and brotherhood was in tune with the outlook of the Fifth Committee. See e.g. The Industrial Christian Fellowship: Its History, Its purpose, and a Call to Personal Service, rev. ed., Westminster, circa 1927.

The 1920s were the high point of official acceptance of Christian socialist ideas. For a few years, before they failed the test of economic crisis, it seemed possible that the Church's leaders might take a resolute stand on issues of social justice. The judgement of the 1920 Lambeth committee was forthright enough. It expressed 'profound dissatisfaction with the existing order' which it did not find 'compatible with the law of Christ'. The committee's verdict was that

the dominant principle in a rightly ordered society will be co-operation for the common good rather than competition for private advantage. It cannot be said that this principle rules our present system. No doubt it will be urged that if the motives which support the present order are removed, the whole industrial system is in danger of collapsing. But as Christians we cannot accept the assumption that men will only be induced to work by the incentive of large gain or by the stimulus of imminent personal want.37

There was a marked contrast between this assessment and that of an earlier Lambeth committee. The encyclical of the 1888 conference had expressed disquiet at the 'excessive inequality in the distribution of this world's goods'.38 But, faced with a choice between encouraging private thrift or approving state ownership of the country's land and capital39 the committee on socialism had strongly recommended the first alternative, believing that 'after all,

37. Ibid., p.71.
39. Ibid., pp.52-3.
the best help is self-help'.

To the argument that Christ taught the dedication of ability or wealth to the service of others rather than to personal profit, the committee had replied that while this was certainly the ideal set forth by Christ, there was no surer cause of failure in practical affairs 'than the effort to act on an ideal which has not yet been realised.' The Church 'must not, like the Anarchists, destroy the whole existing framework of society for the sake of making experiments.'

It was indicative of the idealistic mood of the bishops in 1920 that they refrained from any such stricture.

The Convocations of Canterbury and York provided a further vehicle for the expression of 'official' Anglican opinion on social and economic questions. Each Convocation comprised an upper house of diocesan bishops and a lower house representing the inferior clergy. These bodies met for only a few days, two or three times a year, and their primary concern was with matters pertaining to the worship, doctrine, and spiritual life of the Church, but between 1918 and 1943 the two Convocations passed, between them, over forty resolutions on social, industrial, or international affairs. Some of these, such as the resolution of the upper house of Canterbury, in 1918, on the duty of the Church to promote a truer fellowship in

43. This excludes debates and resolutions on topics such as temperance and education - the traditional concerns of the Church.
industry, were passed after lengthy debates in which several speakers participated.44

To a large extent, the attention devoted by Convocation to these issues reflected the determination of a few bishops to use it as a way of focussing attention on the Church's social duty. This was true particularly of the Canterbury Convocation 45, where twice as many resolutions were passed in the upper as in the lower house, largely at the instigation of five bishops - Woods, Bell, Kempthorne, C.F. Garbett and Gore - well known for their belief that the Church had a message for corporate as well as individual life.46 But the success of this group in getting measures through suggests, at the least, an unwillingness on the part of Convocation to deny the Church's social responsibility.

In 1919, parliament passed legislation 47 creating a National Church Assembly, comprising three houses - bishops, clergy and laity.48 Much of the impetus for

44. CCC, upper house, 8 Feb., 30 Apr. and 1 May 1918. About a dozen bishops took part in this debate.
45. Canterbury Convocation passed twenty-nine resolutions concerned with social order, compared with thirteen from York.
46. These five either proposed or seconded almost all the resolutions of the upper house. Three of them were members of the CSU, four of the Fifth Committee, two of the Lambeth (1920) committee on industrial and social problems, four of the Lambeth (1930) committee on the life and witness of the Christian community, three of the Standing Conference which intervened in the coal dispute of 1926 and four were involved with the ICF. Woods, although he died in 1932, moved six and seconded one of these resolutions.
47. The Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act.
48. The first two houses consisted of the members of the Convocations of Canterbury and York and the third was elected by the lay members of the diocesan conferences. Statesman’s Year Book, 1939, p.21.
this development had come from the Life and Liberty Movement which developed in the latter stages of the war around men like William Temple, rector of St. James, Piccadilly, and Dick Sheppard, the ebullient vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Expressing the spirit of repentance which pervaded the Church after the failure of the National Mission, the supporters of Life and Liberty urged that the anomalies of Church patronage and other abuses in the Church's organization hindered the proclamation of its message. The Church should look to its own house before preaching the need for reform in society. The process of reform had, hitherto, been impeded by the Church's dependence on the passage of legislation through parliament and it was hoped that the creation of the Assembly would enable speedier attention to these matters. The Assembly might also act as a forum for the discussion of social questions.

These bright hopes were only partly fulfilled. It became apparent in 1928, when parliament rejected the revised prayer book, that the Church did not have full freedom to control its own life and worship. It soon

49. See Iremonger, Temple, chaps. 14-17 for a full account of the Life and Liberty Movement and the passing of the enabling act.

50. Under the enabling act, ultimate legislative power remained with parliament: all measures passed by the Church Assembly had to be submitted to an Ecclesiastical Committee, comprising representatives of both houses of parliament, and then passed in each house of parliament before coming law. (Statesman's Year Book, 1939, pp.21-2.) As far as administrative matters were concerned, this proved a beneficial arrangement in that many reforms were effected which would have taken far longer if dependent on the initiative of parliamentarians. (Iremonger, Temple, p.281.) But it did enable parliament to veto a revised prayer book which had approval of the Church Assembly and both Convocations.
became evident also that many in the Church Assembly were keen to direct its attention to the internal life of the Church rather than to proclaiming the Christian message for social and industrial life. This meant disappointment for those who had a broader conception of the Assembly's role. Looking back in 1948, F.A. Iremonger commented that there had been, from the outset,

a sharp and fateful struggle between two groups ... who differed widely in their conception of its policy and its purpose ... the legalists and the moralists. The struggle was a brief one. The legalists ... were soon in control; the voice of the Assembly is now the voice of the administrator, not of the prophet.51

The prophets did enjoy some success. Between 1920 and 1942, the Assembly passed about thirty resolutions on social and international questions. It also accepted the need for a body permanently concerned with these issues. In November 1921, a committee was set up under Bishop Woods to consider the formation of a social and industrial committee.52 Woods' committee reported in favour of such a venture, believing that this would best enable the Assembly to fulfil resolutions 73-80 of the 1920 Lambeth conference.53 The functions of this committee should be primarily of an advisory or 'watching' nature:

51. Iremonger, Temple, p.281.
53. National Assembly of the Church of England, Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Question of Organizing a Social and Industrial Committee [NA 62], May 1922, p.1. Resolutions 73-80 of the 1920 Lambeth report were all those under the heading of social and industrial questions.
It would consider questions remitted to it by the Assembly, and would, as occasion required, take the initiative in calling attention to social and industrial matters in which moral issues are involved. It would study Bills brought before Parliament, and be in a position to advise as to the support, or opposition, to be given to such Bills. It would convene conferences of persons interested in social or industrial problems. On such subjects it would be the recognised channel of communication between the Assembly and the various Church Societies, and also perhaps between the Assembly and the representatives of other bodies. 54

Woods' committee proposed a Social and Industrial Committee, of not more than thirty members, chaired by a nominee of the two archbishops and assisted by a paid secretary. 55

This recommendation was accepted by a large majority in the spring session of 1923 56, although there were protests from the 'legalists'. Lord Hugh Cecil had argued in 1921 that the Assembly could not pretend to be the voice of the Church of England while it spoke for only fifteen days of the year, and that its work was first legislative, and secondly, financial. In its spare time the Assembly might pass resolutions expressed in platitudinous language,

54. Ibid., p.2. The Social and Industrial Commission did become the Assembly's official link with other social and welfare agencies. It had delegates on the Archbishop's Advisory Board, the Church of England Temperance Society, the ICP, the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship, the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, the Church Tutorial Classes Association, the Church of England Men's Society, the Joint Christian and Jewish Conference and the Christian Social Council. The Commission also acted as a liaison with outside bodies, such as the Lord Mayor's Joint Committee set up to deal with distress in the coalfields. See Church Assembly, Reports of the Social and Industrial Commission, SPCK, London, July 1925 - Nov. 1926 [CA 224], Nov. 1932 [CA 397], p.2 and 1928 [CA 269], p.2.

55. NA 62, p.3.

which nobody disagreed with, but this was really a waste of time. Athelstan Riley (an unsuccessful candidate for parliament in 1919) also saw the Assembly's function as primarily administrative and was afraid that it would be turned into 'a mere debating society'. Others were concerned at the extra expense in which the Assembly would be involved. In fact the financial argument was put so strongly that the committee's recommendation of a paid secretary was not accepted. Even Kempthorne, a formidable advocate of the Church's social responsibility, was 'not clear about the appointment of a paid secretary at the present time.'

The Social and Industrial Committee began its work in 1923, and the following year was constituted a Commission, to which persons not members of the Assembly could be co-opted. Chaired by the Bishop of London (A.F. Winnington-Ingram) it included in its numbers some who were active in other branches of the Christian social movement, such as J.A. Kempthorne, F.T. Woods, W.W. Hough and W. Moore Ede. In the 1920s the Commission met three or four times a year, in the weeks of the Church Assembly. Work requiring to be done between meetings was carried out by the honorary

57. Ibid., vol.II, no.3, autumn 1921, p.91.
58. Ibid., p.99.
59. Ibid., vol.IV, no.1, spring 1923, pp.113-20.
60. Ibid., p.116.
secretary (Sir Wyndham Deedes) or by sub-committees appointed for special purposes. At this stage its main work was on housing, overseas settlement, betting and gambling, and temperance.

During the early 1930s the personnel of the Commission changed. Woods, Hough, and Ede died and several others resigned. Amongst the new faces were Sir Montague Barlow, later to head a royal commission on the distribution of the industrial population; E.S. Woods, Bishop of Croydon and later of Lichfield, A.W.F. Blunt, Bishop of Bradford; Maurice Reckitt, Percy Widdrington and Ruth Kenyon of the Christendom group; and P.T.R. Kirk, General Director of the ICF.

In 1931 Kirk became honorary secretary and a formal standing committee was established to conduct the business of the Commission between sessions. The full Commission also began to meet more frequently. In addition to the usual meetings during the Church Assembly, two all-day conferences were held each year at Fulham Palace.

During the next few years, the Commission tackled a variety of topics. At the Assembly's request, it

62. CA 224 and CA 269.
64. Sir Wyndham Deedes, Lord Daryngton and the Archdeacon of St. Albans.
65. CA 397; Reports of the Social and Industrial Commission, 1933-4 [CA 463], 1934-5 [CA 521], 1935-6 [CA 562], 1937-8 [CA 606].
examined the Housing (Financial Provisions) Bill in 1932, and the reports of the Royal Commission on Licensing, and Lotteries and Betting in 1933 and 1934.\footnote{CA 463, pp.2-3.} It produced its own reports on unemployment (1935)\footnote{Church Assembly, Interim Report of the Social and Industrial Commission on Unemployment [CA 484], SPCK, London, 1935.}, the coal industry (1936)\footnote{Church Assembly, Interim Report of the Social and Industrial Commission on the Coal Industry [CA 539], 1936.}, the Church and youth (1936) and the Church and the planning of Britain (1944).\footnote{Church Assembly, The Church and the Planning of Britain, Report of the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly,1944 [CA 753], SPCK, London, 1944.} The reports on unemployment and the planning of Britain reflected the influence of the Christendom group during this period. Christendom members Maurice Reckitt and V.A. Demant played a leading part in the discussions on unemployment during 1932 and 1933 and the final report strongly favoured their social credit views.\footnote{CA 397, pp.2-3; CA 463, p.3. For a discussion of the contents of the report, see chap. VII below.} The impact of Christendom thinking on the planning report was proudly proclaimed in Anglo-Catholic circles.\footnote{David Peck commented in Christendom, vol. XIII, no.56, Dec. 1944, p.231, on 'the unmistakable and gratifying influence of Christendom upon the recent report of the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly'. The Church Union's Committee for Church Social Action was also impressed. Commenting on the report, 'The Committee expressed great satisfaction with the extension of Christian sociological influence to these central councils of the Church, and the degree in which that influence had been exerted by Mr Reckitt'. Church Union, Minute Book of Committee for Church Social Action (before 1939 known as the Council for Church Social Action), 13 Nov. 1936 - 9 Dec. 1947, Church Union, 7 Tufton St., London, entry for 7 Dec. 1944 (hereafter cited as CSA minutes).}
Through the Social and Industrial Commission, those who envisaged a prophetic role for the Assembly saw some embodiment of their ideal. The Commission endeavoured, in the words of its chairman,

to think out some of the great social and industrial questions, and after taking expert advice from all over England, to bring them up for the Assembly's consideration.72

In this, it achieved a certain amount of success. Its work on unemployment sparked off lengthy debates in the Assembly in November 1932 and again in 1935. In 1936 the Commission turned the attention of the Assembly to the plight of the coal industry.73 As a result of the work of these twenty or thirty men and women, the Assembly was forced to turn, from time to time, from its preoccupation with the administrative machinery of the Church to a consideration of its proper relationship with the society around it.

But the Commission was tolerated rather than encouraged. Its vision of a prophetic role for the Assembly was not widely shared. This was made clear in 1931 when, owing to the financial crisis, it was proposed to suspend the Assembly's activities until the following spring. In a postal plebiscite of members on this question, five hundred and seventy-nine voted for the adjournment, fifty voted against, and about eighty abstained.74 When the

74. Ibid., vol. XII, no.3, autumn 1931, p.431.
Assembly met in the autumn to prorogue itself, the one hundred and thirty-five members who attended the session were told by the chairman, Archbishop Lang, that the main reason for the adjournment was 'the urgent call for economy in all spheres of the national life.' Lang argued that to provide the nation with an example of sacrifice and economy would be 'more effective than the words of any resolution which could be composed'.

Vehement protests were made against the adjournment. W.T.F. Jarrold insisted that:

The Church Assembly was a voice of the Church to the nation...and many men and women throughout the country were looking to it for guidance at a time of national distress and unemployment.

Mr. H. Upward argued that the Assembly 'was supposed to take charge of the soul of the nation' and that if economy were such a priority, the churches, too, ought to be closed for six months as this would provide a considerable saving. He believed that closing the churches would be no more serious than stifling 'what was really the only corporate voice that the Church of England possessed.' This argument was supported by the Dean of Chichester, A.S. Duncan-Jones, who contended that 'The Church Assembly in its meeting was the Church meeting as much as the Church meeting in buildings created for the purpose of worship.'

75. *Ibid.*, p.429. The attendance was usually about three or four hundred.
The abandonment of this 'solemn and sacred function' was the same kind of thing as the abandonment of public worship. 79

To the 'legalists', this sort of argument was arrant nonsense. Lord Hugh Cecil maintained that the Church Assembly existed to do a certain type of work only. Its function was to deal with matters which could be expressed as measures or resolutions. This work should not be confused with the real spiritual function of the Church. To talk about shutting the churches for six months, as though it were the same thing as adjourning the Church Assembly was, Cecil believed, to indicate a misconception of the whole relationship between the Church and the Assembly. 80

The predominance of 'legalist' arguments in 1931 was in keeping with the low status of the Commission. It had begun work in 1923 without the paid secretary recommended by the committee which advised its establishment 81, and indeed without any financial provision at all. 82 By 1936 the Assembly was providing £21.18.5 a year, but the fact that it found £300 a year for ecumenical bodies concerned with social questions was evidence of the low regard it had for its own Social and Industrial Commission. 83

79. Ibid., p.438.
80. Ibid., p.441.
81. NA 62, p.3.
83. Ibid., vol.XVII, no.1, spring 1936, p.155.
J.H. Higginson told the Assembly in mid-1936, the Commission was tolerated by the Assembly on the condition that it asked for no money. It had no full-time staff and no office or headquarters. Its activities were dependent on the hospitality of the Bishop of London each year at Fulham Palace, and on the voluntary work of Kirk who already had a full-time job with the ICF. It was only when the Commission appealed for financial assistance on the grounds that Kirk was overworked, that the Assembly, in 1936, increased its financial provision to £200 per annum.

In 1938, C.S. Woodward, Bishop of Bristol and chairman of the ICF, introduced into the Assembly a motion for the amalgamation of the ICF with the Social and Industrial Commission. Woodward's argument was that in view of the proposed formation of an interdenominational Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life, the amalgamation of the two Anglican bodies was sensible. It would provide 'an effective and representative Council within the Church of England to work in collaboration with the new interdenominational Council' and the union would be advantageous to both bodies. The Commission would benefit from the use of the ICF's 'admirably equipped

84. Ibid., no.2, summer 1936, p.273.
85. Ibid., vol. XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, p.450.
86. The debt owed by the Commission to Kirk and Winnington-Ingram was acknowledged by members on several occasions. See e.g. Florence Hunt and S.J. Bartle, Ibid., vol.XVII, no.1, spring 1936, pp.155-6; F.J. Romanes, Ibid., vol. XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, pp.453-4.
88. Ibid., vol. XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, p.448.
headquarters in the centre of Westminster, and its paid, full-time staff. For the ICF, amalgamation might provide the solution to its financial difficulties which could only become worse with added competition for funds from the new interdenominational council.

It became evident during the course of the debate that the Commission's supporters also hoped to enhance its status and increase the interest of the Assembly in social questions. Winnington-Ingram spoke of his desire immensely to strengthen the Social and Industrial Commission by the addition of more members of the Assembly itself. It had been too small a body in the past, and had tended to be looked on as a body of enthusiasts who were to be kindly treated and tolerated. He wanted to make the Commission a responsible body in which the Assembly would take the greatest interest, and whose reports it would await with real anxiety.

This vision was shared by Woodward who asked:

Was the Assembly always to be an entirely colourless and neutral body with no strong views, giving no lead to the Church on great and vital questions? Were those things always to be left to voluntary bodies with no official backing at all? Could they not envisage a time when the Assembly should become in some sense the leader of the Church in all the great and pressing problems of... the social, economic and common life of the people? He had the vision of an Assembly of a very different kind from that which met at the present day - an Assembly which should be in a true sense the living voice of the living Church.

Woodward's plea met with a negative response and he was forced to withdraw his motion. The proposal had been

89. Ibid., p.451.
90. Ibid., p.436.
91. Ibid., p.469.
provisionally approved by the ICF\textsuperscript{92}, but Assembly members made a clear distinction between the roles appropriate to a voluntary organization such as the Fellowship and an official body like itself.\textsuperscript{93} To unite the two bodies would be to confuse their separate and equally valid functions. Association with an official body would restrict the freedom currently enjoyed by the ICF and might stifle its enthusiasm. For its part, the Assembly, as an official organ of the Church, could not be asked to endorse the views of the ICF, which some regarded as a little 'pink'. Winnington-Ingram, although claiming that 'he was not so afraid of the Industrial Christian Fellowship as some people were',\textsuperscript{94} put the Assembly's position in a nutshell:

the Assembly, although a very charming body, was a very conservative and cautious body, almost a nervous body. It would be fatal to harness the frisky horse of the Industrial Christian Fellowship to the Church Assembly. They wanted to keep the Industrial Christian Fellowship within the Church, and to have a go-ahead body not too respectable and too cautious, such as Mr Kirk and the Bishop of Bristol could give them to perfection. They did not, however, want to be responsible for it, and if they were that merely hampered it in its work.\textsuperscript{95}

The following year, the constitution of the Commission was amended. Members argued that infrequent

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{92} Industrial Christian Fellowship, Minutes of Executive Committee, 1918-47, Industrial Christian Fellowship, Leadenhall St., London, entry for 8 July 1938 (hereafter cited as ICF executive minutes).
\item \textsuperscript{93} CA, Report of Proceedings, vol. XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, pp.448-72.
\item \textsuperscript{94} Ibid., p.436.
\item \textsuperscript{95} Ibid., vol XX, no.1, spring 1939, p.14.
\end{itemize}
meetings and a small personnel inhibited efficiency and prevented the formation of committees with direct responsibility for various aspects of its functions.  

Under the new constitution the membership of the Commission was expanded to fifty, but its functions remained substantially as defined in 1923, and there was no requirement for it to meet any more frequently than in the past.

There seemed to be little inclination to lavish any more time or money on 'the Cinderella of the Assembly'.

Introducing the report of a committee which had been appointed to consider the proposed revised constitution, the Dean of Manchester, (F.G.H. Williams) commented that the committee had tried to formulate its proposals upon the assumption that the Assembly did not desire in its Social and Industrial Commission to create a central organisation with expert, whole-time leadership and a highly paid staff, and as a result, an expanding budget.

Having 'none of the qualifications of a highly paid general staff', it would continue to be dependent upon the voluntary activities of busy men 'who, given time, might be expected to give advice to the Assembly which would be of great value'.

96. CA 606, p.6.
100. Ibid., vol.XX, no.2, summer 1939, p.356.
101. Ibid., p.359.
Williams' description of the duties of the Commission's honorary secretary was telling. His task would largely be:

to create and work an organisation which would make the relevant prophetic utterances available, and operative for the Church Assembly without its being necessary for the Assembly to spend much time actually listening to the prophetic deliverances.\textsuperscript{102}

It had seemed, at the end of the war, as though the official Church might take seriously the role of prophet to society. The utterances of the Fifth Committee, the Lambeth conference and the Convocations all pointed in this direction and the appointment of the Social and Industrial Commission provided a body specifically for this purpose. But these developments reflected little more than acceptance, by a temporarily chastened Church, of ideas which Christian socialists had been pressing for sixty or seventy years. When confronted by a new form of crisis in the depression, official Church bodies had little of use to offer. The Church Assembly promptly prorogued itself and the Convocations showed increasing reluctance to debate economic questions. The Lambeth conference, meeting in 1930, almost totally ignored the rising level of unemployment and its accompanying social distress. Its committee on the life and witness of the Christian community did notice, in passing, that the 'strange paradox' of poverty in the midst

\textsuperscript{102}. \textit{Ibid.}, p.358.
of plenty called for 'hard thinking and courageous action', but its own courage and intellectual vigour were reserved for questions such as birth control and the proposed scheme for union between the Churches of South India. Its only contribution to the discussion of economic and industrial problems was an endorsement of resolutions 73-80 passed by the 1920 conference.

It was clear that unofficial bodies would have to provide the leadership on social and industrial questions. The prophets would have to work through voluntary organizations if they wished to influence the representative councils of the Church and the bulk of the Anglican clergy and laity. This pattern was well established by the end of the 1930s. The Social and Industrial Commission had, from the outset, strong links with the ICF and later, with the Christendom group and the interdenominational Christian Social Council. The close co-operation between the Commission and the ICF was referred to by several speakers in the debate on their proposed amalgamation. F.J. Romanes, a member of the executive of both bodies, claimed that:

> If there had not been the willing and close co-operation of the Industrial Christian Fellowship with the Social and Industrial Commission, the Commission might have been almost abortive.


104. These were concerned, essentially, with the need for a change in the spirit and working of economic life. See Conference of Bishops, 1920, pp.45-7.

The links between the two bodies had been established in 1923 when the Commission nominated four representatives to serve on the ICF executive.\textsuperscript{106} In addition, Kempthorne was vice-president and chairman of the ICF, Hough was a vice-chairman and three other members of the Commission served on the ICF council in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{107} In the 1930s the liaison was strengthened by the appointment of Kirk as honorary secretary of the Commission, and by the nomination of four members of the Fellowship's executive to serve as delegates.\textsuperscript{108} The presence also of several ICF personnel unofficially on the Commission brought the Fellowship's representation to nearly half the Commission's numbers.\textsuperscript{109}

It was agreed by both bodies that close co-operation between them was desirable.\textsuperscript{110} In effect, this meant heavy dependence by the Commission on the resources and facilities of the Fellowship. Particulars of courses of study for clergy and laity prepared by the study department of the ICF were frequently circulated amongst members of the Commission, and there was deliberate co-operation with the

\textsuperscript{106} ICF executive minutes, 14 Dec. 1923. The four were F.T. Woods, Lord Daryngton, Florence Hunt and J.H. Higginson.

\textsuperscript{107} W. Moore Ede, S.J. Bartle and Sir Wyndham Deedes. See Industrial Christian Fellowship, Annual Report, ICF, Westminster, for 1920s.


\textsuperscript{109} About eighteen men and women were members of both bodies at various stages in the 1930s. Usually there were about eleven or twelve ICF members on the Commission at any one time. This represented almost half its possible membership of thirty. For membership lists see ICF annual reports and the reports of the Social and Industrial Commission.

\textsuperscript{110} ICF executive minutes, 14 Feb. 1930; CA 397, CA 463, CA 521.
study department when the Commission was dealing with problems common to both bodies. Kirk claimed in 1938 that most of the reports presented to the Assembly by its Social and Industrial Commission had been prepared by the staff of the ICF. As he pointed out, these reports had been accepted by the Assembly, despite the fact that many of its members regarded the Fellowship as a little 'pink'. By its rejection in 1938 of the proposal to amalgamate its Social and Industrial Commission with the ICF, the Assembly had finally cast off the mantle of the prophet. But through close unofficial co-operation between the Fellowship and the Commission, the prophets were able to use the Assembly as a vehicle for the expression of their dissatisfaction with the existing social and industrial order.

2. The Frisky Horse

The formation of the ICF, in 1919, reflected the mood of repentance in the Church and the related concern to attract the working classes. The Fellowship grew out of an 'old-fashioned evangelistic' body, the Navvy Mission Society (NMS), founded in 1877. Inspired by all the talk about 'reconstruction', the NMS decided, in 1918, that it needed to re-examine its relationship with the 'Labour world'. A scheme for reconstruction drawn up by the society's chairman, the Bishop of Croydon (H.H. Pereira),

111. CA, Report of Proceedings, vol.XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, p.467. See also the speech of F.J. Romanes in this debate. He claimed (p.454) that Kirk and his staff had almost always provided the Commission with information from the files of the Fellowship or from its research department.

112. James Adderley, a member successively of the CSU and the ICF, used this description in an article in Commonwealth, Feb. 1927, quoted in Wagner, Church of England and Social Reform, pp.305-6.
its secretary, P.T.R. Kirk, and Rev. H.J. Warde, was accepted by the NMS as the basis for its future work. The report recommended that the society expand its activities beyond its traditional province, 'the Public Works' into other areas of industry, like factories, shipyards, mines and collieries. It should make strong efforts to understand the demands and aspirations of 'Labour' in an attempt to overcome the working man's alienation from the Church and 'help the Church at large to better understand how far the demands for better conditions are just and right'.

In 1919, the NMS changed its name to the Industrial Christian Fellowship. The following year, it confirmed its intention of devoting more time to social questions by amalgamating with the CSU. The CSU needed revitalizing. Not only had its activities been crippled by the war, but it retained the academic, middle class character of the Oxford dons who had founded it and its contact with the working classes was rare. 'What could be better', wrote one old CSU man, 'than to amalgamate the Navvy Mission, on the lookout for a social gospel and the C.S.U., in despair about capturing the men'.

The objects of the new society, as accepted by an ICF sub-committee and a CSU deputation in December 1919,

113. ICF executive minutes, 27 Dec. 1918.
114. In 1905 Lewis Donaldson led a mass march of the unemployed from Leicester to London and back, but this was atypical and not enthusiastically welcomed by other CSU members. See Jones, Christian Socialist Revival, pp.181-8.
reflected its dual origins. It took over, almost word for word, the expressed objects of the CSU\textsuperscript{116} and added a paragraph which reflected the NMS tradition. As well as studying the application of the Christian law to social practice, the Fellowship would endeavour

By living Agents to minister spiritually and socially to all engaged in the industrial world, to appeal to them to confess their faith in Christ, and to seek to unite all classes in a bond of Christian fellowship and prayer.\textsuperscript{117}

In the early years, the organization and methods of the ICF reflected more of its evangelistic heritage than the CSU tradition of study, debate and reform. The emphasis was on getting a message across to the worker rather than on analysis of social problems. The Fellowship's headquarters staff in London was relatively small\textsuperscript{118} and it depended heavily on its clerical and lay workers in the field. Half a dozen 'clerical directors' supervised an army of lay agents and missioners who preached the ICF gospel in factories, halls, clubs and at open-air gatherings. The lay agents were all former working men or women who had been trained by the Fellowship and then sent out into industrial areas.\textsuperscript{119} The best known of the clerical missioners was G.A. Studdert-Kennedy, 'Woodbine Willie', who had earned a considerable reputation as a chaplain on the western front. Often a special 'crusade' would be

\textsuperscript{116} For the objects of the CSU see above, p.16.  
\textsuperscript{117} ICF executive minutes, 13 Feb. 1920.  
\textsuperscript{118} Usually between six and nine.  
held in a particular area. These crusades, initiated at Woolwich in 1919 by Bishop Hough, were organized by the Fellowship in collaboration with local clergy and comprised a number of open-air meetings conducted over a period of about a fortnight. Hough described the crusade as

an effort to break down barriers; to induce those who are outside Church organizations, but not necessarily antagonistic to religion, to hear the way in which Christianity may bring light to bear on the complex problems of to-day. In this way it may be possible to remove prejudices, and make those who hear willing to learn more at a later stage.\(^{120}\)

Towards the end of the 1920s the emphasis began to change. The campaign to convince the working man that the Church, despite appearances, really was on his side, was supplemented by increasing use of the old CSU methods of study and research. To the usual pamphlets and the Fellowship's monthly organ, *The Torch*, were added study guides and conferences as a means of inducing Anglicans to think about the social implications of Christianity. The Fellowship encouraged use of its study department, bookroom and library and held its own study circles at headquarters in Westminster. In August 1936, the study department reported that sixty-three groups had been formed throughout the country.\(^{121}\) Another tactic was the 'Mixed Group'. The first of these, comprising theologians, economists and industrialists, was formed in 1933, to

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120. Quoted in *ibid.*, p.308.
update the Fifth Report.\textsuperscript{122} This task was not, in fact, undertaken, but the group produced, in 1935, a document on \textit{The Church and the New Economic Order}. This attempted a statement of the principles implied in the kingdom of God in relation to industry and an evaluation of current trends in the light of those principles.\textsuperscript{123} Other 'Mixed groups' were organized in Manchester and Birmingham in 1935\textsuperscript{124} and at headquarters during the second world war.\textsuperscript{125} From the early 1930s, the Fellowship also held annual conferences for the clergy. In 1936 Rev. W.G. Peck, a member of the Christendom group, was appointed as a full-time organizer and by the early 1940s, he was arranging about ten conferences a year.\textsuperscript{126}

The impact of the ICF is difficult to assess. In its \textit{Annual Report} for 1928/29 the Fellowship boasted 12,000 subscribers\textsuperscript{127}, although by 1934/35 the numbers had dropped to 9,000.\textsuperscript{128} Totally dependent for its income on subscriptions and donations, it was constantly bedevilled by financial difficulties. As early as 1922 it was necessary

\begin{enumerate}
\item[122.] ICF executive minutes, 14 July 1933.
\item[123.] Industrial Christian Fellowship, \textit{The Church and the New Economic Order}. By a 'Mixed Group' composed of Clergy, Men engaged in Business or in Public Administration, and Students of Economics, ICF, 1935, p.1.
\item[124.] ICF, \textit{Annual Report}, 1935-6, p.39.
\item[125.] ICF executive minutes, 12 May 1939.
\item[126.] ICF, \textit{Annual Report}, 1942-3, p.10; 1943-4, pp.7-8; 1944-5, pp.7-8. Peck also claimed to be much in demand as a public speaker.
\item[127.] ICF, \textit{Annual Report}, 1928-9, p.2.
\item[128.] \textit{Ibid.}, 1934/5, p.1.
\end{enumerate}
to launch an appeal for £5,000\textsuperscript{129}, and this occurred again in 1931, when, as a result of the deteriorating economic situation, the ICF experienced a 'catastrophic deficit'.\textsuperscript{130} By August 1938 the financial situation threatened a curtailment of activities\textsuperscript{131} and the executive considered sacrificing the freedom of the ICF's voluntary status for the security of a regular income which could be achieved by amalgamation with the Church's Assembly's Social and Industrial Commission. Clearly the average Anglican parishioner was not sufficiently distressed about the gap between the Church and labour to give financial support to the Fellowship's attempts to bridge it.

Yet many seem to have heard the ICF's message. One contemporary estimated that in 1925 its agents spoke to 'perhaps a million or more working-men' and suggested that clerical directors had often acted as intermediaries in industrial disputes.\textsuperscript{132} In 1930, one of the missioners claimed that over 1,500 workers heard the ICF message each week, not including church congregations and the crowds on Sundays in the market place.\textsuperscript{133} Reckitt, who was in many ways critical of the ICF in its early years, believed that it was

\textsuperscript{129} Torch, May 1922, p.11.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., June 1931, p.(i) and Oct.1931, p.(iv).
\textsuperscript{131} I.C.F. Review, Aug. 1938, p.152.
\textsuperscript{132} Wagner, Church of England and Social Reform, p.308.
\textsuperscript{133} Torch, Apr. 1930, p.(iii).
doing an obviously practical job in seeking to interpret the significance of the Gospel to men and women in the midst of the perplexities that beset their working lives—men and women for the most part whom parochial and chapel activities are failing to reach.  

But this was success measured in the Church's terms. The object of the exercise was to show men and women in the factory and the street that the Church of England cared, and that Christianity could provide the answers to many of their problems. Essentially it was a paternalistic venture. The Torch in May 1922 reported that 'the militant spirits of the I.C.F.' were currently organizing campaigns in several industrial centres. Plans were 'being carefully laid for massed attacks on Walthamstow...Cardiff...and Reading, and it was hoped that 'many souls will be won for Christ, and that many will be convinced that upon His laws alone can they hope to build a prosperous and happy social order.'

The reports of ICF missioners, which appeared in The Torch fairly regularly from the late 1920s onwards, suggest that this 'onslaught mentality' was fairly typical. The missioners addressed workers, told them that industry should be inspired by brotherhood and co-operation, and at times answered their questions, but there is little evidence that they really came to terms with the problems of everyday life as perceived by the

135. Torch, May 1922, p.16.
working man. In the 1930s, as the attention of the ICF began to turn from closing the gap between the Church and labour, to criticizing the contemporary social structure from the Christian viewpoint, its orientation became increasingly academic, and its capacity to view life from the working class end even more limited.

Although it came closer than most Anglican bodies to the language and problems of the working classes, the ICF was never a genuinely popular body. Its lay missioners were drawn from the working population and its annual subscription of half a crown\footnote{ICF, Annual Report, 1926-7.} would not have been prohibitive for the working man. Similarly, a year's subscription to *The Torch* cost only three shillings.\footnote{See e.g. *Torch*, Nov. 1922, p.10 and *Malvern Torch*, Apr. 1944, p.8. In Nov. 1925, the annual subscription was advertised as only two shillings, and for a literature fee of five shillings, the subscriber could receive not only the *Torch* but the *Quarterly Intercession Paper* and all the pamphlets and leaflets published by the Fellowship during the year.} But working class participation in the organization of the ICF was virtually non-existent. The NMS' original scheme of reconstruction had envisaged the co-option on to its committee of 'representatives from the World of Labour',\footnote{ICF executive minutes, 27 Dec. 1918.} but how seriously this was taken can be judged from the fact that most meetings were held at times which made it virtually impossible for working people to attend. Annual meetings of the Fellowship and half-yearly meetings of its council were frequently held in the morning or afternoon of a weekday, and the executive committee met,
almost without exception, on weekday afternoons. Consequently, the administration of the Fellowship was in the hands of clergymen, and lay men and women of the leisured or business classes. Its presidents were the Archbishops of Canterbury, York and Wales, its vice-president and chairman were invariably bishops, and there was always a large contingent of bishops on the council. Labour interests were represented by unionists like Frank Hodges, secretary of the Miners' Federation; H.H. Elvin, president of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), 1937-8; and Fred Hughes of the National Union of Clerks. These men were free of the more circumscribed hours of ordinary working men. There were, too, some Labour MPs such as C.G. Ammon, Evan Davies, E.N. Bennett, Somerville Hastings, Morgan Jones and J.H. Martin. But only three of these Labour men ever served on the executive, the majority of whose thirty or forty members, like the two hundred or so council members, were unmistakably middle class. The fact that, by 1927,

139. The times of annual and council meetings were reported in the Torch (see e.g. June 1924, p.iv; Feb. 1931, p.(iii) and I.C.F. Review, July 1939, p.132) and the times of executive committee meetings in the minutes.

140. A complete list of members of the council and the executive committee and of all office bearers was published in the Annual Report. The lay members for the year 1926/7 included the following names: Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, KCMG, CB; Sir Henry Slessor, KC, MP; Lord Henry Bentinck, MP; Mr W.L. Hichens (Managing Director of Cammell Laird's); Vice-Admiral S.R. Drury-Lowe, CMG; Miss M.E.E. James, JP; Miss Knight-Clowes; Lady Maurice; Miss Constance Smith, OBE; Miss Gertrude E. Tuckwell, JP; Lady Ailwyn; Mr C.G. Ammon, MP, JP, LCC; Sir Reginald Antrobus; Miss Baker-Gabb; Major A.H. Bathurst; Mr E.N. Bennett, JP; Major J.D. Birchall, MP; Sir Charles Bright, FRSE, M.Inst.C.E.; Colonel David Carnegie, CBE; Sir Robert Connell; Miss Irene Cox, OBE; Lord Daryngton, PC; Miss A. Deane, OBE; Alderman G. Edwards, OBE, JP; Mrs. Patrick R. Green, JP; Dr Somerville Hastings; Lieut.-Com. R.H.K. Hope, RN; Mr W. Hyde, JP, CC; The Hon. Gertrude M. Kinnaird; Sir Cyril Kirkpatrick, M.Inst.C.E.; Sir Lynden Macassey, KBE; Sir Donald Maclean, KBE; Lady Angela Malcolm, etc.
fifty-one bishops had signed a resolution commending the work of the ICF\textsuperscript{141} indicates that, despite what one clergyman described as its 'bright eccentricity',\textsuperscript{142} the ICF was basically 'respectable'.

Yet the ICF was always subject to criticism from conservatives, who feared that it was socialistic. This accusation was particularly prevalent around 1926, when the Fellowship was held responsible for the intervention of Church leaders in the coal dispute, and in 1938 when amalgamation between the ICF and the Social and Industrial Commission was contemplated. In April 1926 the editor of the Spectator devoted a leading article to the ICF, which he claimed was ignored by most newspapers and violently denounced by a few. He found this treatment 'strange' in view of the excellent principle for which the Fellowship stood - 'the doctrine that Christianity should concern itself with the conditions of industrial life'. The ICF was 'inherently not merely unexceptionable, but admirable'. Yet he was clearly disturbed by reports that the ICF was socialistic and suggested that rumours of some ICF meetings being indistinguishable from socialist meetings were a little too strong to be denied.\textsuperscript{143} In July, at the time of the coal dispute, the accusation was taken up by the editor of the Morning Post:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{141} See ICF: Its History, Its Purpose, and a Call to Personal Service.
\item \textsuperscript{142} CA, Report of Proceedings, vol. XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, p.455. This comment was made by Canon H.C. Robins.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Spectator, 10 Apr. 1926.
\end{itemize}
The Industrial Christian Fellowship, as we have noted from time to time, makes frequent interventions into politics, and always, as it happens, on the Socialist side. 144

The paper claimed that the ICF was 'a very active political organisation' which at every crisis was to be found 'working in the interests of the Labour Party'. Its official organ, The Torch 'has for years carried on a political crusade':

So long as five years ago it published several articles favouring the Bolsheviks, and even justifying the secularisation of the Christian Sunday in Moscow. It declared that "the Church must stand clearly for the New Social Order." 145

The Morning Post, apart from failing to produce dates for these alleged articles, chose to ignore the fact that each copy of The Torch carried the declaration that the ICF was 'not a political but a spiritual movement' and that the opinions expressed in articles printed were not necessarily those of the editor. 146 It chose to ignore, too, the fact that as well as articles which might have attempted to explore the common ground between Christianity and communism, there were also contributions in The Torch from conservatives like Lord Eustace Percy, Major Birchall and Lord Charnwood. 147 In November 1926 a leading article in The Times raised the issue again and took much the same stand as the Spectator. It was suggested that while 'there was nothing in the original scheme of the Fellowship to

144. 'Ignorant Interventions', Morning Post, 19 July 1926. The accusation was repeated on July 24 in a leader entitled 'A Questionable Intervention'.
145. 'The Church and the Strike', ibid., 31 July 1926.
146. E.g. Torch, Nov. 1922, p.10.
147. Ibid., Oct. 1921, p.3; Nov. 1922, pp.12-13, and Dec. 1921, p.11.
commit it to Socialism' and though 'its main principle, that the conduct of industry ought to be informed by the Christian spirit', was 'quite indisputable', it was evident that 'many of its activities have fallen under the control of Socialists'.

The Fellowship took steps to defend itself. Studdert-Kennedy wrote twice to The Times and Temple, now Bishop of Manchester, wrote a pamphlet in defence of the ICF, of which 20,000 copies were published. Studdert-Kennedy's denial of socialism was emphatic:

Not a single one of the activities of the I.C.F. has fallen under the control of Socialists. If any of them did I would sever my connexion with the Society immediately. I am not a Socialist, and spend a considerable amount of my time exposing popular Socialist clap-trap, which is a curse to sane thinking, as popular Tory clap-trap is on the other side.

Further, it was 'a direct contradiction of the aim of the Fellowship to associate the Church with a particular policy.' Some members of the public obviously remained unconvinced. In 1935, a correspondent for the Guardian found it necessary to defend the ICF against accusations that it was identified with socialism. He asserted that the ICF was not political, that it embraced all shades of political opinion, and was to be commended for its efforts to make human suffering a matter of conscience without insisting on special remedies. In 1938,

148. 'Christianity and Economics', The Times, 17 Nov. 1926.
149. ICF executive minutes, 11 Mar. 1927. I was unable to obtain a copy of this pamphlet.
150. The Times, 19 Nov. 1926, p.10. See also a second letter from Studdert-Kennedy on 29 Nov., p.8 reaffirming this position.
Woodward's proposal to amalgamate the Fellowship with the Social and Industrial Commission brought the matter to a head again. The Assembly debate revealed that several members were wary of the ICF and believed themselves representative of Church opinion. Canon H.T. Robinson claimed that 'there was no question that for a great many people the Industrial Christian Fellowship did stand for a particular political bias', and Canon H.C. Robins, a supporter of the ICF, conceded that 'some of the laity, and perhaps .... some of the clergy' believed 'that the Industrial Christian Fellowship was a little "pink"'.

Criticism on this occasion was based on a pamphlet which the ICF had produced earlier in the year, entitled The Industrial Christian Fellowship: What it Stands For. Charles Marston, who believed that the gospel gave the capitalist industrial system 'a religious sanction', issued to his fellow members of the Assembly a pamphlet entitled 'On what does it stand?', which accused the ICF of 'proclaiming some form of economic collectivism as the necessary mode of social salvation'. This, he claimed, was wrong, chiefly because the Church's sole duty was 'to minister to the inner life of the individual'. It had 'no concern with questions of social and economic order'.

153. Ibid., p.455.
155. I was unable to obtain a copy of Marston's pamphlet, consequently this statement of his position is based on the ICF's reply to it, in a leaflet entitled The Industrial Christian Fellowship: "On What Does It Stand?" A Reply to Sir Charles Marston, ICF, circa 1939. Some of the arguments in this leaflet were also put forward by Kirk in the Assembly, see CA, Report of Proceedings, vol.XIX, no.3, autumn 1938, pp.465-7.
Fear that the ICF stood for a system of economic collectivism stemmed from its forthright condemnation of the existing socio-economic order. Two of the speakers in the Assembly and an editorial in *The Times* based their criticism of the Fellowship on two sentences quoted from *The Industrial Christian Fellowship: What it Stands For*. On page thirteen of this pamphlet, said J.H. Higginson, 'was to be found in big black type' the statement "We assert, therefore, that the present order is fundamentally wrong and must be replaced by another and different order". And on page six, "The only judgment which the Christian can pass on the present order is that it is fundamentally wrong". Higginson and Peter Agnew (a Conservative MP) did not wish to ally themselves, or the Assembly, with people who condemned the existing social order. They preferred to deal with any 'particularly flagrant' injustices as they found them and to reform, not the system, but 'the individuals who worked it'. As Higginson put it:

A typewriter might produce the most beautiful poetry or the most obscene doggerel, but it was not the typewriter which was to blame in the latter case but the man who worked it. The same was true of the industrial system at the present time.

In reply to this criticism, the Fellowship's officers reasserted the ICF's watchword, 'We stand for Christ and

His principles, independent of party, and claimed that it 'was in no way committed to anything technically known as economic collectivism.' It had never offered and 'would not dream of offering' any particular social or economic scheme as the satisfaction of man's whole nature. The ICF's interest in questions of social order was 'moral, theological, and above all evangelistic'.

It would have been more honest, claimed Woodward, to have quoted the passage which immediately followed the offending sentence. This asserted that

the means by which this change is to be effected is a radical change of the corporate mind, by which men shall accept the Divine Purpose as the final and determining end of all their actions; that this change of mind is to be effected by the redeeming power of our Saviour Christ; that the well-being of the community neither demands nor is compatible with the denial of freedom to the individual... that the new order we hope for can only arise if the soul of the individual and of the nation is redeemed by the living power of Christ; and that specific proposals of reform or reconstruction are to be judged according as they do or do not lead men towards a corporate change of mind.

This, said Woodward, was 'a religious and not a political judgment'. Kirk took the same line in the Church Assembly, arguing that the ICF's position was based on 'the great social traditions of the Church' - on the belief that 'only such a social and economic order as ministered

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159. Bishop of Bristol, letter to The Times, 22 Nov. 1938, p.10.
161. Bishop of Bristol, letter to The Times, 22 Nov. 1938, p.10.
163. Bishop of Bristol, letter to The Times, 22 Nov. 1938, p.10.
to man's spiritual ends would be regarded as theologically justifiable'. As the existing social and economic order did not satisfy this criterion it must be changed - not because 'a new system could in itself provide salvation, but because the present system was addressed to false ends'.

The ICF's condemnation of the existing capitalist order certainly did not imply espousal of economic collectivism. The Fellowship did not advocate anything which would have shocked a socially conscious bishop. From the outset its gospel was the Fifth Report, commended by the Lambeth conference in 1920. The key principles of the report were that industry was a social function carried on for the benefit of the community, and that the dignity of human personality demanded payment of a living wage and a voice for the worker in the industrial conditions on which his life depended.

Neither of these was inconsistent with capitalism.

Concern for individual freedom made the Fellowship nervous of collectivist trends. While recognizing the need for deliberate economic and social planning, it stressed the importance of harmonizing individual freedom with social order:

In the world today the necessity for the ordering anew of a social life which is falling into disorder gives rise to a danger of over-riding the rights of the individual....

Since restraint is inevitable, the Christian must reach clear ideas as to what precisely is to be restrained. Restraints must not be of such a kind that the spirit of man is wounded by them.166

Similarly, the Fellowship's attitude to the distribution of wealth stopped short of collectivism. While condemning present inequalities as incompatible with Christian teaching, the ICF did not commit itself to collective or State ownership of the means of production, or even to equal distribution of wealth. It asked only that 'the provision and distribution of material means sufficient for the attainment of a "good life" by everyone' be the first concern of industry.167 This was nothing more than the 'living wage' principle. Likewise, the Fellowship condemned class distinctions which implied 'an inferiority in real value of one class to another' and hid 'the essential value of each individual'; but it proposed instead, not a classless society, but 'a social structure in which classes would be genuinely functional and co-operative'.168 If being 'pink' meant condemning the existing social order, then the ICF was very 'pink'. But the claims that it supported socialism or economic collectivism were quite unfounded.

166. ICF: What It Stands For, pp.10-11.
167. Ibid., pp.13-14.
In fact, the Fellowship did not have a distinctive economic and social philosophy. It was rather like a weather vane, directed by the prevailing wind. In its early years, it was a faithful advocate of the Fifth Report. But by the early 1930s, its publications were beginning to reflect Kirk's increasing contacts with the Christendom group. In March, April and May, 1931, Demant contributed three articles to The Torch on 'Unemployment as a Problem in Christian Sociology'. In July, the ICF executive was addressed on the views expressed in Demant's forthcoming publication, This Unemployment: Disaster or Opportunity? The executive resolved that it could 'in no way recommend the book', which supported Douglas social credit, but it approved the attendance of ICF representatives at a conference, later in the year, to discuss its argument.169 The Christendom group was given plenty more opportunities to air its views to ICF audiences. At its meeting of January 1932, the council was addressed by Professor T.E. Gregory, a member of the Macmillan committee, on 'The Monetary Crisis: Its Causes and Remedies', and also by Demant, who opposed Gregory's defence of the present system of finance.170 In March, Demant spoke to the ICF's Clergy Fellowship on 'the present economic deadlock',171, and in April the executive heard him on the same subject.172

169. ICF executive minutes, 12 June and 10 July 1931. The conference was organized by the Christian Social Council. 170. Torch, Feb. 1932, pp.(iv)-(v). 171. Ibid., Apr. 1932, p.(iv). 172. ICF executive minutes, 8 Apr. 1932. The attendance at this meeting was very small.
In February 1933, two social creditors, A.J. Penty and W.T. Symons shared the platform at an ICF clergy conference with A. de V. Leigh of the London Chamber of Commerce and Edwin Barker of the Student Christian Movement (SCM)\(^{173}\), while both Reckitt and Widdrington addressed the Clergy Fellowship.\(^{174}\) The ICF took care not to commit itself to the social credit views of the Christendom group\(^{175}\), but there was certainly agreement that the monetary system was in need of reform. The clergy conference of 1933 was prepared to

indict the monetary system as a whole, on the ground that it is not doing what we are justified in expecting it to do, namely to arrange for the proper distribution and exchange of goods and services. The gifts of God are being withheld from His children.\(^{176}\)

The Fellowship also began to share the Christendom group's concern with developing a Christian sociology based on Catholic theology.\(^{177}\) Christendom writers contributed

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176. 'The Christian Faith and the Economic Depression', *ibid.*, Apr. 1933, p.52. See also the report of the clergy conference of 1932, 'Unemployment: With Special Reference to the World Financial Crisis and the Present Monetary System', *ibid.*, Nov. 1932, pp.(i)-(iii).
177. E.g. in June 1936 the *I.C.F. Journal* commented that 'one of the greatest problems facing the Church to-day is the education of its people in the social application of the Gospel' and published, with approval, a document issued by the education committee of the Christian Social Council on 'The Promotion of More Adequate Types of Educational Work on Christian Sociology'. See 'Education in Christian Sociology', *I.C.F. Journal*, June 1936, pp.83-6. The ideas of the Christian Social Council were heavily influenced by the Christendom group, see part 4 of this chapter.
several articles to the ICF journal\textsuperscript{178} and conferences on theological questions were heavily dominated by Christendom speakers.\textsuperscript{179}

The ICF contributed little to the Christian social movement in the way of new ideas. Others involved in Christian discussion of social questions believed its social criticism was not very profound and estimates of Kirk's intellectual capacities were low. Reckitt has described him as 'useless as a thinker',\textsuperscript{180} while Austin Robinson believes that discussions held during the second world war, between theologians, economists and industrialists, in which both he and Kirk took part, were marred by the latter's 'emotional' rather than 'rational' approach. Kirk's statements, in Robinson's opinion, were often unclear and he was not on an intellectual wave-length.\textsuperscript{181}


\textsuperscript{179} The ICF clergy conference on 'The Social Significance of Worship', held in Derbyshire in Jan. 1939 featured addresses by four regular Anglo-Catholic Summer School members; R.H. Tribe, A.H. Rees, E.L. Mascall and V.A. Demant. See \textit{The Social Significance of Worship (A Syllabus for Study with Questions for Discussion)}, ICF, Westminster, 1939. Two theological conventions at Birmingham and Smethwick in February 1939 were heavily dominated by Christendom speakers. See \textit{I.C.F. Review}, Jan. 1939, pp.16-17.

\textsuperscript{180} Maurice Reckitt, conversation with the writer, 28 Apr. 1976. Demant's comment on Kirk was that he was 'not an original contributor'; V.A. Demant, conversation with the writer, 21 Apr. 1976.

\textsuperscript{181} Austin Robinson, conversation with the writer, 7 May 1976.
Kirk's strengths were his energy, dedication and organizational ability. His enthusiasm and hard work were acknowledged by the Fellowship in The Torch in 1930 when he was forced, under doctor's orders, to take a complete rest.\textsuperscript{182} Similar tributes to his dedication were made in the Church Assembly.\textsuperscript{183} He was tireless in propagating what he believed to be the Christian message for social distress and in seeking redress of particular social grievances\textsuperscript{184}, and it was largely the enthusiasm he generated which made the Fellowship an effective popularizer of Christian social ideas.

It was as 'an inspired organizer'\textsuperscript{185} that Kirk made his most distinctive contribution to the Christian social movement. He was like a worker-bee, busily collecting people and ideas from various sources and depositing them in one spot.\textsuperscript{186} He made things happen, and much inter-

\textsuperscript{182} Torch, June 1930, pp.(i)-(ii).
\textsuperscript{184} E.g. ICF executive minutes, 8 Feb. 1935. Tribute was paid at this meeting to Kirk's part in securing the Church Assembly's acceptance of the Social and Industrial Commission's report on unemployment. Subsequently he sent a letter to every member of the Assembly (over 700 in all) referring to the resolutions they had accepted, and drawing attention to the literature and facilities of the ICF. He also conducted a campaign throughout the country on the basis of the report. \textit{Ibid.}, 10 May 1935.
\textsuperscript{186} Rev. N.F.P. Brown, conversation with the writer, Dec. 1975. (Mr Brown was, at the time of the interview, General Secretary of the ICF.) Brown described Kirk as the man who assembled the right people, in the right place, at the right time. Others also commented on Kirk's organizational ability: Demant, conversation with the writer, 21 Apr. 1976; Reckitt, conversation with the writer, 28 Apr. 1976; Patrick McLaughlin, letter to the writer, 6 Apr. 1976.
denominational co-operation on social and industrial questions was attributable to his activity. As a member of the executive committees of the Interdenominational Conference of Social Service Unions and the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship (Copec)\(^{187}\) Kirk established close links with many Nonconformists. Early in 1921, he and Henry Carter, a prominent Methodist cleric, were responsible for issuing to the press a manifesto on the coal industry, in the name of the ICF and a Wesleyan standing committee on international and industrial relations.\(^ {188}\) Arising out of this initiative, a meeting was held on 14 June 1921 between the Wesleyan standing committee and a sub-committee of the ICF, and on July 7 with representatives of other Christian Churches. As a result of the second meeting, a memorial was sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury inviting him to initiate the formation of an interdenominational body through which the Churches could speak with a united voice in any time of national or international crisis.\(^ {189}\) The archbishops decided to defer any such action until after the interdenominational conference planned for 1924 (Copec)\(^ {190}\),

\(^{187}\) ICF executive minutes, 8 Oct. 1920. See part 4 of this chapter for further description of these bodies.

\(^{188}\) Ibid., 13 May 1921. The manifesto was signed by Kirk and Carter and the chairman of each movement.

\(^{189}\) Ibid., 8 July 1921 and 14 Oct. 1921.

\(^{190}\) Ibid., 10 Feb. 1922. This decision was made after consultation with Bishops Kemphorne and Watts-Ditchfield and Rev. C.S. Woodward. In fact, action was deferred until 1929, when the Christian Social Council was formed.
but the ICF, which had warmly endorsed the idea of 'federating the work of all societies which have for their object a more Christian Social Order', continued, in the absence of official action, to forge its own links. In February 1922 an informal conference between representatives of the ICF and the CSL resulted in the formation of a joint sub-committee to consider future co-operation and avoid over-lapping. It was decided, too, that Gore should be contacted with a view to discovering whether some working arrangement was possible with the Christian Social Crusade, another interdenominational body. Kirk was also responsible, at this time, for gathering together representatives of the Christian Churches to consider the impending crisis in the engineering and ship-building industries. This resulted in the issue of a manifesto on the dispute by the leaders of the various Christian Churches. Kempthorne, Fred Hughes and Kirk were also involved in the preparation for Copec. All three were members of its executive committee and of its Commission on the Social Function of the Church.

191. *Ibid.*, 13 Jan. 1922. This was part of a resolution passed at an ICF retreat conference held 2-10 Jan. 1922.
activity after the conference ensured co-operation between the research groups of Copec and the ICF, and also with the group responsible for producing the Cambridge House Bulletins. It was agreed that in the event of a national crisis, the three groups should meet and discuss the possibility of joint action.\textsuperscript{196}

In 1926 a national crisis did occur, in the form of the general strike and a protracted coal dispute, and Kirk and the ICF were prominent amongst churchmen who attempted to facilitate the process of conciliation. Early in 1926, a meeting was held by a joint committee of the Churches to consider the situation in the coal industry.\textsuperscript{197} On May 3, the eve of the general strike, Kirk was one of a 'Radical Group of Church folk' who called at Lambeth Palace and, in Davidson's absence\textsuperscript{198}, spoke with his chaplain, Mervyn Haigh.\textsuperscript{199} On May 7, Kirk, E.A. Burroughs (Bishop of Ripon), Garbett (now Bishop of Southwark), E.S. Woods, C.S. Woodward and Henry Carter were the prominent members of a group of churchmen and Nonconformists who helped Davidson draft the appeal for conciliation which was issued on May 8.\textsuperscript{200} After

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{196} ICF executive minutes, 3 Apr. and 12 June 1925.
\item \textsuperscript{197} \textit{Ibid.}, 12 Feb. 1926.
\item \textsuperscript{198} Davidson had to go to the Church Assembly and the House of Commons.
\item \textsuperscript{199} Davidson Papers, Private Papers, Vol. XV, Diaries and Memoranda, 1925-6, Lambeth Palace Library. The entry for 23 May 1926 is headed 'The General Strike' and numbered 87. This is Davidson's dictated account of the events of the previous twenty days. The reference to the visit of 'Kirk and his friends' is on p.4.
\item \textsuperscript{200} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.10-13.
\end{itemize}
the refusal of the BBC to broadcast the appeal, Kirk and Carter, in collaboration with R.H. Tawney, were responsible for a widespread attempt to publicize it to Anglicans and Free Churchmen in all the main centres of population. As part of this effort a letter was issued on May 8, on ICF letterhead, over the signatures of Kirk and Carter, drawing attention to the appearance of the appeal in *The Times* and the refusal of the BBC to broadcast it. 201

Shortly after the end of the general strike, and in view of the continuing coal strike, Kirk gathered a few Anglican and Free Church clergy together at his office in Westminster to discuss a leaflet he had prepared on the situation obtaining in industry and the proper role of the Church in times of industrial crisis. 202 Kirk argued that it was not the duty of the Church to take sides in a political or industrial dispute, unless, as rarely happened, all the right was on one side. 203 But Christians could make an important contribution to the present crisis, and to any

201. Henry Carter to M.G. Haigh, 11 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Canterbury Official Papers, Special Subject, Coal Strike 1926 (one box - temporary classification). Reference to the role of the ICF in initiating and furthering the intervention of Davidson in 1926 is also made in a review of Reckitt, *Faith and Society*, in the *Torch*, Nov. 1932, p.iv. The reviewer rebuked Reckitt for ignoring the role of the ICF in this, and other, instances.

202. P.T.R. Kirk to M.G. Haigh, 17 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926. Kirk dated the letter 17 Mar., but this is clearly an error as the letter refers to the archbishop's appeal of 8 May. I am assuming, therefore, that the correct date was 17 May. Haigh's reply to the above letter is dated 21 May.

such crisis, by studying the facts, and making their own
judgement on the basis of Christian principles. They could,
in this way, raise the level of public discussion. As
a 'definite constructive policy' Kirk advocated the formation of

a permanent conference of industry representing
employers and employees in the key industries,
together with disinterested persons representing
the community as a whole. Such a conference should
have the task of promoting fellowship and co-operation
in industry; it would examine and declare upon
reports on main industrial issues; and should
arbitrate or arrange for arbitration in times of
acute difficulty and disagreement.

Perhaps Kirk envisaged that Church leaders could
fill the role of the 'disinterested persons representing
the community'. He certainly believed that the Churches
were 'ready to support such a Fellowship of Industry' and, in its absence, he was eager that they make a contri-
bution to the settlement of the current dispute. Towards
the end of June, he and Kempthorne were responsible for
covening an ad hoc group which, calling itself the Standing
Conference of members of the Christian Churches, attempted
to mediate in the coal dispute. Kempthorne was chairman
and Kirk and Carter acted as joint honorary secretaries
to the Conference, which operated from ICF headquarters.

204. Ibid., pp.2-3. He outlined what he considered to be
the relevant Christian principles.
205. Ibid., p.4.
206. ICF executive minutes, 18 June and 9 July 1926;
Iremonger, Temple, p.337; Wagner, Church of England and
Social Reform, pp.319-20; 'The L.K.G. and Some Contemporaries',
L.K.G. Quarterly, Jan. 1928, p.71. Both Iremonger and the
(unidentified) LKG writer credited Kirk alone with the
initiative in calling together the Standing Conference,
while Wagner saw Kirk's role as being supportive of Kempthorne's
initiative. The activities of the Standing Conference are
dealt with in chap. VI below.
Kirk and Kempthorne kept Archbishop Davidson closely informed of the activities of the group.\textsuperscript{207}

The ICF also played an important role in the formation of two more permanent interdenominational bodies: the Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions and the Christian Social Council (CSC).\textsuperscript{208} The former of these two bodies grew directly out of the activities of the Standing Conference.\textsuperscript{209} On the initiative of Kempthorne, Gore and Kirk\textsuperscript{210}, an inaugural meeting was held at Fellowship House on 18 November 1926, with Kempthorne in the chair.\textsuperscript{211} The Council, which was active until 1933, continued to hold its meetings at Fellowship House, with Kempthorne and Nonconformist cleric Scott Lidgett as chairmen, and Kirk and Carter as honorary secretaries.\textsuperscript{212} Its aim was:

\begin{quote}
to watch the social and industrial situation and to take any action, which from time to time may be agreed upon.\textsuperscript{213}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{207} E.g. P.T.R. Kirk to M.G. Haigh, 23 July 1926; J.A. Lichfield to Archbishop Davidson, 10 Aug. 1926; P.T.R. Kirk to Archbishop Davidson, 18 Aug. 1926; Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.
\textsuperscript{208} The reviewer of Reckitt's \textit{Faith and Society} in the \textit{Torch}, Nov. 1932, p.(iv) claimed that the ICF fathered both these bodies.
\textsuperscript{209} Reckitt, \textit{Faith and Society}, pp.132-3; Dark, 'Looking Backwards', p.5.
\textsuperscript{210} Dark, 'Looking Backwards', p.5.
\textsuperscript{211} Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions, Minutes of Meetings of the Council, 1926-33, Industrial Christian Fellowship, Leadenhall St., London, entry for 18 Nov. 1926 (hereafter cited as Council of Christian Ministers minutes).
\textsuperscript{212} \textit{Ibid.}, 26 Oct. 1927.
\textsuperscript{213} \textit{Ibid.}, 18 Nov. 1926.
In 1928, negotiations to establish the CSC were set in motion by Kirk, F.T. Woods, and Congregationalist Malcolm Spencer. When finally established, the Council incorporated the Copec organization and was affiliated to the wider Life and Work Movement. Woods was its first Anglican chairman until his death in 1932, when he was succeeded by Kempthorne; and Kirk became Anglican secretary. Thus a strong link was forged between the ICF and the new interdenominational body. Kirk was also honorary secretary of the British section of the Life and Work Movement.

Kirk and the ICF occupied a pivotal position within the Anglican section of the Christian social movement. The reliance of the Social and Industrial Commission on the resources of the ICF, and in particular on the voluntary service of Kirk, has already been mentioned. Kirk also acted as an effective propagandist for the Christendom group's ideas. Not only did he give them numerous opportunities to influence the ICF and the Social and Industrial Commission, but he organized a special group which provided an additional forum for Christendom ideas. Believing that closer co-operation was desirable between the various Anglican groups which were thinking about the application of Christianity to social problems, Kirk called a meeting

214. Reckitt, Faith and Society, pp.113-5. See part 4 of this chapter for further details of the Life and Work Movement.
215. Ibid., pp.136 and 465.
216. The ICF was also directly represented on the CSC, as was the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly.
for 23 November 1934, to which he invited representatives from the ICF, the League of the Kingdom of God (LKG), the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement (AEGM), the Church Union School of Sociology and the Modern Churchman's Union (MCU). The invitation was declined by the MCU, but representatives of the other organizations agreed to form a group

with the ultimate aim of securing a common mind and a united witness within the Church of England on social, industrial, and economic questions.218

The Anglican group (as it came to be called) set itself first of all to the task of producing a statement 'setting out the theological sanctions for the concern of the Church in the social realm'.219 This, it believed, would provide

217. ICF executive minutes, 12 Oct. and 14 Dec. 1934. For details of the LKG and the Church Union School of Sociology see part 3 of this chapter. The MCU was the twentieth century embodiment of the Broad Church party of the nineteenth century. Its theology was liberal, and its main concern the intellectual and scientific criticism of the Bible and the Christian faith. Theologically, it had little in common with Anglo-Catholic groups like the LKG and the Church Union. But it was not unsympathetic to the question of the Church's witness on social, economic and industrial questions. In 1937 it established a quarterly journal, The Way, to deal with the social application of Christian doctrine and in Dec. 1938 appointed a Sociological Committee to advise further on these matters. Similarly, the AEGM was concerned primarily with questions of doctrine and worship, but it, too, had a Sociological Sub-Committee. Despite its 'anti-Anglo-Catholic' stance on the revised prayer book in 1928, it was able to reach a significant measure of agreement with the more Catholic approach of the other members of the Anglican group.


a common basis for action. Subsequently the group produced tracts on *War and the Church's Duty* (1937) and *The Church and Monetary Reform* (1939). These pamphlets, published by the ICF, helped to increase the circulation of a set of ideas which had, by the late 1930s, made a deep impression on Anglican social thinking.

3. The Cuckoo in the Sanctuary

The influence of the small, Anglo-Catholic Christendom group on the rest of the Christian social movement was quite remarkable. Its chief members, Maurice Reckitt, Percy Widdrington, V.A. Demant, W.G. Peck, and Ruth Kenyon had an extraordinary talent not only for getting themselves on to committees and commissions in the wider movement, but for substantially influencing the deliberations and pronouncements of these bodies. The impact of the group, subtle and disguised in the initial stages, was quite profound by the mid 1930s.

As well as operating through other agencies, the group had its own organizations. The earliest of these was the League of the Kingdom of God (LKG) which was a breakaway from the Church Socialist League (CSL). The CSL, founded by socialist priests of the industrial north shortly after the electoral successes of the Labour party in 1906, had reflected contemporary confidence in collectivist socialism. The League described itself as consisting of 'Church people who accept the principles of Socialism'. Its aim was:
The political, economic, and social emancipation of the whole people, men and women, by the establishment of a democratic commonwealth in which the community shall own the land and capital collectively, and use them co-operatively for the good of all. 220

The socialist basis of the CSL had been challenged at the outset by Widdrington who urged that the League's purpose should be to elaborate a distinctively Christian approach to social problems. In the tradition of Maurice, he believed that economics and politics must have a ground beneath themselves, and that this ground was to be found in the concept of the kingdom of God. 221 This plea for a theological basis had met with little response and a subsequent attempt, in 1916, to alter the fundamental principles of the League was equally unsuccessful; resulting only in the secession of Conrad Noel, the famous Vicar of Thaxted, who subsequently founded the Catholic Crusade. 222 But in 1923 the CSL was finally put to rest and its place taken by the LKG. Those who disagreed with the substitution of a Catholic for a socialist basis formed the Society of Socialist Christians and declared themselves willing to work as part of the Labour movement. 223

The LKG saw itself as the intellectual spearhead of the Christian social movement, its main work being to lead an apostate Church back to an appreciation of its true

221. Reckitt, Maurice to Temple, pp. 167-8.
222. Wagner, Church of England and Social Reform, p.301; Reckitt, Faith and Society, p.157.
prophetic role and its own social teaching, virtually neglected since the middle ages. It defined its two primary tasks as

The insistence on the prophetic Office of the Church, and the Kingdom of God as the regulative principle of theology.

The awakening of Churchmen to the lost social traditions of Christendom and the recreation of a Christian sociology consonant with the needs of the age.\textsuperscript{224}

The League aimed, said Reckitt, at 'an intensity of influence', rather than at 'the sort of platform phraseology which is calculated to make a wide popular appeal'.\textsuperscript{225}

The latter could be left safely to the ICF, but the Fellowship was not providing the 'continuous Christian thinking',\textsuperscript{226} regarded as so important by the Christendom group.

The League's leaders were confident of converting the rest of the Church to their Catholic outlook. There was, they believed, no other basis for a truly Christian social order. Proposals, in 1928, for a body to co-ordinate Christian social witness were met with some misgivings by Peck, who doubted whether Catholic and Protestant could find sufficient common ground to justify a unified approach to the problems of economics and industry. Protestants were too inclined to turn to secular theories for their social ideas, but


\textsuperscript{225} Maurice B. Reckitt, 'The League of the Kingdom of God', \textit{L.K.G. Quarterly}, Apr. 1928, p.79.

The contribution of the Church of England must be made upon the Catholic basis, for the attempt to treat the English Church as one of a number of Protestant communions is ludicrous. Our excellent Nonconformist brethren must understand that we cannot swerve from the historic loyalty or the sacramental dogma.227

Thus spoke the enthusiasm of the recent convert228, but Peck's self-conscious Catholicism, while less subtly expressed at times than that of some of his colleagues, was undoubtedly shared by them.229

This confidence that the wider Church could be recalled to the sanctions of Catholic social teaching was remarkable in view of the numerical inferiority of Catholics within the Church of England. In spite of a revival of Anglo-Catholicism in the 1920s, their numbers were estimated, by one ardent Anglo-Catholic, to be, in 1929, less than one hundred thousand.230 In a Church which numbered some two and a half million231, this was a small minority. Further, the numbers of Catholics concerned to recover the Church's social teaching were small, as members of the LKG readily admitted.232 Yet Reckitt was

228. Peck, ordained an Anglican deacon in 1925 and priest in 1926, was formerly a Nonconformist clergyman.
confident that Anglo-Catholic thought could be influenced 'in very fundamental and decisive ways'. There was, he believed, much to suggest that Catholics were more ready than in the past to develop an independent attitude towards social issues.\(^\text{233}\)

Much of the Christendom group's confidence can be put down to arrogance. Their faith in the authoritative character of Catholic social teaching and in their own intellectual capabilities was almost unbounded. Widdrington joked that it was 'putting a strain on the modesty of our secretary ... to be addressed as "the Secretary of the Kingdom of God"',\(^\text{234}\), but the members of the LKG did have a highly developed sense of their own importance. A contributor to the *L.K.G. Quarterly* in January 1928 commented that

> the League has of late years so often been accused that it is highbrow that we really must take credit for the qualities of that defect. The League Executive is a small body of people meeting fairly frequently and having a common outlook. Some of them have brilliant minds. Others may only achieve the recognition - uncommon in this country - that minds are desirable things. But that is just the kind of group which can do a good deal of preliminary thinking, and writing, and organising, towards the work to be achieved by ... [larger] bodies.\(^\text{235}\)

\(^\text{233}\) Reckitt, 'The League of the Kingdom of God', p.80. He added the comment that it was less difficult for Catholics than for others to develop a radical outlook; they were used to being regarded by their neighbours as having 'strange', 'extravagant' or 'un-English' opinions.


\(^\text{235}\) 'L.K.G. and Some Contemporaries', p.72.
Not all League members were happy to be cast in the role of intellectual élite. At the annual conferences of 1926, 1927 and 1928 there was expressed disagreement over interpretation of the League's function. It was argued by some members that the LKG always talked instead of acting, that it was out of contact with economic realities and working class life, and that it should be involved in political action. These protests came chiefly from the Coventry branch, whose members were less immune to the exigencies of industrial working class life than the majority of the executive, who viewed English life from the vantage point of the south-eastern counties. The protests were a reminder that some of the older members of the LKG, like T.C. Gobat, had served their apprenticeship in the CSL, and still had strong emotional links with the Labour movement.

The executive was able to ignore these protests. It functioned successfully as a self-perpetuating oligarchy, offering little encouragement to 'outsiders' to nominate for positions. A notice in the L.K.G. Quarterly for October 1928 advised readers that all members of the executive were willing to serve again in the forthcoming year. Those wishing to

237. Widdrington was rector of Great Easton, Dunmow, Essex; Kenyon lived at St. Leonard's, Sussex; C.F. Gillett was at Cambridge; Reckitt, Slesser and P.L. Donaldson were based in London; G.W. Wardman was at Letchworth, Hertfordshire; Mary Alexander resided at The Cot, Watlington, Norfolk or Oxfordshire; and Felix H. Matthews was rector of Aylmerton with Runton, Norfolk. The only members of the executive living in industrial areas were Stacy, Vicar of St. Peter's Coventry; V. Spencer Ellis, Liverpool; and A. Linwood Wright, Vicar of St. Mark's, Leicester.
nominate anyone else were required to gain permission from that person and inform the secretary before October 1 'so as to prepare for a hasty ballot'. Six months later, it was announced that Reckitt wished to resign as chairman, in favour of Kenyon, a situation which the editor of the Quarterly clearly approved. Members of the League were reminded that they could nominate any number of candidates if they wished; but that the nominee's written permission was essential and should be gained at once, to avoid any confusion. The general tone of these notices discouraged any attempt to infuse new blood into the executive. Those who dissented from its policy seemed to lack the motivation (or time) to mobilize opposition, and the orientation towards thought rather than action continued. At the 1927 conference, Reckitt made it clear that the Executive would continue to regard the conversion of the Church, and especially the arousing of Catholics to the social meaning of the Faith, as their first and chief work, though the other side of witness to social justice would never be forgotten.

The LKG was always a small body whose leaders tended to come from the clergy and the leisured middle class.

239. Ibid., Oct. 1928.
240. Ibid., Apr. 1929, p.115.
242. Reckitt commented in Faith and Society, p.162, that it counted its numbers in hundreds rather than thousands.
243. The most influential lay persons were Reckitt, assured of an income by his membership of the famous starch and dyes family and consequently able to devote his life to croquet, ballroom dancing and the Christian social movement; and Kenyon, who pursued a life of honorary public service in Hastings and through the Church.
Subscription was according to means, and in 1926 the minimum fee was only half a crown per annum. But the narrowly Catholic outlook of the group, and its backward-looking frame of reference, limited its appeal. Its leaders were not unduly concerned about this, regarding it as an inevitable situation for an intellectual élite which had to expound a 'definite outlook'. The League did engage in propagandist work in the theological colleges and universities and in the larger industrial towns. Widdrington, as National Organizer, visited most of the theological colleges each year and Oxford and Cambridge at least every two years. By such means it was hoped to persuade the new generation of priests and intellectuals of the importance of Christian sociology. The League's annual conference, held each time in a different industrial centre, was also the occasion for a fortnight's intensive evangelical activity when

a team of a dozen or so descends upon the place of meeting, where sermons are preached on the Sunday in all the churches which will hear the message, and conferences, for priests or lay folk or both, are held on the Monday or Tuesday, with a Public Meeting on the Monday night.

The main aim of these conferences was not so much to confer, as to use the pulpits of the town as a means of propagating the League's ideas. Over the twelve years from 1923 to

246. Ibid., p. 6.
247. Reckitt, Widdrington, p. 112.
1934 the conference locations included Coventry, Leicester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, Newcastle, Manchester, Leeds and Middlesborough. These, with Cardiff, Cornwall, Kelham, Mirfield and Lincoln Theological College were the main centres of life for the LKG outside London.

But links with the north and the midlands were reminiscent of CSL days, rather than characteristic of the LKG. The League was never organized on a formal branch system, and the nuclei in the industrial cities were largely independent of each other, and of the executive. The L.K.G. Quarterly acted as a link until 1929, and the annual conferences until 1934, but after this the ties with the north were weakened. The LKG conferences gave way to the 'Christendom' conferences which, from 1932, were held annually at the Mirfield community's house at 'Moreton', St. Leonard's-on-Sea. The shift in geographical focus was indicative of the drift of the group's interests - the Christendom conferences were intellectual discussions, unconnected with any evangelizing mission.

The LKG remained nominally in existence, but by 1934 it had more the character of a 'rather esoteric little body' than 'an effective organization'.

250. This was the result of a deliberate decision not to operate on a branch system. See ibid., Jan. 1926 (report of LKG conference, Nov. 1925) and Oct. 1926, p.31.
251. Reckitt, Widdrington, p.113.
252. Ibid., p.112.
dominated the League - Reckitt, Kenyon, Widdrington, Peck, Demant and Paul Stacy - now expressed their ideas chiefly through Christendom, the journal founded in 1931, and at the 'Moreton' conferences.\textsuperscript{253} By means of the journal and the conferences, a younger generation was attracted to what gradually became known as the Christendom group.\textsuperscript{254} Eric Mascall, Julian Casserley, Donald Mackinnon, Patrick McLaughlin and Peck's son, David, confirmed, by their presence, the increasingly intellectual character of the group. During the 1920s the faces of men like T.C. Gobat and F. Lewis Donaldson on the LKG executive had served to remind it of its origins in the CSL. But by the 1930s the increasingly tenuous links with industrial reality had disappeared and the Christendom group was left to develop its ideas in the comfortable environs of the south.

Its esoteric nature and limited means had, from the start, necessitated that the LKG/Christendom group should be something of 'a cuckoo in the ecclesiastical bird sanctuary'.\textsuperscript{255} For the first years of its existence, the League had used the Commonwealth, founded by Scott Holland in 1896, as a means of reaching a wider audience. As well as a special LKG section, Ruth Kenyon had written the editorial notes from 1922 until 1929.\textsuperscript{256} In November

\textsuperscript{253} These conferences were attended by the editorial board of Christendom, members of the LKG executive, and others in sympathy with the ideas for which Christendom stood. See LKG: Its Work and Future, p.7.

\textsuperscript{254} Reckitt, Widdrington, p.113.


\textsuperscript{256} Ibid., p.273.
1925, the LKG conference had decided to issue its own quarterly paper and G.W. Wardman, editor of the Commonwealth and also a member of the LKG executive, offered to publish this at the lowest possible price. But the L.K.G. Quarterly had only lasted until 1929. It was succeeded by Christendom which was published quarterly by Blackwell's until the early 1950s. Christendom was never a financial success, but it became an important vehicle for the development of the group's theological and social ideas. Nevertheless, the communication of these ideas was achieved chiefly through permeation of other bodies. By the mid 1930s, as Reckitt acknowledged, the Christendom group was working through the Anglo-Catholic Summer School of Sociology, the Research Committee of the CSC and the ICF's clergy schools. He might also have mentioned the influence of its members on Copec commissions and the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly.

The summer schools, held annually at Keble College, Oxford, from 1925 to 1938 and subsequently in other colleges.


258. Reckitt, *As It Happened*, p.273. Subscription to the journal was 7/6 per annum.

259. Reckitt, *Widdrington*, p.112. There were always LKG members on the ICF council; Donaldson, Kenyon, Slesser, Gobat, Wright and Romanes all served in this capacity at some stage during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. In the early 1940s, Reckitt, McLaughlin and T.M. Heron were all on the ICF executive. See below, part 4 of this chapter for discussion of Christendom influence on the CSC.

260. Reckitt was on the Politics and Citizenship, and International Relations Commissions; Slesser was on Politics and Citizenship and Industry and Property; Kenyon was on Politics and Citizenship.
of the university, were initiated as a result of co-operation between the LKG, the Fellowship of Catholic Priests, and the official Anglo-Catholic bodies, the English Church Union and the Anglo-Catholic Congress. According to Reckitt, the initiative came from Reginald Tribe of the Society of the Sacred Mission, Kelham and G.D. Rosenthal, a priest from Birmingham. The LKG responded enthusiastically to the invitation to co-operate in the venture and, from the outset, took a lead in organizing and conducting the schools. Widdrington, Kenyon, W.G. Peck, Demant, Stacy, Reckitt, Henry Slesser and V. Spencer Ellis were all active and, later in the 1930s, McLaughlin, Casserley and D.G. Peck joined the Summer School Committee. This committee undertook the preparation for the schools - organizing a detailed syllabus, questionnaires for study circles, and speakers. The LKG's involvement did not surprise Reckitt, who regarded it as a tribute to the group's 'intellectual leadership'.

The outlook and clientele of the schools was predictably narrow. At £2.10.0, including board and

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261. Widdrington, 'History of the LKG', p.60. In 1934, after the amalgamation of the Anglo-Catholic Congress and the English Church Union to form the Church Union, the Summer School took the title of the Church Union School of Sociology.


263. Reckitt, Widdrington, p.97.

264. Church Union, Minute Book of Summer School Committee, 1933-63, Church Union, 7 Tufton St., London (hereafter cited as Summer School Committee minutes). See also Reckitt, Faith and Society, p.160.

265. Reckitt, Widdrington, p.98.
lodgings\textsuperscript{266}, the cost of attending was not prohibitive, but the membership was limited to a little over one hundred, and applications were sometimes refused.\textsuperscript{267} More importantly, the intellectual atmosphere of these gatherings would have discouraged those with little education. Reckitt claimed that they were not confined to 'highbrows'\textsuperscript{268}, but his comment that

\begin{quote}

those...who have taken their visits to our Oxford Summer School seriously have often gone on thinking for what is now quite a long time, and are getting used to it\textsuperscript{269}
\end{quote}

would hardly have encouraged those who were either shy or sceptical of the value of academic discussions.

The leaders of the school claimed to be uneasy about its lack of representativeness. The Catholic Social Guild, which also held an annual summer school at Oxford, had a large working class membership and was conceded by Reckitt to have 'a valuable advantage' over the Anglo-Catholic school which presented 'a far more exclusively middle-class complexion'.\textsuperscript{270} Making the same comparison, Mary Alexander commented in the \textit{Commonwealth} in 1927 that

\begin{quote}

the Church of England must understand and be understood by the masses before she can make her Christian Social thinking a living power.\textsuperscript{271}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{266.} Christendom, vol.3, no.10, June 1933, p.82.
\textsuperscript{267.} Summer School Committee minutes, 13 Mar. and 30 July 1934.
\textsuperscript{268.} Reckitt, \textit{Faith and Society}, p.160.
\textsuperscript{269.} Reckitt, \textit{As It Happened}, p.267.
\textsuperscript{270.} Reckitt, \textit{Faith and Society}, p.167.
A report in the *L.K.G. Quarterly* on the 1928 school welcomed the presence of both 'some genuine representatives of our manual workers from town and country' and some manufacturers, business managers, and civil servants, with the comment that

unless we have in future a far larger ingredient of men and women who are actually living in the vortex of industrial and business life, who know at first hand the difficulties of applying Catholic principles to everyday affairs ... our discussions must often halt and reach no goal.272

But the obvious emphasis of the schools on the development of Catholic sociology rather than on practical issues suggested little genuine concern to attract men of the world. Consideration was given to questions such as Catholicism and property, the Catholic standard of life, and the Catholic faith and the industrial order - topics which might conceivably appeal to those engaged in industry. But other subjects, such as the social teaching of the sacraments; the Catholic conception of freedom; Catholicism and international order; grace and nature; and God, man and the world required extensive knowledge of Catholic social teaching and a grasp of complex theological concepts. The majority of the speakers, too, were Catholics273, and their addresses were frequently


273. There were, of course, notable exceptions to this. William Temple and C.E. Raven, both Anglicans, but not identified with the Anglo-Catholic movement; J.H. Oldham, an Anglican layman; Nicholas Berdyaev, Russian Orthodox; and Julius Hecker, a Communist sympathizer, all addressed the school during the 1920s and 1930s. Others invited, but unable to participate, were R.H. Tawney, F.R. Barry, A.D. Lindsay, J. Middleton Murry and E.H. Carr. See Summer School Committee minutes.
couched in language which would have made little appeal to the average Anglican. In short, the tone of the schools was predominantly Catholic, and their merit, from the viewpoint of the organizers, was that they were 'making possible the building up of a real corporate mind upon the social issues of the age' based on 'the unity of outlook which a common Catholic philosophy and devotion contribute'.

In 1936 the summer school, now a permanent body affiliated to the Church Union, amalgamated with the Union's Housing Association to form the Church Union Association for Church Social Action. From the outset, the Christendom group was a strong influence in Church Social Action (CSA). McLaughlin became its first secretary and Reckitt, Widdrington, W.G. Peck, Kenyon, Demant, Casserley and Mackinnon were all members of its council. The two original founders of the summer schools - Tribe and Rosenthal - were members also.

CSA was based on the conception of the 'lay apostolate'. It was argued that the task of the priest should be to train the laity to work for the re-Christianization of society in their normal places of living and working. This was a lesson learned from the new Catholic Action movement in Belgium, a

275. CSA minutes.
representative of which addressed the summer school in 1937\(^{277}\), but it was also a major part of the platform of the ecumenical movement which likewise held a major conference at Oxford in 1937.\(^{278}\)

Ruth Kenyon suggested in her report on the 1937 summer school that the most obvious call felt by its members was for the creation of 'the local or parochial cell or guild'.\(^{279}\) One of the study circles reported that

> what is being sought is not associations of Christian bankers or bricklayers who shall go on being ordinary Christians and ordinary bankers or bricklayers, but groups of people who shall face together the moral and spiritual problems which the particular trade or profession offers for Christian witness.\(^{280}\)

In practice, CSA became involved in attempts to revive several guilds, such as The Guild of St. Francis de Sales, for those engaged in journalism and literature; The Guild of the Good Shepherd, for teachers; a guild in politics and a guild of those concerned with housing.\(^{281}\) But CSA's commitment to training the laity for social action seems to have gone no further than this. During the war its attention, and that of the Christendom group, was diverted to questions like the role of the Church in the rural community and the importance of agriculture. This, of course, ignored the fact that for the average layman,

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278. See part 4 of this chapter.
280. These were actually Reckitt's words. *Ibid.*, p.213.
281. CSA minutes, e.g. 16 Mar. 1938.
reality was the difficulty of witnessing to Christian social principles in the context of urban industrial life. It was largely with the Christendom group in mind that Donald Mackinnon wrote in 1942:

there are moments when it seems hard to escape the conviction that some contemporary forms of Christian social activity are little less than highly subtle forms of escapism. They are 'idealist' in the sense assigned to that term by Marxist writers, for they rest on unconscious desire to escape the pressing demand to wrestle with social actualities in the here and now by passing into a world that analysis points out to be one of ideas only.282

4. The Ecumenical Movement

Although it had its intellectual origins in the Christian socialism of men like F.D. Maurice, Charles Gore and Scott Holland, twentieth century Anglican social thought owed a great deal to the ecumenical movement. This was particularly true of the mid 1920s, when inter-denominational co-operation and enthusiasm were high; and of the late 1930s, when Anglican social theology gained a new perspective through ecumenical contacts.

As early as 1910, the social service unions of various denominations had joined to form the Inter-denominational Conference of Social Service Unions, or 'The Panjandrum'. This body met at Birmingham in 1911 and then annually at Swanwick. In 1913 the Conference

reconstituted itself as the Council for Christian Witness on Social Questions. With Gore as its president, it continued after the war as the Christian Social Crusade and worked chiefly through the social service unions of the various denominations.  

It was out of the social service unions and another interdenominational body, the Collegium, that the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship (Copec) developed. Held at Birmingham from 5-12 April 1924, Copec was the result of elaborate preparation over a period of four years. Organization was in the hands of a representative council of 250 and an executive committee of thirty-eight. About 250,000 questionnaires were distributed and these became the basis of study circles throughout the country. Twelve commissions were established, each dealing with a different aspect of Christian social witness, and, using some of the material


provided by the study groups, each compiled a detailed report.288

The conference, when finally assembled, comprised 1,500 delegates, eighty of whom were from outside Britain.289 Its main work was to consider the reports of the commissions. With the exception of the first and last volumes, each report was debated by the conference for one, and in some cases two, complete sessions. Resolutions were passed on the basis of nine of the reports.290

The Copec reports served as the British contribution to a similar international conference held in Stockholm in 1925. Also the result of elaborate preparations, this conference was attended by more than six hundred delegates from thirty-seven countries291, including representatives from all the Churches of Europe and America (with the exception of the Roman Catholics) and the Greek Church.292 The subjects with which the


289. Iremonger, Temple, p.335.


conference dealt fell under six headings: the general obligation of the Church in the light of God's plan for the world, the Church and economic and industrial problems, the Church and social and moral problems, the Church and international relations, the Church and education, and ways and means for promoting co-operation between the Churches. 293

Both conferences were based on the assumption that, in spite of doctrinal differences, the Christian Churches could and should co-operate in an effort to apply Christianity to urgent social and international problems. It was hoped that common service in the field of practical problems would help to break down prejudices and foster unity. 294 The belief that these issues could be separated was reflected in the existence of two separate wings of the ecumenical movement during the inter-war period. The Faith and Order Movement, which had originated at the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 295, met in conference at Lausanne in 1927 and Edinburgh in 1937. The Life and Work Movement emerged out of a conference in Geneva in 1920 296 and held separate conferences at


294. This approach was strongly approved by the bishops of the Anglican Church at the 1920 Lambeth conference. See Conference of Bishops, 1920, pp.75-6.


Stockholm in 1925 and Oxford in 1937. It was not until 1948 that the two movements were formally merged in the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The immediate result of this attempt to bury theological differences was a strong emotional impetus to ecumenical co-operation. Woods of Winchester believed Copec was the manifestation of a movement of the Spirit while another observer described it as part of 'a vision of the Christian Enterprise'. Temple's foremost impressions were 'the sense of spiritual power' and the conviction that 'open and candid discussion' of difficult questions was a real possibility.

In practical terms, the results were not so impressive. The continuation committee set up at Copec proved less than effective. Confronted with the national crisis of a general strike in 1926, its only response was to circulate a letter to all clergy, suggesting they hold religious meetings throughout the country to ask for peace and the resumption of negotiations. More constructive activity was left to Kirk's ad hoc Standing Conference. The Copec continuation committee did initiate

300. Guardian, 14 May 1926.
some activity. It reassembled the commissions which had produced the reports on the nature of God, and the social function of the Church; and set in train further investigations on the Church and rural life, and on the problems of interest and investment from a Christian standpoint. This resulted in further additions to the growing stock of Christian social literature. But the continuation committee contributed little to the co-ordination of Christian social activity, and the permanent organization it had been charged to call into being did not eventuate until 1929.

When the Christian Social Council (CSC) was eventually established, hopes were expressed that it would strengthen the 'rather unco-ordinated co-operation between the Church of England and other Churches' hitherto provided by the continuation committee. The new body included delegates from all Churches except the Salvation Army and the Roman Catholics. The representation of the Church of England and the Nonconformist Churches was approximately equal; the Anglican representatives being drawn half from the ICF and half from the Social and


Industrial Commission.  

The CSC comprised a quarterly council, an executive committee and five standing committees, through which it did most of its work. The Local Co-operation Committee carried on the work, begun by the old Christian Social Crusade, of forming local Christian Social Councils and co-ordinating their activities. The Youth Committee followed up the activities generated by a Copec conference on the 'Welfare of Youth' in 1928, the Research Committee organized further Christian thought on social subjects, the Social Education Committee was in charge of the propagation of Christian social material and the Committee for International Co-operation maintained contacts with the Life and Work movement.  

The expressed aim of the CSC was

To apply the Christian faith to Social, Industrial and Economic questions, and as far as possible to co-ordinate all the various agencies existing for that purpose, and to promote and encourage the work of research relative thereto.

Co-ordination of other bodies was achieved partly through official representation on the Council and partly by unofficial links and the use of co-option. By virtue

303. Ibid., pp. 183-6 and Reckitt, Faith and Society, p.135.
306. Ibid., p.135.
of these informal arrangements the Christendom writers were able to gain a firm footing in the CSC and use it as a sounding board for their own ideas. This influence was achieved largely through the Research Committee, of which Reckitt, Kenyon and Tribe were all members\(^{307}\), and Demant was appointed Director (largely as a result of Reckitt's influence).\(^{308}\) With sympathetic secretaries in Kirk and Malcolm Spencer, the group was able to pursue its own interests. Although the official definition of the Research Committee's methods included the assembling of facts, the study and revaluation of the moral and spiritual judgements already pronounced on these facts, and the organization of further Christian thought on social subjects, the Christendom group was interested only in the latter activity. In Reckitt's view, the Research Committee was 'not primarily an information bureau' or 'a "fact-finding" organization'. Its role was to promote Christian thinking. For

the initiation of this type of continuous corporate thinking goes far to supply ... a very definite lack in the equipment of the movement, the thought of which has tended to be far too exclusively empirical or derivative in the past.\(^{309}\)


\(^{308}\). Reckitt, *As It Happened*, p.270.

\(^{309}\). Reckitt, *Faith and Society*, pp.139-40. It is clear that Spencer was looking to the Christendom group for an important contribution to 'Christian Sociological Research'. Writing in 1928, and anticipating the formation of the CSC, he referred to the notable example in this sphere provided by the group and the Anglo-Catholic summer schools. See Malcolm Spencer, 'The Social Activity of the English Churches', *Stockholm*, vol.1, no.2, 1928, p.172. Spencer also shared the group's interest in social credit. See John L. Finlay, 'The Religious Response to Douglasism in England', *Journal of Religious History*, vol.6, no.4, Dec. 1971, p.364.
Not surprisingly, the work of the Research Committee under Christendom influence was highly theoretical.

The follow-up to Stockholm was also entrusted to a continuation committee which after meeting first at Uppsala, a second time at Berne in 1926, and in 1927 at Winchester, was reconstituted as the permanent Universal Christian Council for Life and Work in 1930. At the Winchester meeting, it was decided to establish an International Christian Social Institute at Geneva in 1928.310 Under the direction of a Swiss, Dr Adolf Keller, the Institute established relations with other Christian organizations already in Geneva, with the International Labour Office and the League of Nations, and with national agencies such as Copec and the American Federal Council. Its concerns were primarily research on social problems from a Christian point of view, the establishment of contact between the socially active Christian organizations in different religious communions and countries and the foundation of a centre for the exchange of information and experience useful to the Church in its social-ethical tasks.311 From 1928 to 1931, the Institute produced a tri-lingual quarterly, Stockholm, of which the English editor was A.E. Garvie, also secretary of the continuation committee.


The outstanding aspect of ecumenical social thought, in the period between the Stockholm and Oxford conferences, was its increasingly theological orientation. The agreement achieved at Copec had, in reality, been rather fragile. The report of the theological commission had been received by the conference without any debate, thus removing a major opportunity for theological disagreement. Subsequently, fundamental criticisms had been made of the report from the Evangelical standpoint, and the caution shown by the Church Times towards Copec reflected the concern of Catholics about the theological gap between their own and the Protestant position. While applauding the evidence of agreement at Copec, a special correspondent for the Church Times suggested that 'the real basis of disagreement upon the contentious subjects of the Conference - Contraception, Pacificism [sic], Prohibition - was, at the bottom, theological'. There had been, he suggested, a good deal of muddled thinking, and a tendency for the audience to be enthralled by rhetoric.

At the Stockholm conference it quickly became apparent that the attempt to hide theological differences

313. Church Times, 4 Jan. 1924. The writer, 'Lancastrian', referred to Catholic fears that sacramental truth would be sacrificed at Copec. Concern about Catholic/Protestant differences was also evident in the editorial on Copec, 11 Apr. 1924.
was futile. Garvie later recalled that English and American theologians had been 'not a little disconcerted' to find their use of the term 'Kingdom of God' challenged by German scholars.

To their confident conviction that the Kingdom of God might be advanced and hastened on earth by human endeavour, there was opposed the charge of an optimism and an activism, inconsistent with that humble sense of man's insufficiency ... put forward ... by the Lutheran speakers. For them the Kingdom of God meant a transcendent, catastrophic Divine intervention in human history, and not an evolutionary human moral and religious progress.315

The attempted resolution of this theological difference resulted in a far greater concern for the theological premises of Christian social thinking. In 1927 at Canterbury, 1928 in Wartburg and 1931 at Chichester, George Bell presided over a series of discussions between German and English theologians on theological problems germane to the sphere of Life and Work.316 A volume of essays published as a result of these conversations made it clear that important differences of interpretation remained317, but there was agreement about the importance

317. G.K.A. Bell and D. Adolf Deissmann(eds.), Mysterium Christi: Christological Studies by British and German Theologians, Longmans, London, 1930, pp.(v)-(vi). A German edition of these essays was issued simultaneously. Garvie commented in 1930 that 'while mutual intercourse may have done something to modify the opposition, the contrast of conception still remains'. See 'Recent Foreign Theology', p.523. See also Bell's report of the Canterbury conference, Guardian, 14 Apr. 1927, p.289.
of social theology itself. In a letter to an American colleague in Life and Work, Bell wrote that the conference was 'at one in expressing its conviction of the need of a theological basis for the treatment of sociological problems'. The following year, after succeeding F.T. Woods as chairman of the council of the Life and Work movement, Bell refused to sign a report on *The Churches and the World Economic Crisis* compiled after an international conference of economists, industrialists and churchmen at Basle, because it was based on economic rather than religious principles. Bell's concern was shared by the research department of Life and Work which organized an ecumenical study conference, in March 1933, to consider the basic theological principles shared by the Churches of the movement in their attitude to social order. These issues were never fully resolved, but by the end of the decade the gap between Anglo-Saxon and European was noticeably diminished.

With the growing theological orientation of the ecumenical movement, there developed a greater emphasis

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319. Ibid., p.99. He eventually signed a prefatory note which made it clear that he was not supporting the findings, but merely submitting them to public opinion.
320. Ibid., p.100.
322. See below, chap. IV.
on the importance of the Church and its nature, reinforced by a new concern about the expanding role and power of the modern State. These emphases were evident in the second world conference of the Life and Work movement at Oxford in 1937, on the theme of Church, Community and State.

The preparation for Oxford was initiated at the biennial meeting of the Universal Christian Council at Fanø, Denmark, in 1934, and continued over the next three years by means of a complicated network of conferences, discussions and written papers. The programme covered nine subjects, all connected to the central theme of the relation of the Church to the State and to society. This preparatory activity involved, in Bell's opinion, 'some three hundred of the ablest Christian minds in Europe and America'.

The conference, when finally assembled at Oxford in July, 1937, comprised 425 members, 300 of whom were official delegates appointed by the Churches. One hundred delegates had been co-opted by the Universal

324. Ibid., pp.582 ff.
325. Ibid., pp.583-7. The subjects were: The Church and its Function in Society; Church and Community; Church and State; Church, Community and State in relation to Education; Church, Community and State in relation to the Economic Order; The Universal Church and the World of Nations; The Christian Understanding of Man; The Kingdom of God and History; The Christian Faith and the Common Life.
Christian Council 'in order to ensure the assistance of eminent experts in various fields' and the remaining twenty-five were fraternal delegates and ecumenical officers. 328

The work of the conference was done by five sections, to which the delegates were assigned. The subjects dealt with by the sections were Church and Community; Church and State; Church, Community, and State in relation to the Economic Order; Church, Community and State in relation to Education; and the Universal Church and the World of Nations. 329

The reports produced by the conference were qualitatively quite different from anything emerging out of Copec and Stockholm. At Copec the delegates had discussed and accepted reports already prepared by the commissions and published before the conference. The majority of the resolutions passed at the conference had been framed by the commissions themselves. 330 In the case of Stockholm, reports had been prepared beforehand on six main themes, but an overcrowded agenda had prevented either extensive discussion or the drafting of reports by the conference itself. 331 The procedure at Oxford was quite different. The result of the extensive preparation for the conference

329. Ibid., p.590.
330. Of the fifty-nine resolutions passed by the conference on the commission reports, only three were proposed at the conference itself and only four were altered from the commissions' original wording. See Proceedings of C.O.P.E.C., pp.277-92.
was a series of volumes of essays. Only one of these was published before the conference met, but the main essays had been distributed beforehand and a draft report had been compiled on the work of each section. These drafts became the basis of extensive discussion at the conference itself and were substantially amended and recast. The resulting memoranda issued by the sections were, in a real sense, the work of the delegates at the conference.

The atmosphere at Oxford in 1937 provided a striking contrast to that at Birmingham in 1924 and Stockholm in 1925. Reflecting the optimism of the period, Christian social thinkers in the 1920s had been confident that social forms could be changed for the better; that progress could be made towards a Christian ideal of society. By 1937, as Bell put it, civilization was 'in the melting-pot' and Christianity was 'fighting for its life', challenged by ideologies which claimed to provide superior solutions to the problems of man. The obvious failure to achieve the better world envisaged in the 1920s had a sobering effect on Christian

332. W.A. Visser 't Hooft and J.H. Oldham, The Church and its Function in Society; T.E. Jessop and others, The Christian Understanding of Man; H.G. Wood and others, The Kingdom of God and History; N.E. Ehrenström and others, The Christian Faith and the Common Life; K.S. Latourette and others, Church and Community; F. Clarke and others, Church, Community and State in relation to Education; The Marquess of Lothian and others, The Universal Church and the World of Nations. These were all published by Allen and Unwin, London.


social idealism. The delegates to Oxford were less confident that solutions could be found. Commenting on the Oxford meeting, the editor of the *I.C.F. Journal* noted that

the calm deliberation, the confident expectation of Stockholm were replaced by the tense expectancy, the grim earnestness which mark the throes of conflict ... [Recent years] have brought home to us with uncompromising emphasis the necessity for facing hard facts, they have brought the Christian Church to its knees in more senses than one, and the pious aspirations of 1925 have become the inescapable conditions of its continued existence. The menace to Christian culture and civilisation has driven the Church all over the world to consider how it can best deal with a situation which offers it a challenge comparable only to that of the first century.335

Symptomatic of the greater realism which characterized the Oxford conference was the attempt to integrate the insights of theologians with those of experts in secular spheres of knowledge. This approach had been evident in ecumenical studies as early as 1933336 and, in the opinion of one participant, Oxford 1937 achieved 'the organic blending of theological reflection with the everyday experiences and problems of the lay mind'. An important corollary of this was a greater accent on the importance of the role of the laity in Christian social thought and action.337

These emphases were reflected in the organizational structure of the Christian social movement in England. In


1938, the Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life (CCFCL) was established. This comprised a small staff of ecclesiastical leaders with powers to co-opt laymen representing various spheres of public life. The motive behind the foundation of the Council was the encouragement of dialogue between churchmen and secular experts in an attempt to overcome the gap between Christian social theory and reality. As Archbishop Lang told the Church Assembly, there was a gulf 'between the work, witness and language of the Churches and the actual interests and preoccupations of the bulk of the nations'. Men were becoming annoyed at the assertion by churchmen that the Christian faith was the only solution to the world's problems.

They wanted that solution to be related to the actual problems and interests in which day by day they were engaged. That could only be done by thinking ... [and] it must be done by the best minds which could be got together to work in relationship to each other.

The business of the Council would not be to issue pronouncements, but to encourage co-operative thinking on particular aspects of secular life. This implied a recognition of the role of the laity as 'the spearpoint of the Church in action'. From 1939 the Council produced *The Christian*


Also established after Oxford was The Commission of the Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility. Chaired by Temple, the Commission comprised about eighty official delegates from the various Christian communions in Britain (with the exception of the Roman Catholics) and possessed a full-time secretariat. During the war it produced two documents, Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction and The Christian Church and World Order, which attempted to outline the fundamental measures necessary to secure a world more in line with Christian principles.

In 1939, Alec Vidler assumed the editorship of Theology, a liberal Catholic journal which had not, hitherto, been much concerned with social issues. Vidler was sympathetic to the outlook of Oldham and the CNL (which he helped edit) and in the early 1950s was joint editor of its successor, the Frontier. Under Vidler's editorship, Theology became an important focus of debate on social theology.


An important consequence of these new developments was an end to the Christendom group's dominance of Anglican social thought. The group's ideas were still noticed by social Christians (Temple invited them to give the key-note speeches at a conference he chaired at Malvern, in 1941, on the Church and social order) but their assumptions were increasingly challenged by those who took their theological cue from Oxford.  

II. THE RECOVERY OF PROPHECY: THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST STAGE

1. The Prophet's Mantle

The inescapable reality for the twentieth century Church has been the development of a secular culture and the disappearance of a world even nominally Christian. The growth of the Christian social movement, in the early decades of the century, was one response to this phenomenon. The idea of a Christian social order was projected as a positive alternative to a society in which the relevance of Christian values was conceded only for personal life and in which, increasingly, social patterns were determined by the State and the developing mass media.

The main aim of the movement was to recover the Church's social teaching and what was perceived as its true, prophetic role in society. Influenced substantially by Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*¹, social Christians argued that since the medieval period, the Church had abdicated its social function. The teaching of the Old and New Testaments, they claimed, had a social reference which had been taken seriously by the early and medieval Churches. The writings of the Fathers had assumed a distinctive attitude on the part of Christians towards economic questions - an attitude which separated them from

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the rest of the world. During the medieval period, the Church had developed its social doctrine more fully. Medieval thinkers (despite what could be said about medieval practice) had claimed that all areas of life were sub-departments of religion, and the Church had sought to establish a standard of equity against which all transactions should be measured. It had seen itself as the representative of the kingdom of God on earth, a visible society, in which every activity was directed to God.

Social Christians followed Tawney in arguing that the decline of this total conception of religion, between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, had resulted in the severance of religious and economic life. In their view, the Church had become unduly individualistic and other-worldly, with the result that its influence on the development of industrial society had been negligible. The duty of the twentieth century Church, they claimed, was to teach the world afresh what Christianity really stood for. It must take up the task, neglected since the middle ages, of developing a body of Christian doctrine


3. Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.32-8; Gore, Christ and Society, pp.91-113.
applicable to all areas of life.4

Charles Gore captured this mood in his Hailey Stewart Lectures5 in 1927. Gore envisaged a modern version of medieval social teaching; a comprehensive work on Christian ethics based on the teaching of Christ and the history of the Church, and accompanied by a new casuistry for the guidance of Christians in the concrete situations of everyday life.6 But he warned against regarding the apostolic and medieval Churches as anything more than inspiring examples of the integration of religious and social life. They could not provide true precedents for the twentieth century; for the modern Church was neither an enclave in a hostile environment, nor a powerful Church-State.7

This warning was particularly apt with respect to the medieval Church. It was not only Anglo-Catholics who

4. Christianity and Industrial Problems, p.47; Talks on Christianity and Society, Tawney Papers, section 20, no.7, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London. The handlist for the Tawney Papers suggests that this section is mainly material relating to the 1940s, but the notes are interspersed with material on the Life and Liberty Movement, which suggests that they belong to the period during or soon after the first world war. See also an extract from Tawney's address to the International Missionary Council, Jerusalem, 1928, in Memorandum on the Approach to a Christian Sociology, York, Oct. 1929, p.2, Garbett Papers, file on the International Missionary Council.

5. The Hailey Stewart Trust was founded in 1924 to encourage research for the prevention of human suffering and the promotion of the Christian ideal in social life. Activities include lectures, publications etc. and grants to universities, hospitals and charitable institutions for the support of specific research projects. See Gore, Christ and Society, introductory pages and Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli (ed.), Directory of European Foundations, Turin, 1969, p.463.

6. Ibid., pp.165-6.

7. Ibid., pp.159-63.
were lured by the medieval ideal: a liberal Protestant like F.R. Barry (later Canon of Westminster and Bishop of Southwell) bemoaned the 'disintegration of ...modern life' and urged the necessity for a 'principle of authority' which could command 'the allegiance of the modern world'. He believed that the solution lay in a 'modern equivalent of the medieval Papacy' which would restore to life 'some kind of moral sanity'.

Barry, and others who shared his concern, professed to recognize that there could be no return to the position of spiritual and temporal power enjoyed by the medieval Church. Yet some clearly hoped for a situation in which Christian social doctrine, rewritten for contemporary conditions, would be enforced by a modern system of Church social discipline. The question of what authority this doctrine would have over those not members of the Church, and indeed in the whole realm of

8. F.R. Barry, 'The "Temporal Power" in the Modern World', Pilgrim, vol. 3, no.3, Apr. 1923, pp.263-4. See also O.C. Quick, 'What is Authority?', ibid, vol. 5, no.3, Apr. 1925. Quick argued for 'a return to a philosophy which will enable us to cling to the absolute authority of reason and goodness in the world. This requires a sense of subjection to universal and paramount law'. (p.264).


temporal power, was largely evaded. It was easy to slip from the recognition that Christian social teaching would have little authority merely because it was proclaimed by the Church, to the assumption that because Christianity was capable of providing the answers, its inherent truth would ultimately be recognized by both Christians and non-Christians. Reckitt, for example, believed that when the Church, like its medieval predecessor, 'had something clear and concrete to say, and good grounds for saying it', it would readily command an audience. 11 It took the experiences of the German Church in the 1930s to shake these simplistic notions about the Church's authority vis-à-vis the secular State.

Any attempt to enforce a social interpretation of Christianity on the Church's members would have encountered vociferous opposition. The Protestant conception of religion as primarily a matter of individual conscience and salvation had strong adherents in the Church of England. In his primary charge to the diocese of Durham, in 1924, Hensley Henson criticized the Copec movement for its inversion of 'the evangelical order of reformation'. He accused Copec of placing 'the transformation of the individual' second to the task of regenerating society. This was to ignore that the 'primacy of individual transformation' was 'distinctive of Christ's method' and

that the redemption of the world could come only through the redemption of individuals. Henson claimed that a social interpretation of Christianity was inconsistent with the true nature of Christ's teaching. The way of Christ, he told a congregation in Westminster Abbey in March 1926, had survived a number of forms of social and political organization; consequently Christians need not be much concerned with these questions. Personal duty was more important, for Christ had taught that 'the Kingdom of God is within you'.

Rev. Reginald Rynd agreed that the gospel was essentially concerned with the individual:

If there is such a thing as a 'social gospel' Jesus gives us no hint either of its scope or characteristics. He left 'society' as such severely alone, not because he despaired of it, but because it was irrelevant.

Christianity was essentially other-worldly. Preaching on the text 'Our citizenship is in heaven', Dean Inge informed his flock at St. Paul's that the eternal world was 'the real world'. The only thing which mattered in this life was the soul, 'here on its trial, passing through its earthly pilgrimage towards weal or woe'. Christians must fix their eyes 'upon the curtain which hangs between us and the beyond' and develop a stoical attitude to the


14. Reginald F. Rynd, 'The Social Gospel', Hibbert Journal, vol.XXIV, no.2, Jan. 1926, p.290. Rynd was Reader of the Temple. See also Dean Inge's interview with the editor of the Guardian, 2 July 1926, p.526. Inge claimed that the gospel was not one of 'social reform' but of 'spiritual regeneration'.
problems of material existence. With this Henson agreed. He confessed that there was much in English life to 'depress and discourage' the thoughtful Englishman and that 'the shadows of economic dislocation and social unrest' lay 'darkly' on the country, especially in Durham. But he urged Christians to concern themselves not with 'material prospects' and 'probable fortunes' but with 'moral obligations' and 'certain duties'. The lesson of the New Testament was that indifference to external circumstances provided the best method of conquering them. A difficult environment, far from impeding individual salvation, encouraged moral fortitude. Inge exhorted his congregation to rise to the challenge of modern life:

We have been born into a period full of dangers and difficulties ... a period which demands men and heroes ... do not live softly. Luxury is bad from every point of view. Learn to endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Whatever your political or economic theories may be, it must be wise and patriotic to live the simple life.

The heroic virtues called forth by the simple life at the Deanery of St Paul's were left to his listeners' imagination. Social Christians challenged this view of Christianity, which seemed to aim at developing moral supermen, rather than at creating conditions which enabled ordinary people to lead decent and moral lives. Demant argued that there was

17. Henson, Quo Tendimus, pp.129-30.
18. Dean of St. Paul's, 'Our Citizenship'. 
no warrant in Christian ethics for demanding an extraordinary measure of heroism for the majority of men as a condition of their fulfilling their daily duties and avocations.

Certainly the Church had to be concerned with standards of personal behaviour and would always make demands on the heroic virtues which brought men a certain victory over circumstances. But this did not allow it to ignore that social conditions had an important effect on the conduct of individuals and that it was part of the Church's ministration to society as a whole to work for such a social order that men in the mass will not be confronted with momentous choices between superhuman heroism and degradation, choices in which many succumb.

To excuse indifference to social conditions on the grounds that the worse they were, the more they encouraged heroic virtues was, in Demant's opinion, 'to regard moral gymnastic as the total content of religion'.¹⁹ As one document on Christian social teaching put it, social conditions could 'lay an altogether undue strain on the moral development of the individual' and Christianity should 'strive to make impossible those conditions which militate against the growth of Christian character'.²⁰ An un-Christian social order, while it might strengthen the character of moral giants, merely put extra obstacles in the way of ordinary human beings.

Temple argued that the structure of society had a powerful influence on economic behaviour and that currently

its impact was more evident than that of religion:

Would any observer of our social and industrial life, who observed it with a view to drawing inferences about our fundamental beliefs, find himself led to a conviction that we believed in human brotherhood under the universal Fatherhood of God? .... does the capitalist employer find any encouragement to unselfishness in his financial policy? Does the Trade Unionist? Or the casual worker? They are all in the grip of a system; and that system not only settles their policy but, through the conduct that it imposes on them, does a good deal to determine their character.21

It was futile to attempt to redeem the individual and not society; the two processes must proceed side by side. While a perfect society could only be achieved when all its members were Christians, the existing structure of society made it especially difficult for men to act as Christians.22

Social Christians explicitly rejected the argument that there is no social teaching in the gospels and that the appeal of Christ was purely to the individual. The Fifth Report acknowledged that Christ did indeed appeal to the individual, but at the same time insisted that his teaching did not sanction a division between personal and social behaviour. Christ had assumed the whole existing


body of social teaching found in the law and the prophets, and the subsequent teaching of the Christian Church, from the first to the seventeenth centuries, had contained a social reference. The social principles of Christianity were not 'a mere deduction from, or corollary to, the Christian Faith' but 'an essential part of it'.

The Fifth Committee claimed, with Maurice, that the kingdom of God was a social conception, encompassing all of God's creation. It supplied a pattern for the whole of human life; a scheme in which all the 'secular' activities of man had their proper place.

Christianity regards society, not as a machine, but as an association of men, the ultimate object of which is to promote the development of the human spirit and its preparation for the Kingdom of God. In that process of development and preparation the provision of the material means of existence plays an indispensable and honourable part. But they are its foundation, not its completion. Industry and economic activity are not ends in themselves, to be pursued without reference to the main end of human society, or by methods inconsistent with it. Therefore it is the duty of Christians to insist that the ultimate criterion of social institutions, of economic activity and of industrial organisation is to be found in the teaching of Christianity. It is for the Church to humanize industry by upholding the spiritual ends to which it ought to be directed, and the spiritual criteria by which it ought to be judged.

24. *Ibid.*, p.8. The report did, however, insist equally that the social teaching of the Church was only part of its larger spiritual witness (p.21).
True Christianity, it was argued, was essentially social, because Christ had founded the Church as a society of brethren, 'bound to each other by mutual obligations'.

Personal religion should lead inevitably to the life of fellowship because personal discipleship to Christ involved membership in his body. Worship should be an expression of this common membership - a shared activity, and not merely an aid to individual devotion. This was particularly true of the service of holy communion, of which Temple wrote that it was 'impossible to separate the individual and corporate aspects ... without irreparable damage to both'.

To treat the communion service merely as an act of private devotion was to reduce it to 'the level of a Mystery Cult' and to ignore the fundamental fact of fellowship.

If we are in fellowship with God we are by that very fact in fellowship with one another. If we are not in fellowship with one another ... we are not in fellowship with God.

Fellowship, then, is at the heart of Christian worship.

The social implications of the communion service were stressed even more explicitly at an ICF clergy conference, in 1939, on the social significance of worship. The syllabus for the conference declared that this 'central

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27. Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.16-17.
29. Ibid., p.48.
30. Ibid., p.49.
31. Prepared, according to Kirk, by a committee which comprised all schools of thought in the Church of England. (Social Significance of Worship, pp.5-6).
act of Christian worship' could never be 'merely individualistic' because it expressed the intimate relationship between man and God and man and his fellows.

The act of communion is performed within the Christian fellowship, and is a mode of ever deepening integration with the Fellowship of the Baptised. The more a man loves God, the more will he love the brethren; the growth of his personality is a contribution to, and enrichment of, the life of the whole Body, and only in the life of the whole Body can it attain its full stature.

From that social relation the Christian soul cannot be extricated.32

From the fact of the corporate nature of both life and worship it followed that the Church ought to draw attention to corporate sin and the need for corporate repentance. By his membership of an established society, the individual was inevitably a partaker in other men's sins. Social evils like slums, sweating and war resulted from corporate selfishness and were a breach of fellowship which should be roundly condemned by Christians.33

During the 1920s and 1930s, the main energies of the Christian social movement were directed towards the development of a theology which did justice to Christianity's inherent sociality and to the Church's prophetic task. In the early stages, there was strong continuity with

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the Christian socialism of the late nineteenth century which had been substantially influenced by progressive secular thought. As the Christendom group's search for an intrinsically Christian sociology gained momentum, Anglican social thought claimed to reject secular influences and tried to expound a purely Christian view of society. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, there was some evidence of a balance between these two positions which enabled an appreciation of the relative contributions of Christian and secular thought.

2. The Anatomy of Christian Socialism

In 1889, the group of young High Churchmen known as the 'Holy Party' produced a volume of essays on the incarnation. Edited by Gore, and including contributions by E.S. Talbot, Scott Holland, J.R. Illingworth, R.C. Moberly, W.J.H. Campion and R.L. Ottley, Lux Mundi embodied a blend of Christian theology and philosophical idealism which was to characterize Christian socialism over the next four decades.

Lux Mundi's emphasis on the incarnation rather than the atonement as the focal point of theology reflected the renewed interest, evident in both Maurice and the Tractarians, in the theology of the Greek fathers, hitherto neglected in favour of the Latins. Maurice had taught that theology should begin not with the fall of man, but with God, creator and sustainer of the world. The creation,
permeated by God's spirit (the Logos) was completed by the incarnation in which Christ had assumed human nature. Because God was sovereign over all his creation the task of theology, Maurice believed, was to comprehend man in all his activities, secular and spiritual.³⁴

In this spirit, the contributors to Lux Mundi claimed that 'the central ideas and principles of religion' must be re-examined 'in the light of contemporary thought and current problems'. The volume was a conscious attempt to reinterpret the faith in the light of the 'profound transformation, intellectual and social' evident in the modern world.³⁵ This openness to the truth contained in contemporary secular thought reflected also the influence of T.H. Green on several of the volume's contributors. There was a strong affinity between Green's philosophical idealism and the Greek theology learnt from Maurice and the Tractarians.³⁶ Idealism's insistence that the natural world was the manifestation of spirit and that the world demonstrated a spiritual unity, harmonized with Maurice's teaching on the Logos and enabled accommodation of the principle of evolution. As Michael Ramsey has put it,

³⁴ Bernard M.G. Reardon, From Coleridge to Gore: A Century of Religious Thought in Britain, Longmans, London, 1971, pp.168-75, 194-7 and 433; Lilley, 'Church Authority and Social Leadership', pp.258-61; Binyon, Christian Socialist Movement in England, pp.12-17, 68-73, 84-8. Binyon, while recognizing and approving the re-orientation of Anglican theology towards a study of the Greek fathers, did not accept that the Tractarians had been part of this trend.
³⁶ Reardon, Coleridge to Gore, p.434.
Lux Mundi

gave an unwonted emphasis to the belief that He who became Incarnate is the Logos who has been at work in the whole created world, in nature and in man, in art and in science, in culture and in progress, and all in such wise that contemporary trends of thought, like evolution or socialism, are not enemies to be fought, but friends who can provide new illuminations of the truth that is in Christ.37

Through Green, some of the 'Holy Party' imbibed the growing tendency towards collectivism in British political thought. Green's insistence that the good life was possible only in a certain form of community, that men do not possess rights independently of society and that a human being becomes a person only in society38, was reflected in Gore's essay in Lux Mundi. He wrote of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church: 'It is social. It treats man as a 'social being', who cannot realize himself in isolation'.39 It was the original intention of God, Gore claimed, 'that the Spirit should find His chiefest joy, building the edifice of a social life in which nature was to find its crown and justification'.40

The impact of Green's philosophy on Anglican social thought was still evident in the 1920s and 1930s. The insistence of social Christians that the structure of society exerted a powerful influence on individual character and behaviour was strongly reminiscent of Green's positive

37. Ramsey, Gore to Temple, p.3.
40. Ibid., p.318.
State. Traces of idealism were particularly strong in Temple's thought. Green's distinction between a human being and a person, based on the belief that personality is actualized in society and involves 'some practical recognition of ... an "I" by a "Thou" and a "Thou" by an "I"', was an essential part of Temple's philosophy.

For Temple, the person was a socialized individual:

personality ... only becomes what it is capable of being, through its development in the reciprocal relationships of society .... I am only I in my relationships with You, and You are only You, or capable of being called an I, in your relationships with Me. It is positively in the interaction of embryonic personalities with one another that the resultant personality is developed.

As well, Temple rejected, as Green had done, social contract theories which implied that society was an artificial creation, rather than a natural and historical development.

Although not all the Lux Mundi writers had been interested in the social implications of incarnation theology, their work became a fruitful source for others. One of the key elements of Anglican social theology in the 1920s, and to a lesser extent in the 1930s, was the notion of 'sacramentalism' or the 'sacramental principle'. This

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41. T.H. Green, Prolegomena to Ethics, 1883, section 190, quoted in Cacoullas, Green, p.78.


principle, a version of the Logos doctrine, embodied the belief that God's spirit was present in his creation and that the physical world was a vehicle for the expression of spiritual significance. In an article devoted to the explication of the principle in 1921, Temple declared:

According to the Christian belief the world exists as a result of the self-expression of God .... The universe is a divine utterance. It is ... a physical fact with a spiritual meaning. It is at every moment dependent upon the divine will ....

The sacramental principle is that the lower order of creation finds its own fulfilment when it is possessed and controlled by the higher: matter by life, life by finite spirit, finite spirit by God .... all creation is in principle sacramental.44

The incarnation was seen as the supreme example of the sacramental principle: God had expressed himself in the physical form of man, thus investing man's material life with potential spiritual significance. C.S. Woodward expressed this idea thus:

At the heart of the doctrine of the Incarnation stands the sacramental principle that material life, that which is outward and visible, is meant to be the vehicle of inward and spiritual reality. However much material things have been distorted and misused by man, however much sin and selfishness have marred their harmony, they are still capaces Dei, able to be employed for divine and spiritual ends.45


The incarnation and its underlying sacramental principle were believed to have an important social corollary; that man's material and social life was inherently worthwhile. Far from being irrelevant to the progress of his soul, it was a means of expressing either his worship of God or his indifference to God's purpose. Through the incarnation God had redeemed not only individual man, but 'the whole setting of a human life'. 46 Man's material existence and social relationships were, therefore, the proper concern of the Church. The Christian could neither ignore social affairs nor 'stare them out stoically as essentially alien to his true self'. 47

As the work of the Lux Mundi group represented a fusion of High Church and Maurician theology, the sacramental principle provided common ground on which Anglo-Catholics and liberal theologians could base a justification of Christian social concern. Modernists found the sacramental principle a useful expression of their immanentist view of the incarnation. M.T. Dunlop expressed it thus:

It [Christianity] is a religion of Incarnationalism. The eternal is only truly seen in the temporalism The material world - of the passions, of art, of politics - is the condition of the spiritual; and the visible is not the unspiritual since soul and world together have their origin in a single source - the Father God. 48


47. M.T. Dunlop, 'The Church of England: Her Character and Social Task To-day', Torch, May 1934, p.69. For Copec's acceptance of the sacramental principle see Nature of God and His Purpose for the World, pp.41, 71 and 73-4.

The sacramental principle was particularly congenial to Anglo-Catholics. They stressed not only the spiritual meaning inherent in material existence, but the implications of this principle for Christian worship. The Eucharist, for example, was interpreted as a symbol of the dedication of material life to God. To divorce the worship of the Church from actual social conditions was to pervert worship and to betray the essential meaning of Christianity. W.G. Peck expressed this graphically in the claim that a slum tenement was 'as derogatory to the Holy Ghost whose human temple inhabits it, as would be a Mass celebrated with mouldy bread and a dirty chalice'.

The attention devoted to the social ramifications of Christian worship resulted in some fine rhetoric about sacramental possibilities and the shortcomings of a social order which violated human fellowship and God's creative purpose. The syllabus for the ICF's conference on the social significance of worship declared that:

In the Act of Consecration a prophetic judgment is passed upon a world in which bread and wine are cornered by speculators and adulterated by manufacturers; a world in which the interests of


money actually misrepresent God's bounty and create an artificial poverty.51

Although this sort of language was a graphic expression of Christian social concern, it represented a tendency to concentrate on the act of worship itself rather than on harnessing the social energy which worship might generate. There was always a danger that the practice of worship as a corporate activity which had social implications would become not the prelude to Christian social reform, but a substitute for effective action. This propensity was strengthened, during the 1930s, by the emphasis of the ecumenical movement on the importance of the Church being the Church, and by the liturgical revival of continental Catholicism.

There are many examples illustrating this weakness. John Perret, an Anglo-Catholic strongly influenced by the liturgical movement, suggested that the significance of liturgy lay in the fact that it could turn a congregation into 'an apocalyptic power which alters the course of history'; but he showed little interest in how that power could effect change. Another Anglo-Catholic, A.C. Hebert, argued that the witness of the Church to the modern world was to be given primarily in the life of the Church itself, in the way in which Christians worshipped, prayed and lived their daily lives for God's glory; and only secondarily, in the efforts and enterprises which

sprang out of this background.\textsuperscript{53} Again, no attempt was made to detail these 'efforts and enterprises'. Perhaps the best example of tokenism was provided by F.M. Downton, a parish priest, who seemed to believe that worship was social reform. Downton contended that community worship, diligently practised each day, would do much to heal the ills of society. First, it would help to produce that 'Christian character' which was 'the foundation of true culture and civilization, and of all sound schemes of reform and social progress'. A social fabric not built on the rock of Christian character would collapse in the face of storms and 'economic blizzards'. For this reason the unemployed should be encouraged to participate in community worship. Such a scheme, said Downton, although it 'staggered the imagination', would have 'solid advantages' in teaching 'broken-hearted men' the 'gentle art' of Christian virtues: 'the spirit of patience and forbearance, the spirit of docility, humility and penitence'. They would be taught how 'to turn their troubles to spiritual account'. Secondly, community worship would produce change. Prayer was 'the principal means of getting things done' and worship created groups of 'devout and well-trained worshippers' who were 'powerful intercessors' for the world. What better help than this, Downton asked, could be given to the unemployed?\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{53} A.G. Hebert, 'The Church as the Sphere of Redemption', \textit{Christendom}, vol. 6, no.22, June 1936, pp.107 ff.
\textsuperscript{54} F.M. Downton, 'Community Worship and Social Reform', \textit{Theology}, vol.XXIV, no.141, Mar. 1932, pp.156-61.
This tendency to substitute worship for action and, in Downton's case, to try to reconcile the unemployed to their lot, illustrates the gap which often existed between Christian social rhetoric and the realities of social life. In particular, the significance attached to the communion service as a social ceremony implied that the conditions of life and labour could be transformed by the act of worship alone.

The Catholic emphasis on worship and sacraments was a persistent influence in Anglican social thought throughout the inter-war period. An equally important ingredient, although very different in nature, was the Liberal Protestant theology of the early decades of the twentieth century. *Lux Mundi* had represented the Liberal Catholic response to 'the scientific and critical movement'.

It had offered a theology which, through its stress on immanent spirit, was able to accommodate the modern principle of evolution. Although it shocked some conservative Tractarians, *Lux Mundi* remained within the bounds of 'critical orthodoxy'. The same could not be said of the Liberal Protestant response to biblical criticism, which was an attempt to strip away the 'non-essential' elements of Christianity; 'to cut behind the Christ of Dogma to the Jesus of History.'

55. Reardon, *Coleridge to Gore*, p.434.
56. This is Reardon's term. See *ibid.*, chap. XIII. H.P. Liddon and R.W. Church were particularly shocked by *Lux Mundi*.
57. Neville, Pretor, [Neville Talbot, Bishop of Pretoria], 'The Kingdom and the Church', *Pilgrim*, vol.4, no.1, Oct. 1923, p.93.
The 'classic exposition' of what became known as Liberal Protestantism was a series of lectures delivered in Berlin by the German scholar, Adolf Harnack, in 1901. Harnack argued that the core of the gospel was the teaching of Jesus about the kingdom of God, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. In Harnack's view, all the dogmatic, miraculous and supernatural elements in the gospel tradition, together with the doctrine of atonement, were not what Jesus really taught or did, but later accretions of the early Church. Probably the best known publicist of radical liberal theology in England was R.J. Campbell, a Congregationalist preacher who later rejoined the Anglican Church. Campbell's *The New Theology* (1907) aroused a storm of controversy, for he was interpreted as denying that Jesus was divine in any way other than was possible for every man. The most obvious impact of these trends in the Church of England was seen in the foundation of the Modern Churchmen's Union in 1898.

The 'new theology' appealed particularly to those who were concerned that Christianity should prove itself relevant in the social sphere. It was the basis of the idea of the 'social gospel' (prevalent particularly in the United States) which projected Jesus primarily as a

60. Originally called the Churchmen's Union for the Advancement of Religious Thought, it was renamed the Modern Churchmen's Union in 1928. See Ramsey, *Gore to Temple*, p.67.
teacher of social reform, and the gospel of the kingdom as the message of a Christian social order to be established on earth. 61 Although rejected in its extreme form by mainstream Anglicanism 62, Liberal Protestant theology had a marked impact on the formulation of Anglican social teaching in the 1920s. Christianity was presented as a system of ethics and a way of life rather than a set of religious beliefs. This reflected the concern of liberal Christians to stress the content of Christ's teaching rather than his supernatural status as the son of God.

Even Gore, who was sharply critical of Campbell's 'new theology' and vitally concerned with the pursuit of theological truth 63, was inclined to push aside questions of dogma in the interests of presenting a 'social gospel'. In his Halley Stewart Lectures he set himself the task of outlining 'the idea of human life...embodied in the teaching of Jesus' and its relation to man's political and economic life. 64 He emphasized the importance of 'mak[ing] men understand afresh that Christianity is a life before it is a doctrine'. He admitted that this life drew its motives from 'a certain doctrine about God and about man' and would 'lose its vitality if it lost its hold on

61. See e.g. Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel, Macmillan, N.Y., 1918.
62. See Ramsey, Gore to Temple, pp. 68-91.
63. Ibid. and Prestige, Gore, p.304.
64. Gore, Christ and Society, p.49.
its creed'. But he insisted that

... Christianity is first of all a way of life for men in fellowship. The call of Christ was to live this life ... Our endless critical, theological, and ecclesiastical or sacramental controversies are always making mankind forget ... that the object of the Church of Christ, as its Founder defined it, is to live a life, and that life an organized brotherhood... 65

The same emphasis was evident elsewhere. An article in the ICF journal, The Torch, on the place of the Church in the modern world, stressed that Christianity was 'not only a message to be believed ... [but] no less emphatically, a deed to be done'. 66 The Fifth Report, a semi-official statement of the Church's views, concentrated on Christ's teaching and the ethical precepts of the New Testament with little reference to the nature and person of Christ. For this it earned the criticism of the Church Times' correspondent who claimed that by its failure to put the doctrine of the incarnation in 'the forefront of its message', the report had not only denied to the Christian social message its full authority, but had failed to follow the example of the earliest leaders of the Christian social movement, namely Maurice, Westcott and Holland. 67

In contrast to later stages of Christian social thinking, there was little attempt to present a theological understanding of the modern world; to interpret the commandment of love in the light of the realities of power

65. Ibid., pp.164-5.
and the complexities of urban industrial living. There was merely the wish that men would act as Christ had taught. Gore pointed out that Christ had been 'at pains, first of all, to establish ... [the] ethical character' of the gospel. He had instructed his disciples about the sort of people who would be citizens of the kingdom of God. The 'dominant theological principle' of Christ's teaching had been 'that of the Fatherhood of God' and its corollary, the equal spiritual value of all men. Others agreed that these were the central principles of the gospel. In an article on the Christian solution to industrial problems, contributed to the Modern Churchman in 1920, J.W. Diggle (Bishop of Carlisle) claimed that

the two foundations upon which Christ built the whole structure of His religion were the fatherly love of God and the brotherly love of man .... Christ sums up His redemptive revelations for mankind in the proclamation of the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal Brotherhood of man.

The solution of all ecclesiastical, social and industrial problems would be found in 'the divine influence of these two great revelations of The Christ'. Temple used the same language in the 1920s. He described the aim of Copec as


To help us in forming a clear conception of what is meant for us here and now by belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.\textsuperscript{70}

He believed that Christ had given a new emphasis to God's fatherhood. In the Old Testament, the thought of God as father 'stood alongside the thought of Him as King, and as Lawgiver, and as Judge' - and was, for the most part, subordinate to these other conceptions. But Jesus made 'the loving Fatherhood...supreme in the whole conception of God'.\textsuperscript{71} In Jesus' teaching man's relationship to God was always set forth in the family relationship of fatherhood and brotherhood.\textsuperscript{72}

These 'old, unchanging truths'\textsuperscript{73} were the basis of a number of Christian social principles. For Temple, the most fundamental of these was 'liberty, or ... the principle of respect for personality in all men'. This followed directly from 'the theological dogma of divine Fatherhood'.\textsuperscript{74} The second principle, 'brotherhood or fellowship'\textsuperscript{75}, he believed to be an accurate expression of the idea which had dominated the 1920 Lambeth conference and, indeed, of the contemporary Zeitgeist.\textsuperscript{76} The third, the duty of service,\textsuperscript{70}\textsuperscript{71}\textsuperscript{72}\textsuperscript{73}\textsuperscript{74}\textsuperscript{75}\textsuperscript{76}

\begin{itemize}
\item 70. Bishop of Manchester, Copec Supplement, Guardian, 4 Apr. 1924, p.(i).
\item 71. Temple, Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship, pp.7-8.
\item 72. Ibid., p.37.
\item 73. Bishop of Manchester, Copec Supplement, Guardian, 4 Apr. 1924, p.(i).
\item 75. Ibid., p.12.
\item 76. Ibid., chap.l, p.1. This essay, on 'Fellowship', originally appeared in the Pilgrim in 1921.
\end{itemize}
followed from the first two, and the fourth, 'the power of sacrifice' was 'at the very heart of the Christian religion'. The Fifth Report listed 'the fundamental principles of social welfare and progress' as the sanctity of personality, the duty of service (including acceptance of the primary function of industry as service), co-operation rather than competition ('the ethical spirit of the New Testament'), brotherhood or corporate responsibility, and stewardship (the law governing the ownership of material wealth).

Emphasis on the social ethics of Christianity provided an easy link with the ideals of socialism. The stress on fellowship, brotherhood and co-operation reflected disquiet about the capitalist ethos and sympathy (albeit rather vague) with the spirit of the labour movement. Gore maintained that the main idea of socialism was closely allied to the Christian idea.

The socialistic movement is based upon a great demand for justice in human life .... The indictment of our present social organisation is indeed overwhelming. And with the indictment Christianity ought to have the profoundest sympathy. It is substantially the indictment of the prophets.

The ideals of socialism, in Gore's opinion, were positive and ethical. On the whole, therefore, Christianity was

77. Ibid., chap.2, pp.16-17.
78. Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.12-22. The phrases quoted are on pp. 22 and 17 respectively. For a similar statement of Christian social principles from the Lambeth conference, see Conference of Bishops, 1920, pp. 46 and 68-70.
more in sympathy with socialism than with individualism. 79

The identification of Christianity with socialism was particularly strong in the decade before the first world war. The outlook of the CSL was aptly described by one of its adherents, F. Lewis Donaldson, in the phrase 'Christianity is the religion of which socialism is the practice'. 80 After the war this explicit identification was less apparent, but the sympathy remained. The Fifth Committee, pulled in a collectivist direction by Tawney and Lansbury, had little time for individualism and favoured a positive role for the State in the pursuit of social welfare. During the industrial unrest of the post-war years several bishops were outspoken in their support for labour demands and Temple, a close friend of Tawney, was even a member of the Labour party. 81

3. The Hope of the Kingdom

Christian socialism was a blend of liberal theology, idealist philosophy and socialist ethics; best described as ethical idealism. The essential optimism of this creed was reflected in its faith in ethical motivation and its

80. Church Socialist, vol.1, no.9, Sep. 1912, pp.4-5, quoted in ibid., p.258.
81. Iremonger, Temple, pp.332-3. For a discussion of the social critique of the movement in the 1920s, see chaps. V and VI below.
conception of the kingdom of God as a realizable social order.

The social pronouncements of Anglicans, in the early post-war years, emphasized again and again, the potential of Christian social principles to change the operation of economic and social life. In a sermon to the 1921 Church Congress at Birmingham, described by one commentator as typical of the spirit emerging in the Church, one bishop spoke of his hopes for the future:

We look forward to the realizing of His Kingdom of Love, in which the spirit of service shall triumph over selfishness, and partial or sectional aims be swallowed up in a passion for righteousness and fellowship; in that Kingdom the value of each child of man will be recognized, and each will have opportunity to do his best, that he may give his true contribution to the whole. 82

The Fifth Committee claimed that if the Church carried out its duty of insisting that Christian ethics were as binding on economic conduct and industrial organization as on personal and domestic life, it would modify the assumptions which men bring into the transactions of economic life, and would cause them to judge industry and industrial success by moral, not merely by economic, criteria. Such a pre-eminence of moral over material considerations is in accordance... with the spirit of the New Testament.83

In similar fashion, the 1920 Lambeth conference's committee on social problems expressed the conviction

82. S. Coleman, 'The Church in the New Age', Torch, Dec. 1921, p.6. The bishop was not identified in the article.
83. Christianity and Industrial Problems, p.12.
that 'if there is to be industrial peace we need the outlook and the motive which are supplied by our Christian Faith'. The conference resolved that the Church should 'emphasize the duty which is laid upon all Christians of setting human values above dividends and profits in their conduct of business'. It was the Church's 'outstanding and pressing' task
to convince its members of the necessity of nothing less than a fundamental change in the spirit and working of our economic life. This change can only be effected by accepting as the basis of industrial relations the principle of co-operation in service for the common good in place of unrestricted competition for private or sectional advantage. All Christian people ought to take an active part in bringing about this change, by which alone we can hope to remove class dissensions and resolve industrial discord.

The same spirit prevailed in Convocation. In an address to the upper house, in May 1919, Davidson claimed that the 'new social order' which they all hoped would 'issue from the War' depended upon great spiritual principles. We must set the service of the public against private gain, set the ideas of trust, unselfishness, brotherhood and love against the lower motives which may actuate people in reconstruction times.

Davidson claimed that if these principles were 'properly inculcated ... the sentiment would give a new spirit to a good deal of the legislation which is being contemplated'. He mentioned in particular, 'the Housing Bill, the Ministry of Health Bill, the Transport Bill...the Acquisition of Land

84. Conference of Bishops, 1920, p.68.
85. Ibid., p.46. This was resolution 74 of the conference.
Bill, and the Land Settlement Bill', all of which cut 'right across our social life'. As bishops, he said, they were 'bent on trying to help people to get at the deeper principles on which all these reconstruction systems must rest'.

Two years later the bishops passed a resolution moved by Kempthorne which, based on the belief 'that moral no less than economic issues' were involved in the current dispute in the coal industry, declared its support for resolution 74 of the Lambeth conference and called on all members of the Church to do everything in their power 'to spread a spirit of fellowship'.

Little time was wasted in considering the efficacy of these resolutions or the applicability of Christian ethics to a system which was clearly more powerful than the sum total of the aspirations of those who were part of it. A study on *Competition*, produced by a small group of Christians in 1917, had stated blandly that to believe that men are condemned for ever to work under a competitive system which thwarts brotherhood, is really a refusal to believe in redemption .... The first duty of the Church will be to hold up her moral ideal, to impress upon succeeding generations ... the conviction that the world of competition as we know it is one that is to be turned upside down by the operation of the spirit of Christ through His disciples in business life.

86. *CCC*, 6 May 1919, p.255.
87. *Ibid.*, 28 Apr. 1921, p.296. Resolution 74 had called for 'a fundamental change in the spirit and working of our economic life', see above, p.135. For a similar expression of these sentiments in Convocation see *ibid.*, 13 Feb. 1919, pp.134-5.
Kirk's response to the question of the practicability of Christianity in the field of business was similar. He insisted that while much was, at present, 'in the realm of dreams', ultimately

the question of the practicability of applying to business conditions such Christian ideals as personal integrity, self-sacrifice, and fellowship ceases to be a matter of debate to the real follower of Christ. To him it is not only possible, but imperative.\(^{89}\)

One of the best examples of the impractical idealism of these years was Temple's claim that what men's souls really desired was 'not justice as between people who are indifferent to one another, but love which ends that indifference and unites them in fellowship'. He admitted that it was useless merely to tell two parties in a dispute to love each other and that the Church must be able to offer principles 'whereby this goal may be pursued'.\(^{90}\) But his belief that reiteration of the values of personality, fellowship, service and sacrifice was adequate to this purpose\(^{91}\) is evidence of a lack of understanding of the realities of industrial life.

The Christian socialist hope was based on a liberal interpretation of the kingdom of God which treated the eschatological elements in Christ's teaching as peripheral and encouraged the belief that Christians who worked for

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90. Temple, Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship, pp. 64-5.
91. Ibid., pp. 66-8.
social regeneration were helping to build the kingdom on earth. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, already realities for Christians, would gradually be extended to all people.

This type of thinking was evident at the tenth conference of Modern Churchmen, held in September 1923. One of three groups of papers delivered on the general theme of 'Christ and Human Society' dealt with the kingdom in its relations to God, the individual, the State, the Church and humanity. Canon M.G. Glazebrook's opening address offered a gradualist interpretation of the kingdom and linked it explicitly with the idea of a Christian social order. Glazebrook dismissed the 'eschatological elements' in the gospels as a product of the atmosphere in which Jesus had delivered his teaching. The 'apocalyptic fancies' of the Jews had introduced into the gospel record a note which should be discounted in favour of 'the many sayings which imply a prophetic, as distinct from an apocalyptic, conception of the future'. Glazebrook contended that texts such as 'The Kingdom of God is like unto leaven' and 'The Kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed', suggested that the coming of the kingdom would be a 'gradual, ethical, development'. It would not appear suddenly, after a cataclysm, but would 'grow up almost unseen, making its way gradually

but irresistibly like leaven'.

The establishment of the kingdom was believed to imply the evolution of a new society which would embody conditions already existing in heaven. Glazebrook put it thus:

When Jesus appeared as a prophet in Galilee, His message was: 'Change your ways, for the Kingdom of God is at hand'. This was not merely a call to repentance, though that was essential... [it implied] a new standard of personal and social duty... the doctrine of the Kingdom was a powerful solvent of old institutions, and creative of new ones. These two processes have gone on through all the Christian centuries... [and it was a Christian's duty] to anticipate, and if possible to hasten, the reforms which His teaching is destined to effect in the structure of society.

The co-operation of humans in the creation of a Christian society was pre-supposed. Man, according to W.M. Pryke, must be regarded as 'a junior partner in the creation of spiritual good'.

Having seen the plans of the divine Architect... the vision of the completed City existing already in the heavenly places, it is for man to set his hands to the task of creating a world resembling as far as may be the City of God.

This social interpretation of the doctrine of the kingdom contributed to the confidence of Christian socialists that the world could be changed. The coming of the new order was seen as a reality which their advocacy of Christian social ethics could only hasten.

Some of the blandest statements of this outlook appeared in ICF publications where assumptions about the nature of the kingdom were often totally divorced from any theological justification. A pamphlet entitled 'the Kingdom of God and the Economic Life' (1920) stated boldly that

the Kingdom of God was the aim for which Jesus lived and died. In so far as we are really His followers, we too must make that the paramount object of all our work and desire. Whatever else the Kingdom of God involves, it certainly demands a righteous and brotherly social order on earth.96

The optimism implicit in this view of the kingdom was characteristic of the 1920s. Although there were still traces of it during the following decade97, it had, by the late 1930s, been seriously challenged by the eschatological interpretation more prevalent in Europe. The change of emphasis was due partly to growing contacts with the ecumenical movement, but also to the fact that against the background of depression, unemployment and impending war, it began to seem less and less likely that God's kingdom and human society had very much in common. The difference in mood was neatly captured in a Scottish student's parody of a well-known hymn. The 1920s version,

Rise up, O men of God,
His Kingdom tarries long,
Bring in the day of brotherhood,
And end the right of wrong,

97. See e.g. the Bishop of Bristol's sermon at the League of Nations service in Geneva in Sep. 1936, Guardian, 25 Sep. 1936, p.661.
gradually gave way to the 1930s version:

Sit down, O men of God,
His Kingdom He will bring,
Whenever it may please His will;
You cannot do a thing!\(^98\)

III. CHRISTIAN SOCIOLOGY: A THEOLOGICAL VIEW OF SOCIETY

1. From Ethics to Sociology

The recovery of the Church's social teaching and of its prophetic role in society was the agreed aim of the Christian social movement throughout the 1920s and 1930s. But there were different interpretations of what constituted the Christian social message. During the 1920s the most widely accepted version was ethical idealism; but the publication, in 1922, of *The Return of Christendom* was a portent of future directions in Anglican social thinking. The essence of the Christendom outlook was a conscious rejection of the eclecticism of ethical idealism and an insistence that the Church should confront the world on the Church's terms. The main features of the group's approach were an emphasis on Christian dogma, the rejection of progressive secular thought and the intention to develop a Christian sociology, based on a Christian view of God, man and the world.

The chief contention of *The Return of Christendom* was that social recovery for an ailing world would come neither from secular formulae nor from a liberal Christianity which attempted to detach Christian social ethics from their dogmatic basis. The contributors to the volume, as Gore pointed out in its introduction, did not share the contemporary fear of dogma in religion. They insisted that 'the root and ground of the ideas of justice
and brotherhood and the universal duty and joy of social service' were to be found only in Christian doctrine.\(^1\) Lionel Thornton's essay on 'The Necessity of Catholic Dogma' explicitly repudiated the 'humanitarian type of religion' in which the gospel was presented as 'a modest programme of social reform for a world which can save itself'. This version of Christianity, Thornton argued, had been a product of the nineteenth century belief in inevitable progress:

According to it the Christian religion consisted in believing that God is our Father, and that all men are brothers; that Christ was a good Man who taught this, and enforced it by His example. In short, that He came not to redeem society, but to teach men how to reform society.

This sort of attempt to discard the miraculous was futile and essentially out of date: a 'bankrupt world' needed the assurance that it was 'redeemed by God in spite of itself'.\(^2\)

Thornton argued that dogma must always have a fundamental place in a Christian social order; in any adequate embodiment of the kingdom of God on earth. The idea of the kingdom had grown out of God's creative act of redemption, and knowledge of that act and of the embodiment of Christian social principles in the first Christian society had come down through the creeds and dogma of the Church. Christian social values were 'bound

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up with an experience of redemption' which involved dogmatic beliefs. Those who sought to 'disengage' Christian social ideals from 'their dogmatic and historical foundations' were 'unscientific' because they ignored 'the testimony of those religious experiences which are our only source of information on the subject'. To cut away the 'historical and dogmatic elements' of Christianity was to opt for 'a vague doctrine of immanent spirit which has no sort of answer to the social problems of our day'.

Emphasis on the transcendence of God, the divinity of Christ, and the spiritual nature of man, as against the immanentist tendencies of religious liberalism, remained a strong theme of Anglo-Catholics in the Christian social movement throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Christian social theory, according to this school, must be based on the truth of man's being as a creature whose ultimate meaning was found not in the time process, but in his relationship with a transcendent God. The determination of liberal Christians to explain away the supernatural and the miraculous had resulted in the displacing of God from the centre to the circumference. Liberalism had sought to save religious faith from the rigours of scientific criticism by abandoning half the field; by

3. Ibid., pp. 75-9. The quoted passages are from p.78.
arguing that there need be no conflict between religion and science, or revelation and natural knowledge, because the two belonged to entirely different spheres. Religion was concerned with values and moral ideals, whereas science was concerned with fact and truth. The concomitant concern that Christianity should prove itself relevant in the social sphere had led to an over-emphasis on the humanitarian aspects of Christ's teaching and a neglect of his divine nature.

Anglo-Catholics argued that ethical Christianity started from the wrong end; from what man could and ought to do, rather than from what God had done. The Christian social movement should be concerned not with ethics, but with sociology; with a study of the social structure and the extent to which it deviated from God's purpose. The key word for Christian sociologists, said Reckitt, was justitia - a concept which transcended questions of personal attitudes and implied a rightness in political, economic, and other moral relationships. Reflecting the group's growing interest in neo-Thomism, Demant wrote in 1931:

Religion is concerned with 'rightness' in the whole of life .... A Christian Sociologist, like Aquinas, if faced with a social situation leading to suffering, strife and despair would first ask, What are these people trying to do - is their

8. Demant, God, Man and Society, chap. II.
collective effort according to nature, is it rational, is it not self-contradictory, is it technically possible? .... Only if the attempted policies are seen to be rational, not contrary to nature, does the second question arise, Are the people concerned not acting upon right moral principles?10

It was useless to talk about motivation and the importance of co-operation in industry (as the Fifth Report had done) if the underlying purpose of the social and economic order contradicted 'rightness' as perceived in the natural order. Demant argued that the social witness of the modern Church was largely ineffective because it was confined to the moral level. Religion was 'as much concerned with truth as with goodness' and it was futile to blame an unjust social situation on wrong ethical conduct when the causes lay in a deeper neglect of God's plan for society. It was impossible to 'moralize a contradiction'.11 In the same vein, Reckitt questioned the effectiveness of preaching the principle of a living wage without challenging the whole purpose and organization of industry. Because it was not part of the purpose of modern industry to provide livelihoods, the payment of adequate wages would bring industry to a standstill. It was not merely 'the inadequate moral level' but 'the false intellectual categories' of society which mocked God's purpose.12

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The gist of the Anglo-Catholic standpoint was captured in a letter to the New English Weekly from Cyril Hudson, in 1935, following a review of his Preface to a Christian Sociology. The book had been written, said Hudson, to defend two main propositions:

that the only sound foundation for a true Christian Sociology must be theological rather than ethical - the Person rather than the precepts of Christ and

that it is impossible for the Christian Church to provide political or economic programmes for a society which disputes her convictions as to the meaning and purpose of human life.13

At the heart of the attempt to formulate a Christian sociology was the assumption that the world must be brought to view itself from a Christian standpoint; for theology alone provided a true view of society. Against the attempt of the liberal school to accommodate Christianity to new trends in secular thought, the Christendom writers argued that secular assumptions must be absorbed by the truths of Anglo-Catholic sociology.

Amongst the elements of secular thought which must be rejected was collectivist socialism. Christian social thought, wrote Thornton in 1920, had hitherto been 'too much "tied to the tail of the Marxian Kite"... [and had] consist[ed] in vague untheological echoes of secular thought'.14 This comment reflected the group's

14. Lionel Thornton, article in the Church Socialist, quoted in Reckitt, Widdrington, p.78.
dissatisfaction, evident since before the war, with the CSL's acceptance of the collectivist assumptions of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and the Fabian Society. Reckitt and Widdrington, together with other League members including Tawney, A.J. Penty and Paul Bull were impressed by what Reckitt later described as the 'fundamental criticisms of the collectivist position' made by the advocates of guild socialism. Influenced by the writing of A.R. Orage and S.G. Hobson in the *New Age* and by the distributist ideas of Belloc and the Chestertons, they argued that collectivism was leading not to a community of free and responsible citizens, but to a servile state in which the normal citizen would have no economic independence. Widdrington suggested years later that

> [Guild socialism] removed some of the stumbling blocks which Collectivist Socialism presented to many sincere democrats. It placed a welcome emphasis on personality and asserted the right of initiative and control as belonging to the ordinary man. Its philosophy was instinctively Christian.

Doubts as to whether collectivism was really the political expression of Christianity were apparently confirmed by developments in Russia which revealed 'open defiance... of the claims of supernatural religion' and of the values

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17. Percy Widdrington, article in the *Commonwealth*, July 1927, quoted in Reckitt, *Widdrington*, p. 61. Widdrington, like Reckitt, was a member of the National Guilds League (*ibid.*, p.62).
of 'Christian' culture.\textsuperscript{18}

Guild socialism appeared to accord particularly well with the values of Christian culture. As Reckitt put it, the claim of guild socialism

that there was no other way out of the wage system... than by the development of the workers' unions into responsible guilds, recalled in the first place, that 'principle of association' preached by the earliest Christian Socialists, and secondly, and perhaps even more significantly, the industrial organs of a civilization which sprang directly out of a Catholic interpretation of life.\textsuperscript{19}

The guild idea was in the tradition, not only of J.M. Ludlow's producer co-operatives of the 1850s, but of the social structure of medieval Christendom. Most importantly, its pluralist principle was an expression of the medieval theory of \textit{communitas communitat\textsuperscript{a}}\textsuperscript{1}, revived by the writing of J.N. Figgis.\textsuperscript{20} Figgis argued that there were a number of forms of human association (cultural, religious, economic, educational, and professional) which arose spontaneously as an expression of man's social instinct. These associations were prior to the State and possessed 'a quasi (juristic) personality'.\textsuperscript{21} The \textit{communitas communitat\textsuperscript{a}} was a conception of society as a fellowship of fellowships in which all the parts, while retaining

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Reckitt, \textit{Maurice to Temple}, p.167.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{20} John Neville Figgis was, like Gore, Bull and Thornton, a member of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield. His \textit{Churches in the Modern State}, London, 1913, was concerned as much with the freedom of the Church as an association \textit{vis-à-vis} the State, as with trade unions.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ruth Kenyon, \textit{The Catholic Faith and the Industrial Order}, Philip Allan, Great Britain, 1931, pp.9-10.
\end{itemize}
their freedom, were dedicated to an overall social purpose. If T.H. Green's positive State had provided Christian socialists with an antidote to individualism in religion and social theory, Anglo-Catholic sociologists found in Figgis' pluralism a principle which they believed balanced the values of freedom and community.  

As its name suggests, the Christendom group was fascinated by the organic, pre-industrial society of the middle ages. Medieval Christendom was regarded as the prototype of a Christian society; a conscious attempt to embody the kingdom of God in earthly social forms. In this sense, the group was heir to the medievalism of Coleridge as well as to the preoccupation of his disciple, Maurice, with the idea that the kingdom of God provided the pattern for human society. A more immediate influence, apart from Belloc and Chesterton, was Tawney's *Acquisitive Society* which bemoaned the disappearance of the ideas of function and social purpose characteristic of the middle ages, and his Scott Holland Lectures which

25. See Ranson, 'Kingdom of God as the Design of Society'.
argued that the post-medieval Church had abdicated its social function. The group agreed with Tawney that one of the foremost tasks of the Church must be the recovery of its social teaching and the recreation of a Christian sociology.

The development of a Christian sociology became the main purpose of the Christendom group and the Anglo-Catholic summer schools. By the late 1920s, there were signs that this aim was shared by the wider Christian social movement. In October 1929, Temple, newly appointed to York, chaired some informal discussions by a small interdenominational group concerned to discover whether the creation of a Christian sociology was possible and if so, what were the necessary elements in it. The same year, the CSC conducted a course of preparation for teachers of Christian sociology. Open to both clergy and laity, the lectures covered the social teaching of the Old and New Testaments, the historical record of the Church in translating this teaching into practice and the bearing of Christian social principles on contemporary problems. Similar courses were conducted by the Church

26. Reckitt's essay on 'The Moralization of Property' in Return of Christendom (p.175) acknowledged the influence of Tawney's Acquisitive Society. See also Kenyon, Catholic Faith and Industrial Order, p.10.

27. Discussions on the Approach to a Christian Sociology, p.2. This document quotes a speech by Tawney to the International Missionary Council in Jerusalem in 1928.

28. Ibid. This document is a record of the discussions of the group.

Tutorial Classes Association in 1935, 1936 and 1937; and from 1936 the ICF organized clergy conferences dedicated to the proclamation of a Christian sociology. By the early 1940s the importance of Christian sociology was widely accepted. The ICF was holding about ten of its clergy conferences each year, and in 1938 Kirk had been asked to give evidence on training in Christian sociology before the Archbishops' Commission on Training for the Ministry. Kirk's evidence dealt with the need for such training, the lack of it, the demand for it from ordinands and the means by which it could be given. The Commission's report in 1944 emphasized the importance of the clergy acquiring real knowledge of social conditions. It suggested the establishment of a small number of institutions, staffed by specialists in theology and sociology. Their aim would be 'avowedly Christian' and their particular task the scientific study of social questions. They would act as research centres for the Church in social affairs, keep in touch with ordinands.

31. ICF, Annual Report, 1935-6, p.36; 1942-3, p.10; 1943-4, pp.7-8; 1944-5, pp.7-8. It was claimed that at the 1936 conference nearly every diocese was represented.
32. Ibid., 1942-3, p.10; 1943-4, pp.7-8; 1944-5, pp. 7-8.
33. Industrial Christian Fellowship, Minutes of Message Committee, 1933-9, Industrial Christian Fellowship, Leadenhall St., London, entry for 4 May 1938 (hereafter cited as ICF message committee minutes).
after ordination and provide 'refresher' courses for older clergy. The report regarded Christian sociology as a legitimate, and important, area of specialization for clergy.

Despite wide usage of the term, little thought seems to have been given to its precise meaning. The Church Times' correspondent at the eighth Summer School of Sociology, in 1932, reported that 'a great deal of amusement was caused ... in the very middle of the discussions' when one study group raised the question 'what is Christian Sociology?' It was evident that the members, some of whom had attended the School for seven years, found it extremely difficult to define the term. All knew what it meant, they said, but each member expressed his knowledge in different words; and it was some time before a formula could be devised that could find general acceptance.

For the most part, the term was used to describe the development of a theologically-based body of Christian social teaching. Few examined the meaning of the word 'sociology' or tried to distinguish between Christian

35. Ibid., p.57.
36. Ibid., pp.58 and 68.
37. The term was not new to the twentieth century. Bishop Alexander of Derry is credited with its first use when, in an address to the 1887 Church Congress, he advocated the endowment of a university chair of Christian sociology (Binyon, Christian Socialist Movement in England, p.138). By 1894 there was a Chair of Ethics, Christian Sociology and Apologetics at Lancashire Independent College, held by Robert Mackintosh (see Mackintosh's entry in Who Was Who, 1929-1940, A. & C. Black, London, 1947). W.J.H. Campion had also used the phrase 'Christian sociology' in his essay, 'Christianity and Politics', in Gore (ed.), Lux Mundi, p.446.

and secular versions of it. Those who recognized the possibility of an inherent contradiction in the idea of a Christian sociology ultimately side-stepped the issue. Reckitt acknowledged that the term was 'not perhaps ... altogether defensible' and conceded that sociology was strictly speaking, a word implying the attempt to create a science of Politics, based solely on the facts of observation and experiment, on which can be founded natural laws governing the life of human society.

Clearly, Christian sociologists had in mind 'no such rigidly amoral or purely objective purpose'. Their approach was normative: they wished to effectively convey the idea of the creation of a social order responsive to the demands of truth, beauty and moral perfection as revealed to mankind uniquely in Christ .... The pre-eminent aim of a re-emergent Christian sociology must be to establish every social activity round the central object of reflecting the glory of God. 39

Demant, too, was prepared to recognize a distinction between sociology per se and Christian sociology:

Sociology is the objective and dispassionate study of society. It includes not only an investigation of what exists in the way of social structure and change, but also of the forces at work which maintain or disturb the structure. In so far as our task is to undertake such an examination it can claim the title of Sociology. There is no specifically Christian method of doing this. But in so far as we undertake it for the purpose of judging in the light of Christian standards the quality of the behaviour to which the social structure predisposes men and also claim to elucidate and evaluate the forces which make up that structure in the light of the Christian doctrine of human nature and of the purpose of God, then we can validly speak of a Christian Sociology. There need be no mis-

Thus sociology - 'the objective and dispassionate study of society' - became Christian when the social structure was judged in the light of the Christian doctrine about God and man. But Demant did not always make such a clear distinction between the scientific and the normative. Elsewhere, he argued that there had never been a truly objective sociology and that Christianity was concerned not only with values, but with truth. There was 'no warrant whatever for confining the Christian outlook to questions of ethics'. The doctrine of creation taught that the world in some measure reflected its creator. Christianity claimed to provide, therefore, 'not only a doctrine of what man ought to do and to be' but also 'a doctrine of what the world is and what man is, and what the relationship between the two is'. The doctrine of creation provided the sanction for Christian sociology; for the claim that the Christian faith could throw light on the structures of society and the extent to which they reflected God's purpose.

If Demant accepted sociology as a legitimate discipline which needed to be supplemented by the insights of Christianity, others claimed that sociology without Christianity was invalid. G.C. Binyon believed that 'a complete scientific sociology' must include 'a theory of human nature and destiny'. He admitted that this was to pass outside the limits of what was 'commonly known as science' but, undeterred, asserted that it was possible to 'continue to be unimpeachably scientific' while taking into account 'religious revelation and the ethical ideals which religion involves'. A 'complete sociology' would examine the influence of the natural environment on the social order; the influence of the social order on the history of man; and man's religious and moral ideals.

Similarly, Eric Mascall, one of the younger generation of the Christendom group, found a scientific definition of sociology too narrow. He preferred to include in its scope the consideration of the sort of social order that ought to exist and the ways in which it can most rapidly and efficiently be brought about.

As Christians wanted a different kind of social order from non-Christians, there must, ipso facto, be a Christian sociology. Mascall begged the whole question of the validity of the concept by asserting that any sociology

44. Ibid., p.160.
which was not Christian was false. Christian sociology was not merely one of a variety of equally acceptable sociologies:

Christian sociology is just sociology ... [and] we are insisting that no sociology except a Christian one is worth developing, simply because no sociology except a Christian one will be based upon a true view of the aim and needs of human life, and because in consequence a non-Christian sociology, however imposing it may be, will be a house built on the sand.... Non-Christian sociology ... is not a sin, merely a mistake.46

Despite some uneasiness about the use of the term, there was a reluctance to abandon it. More suitable phrases like 'Christian social philosophy' or 'social theology' were rejected as too abstract and difficult (the intellectual status of sociology was obviously low). Reckitt justified the use of 'Christian sociology' on practical grounds. It was helpful because it suggested a standpoint not effectively indicated by any other formula: "when I use a word", said Humpty Dumpty to Alice, "it means just exactly what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less"; not an impartial investigation of social structures, but an examination of how society could be transformed into a more Christian order.

46. Ibid., pp.3-4.
47. In 1939, the ICF's message committee recommended substitution of the term 'social theology' for 'Christian sociology', but fear that the missioners would misunderstand and misuse the new term resulted in this proposal being abandoned. See ICF message committee minutes, 3 Jan. and 14 Feb. 1939. See also Reckitt's discussion of alternative terms in Religion and Social Purpose, pp. 1-2.
What Christian sociologists really sought was a theological view of society. As the editor of the *I.C.F. Journal* put it in 1937: 'Christian sociology seeks to find the relation of the whole of Christian theological belief to the social life of men.'\(^{49}\) It was proposed to start from theology and to deduce the social principles which should rightly underlie man's corporate life.\(^{50}\) Christian sociology, it was hoped, would provide an alternative to the secular theories of society offered by political scientists and economists.\(^{51}\) Its purpose, in the words of Alice Charles (in charge of the ICF's study department and a regular summer school attender), was to indicate the possibility of creating a social order, varying with time and place, that would be a Christian order.\(^{52}\)

2. **The Kingdom of God and the Natural Order**

Fundamental to the outlook of Christian sociologists was the claim that man could know God's purpose for society. It followed from this that it was possible to measure the

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50. See e.g. Christianity and Industrial Problems, p.8; *Nature of God and His Purpose for the World*, pp.4-5; Charles E. Raven, 'Calling and Duty', in Maurice B. Reckitt (ed.), *The Social Teaching of the Sacraments*, London, 1927, p.73, quoted in Norman, *Church and Society*, p.320.

51. See e.g. *Malvern*, 1941, p.12, for Temple's hopes in this connection.

existing social order against the divine plan and to envisage the creation of a truly Christian society. The claim was based on a Maurician interpretation of the concept of the kingdom of God and a neo-Thomist view of natural law. The result was a theology which, in its emphasis on the supernatural aspects of religion, the transcendence of God and the 'givenness' of God's order was far more theocentric than liberal theology. Yet, compared with the Protestant neo-orthodoxy which was to have an important impact in the late 1930s, it was essentially world-affirming, optimistic and rational. As such, it still provided the basis for belief in the possibility of creating a Christian social order.

Widdrington's essay in *The Return of Christendom* singled out the doctrine of the kingdom as 'the essential character' of the gospel. He argued that Jesus' teaching about the kingdom should be viewed in the context of Old Testament prophecy. God had begun to reveal himself and his plan for the coming of the kingdom on earth long before the advent of Christ. The prophets had taught that the kingdom, 'the outward manifestation of God's sovereignty', would be established on earth through the coming of a Messiah. Their concept of the kingdom was essentially a social one, 'involving the life of man in all its relations'.

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54. Ibid., pp.93-6.  
55. Ibid., p.97.  
56. Ibid., p.99.
of the term as one which required no definition and would be automatically understood by his hearers, implicitly accepted its social connotations. He proclaimed himself as the fulfilment of the law and the prophets, the long-awaited Messiah who had come to inaugurate the kingdom and he set out to train the twelve disciples to become the Church, the herald and instrument of the kingdom. The kingdom was, therefore, both present, established through Christ's death, yet still 'at hand', to be completed.

This biblical view was supplemented by a Maurician interpretation of the kingdom as part of God's creative purpose. To Maurice, the kingdom was 'an ordered dominion of God' which had been revealed by Christ. In the light of that revelation men could discern the outlines of the kingdom in the institutions and structures of the society around them. The influence of Maurice was evident in a Christendom editorial of the early 1930s:

A true human order may be discovered, but can never be in any valid sense created by man. The beauty of social perfection is...a statue inherent in the God-given marble of the world; and man, through grace, may become a creative sculptor, unfolding what God first has willed. The Kingdom of God is there all the time, and so we may never despair; for if its discovery is our task, its fulfilment is God's business, and our human vision is too dull to assess truly the results we here achieve, or fail to achieve. It is for us only to perceive our responsibility to that Kingdom and to embrace it.

57. Ibid., pp. 98-9.
58. Ibid., pp. 104-6. See also Gore, Christ and Society, pp.22-47 and Anglican group, Doctrinal Basis, pp.7-8.
60. Maurice B. Reckitt, 'The Necessity of Christian Sociology', Christendom, vol.4, no.16, Dec. 1934, p.247. This was a quotation from an earlier Christendom editorial, for which no date was given.
This was a view of the kingdom which recognized it clearly as God's, but allowed man to assist in its realization. It was a view which (in contrast to eschatological interpretations) granted that the new world of the kingdom would be built up out of the old, partly through the agency of the Church, but emphasized that it would only be completed by Christ. It was an interpretation of the kingdom poised midway between the liberal, which tended virtually to turn it into the kingdom of enlightened man, and the extreme eschatological, which denied that man could play any part in its realization.

The concept of the kingdom was central to Anglo-Catholic social theology. The creation of the League of the Kingdom of God in 1923 was an earnest of the importance attached to the belief that the kingdom of God should be 'the regulative principle of theology'. In 1939, despite the increasing popularity of eschatological interpretations, Demant was still prepared to describe the kingdom of God as 'a regulative criterion for the social order'. The significance of the concept was that it seemed to provide justification for the belief


that it was possible to create a Christian social order. At the 1935 summer school, one of the study circles reproduced a definition of the kingdom, originally used by Bishop Stubbs (1845-1912) which made this connection explicit:

The Kingdom of God, for whose coming we pray, is human civilization regarded as the outcome of a Divine order.... The whole of life, in every phase of its progressive activity, in all its realms of thought and action and feeling, subordinated to the law of a King.... a new social order.\textsuperscript{64}

Charles Gore pointed out that in medieval Christendom, the Church had had a clear vision of itself as the representative of God's kingdom on earth:

It never failed to present the kingdom of God as a visible society on earth in which every activity of man, every aspect of his individual and corporate life, was to be brought under the obedience of Christ.\textsuperscript{65}

In their endeavour to embody the kingdom in a visible social structure, medieval theologians had turned to natural laws as a way of determining what was reasonable and just, and in accordance with God's will. Unsurprisingly, the renewed concern amongst twentieth century Christians about man's earthly existence and the 'right ordering of his temporal and secular life' was accompanied by a revival of interest in natural law theory.\textsuperscript{66} In particular, Anglo-

\textsuperscript{64.} 'The Eleventh Summer School of Sociology', Christendom, vol.5, no.19, Sep. 1935, p.216.

\textsuperscript{65.} Gore, Christ and Society, pp.110-1.

\textsuperscript{66.} A.R. V[idler], 'Inquiries concerning Natural Law', Theology, vol.XLIV, no.260, Feb. 1942, p.70.
Catholic sociologists, influenced by Roman Catholic neo-Thomists like Jacques Maritain, Christopher Dawson, Gerald Vann and Victor White, used natural law teaching in their attempt to discern the outlines of a Christian social order.

Natural law theologians were concerned with what could be understood of the being and nature of God through deduction from natural phenomena, by reason alone. Natural laws were regarded as disclosures of God's purposes evident to unaided reason, although it was always accepted that natural knowledge needed to be supplemented by revelation.

67. The French neo-Thomists were widely read in England. Maritain's importance was attested to in Donald Mackinnon's comment that *True Humanism* was 'perhaps the most important single book' on Christian social thought to appear in recent times. See *Theology*, vol.XXXVIII, no.227, May 1939, p.378. See also Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: The Ecumenical Century, 1900-1965*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1965, p.184.

68. The enthusiasm of the leaders of the Anglo-Catholic Summer Schools for natural law theory was not always shared or understood by those who attended the schools. S.C. Carpenter, editor of *Theology* in the 1930s, specifically dissociated himself from Thomism in his address to the 1935 school; and the report of that school which appeared in *Christendom* (written presumably by a Thomist) commented that 'the flounderings of most of the Circles when asked to talk in terms of Natural and Divine Law, or even of Natural and Supernatural' indicated the 'desirability of at least some general education in so classic a Catholic philosophy as the Thomist'. See S.C. Carpenter, *God, Man and the World. I. The Christian Doctrine of Creation*, *Christendom*, vol.5, no.18, June 1935, pp.94-101 and the report of the summer school on p.215 of the same volume.

69. See e.g. E.G. Selwyn, *The Father's Glory*, *Theology*, vol.XXIV, no.141, Mar. 1932, pp.144-5 and 151. This usage was distinguished from the scientific connotation in which a natural law was a generalization from a large number of particular phenomena (see Vidler, *Inquiries concerning Natural Law*, pp.65-6) and from interpretations of natural law as natural rights (see Demant, *Studies in Christian Sociology*, pp. 275-6 and Demant's review of C.G. Haines, *The Revival of Natural Law Concepts*, Humphrey Milford, London, in *Christendom*, vol.1, no.3, Sep. 1931, p.237).
One of the best expositions of natural law theory, as used in Anglican social thinking, was given by Dr Hubert Box to the 1936 summer school. Box showed that the idea of natural law was based on the doctrine of creation which demonstrated the manner in which God had revealed himself, and the true nature of the world. God had created not 'a chaotic universe' but 'an ordered world - a world under law'. This law was an expression of 'Divine Reason'. All persons and things were subject to the eternal law and 'to fulfil the Divine plan' was 'the supreme achievement of man's mind and will'. The rational creature's participation in eternal law was called natural law: 'the impression and the reflection of the eternal plan of Divine Wisdom in the reason of man'. By the light of natural reason, man was able to discern what was good and what was evil. The proper function of a human activity could be apprehended by a consideration of its true nature. Natural law was, therefore, 'the ultimate foundation of all morality' and of human or positive law.  

Man's natural sense of justice was, however, impaired by sin. Although he had been created 'in the image of God', the image had been 'stamped upon an animal nature'. The paradox of man's existence was the constant tension between the natural and spiritual aspects of his being. 

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70. Hubert S. Box, 'Natural Law and the Creation', Christendom, vol. 6, no.22, June 1936, pp.96-100. See also William Temple, Christianity and Social Order, Penguin, England, 1942, p.57.

71. Temple, Christianity and Social Order, p.40.
God's will (original righteousness), man perpetually 'sank to the level of Nature' and stood in need of redemption to restore him to his supernatural state. The significance of the incarnation was that it renewed God's image in man and restored the truth of the creation. Grace completed nature and revived man's natural sense of justice and truth.

Central to this theology was the belief that the created world still in some measure reflected God's purpose and that, even in the case of sinful man, the image of God had not been utterly defaced. This was believed to have important sociological implications. It was possible, as Demant put it, to go behind human nature and the world as actually seen (distorted by sin) and 'find out something of man as he essentially is' (as God created him). Christian sociologists could then outline the conditions of social life compatible with 'the essential needs of human nature' and 'judge the actual condition of society in the light of those demands'. In other words, it was possible to deduce from the Christian teaching about man 'what a human social order should be'. The nearer actual human society could be made to approximate to a truly Christian social order, the greater the chance of men fulfilling God's purpose for them.

75. Demant, God, Man and Society, pp.46-9. The phrases quoted are from p.46.
The belief that it was possible to discern God's pattern in society rested on a 'low' doctrine of sin. Redemption was interpreted as the recovery of possibilities forfeited by sin; the restoration of man to his original status by the removal of 'the layer of sin' which obscured God's image in him. As Cyril Hudson put it, a true doctrine of sin was the opposite of a doctrine of despair; it assures us that the most important thing about sin is not its sinfulness, but the fact that it can be redeemed. Christian penitence looks forward, rather than back; it is filled with hope, and the sinner's duty is to think of himself as God thinks of him, that is, in the light of what he is meant to be and by grace may yet become, rather than of what he now is.

It was this emphasis on the powers of grace rather than the sinfulness of nature which was over-turned by the Barthian influence of the late 1930s.

3. The Collapse of Idealism

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, there were signs that Christians seeking an explanation for social ills were beginning to look beyond ethical behaviour to the structure of society and the extent to which this reflected God's purposes. Temple's dissatisfaction with ethical idealism was evident in a comment made in his opening Scott Holland Lecture, in 1928:

76. Mascall, Death or Dogma, p.21.
In a great deal of recent Christian sociology attention has been fastened upon what I now regard as secondary principles... I have myself been accustomed to insist upon four of these as implicit in the Gospel and therefore as binding upon all Christian people. These are the sanctity of Personality, the fact of Fellowship, the duty of Service, and the power of Sacrifice. To these we are brought when we ask what is the Social Gospel, or (which is the same thing) what are the social principles of the Gospel, in relation to the economic ordering of society. But they are not the most fundamental of all; and as we turn to the still deeper questions affecting the foundations of society and the nature of the State, we must also have in our mind the utterly fundamental realities - God and Immortality.78

Temple now believed it essential to begin with the 'creative and all-controlling' power of God.79 A similar train of thought was evident in the ICF. Its crusade syllabus for 1937 denied that talk of brotherhood would solve the world's troubles.80 The fundamental cause of the world's distress was the failure to perceive man's spiritual end. What was needed was a belief in God as creator and sustainer of the world:

God is the creator of all visible things... it is His power and presence in them which upholds them and keeps them in being....

In His creation of the world God has a purpose, and the world is so constituted that this purpose can be fulfilled in it and no other purpose can. All aims and endeavours, therefore, which get across the Purpose of God are doomed to failure....

We hold that the reason why our problems are so difficult to deal with, is that we are tackling

78. Temple, Christianity and the State, pp.5-6.
79. Ibid., p.12 and p.33.
them without any reference to God or His ultimate Purpose for humanity.\textsuperscript{81}

The decline of ethical idealism\textsuperscript{82} and the new emphasis on God's creative purpose were due, in the first instance, to the persuasiveness of the Christendom group; and reinforced by the evident chaos of the secular world, the threat to Christian beliefs posed by totalitarian ideology and practice, and the increasingly theological character of the ecumenical Life and Work Movement.

Reference has already been made to the position of dominance attained by the Christendom writers in the various branches of the Christian social movement. They also had an appreciable influence on Temple's ideas, evidenced by his dabbling in both natural law theory and credit reform. In 1934, at Temple's invitation, Reckitt delivered three lectures on the theme of religion and social purpose to the York Diocesan Clergy School.\textsuperscript{83} In 1941, Temple gave the group the opportunity to present to the Malvern conference what he described as the most 'extensive' and 'coherent' interpretation of Christian

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., pp.12-14. Cf. the 1925 edition of the syllabus which suggested that the most serious aspect of the world's chaos was 'the abrogation...of all moral sanctions', see Industrial Christian Fellowship, \textit{A Syllabus for Church Crusades}. Issued under the direction of the Central Committee for Church Crusades, Fellowship House, Westminster, 1925, pp. 13-15. The quoted phrase is on p.13.

\textsuperscript{82} Ethical Christianity did not disappear entirely. There remained a tendency, most evident in the 1930s among some Christian pacifists, to argue from the moral precepts of the New Testament rather than from a doctrine of God, man and the world. See William Temple, \textit{Christ and the Way to Peace}, SCM, London, 1935, pp.7-10 for a criticism of this position.

\textsuperscript{83} Published under this title in 1935 by SPCK.
social doctrine currently discernible within the Church of England.\textsuperscript{84} If Reckitt is to be believed, Temple was twice responsible for Demant's advancement: on the first occasion, in 1933, to the living of St John's, Richmond, and later, in 1942, to the canonry of St Paul's.\textsuperscript{85}

Temple was keenly interested in both Demant's and Reckitt's writing\textsuperscript{86}, and the influence of their ideas was evident in his own work. An article contributed to the \textit{Contemporary Review}, in 1932, bore strong marks of Demant's \textit{This Unemployment}\textsuperscript{87}; while Temple's Penguin Special of 1942 made use of the concept of natural order or natural law, which he claimed described the order and law of God the creator and the essential nature of man.\textsuperscript{88} An article on 'Thomism and Modern Needs', contributed to \textit{Blackfriars} in 1944, was a defence of the possibility of natural theology (increasingly challenged since the late 1930s) and 'the value of analogical argument from created nature, including human nature, to the nature of the Creator'.\textsuperscript{89}

There were always important differences between Temple's ideas and those of the Christendom group. While in Reckitt's opinion the idea of applying Christian

\textsuperscript{84. Malvern, 1941, p.11.}
\textsuperscript{85. Reckitt, conversation with the writer, 28 Apr. 1976.}
\textsuperscript{86. Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{88. Temple, \textit{Christianity and Social Order}, chap. VI.}
\textsuperscript{89. William Temple, 'Thomism and Modern Needs', \textit{Blackfriars}, vol. XXV, no.288, Mar. 1944, pp.86-93. The quotation is from p.87.}
principles to the social order suggested that religion was 'a sort of mustard plaster laid on to reluctant patients by a caste of medicine men'. Temple continued, as late as 1942, to write about freedom, fellowship and service, although he made it clear that their importance was secondary to an understanding of God's creative purpose. He certainly showed more obvious concern for individual personality than did the Christendom group. For this reason, he rejected the medieval conception of society as an organism, believing that this analogy implied insufficient autonomy for its component parts. Characteristically, Temple's own exposition of the Christian view of society was in terms of freedom and fellowship. He was essentially a personalist, attracted at the same time by the order and harmony of the Thomist system. The Christendom writers, while recognizing

90. Reckitt, Religion and Social Purpose, p.2. Demant had a similar phrase: the application of Christian principles was 'rather like applying a bandage to an earthquake'; Demant, interview with the author, 21 Apr. 1976.


92. Temple, Christianity and the State, pp. 87-9.

93. Temple believed that Aquinas' neglect of individuality was substantially corrected in Maritain's work by a new emphasis on the worth of personality (Malvern, 1941, pp.13-14), but he believed Christopher Dawson's work to have dangerous affinities with Fascist thought (Temple, Christianity in Thought and Practice, pp.39-45 and 60-1).
the weakness of the biological analogy, continued to use it. Ultimately, they were more concerned with order than with individual freedom and tended to become impatient with 'a great deal of the chatter about the development of personality'. Reckitt told an ICF conference, in 1936, that 'the hunger for an organic society' was the 'dominant' and 'most significant' social aspiration of western man and that there was no implicit conflict between 'organic order and personal responsibility' as long as society acknowledged a supernatural criterion.

Although there is no doubt about the influence of the Christendom group on Temple and others in the Christian social movement, the collapse of ethical idealism reflected deeper currents. Confronted, by 1930, with economic depression and widespread unemployment, few Christians could any longer place their trust in the power of co-operation and fellowship to achieve a more just society. Like their secular contemporaries, many felt compelled, increasingly, to question the assumptions of a social and economic order capable of producing such human misery. Typical of the deeper questioning of the 1930s was a manifesto on 'The Present Economic Distress' issued by the Council of Christian Ministers in 1933. This document urged the necessity of looking beyond economics to the spiritual end of human life. Current attempts to solve

the economic crisis, such as the World Economic Conference at Geneva, would meet with no success if they regarded contemporary problems as 'purely economic'.

Economic measures, and theories which justify them, must be assessed in the light of the human purposes for which industry exists. Christians cannot accept in silence assumptions about these purposes which, whether unconscious or otherwise, appear to make men mere instruments in industrial processes and so sacrifice human interests to traditional economic theories and systems.

The current crisis had provided a challenge to existing theories and practice in economics and finance, and demonstrated the need for social life to be rebuilt. Religion could only accept an economic outlook which recognized God's purpose for man. 96 Similarly, the Social and Industrial Commission's report on unemployment, in 1935, expressed the view that the current economic dislocation, with its accompanying social distress, indicated a fundamental defect in the economic and social system. Such disorder could not be in accordance with God's will: 97

The Church believes in the unity of God, and this implies that this world is not a chaos but a coherent system. The problem of the present contradiction between the principles of morality and the theory of economics cannot be insoluble .... no human system is sacrosanct .... The only limits which a Christian is bound to recognize in the framing of an economic system are those imposed by God's will as it is expressed

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97. CA 484, pp.2-3.
through the physical resources of the world and through the moral law. All else must be brought into conformity with God's will, and can be, in so far as man is able to understand and obey it. In each age and generation we are called upon to discover God's will for that age and generation. 98

These, and other statements like them, bore definite marks of the Christendom hand. The appeal of this approach was evident: it seemed to make sense of a non-sensical world, to offer the hope of order in the midst of chaos. The idea of God's purpose and man's spiritual end as the yardstick for a floundering economic system provided a sense of authority when secular solutions were proving inadequate. As Demant commented in 1937, the idea of natural law raised 'the possibility of the social order being regenerated, in the sense of reflecting the true nature of man, without demanding the perfection of persons'. 99

The sense of returning to theology as providing the only true view of the world was reinforced by the challenge of totalitarian ideologies which laid claim to the whole of human life. The experience of the Christian Church in Germany, at the hands of the National Socialists, brought home in no uncertain terms the threat to Christianity from a government which refused to tolerate rival philosophies of life. For Christians,

98. Ibid., pp.11-12.
the menace of totalitarianism lay not only in its treatment of the institutional Church but, more fundamentally, in its conception of man as ultimately subordinate to the State. In the final analysis, the Church was the only guarantee of human freedom. An ICF leaflet on the contemporary 'peril' commented:

The world's most profound and acute thinkers have seen that we have reached the end of an era, and that the ideals of liberty and democracy, the very conception of personality as intrinsic to society, can no longer be maintained upon a secular basis.... It becomes plain that the Church is the stronghold of human dignity and significance; that the Church alone can state the principles of a social order which shall be truly human, because addressed to a divine end.

The belief that a free society could be built only on Christian values was a major theme at the ecumenical conference at Oxford in 1937. Adolf Keller told the conference that the menace of totalitarianism was driving the Church all over the world to seek clearer, deeper, more convinced and therefore convincing insight into the meaning of man in the mind of Christ, as contrasted with the Marxian or the nationalist doctrines of mass man. Simultaneously they are driven to seek the Christian meaning of the community of the sons of God across the world as contrasted with conceptions based on the doctrines of class, race, blood, or soil, recognizing at the same time the elements of truth and error in these doctrines.

100. This was, no doubt, a reference to Reinhold Niebuhr's Reflections on the End of an Era (1934) and Nicholas Berdyaev's The End of Our Time (1935), both of which had a noticeable impact on English Christian social thinking.


The preparations for the conference had been guided by the belief that the problems of Church, State, and community were fundamentally theological and that the primary task of the Church was to produce a Christian understanding of man in his relationships to Church and society. As Walter M. Horton, an American theologian, recalled years later, 'Nothing was more distinctive of the Oxford Conference ... than the careful theological work that went into its preparation'. The chief lesson of the conference for Horton was 'that the best theology is applicable to ethics, and the best ethics have a firm theological grounding'.

After the conference, its British participants urged the importance of recognizing that the struggle against totalitarianism had to be fought at home as well as on European soil. J.H. Oldham argued that the conflict between Church and State was present in democratic as well as in autocratic states. Similarly, Bell claimed that totalitarianism is not confined to Fascist or Communist States. It is present in a more subtle way in Western democracies, where it exercises its influence through ... elaborately planned social services ... and

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through a skilfully directed Press, or through the film industry or the wireless.\textsuperscript{105}

One of the motives behind the formation of the CCFCL, in 1938, was the belief that the Church needed to determine its attitude to 'the increasing intrusion of the State' into 'the affairs of life'.\textsuperscript{106} The Christian faith had to come to terms with the 'increasingly totalitarian form of society'.\textsuperscript{107}

This was not just a simplistic rejection of collectivist trends in government. The Council recognized that, in the future, the State would play a greater role in the promotion of social welfare. The Church's task was not to oppose this, but 'to discover how the social necessity of a planned existence may be reconciled with the freedom of men'.\textsuperscript{108} But the lesson drawn from European totalitarianism was that the secular State was not always mindful of individual liberty and that the Church must stand as ultimate guardian of man's spiritual freedom.

It could not be assumed, as it had been in earlier years, that social Christianity and the best elements in secular thought were necessarily running in the same direction (of progress). Gore's declaration, in 1908, that the main idea of socialism was 'closely allied to

\textsuperscript{105} Interview with Bishop of Chichester, \textit{Guardian}, 16 July 1937, p.558.


\textsuperscript{107} Document issued by the Council and quoted by Bristol, \textit{ibid.}, p.449.

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Ibid.}
the Christian idea would have sounded naïve thirty years later. By the late 1930s, the Christian social movement had moved beyond the idea that it occupied the common ground between Christianity and secular reformism. It had been thrust back on its own roots; on the conviction that only Christianity could supply the ultimate sanction for human personality.

4. The Idea of a Christian Social Order

The possibility of recreating a Christian social order based on the insights of natural law was a constant vision for the Christendom group. As late as 1941, when contemporary events might have seemed to indicate the contrary, Reckitt still believed that the prospects of a revived Christendom were good. He believed it possible

110. Although the main trend of social Christianity was back to theology, there were some Christians who believed it important to emphasize the common ground between Christianity and communism. F.R. Barry, for example, argued for 'a positive affirmation of Christian Communism' (see J. Davis McCaughey, Christian Obedience in the University: Studies in the Life of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland 1930-1950, SCM, London, 1958, pp.70-1). A similar concern underlay the publication of John Lewis, Karl Polanyi and Donald K. Kitchin (eds.), Christianity and the Social Revolution, Gollancz, London, 1935. The contributors to this volume, both Christians and non-Christians, aimed to promote 'a better mutual understanding' between Christianity and communism (p.27). Contributors included Reinhold Niebuhr, Conrad Noel, G.C. Binyon, C.E. Raven and John Macmurray. Niebuhr, it should be noted, believed that Christianity could learn from Marxism in the development of a political ethic, but he did not (as Macmurray did) advocate abandonment of Christianity's supernatural aspects in the interests of accommodation to communism (cf. chaps. IV and VI of part III).
to attain

not a Utopia without sin, but a re-created natural order without perversion. I am convinced, despite the pessimism of some sociological fatalists and Barthian Christians, that there is nothing inherently impossible about the establishment of a social order on the basis of reason and justice. Europe knew such an order, stained as it was with crimes and imperfections, for some three or four centuries, and what man has done man, similarly inspired, can once again and more gloriously do.\textsuperscript{111}

Throughout the inter-war period, this dream was shared by the wider Christian social movement. The acronym, Copec, after the Birmingham conference, came to stand for a Christian Order in Politics, Economics and Citizenship and this seems to have been accepted as the objective of the Christian social movement.\textsuperscript{112} ICF propaganda frequently referred to the notion of a Christian social order in a manner which assumed the validity of such an objective and the possibility of attaining it.\textsuperscript{113} George Every, who was critical of the supposition that Christian sociology could provide 'a workable plan for the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth' noted, to his chagrin, that at the 1934 summer school

\textsuperscript{111} Reckitt, \textit{As It Happened}, p.200.

\textsuperscript{112} See e.g. Reckitt, \textit{The League of the Kingdom of God}, p.84.

the assumption was commonly made and little challenged that the Kingdom of God, or at least a just and Christian social order, must eventually be established by Christians on this present earth.  

His assessment was borne out the following year by the statement in the report of the school that its members had repudiated apocalyptic interpretations of the kingdom and reaffirmed their adherence to the Maurician meaning, according to which the kingdom was 'there, to be recognized and entered into'.

As commonly used in the Christian social movement, the idea of a Christian social order had certain distinguishable features. First, it was envisaged as a social model or pattern, inherently harmonious and ordered. Reckitt spoke of achieving 'a harmony of the several spheres of human order' and a 'pattern of corporate life'; Demant wrote of an order in which human activities would be 'more true to their own functions than in a more unnatural state of affairs'. Essentially, a Christian society was believed to provide an ordered alternative to 'the fiasco of Godless materialism'.

It was claimed that the idea of a Christian social order did not necessarily imply a fixed or definite type

115. 'Eleventh Summer School of Sociology', p.216.
of social structure: social arrangements would vary over time and there were a number of forms of social organization which could conceivably be called Christian.\footnote{Demant, \textit{God, Man and Society}, p.47 and \textit{The Gospel: Social}, p.164.} All that was necessary was that the social order should satisfy certain Christian criteria, such as the sanctity of personality and the importance of community. In practice, however, the model offered (by the Christendom group at least) tended to look more like the static structure of medieval Christendom, updated to allow for social credit, than anything likely to emerge out of twentieth century English society.

It was recognized, by those whose feet were firmly on theological ground, that a Christian social order could not be perfect, because men were not perfect. It would be 'an order congruous with the essential nature of man', as implied in the Latin term \textit{justitia}.\footnote{Demant, \textit{The Gospel: Social}, pp.164-5.} This meant, in modern English, not perfection, but reason and justice.\footnote{Reckitt, \textit{As It Happened}, p.200.} In its more sober moments, this was the view of the ICF\footnote{\textit{I.C.F. Journal}, Oct. 1936, p.161.} as well as the Anglo-Catholic group, but the Fellowship's speakers were, at times, liable to be carried away by their own rhetoric. Kirk, for example, took as his text for a sermon at the opening of the International Labour Conference at Geneva, in 1931, 'Happy is that people whose God is the Lord', and outlined a vision of bliss which, to many, must have appeared incredible. The kingdom, he
claimed, did not exist 'in some distant sphere above the bright blue sky'. It was, rather,

the condition of human society where all men are happy, all men are free, all men in fellowship with one another and with God. It is a world from which all human causes of sorrow have been removed and where sin has ceased to be.123

Demant, by contrast, insisted that there was 'no ground whatever' for envisaging a society where humans would be 'free from all problems, tensions and the necessity of hard choices'. What the Church should be concerned with was the creation of social conditions which were 'not too hard for sinful people'.124

The main weakness of discussions about a Christian social order, until after the Oxford conference, was that little attention was given to considering how this model of an ideal society could be implemented within the realities of the political structure. The ICF, for example, seemed to believe that the intrinsic worth of the ideal and the power of God were sufficient assurances that it would be achieved. In Kirk's opinion, it was an ideal which had 'untold and unrealised forces for its own accomplishment'.125 His attitude to the world of politics was summed up in the statement that '[political parties] say that better times depend upon better methods, while we say that they depend upon better people'.126 The whole

125. Kirk, Christianity and Democracy, p.4.
126. Ibid.
subject, as the Fellowship's crusade syllabus candidly admitted, was approached with the conviction that if 'the ideally right thing' could be discovered, it could be done.\textsuperscript{127} The editor of the \textit{I.C.F. Journal} was quite affronted at the suggestion that the dream of a Christian social order might be impracticable. 'We dare not', he wrote,

\begin{quote}
go on allowing our ideals to be crushed down by the weight of these so-called hard facts. "An ideal is the possibility to be seen in the actual facts"... [Christians must] take all ideals of a world at peace, a better social and economic order, and translate them out of the realm of the impossible, into which they are being banished, and see them as the possibilities inherent in the actual facts.\textsuperscript{128}
\end{quote}

This was typical of the naïve assumption, made by many in the Christian social movement in the 1920s and early 1930s, that the force of moral persuasion was sufficient to influence the realities of political and social order.

In an article contributed to the \textit{Pilgrim}, as early as 1923, Temple had made a distinction between ideals and principles. Idealists, he suggested, constructed an ideal, then searched for means of realizing it; realists tried to apply valid principles of conduct at a particular stage of social development. In his opinion, the idealist position contained certain dangers: the ideal might be defective; it might be taken to justify undesirable

\textsuperscript{127} Christ the Lord of All Life, 5th ed., 1937, p.160.
methods; and it encouraged dreaming rather than action in the concrete present. His warning might profitably have been heeded by the Christendom group and by others who accepted their outlook. It never seemed to occur to them that their ideal might justifiably be impugned: for them it had the authority of the natural law. As far as Temple's warnings about day-dreaming or undesirable methods were concerned, he might as well have saved his breath. There was never any real danger of the Christendom group advocating undesirable methods of achieving their aims. The question of action did not impinge on their consciousness until the late 1930s, and even then they directed more energy to justifying the length of their dreamtime than to considering specific modes of action.

The distinction between ideals and principles was, however, pursued elsewhere. The group whose discussions on Christian sociology Temple chaired at Bishopsthorpe, in 1929, argued that Christian principles should be followed even though it was not possible to discern what would be the ideal state resulting from their adequate implementation. If a principle was faithfully observed it was irrelevant whether its perfect realization was attained in this world or not. This was in complete

contrast to the Christendom approach which was to fill out a conception of the ideal without outlining a method of reaching it. Until the late 1930s, the 'principles' approach had few adherents outside a small group in the SCM. But the Oxford conference, with its emphasis on the formulation of principles which could be applied in concrete situations, changed all that.
IV. THE PERSPECTIVE OF CRISIS

1. A Change of Theological Climate

By the end of the 1930s, the incarnation theology which had dominated Anglicanism over the previous half century was losing ground to a theology of crisis. This development was noted by Temple in his introduction to the report of the Archbishops' Commission on Christian Doctrine, published in 1938. Temple pointed out that the Commission had begun its work, in 1922, in a very different theological climate:

In our country the influence of Westcott reinforced by that of the Lux Mundi school had led to the development of a theology of the Incarnation rather than a theology of Redemption.... A theology of the Incarnation tends to be a Christocentric metaphysic. And in all ages there is need for the fresh elaboration of such a scheme of thought or map of life as seen in the light of the revelation in Christ. A theology of Redemption ... tends rather to sound the prophetic note; it is more ready to admit that much in this evil world is irrational and strictly unintelligible; and it looks to the coming of the Kingdom as a necessary preliminary to the full comprehension of much that now is.

If the security of the nineteenth century, already shattered in Europe, finally crumbles away in our country, we shall be pressed more and more towards a theology of Redemption.... We have been learning again... how deep and pervasive is that corruption which theologians call Original Sin.  

Temple's comments highlight the main changes in theological outlook since the early 1920s: an emphasis

on sin and irrationality, as against the ordered system of incarnation theology; and the replacement of liberal interpretations of the kingdom of God by eschatological exegesis. One of the seminal influences on the latter development was the New Testament criticism of Cambridge theologian, Sir Edwyn Hoskyns. Hoskyns' interest in biblical theology, aroused initially by a period of study under Harnack in Berlin, resulted, ironically, in an interpretation which completely overturned the liberal assumptions of his teacher. Hoskyns dismissed the argument of liberal theologians that the true historical Jesus could be discovered only by cutting through the credal embellishments of the early Church. On the contrary, he claimed, a truly scientific approach to the gospels must be through the religious experience of the early Christian community, as told in the epistles. Hoskyns, and the Nonconformist biblical theologian, C.H. Dodd, argued that the elements of mystery and the supernatural were vital to Christianity. Far from needing to be explained away, they represented the true starting point for biblical criticism. For Hoskyns and Dodd, the gospel was much more than an ethical handbook which, carefully followed, would point the way to the kingdom of God. They taught that the

2. The most important of Hoskyns' conclusions were published in 'The Christ of the Synoptic Gospels', in Edward Gordon Selwyn (ed.), Essays Catholic and Critical By Members of the Anglican Communion, SPCK, London, 1926; 'Jesus, the Messiah', in Bell and Deissmann, Mysterium Christi; and Sir Edwyn Hoskyns and Noel Davey, The Riddle of the New Testament, Faber and Faber, London, 1931. Davey was Percy Widdrington's son-in-law.
gospel introduced a note of crisis; eschatology was 'realized' in the presence of Jesus and in his Church. The kingdom of God had been inaugurated by Jesus and would be completed by his final coming. This was a direct challenge to the futurist eschatology of liberalism which, by delaying God's bringing in of the kingdom, allowed that it could be virtually built by men.³

During the 1920s, the impact of Hoskyns' theology was limited. His stress on the supernatural, sacramental aspects of Christianity and on the importance of the Church made immediate appeal to the resurgent Anglo-Catholic movement⁴, but the eschatological note fell largely on deaf ears. The doctrines of the incarnation and the Logos, and belief in the possibility of natural theology remained essentially more congenial to Anglicans than Hoskyns' insistence that

far more important than this is the belief that God acts catastrophically in human affairs, that He works miracles, that men are transformed from sin to righteousness, that prayer calls for an act of God, that it does not merely effect an adaptation to the laws of nature.⁵

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5. Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, Cambridge Sermons (1938), p.35, quoted in Davies, Worship and Theology, p.181. There was, however, a small nucleus of Anglo-Catholics connected with the Society of the Sacred Mission at Kelham which studied Hoskyns (and later Barth and Brunner and the Roman Catholic theological and liturgical revival) with some seriousness. See George Every, SSM, 'New Directions', Christendom, vol.6, no.24, Dec. 1936, p.255. Hoskyns' eschatological note can be detected in some of their work. See e.g. Every, 'Reflections on the Idea of Catholic Sociology' and Arthur Michael Ramsey, 'Grace and the New Creation', Christendom, vol.6, no.22, June 1936, pp.92-5.
By the late 1930s the theological climate in England had changed. The obvious disorder of the western world threw into question a theology which placed a high premium on reason and harmony. Evidence of the irrationality and chaos of human society challenged what theologian J.K. Mozley later described as the tendency of English theology to accommodate the insights of philosophy and 'to present Christianity as a philosophy of religion ... a rational scheme which is open to investigation by the human reason'. Hoskyns' emphasis on the catastrophic, eschatological elements of the gospel took on a new meaning in a world which was heading rapidly for war.

The threat to the freedom of the Church explicit in the growth of the totalitarian states (especially Germany) and implicit in the growth of modern democratic states pointed up the need for a theology of the Church. The emphasis at the Oxford conference on the importance of the Church being the Church was a product both of the contemporary struggle in Europe and of the conclusion of biblical theology that there was no Christian gospel apart from the Church.


7. Churches Survey Their Task, pp.30-1.
Both these tendencies combined to produce a strengthening resolve, in English as in ecumenical theology, to disentangle the Church from what was perceived as a civilization bent on self-destruction. Not only did totalitarianism demonstrate the gulf between Christian and secular assumptions about man, it sharpened the tension between Church and world. There was a growing belief that the attitude of the Church towards the world should be prophetic rather than eirenic; judgemental rather than accommodating.

This theological outlook was reinforced by growing familiarity with the work of neo-orthodox theologians in Europe and America. The writing of Karl Barth, well-known to European theologians since the early post-war years, had not been translated from German into English until the late 1920s. Even during the 1930s Barth's influence on Anglicans was limited. Few became Barthians and few fully understood him. But his teaching, like that of Hoskyns, highlighted the irrational elements of Christianity (those least congenial to philosophy) and the sinfulness and impotence of man at a time when such an outlook was eminently believable. Barth provided a new language of paradox and crisis which excited and stimulated without necessarily converting. As Ramsey put it, 'there were many ... who, without being drawn from one theological system to another, underwent a theological and religious "shock"'.

8. Ramsey, Gore to Temple, p.142.
The impact of Reinhold Niebuhr on English theology was more profound, largely because he stressed the power of sin and the imperfection of human achievement without embracing political nihilism. Barth's insistence that every possible line of political or social action was equally sinful in the sight of God, and that theology could offer no direct or specific guidance in human affairs was meat far too strong for English social Christians.  

They were more receptive to Niebuhr because he placed equal emphasis on the reality of sin and power and on the Church's duty nevertheless to seek justice. He argued that although the gospel transcended all particular social situations, it did not lift Christians out of history and its conflicts, and could only be preached effectively by a Church which helped to bear the responsibility of the contemporary situation.  

Niebuhr's theological conservatism was combined with a political radicalism which was likely to appeal to the social conscience of erstwhile idealists. His impact was particularly strong in the SCM which claimed to have been largely responsible for introducing him to British Christians. As one sceptical

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contemporary later commented:

[Niebuhr] exercised a fascination for a whole generation of students and younger ministers, so that it was somewhat irreverently said that the first and greatest commandment now ran: 'Thou shalt love the lord thy Dodd and thy Niebuhr as thyself!' 11

Amongst Anglicans who discovered Niebuhr through the SCM were Temple, Oldham, Vidler, David Paton and Alan Richardson. 12

It was evident at Oxford, in 1937, that crisis theology had made its mark on the British outlook. Walter Horton commented that the theological gap which had yawned at Stockholm between continental 'quietism' and Anglo-Saxon 'activism' had narrowed appreciably. Anglo-Saxons, chastened by the world situation, were 'pretty generally prepared to draw a sharp distinction between the kingdom of God and anything we can hope to achieve by united Christian endeavour in the near future'; while the Europeans had 'lost their appearance of ethical indifference'. 13 There were still extremes of opinion. The Anglican press noted a striking contrast between the


address of Swiss theologian Emil Brunner, who declared that 'the wisdom of this world is bankrupt' and that 'the Christian Church has no right to lay down a social programme', and the Dean of St. Paul's, W.R. Matthews, who asserted that the teaching, person and work of Christ formed a revelation of the good life which Christians recognized as true 'because it harmonizes with the thoughts we already have, as men created in the divine image'. Matthews' conception of the kingdom of God as 'a social idea' bore little resemblance to the eschatological kingdom of Dodd and Hoskyns. Nevertheless, as the editor of the American Christendom commented, the theological controversy expected at Oxford 'did not come off'.

2. The Generation Gap

Although English theology, by the late 1930s, was generally less Pelagian and more open to the need for an emphasis on redemption, the impact of crisis theology was more far-reaching for some than for others. Most older men, brought up on idealist philosophy and incarnation theology, were unable to go as far as the


15. Quoted in Horton, Contemporary Continental Theology, p.(xvii), note 2.
generation born since the turn of the century in the abandonment of a world-affirming outlook. There developed a generation gap between those who had formed their theological outlook before the war and those who reacted sharply against 'the neat and cosy sacramentalist incarnationalism of a comfortable Church'. The rift, present in Nonconformity as well as Anglicanism, was described by Vidler as 'more serious than the normal divergence between older and younger generations' and by Mascall as 'both abnormally great and peculiarly difficult to cope with'. Michael Bruce, a young Anglican prominent in the SCM, expressed the mood of some of the younger men in the comment that there was 'scarcely a subject, theological, sociological or international, upon which the typical older theologian can speak without jarring the nerves of his younger counterpart in every second sentence'.

19. Michael Bruce, 'The Church - A Key to the Conflict in Anglican Theology', ibid., vol.XLI, no.242, Aug. 1940, p.81. Bruce did recognize that the division of theologians into categories of older and younger was rather 'rough-and-ready'. See his letter to Theology, vol.XLI, no.246, Dec. 1940, pp.364-5. As Alan Richardson commented ('Biblical Theology and the Modern Mood', p.246), 'the mental age of a theologian is not to be reckoned by the number of years he has lived'.
The older generation of Anglo-Catholic sociologists were amongst those least able to accommodate the outlook of crisis theology. Demant's review of Niebuhr's 1939 Gifford Lectures revealed the fundamental cleavage between Protestant neo-orthodoxy and the neo-Thomism of the Christendom writers. Demant was generous in his praise of Niebuhr as 'the most important English-speaking theologian of to-day', provocative of both intellectual clarification and soul-searching. He appreciated Niebuhr's emphasis on 'the egoism and bias in all human activities'. But he argued that Niebuhr failed to see the essential truth of Catholic doctrine, that original sin, while taking away man's original righteousness, did not cause him to lose his essential nature or obliterate in him the image of God. In Demant's view, the fall of man should be interpreted as 'transgressing some precept not directly bound up with man's nature, but superadded to it'. Niebuhr, for his part, could not accept the Thomist belief that the fall, though robbing man of a


donum superadditum left him with a capacity for natural justice.\textsuperscript{22} All statements of justice, he believed, were corrupted by self-interest.\textsuperscript{23}

An article contributed by Demant to Nineteenth Century, in 1941, indicated that his estimate of the power of sin had altered little over a decade in which man's propensity for chaos and destruction had been far more evident than his capacity to achieve peace and harmony. He admitted that the world could never be perfected (though perfection was possible for individuals), that it was very evil, and that the contemporary world was 'farther gone from a natural order than in any other period of history'. But it was not so depraved that the true natural order was completely obliterated. Demant remained optimistic:

Because the Church knows the supernatural roots and destiny of man, the Christian mind, we must believe, can engender a recovered sense in the community of the right order in its political, cultural and economic functions.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{22} The Roman Catholic Thomist, Victor White, questioned Niebuhr's interpretation of Thomist theology (see White's letter to Theology, vol.XL, no.238, Apr.1940, pp.292-3). White denied that Aquinas had claimed that the fall of man did not seriously impair his capacity for natural justice. It was, in White's opinion, 'rank heresy' to argue that the fall left man's \textit{pura naturalia} intact. Demant's criticism of Niebuhr, though, implicitly accepted the latter's interpretation. Demant's viewpoint seems to have been shared by Casserley. See J.V. Langmead Casserley, Providence and History: A Tale of Two Cities, Dacre Press, Westminster, 1940, pp.105-6.


\textsuperscript{24} V.A. Demant, 'The Importance of Christopher Dawson', Nineteenth Century, vol.CXXIX, no.767, Jan. 1941, pp.74-5.
Here the acknowledgement of evil was only formal: faith in
the possibility of outlining a Christian social order was
still there. An essay on 'The Idea of a Natural Order',
contributed to the group's *Prospect for Christendom*, in
1945, showed Demant still essentially impervious to
the main thrust of crisis theology. There were some minor
concessions to the language of eschatology and to the
importance of the gospel as illuminating in a particular
way the general truths of natural law, but Demant does not
seem to have been moved, as Temple was, by Niebuhr's sense
of the 'aboriginal sin of man'.

Temple, while he retained the older generation's
faith in the possibility of natural theology, made far
greater concessions to the new emphasis on sin and
irrationality. A 'theological confession and *apologia*',
offered to *Theology* in 1939 demonstrated his ability to
span the intellectual and emotional gap between the two
generations. He and his contemporaries, he wrote, growing
up in a stable and at least nominally Christian world, had
been concerned above all 'to lead a few members of a
generation which accepted one large part of the Christian
heritage to enter also on the rest'. They had believed
they could make a Christian map of a world which was

25. V.A. Demant, 'The Idea of a Natural Order', in
Maurice B. Reckitt (ed.), *Prospect for Christendom: Essays
in Catholic Social Reconstruction*, Faber and Faber,
London, 1945, pp.27-42.
capable of rational explanation and populated by reasonable people. But this, he realized, was not the experience or outlook of the younger generation who had been brought up in a world which openly repudiated Christianity and which defied rational interpretation. It was a world of which no Christian map could be made; a world which needed to be converted rather than explained.

Temple had learned from Niebuhr a new awareness of the power of sin and of the need for the Church's message to be redemptive rather than expository. He came to regard the Church, the sphere of redemption, as apart from and in many ways opposed to the world. But he was not prepared to abandon the belief that there remained, outside the sphere of redemption, discernible evidence of God's creative purpose. He believed those who rejected the possibility of natural theology to be guilty of pressing the doctrine of the fall of man 'to a point where the human reason is regarded as incapable of apprehending any divine truth'; they postulated not a natural order but a natural disorder, 'the fruit of sin'. Temple continued to accept the possibility, ultimately, of drawing an intellectual map of the world. It would not be feasible in his own time to work again towards a synthesis of knowledge such as

28. Ibid., p.328.
29. Ibid., pp.329-30.
Aquinas had achieved in the medieval period, but he believed that one day theology would 'take up again its larger and serener task and offer to a new Christendom its Christian map of life, its Christocentric metaphysic'.

Younger writers were far more sceptical. Responding to Temple's apologia, Alan Richardson, a young biblical scholar who later became Canon of Durham, admitted that it would be 'sad indeed if the younger theologians lost sight of the task of theology of providing a "universal synthesis" based upon the revelation of God in Christ'. But he pointed out that they were more immediately concerned with 'the provision of emergency shelters' or a 'theology of crisis'. Richardson showed a Niebuhrian grasp of the essentially relative character of all theological formulations. He stressed the need to subject 'familiar theological furniture' to close scrutiny in the attempt to isolate those elements which 'really have no strictly theological basis at all'. This was a reminder that theological expositions frequently reflected the movement of secular thought and that the theological and sociological schemes of Christians were inevitably time-conditioned. A similar point was made, albeit more caustically, by philosopher Donald Mackinnon in a review of Prospect for Christendom:

33. Ibid. See also Temple, 'Thomism and Modern Needs'.
34. Richardson, 'Biblical Theology and the Modern Mood', p.245.
35. Ibid., p.248.
Do we see as God sees? Or do we not sometimes in our pretension exalt our little verdict on the relativities of history into the divine appraisal of their significance?...It is our so-called Christian perspective that almost more than anything else we need to submit to the crucial sifting of God's word.36

The younger generation did not offer an alternative theological system; indeed, it was system and order against which they were rebelling. The determining factors in their outlook were an acute awareness of the sinfulness and disorder of the contemporary world and a theological disposition informed substantially by the eschatological emphases of modern biblical study.

This was illustrated by Mackinnon's treatment of the doctrine of the incarnation, dear to social Christians for its 'sociological implications'. Mackinnon pronounced as 'a blasphemous piece of impertinence' the tendency of English theologians to argue that the world could not be too bad a place because it had been the setting for the incarnation. Against such 'blasphemy' he offered the insights of the theologians of crisis, for whom the incarnation was not 'the disclosing of certain universal cosmical principles' but 'the manifestation of the divine word in the harsh particularities of an individual human existence'.37 Here was the Hoskyns/Dodd insistence on the realized eschatology of the present.

Mackinnon was appalled by the 'lust after synthesis' displayed by the older generation, although he was careful to point out that repudiation of these 'synthetic enthusiasms' did not imply rejection of the doctrine of creation. On the contrary, it was acute awareness of the immensity of the field illuminated by creation theology which gave rise to scepticism about the drawing of patterns. To specify the content of the natural law was 'a task of appalling difficulty'. Mackinnon believed it impossible 'to formulate the concept of a norm of manhood apart from an entrance of the Son of God within history that is wholly irruptive'. In other words, Christians could not expect to lay bare the general principles of social order, or to produce a pattern or synthesis of society. They could, however, by the grace of God, offer some illumination of the particular social situation. Ultimately the Christian ethic was an 'interims-ethic', appropriate to the period between the coming of the kingdom of God and its final fulfilment. Mackinnon did not reject natural theology as such, but he questioned its efficacy as a basis for Christian social philosophy and emphasized, rather, the truths of eschatology.

One of the most interesting contributions to Anglican crisis theology was J.V. Langmead Casserley's apocalyptic interpretation of history. Offered as a corrective to exaggerations of the positive pole in the Christian attitude

38. Ibid., pp.92-4.
39. Ibid., p.96.
40. Ibid., p.100.
towards society, Casserley's writing evoked the note of judgement characteristic of crisis theology.\textsuperscript{41} He argued that there were times when the negative pole, an emphasis on 'judgment and rejection', were particularly appropriate. In the current situation, for example, when there had been 'a real breakdown of the natural law in the social order', attention should be drawn to the 'convulsing judgments of God'. Apocalyptic exegesis provided 'specific interpretations of specific occasions' which were not adequately explained by a 'natural philosophy of society'. The insights of the prophet, deeply rooted in the Bible, provided balance and supplementation to the truths of natural theology.\textsuperscript{42}

Casserley expounded a spiral view of history\textsuperscript{43} which owed much to Arnold Toynbee. He rejected both the linear view, with its liberal assumptions about progress, and the cyclical model of the Greeks, revived by Oswald Spengler, which assumed the inevitability of the cyclical process and denied any significant links between civilizations. He found Toynbee's description of the relations of 'apparation and affiliation' existing between different


\textsuperscript{42} J.V. Langmead Casserley, 'Eschatology and Social Action', \textit{Christendom}, vol.9, no.35, Sep. 1939, pp.185-7.

\textsuperscript{43} See J.V. Langmead Casserley, 'Christianity and the Mechanics of History', parts I & II, \textit{ibid.}, vol.6, nos. 23 and 24, Sep. and Oct. 1936; 'Evangelism and History', parts I & II, \textit{ibid.}, vol.7, nos. 27 and 28, Sep. and Dec. 1937; and \textit{Providence and History}. 
civilizations provided a useful compromise between these older interpretations, by combining the truths of each. The result was a spiral view of history which recognized that civilizations developed then declined, but which allowed for continuity between some elements of a dying civilization and the birth of the next.

Casserley distinguished five phases of a culture cycle through which all civilizations tended to pass: birth, growth, maturity, decay and death. Religion moved through five 'distinct but parallel' phases: prophetic, sacramental, dominant, pastoral and again prophetic. The keynote of the prophetic phase was the clear distinction between the divine and the human, while the intermediate stages represented a gradual identification of religion and culture which resulted, by the fourth stage, in the virtual immersion of the former in the latter. This coincided with the decay of the civilization and resulted in the reassertion of the prophetic note; the dissociation of religion from a dying culture.  

This was the point at which western civilization had arrived by the late 1930s. In the midst of a 'waning world', the primary task of the Church must be 'prophetic detachment'. There should be a movement from the world-affirming to the world-renouncing pole of the

Church's relationship with the world. Christians should beware of encouraging a 'second religiousness', of exhorting the world to return to religion as a way of saving modern civilization. This was to turn the Church into 'a kind of social funkhole' and to subordinate it to secular needs. The archbishops' call to religion at the beginning of 1937 had, Casserley believed, come dangerously close to doing this.

The true task of the Church in the hour of death was to preserve a 'remnant' which would establish, in Toynbee's terms, the relationships of 'apparentation and affiliation' between the dying civilization and the new one which would arise out of it. For a civilization was never entirely destroyed. It always left behind it 'a remnant purified by suffering, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, the guide, philosopher and friend of younger peoples'.

Such an interpretation of history affirmed the sovereignty of God over the civilizations of man and had specific implications for the Church's attitude in the particular catastrophe that was ensuing. Casserley held no brief for western civilization. 'Surely', he wrote in

46. Ibid., p.266 and Providence and History, pp.87-91. The concept of 'second religiousness' was borrowed from Spengler who, according to Casserley, saw religious revival as a product of the process of cultural decay; as evidence of the mood of defeatism current in the twilight era of a culture.

47. Casserley, 'Evangelism and History', part II, p.266. See also Bruce, 'The Church', for a warning against subordinating the Church to secular needs.

48. Casserley, 'Evangelism and History', part II, p.267. See also Mackinnon, 'Recall - to What?', a scathing review of the book of essays which had marked the recall to religion. Mackinnon's sympathy with Casserley's apocalypticism is evident in this article.

We cannot ... desire that our present industrialised, imperialistic order of society should continue indefinitely, even if that were possible. A Christian certainly cannot desire it. The West, though dear to us because it contains so many relics of the first Christendom, is not the Kingdom upon earth for which we pray in the Lord's Prayer....It is not even a good basis from which to journey to that Kingdom. All its roads branch off in another direction. Between the West and the Kingdom there is no broad highway, only a wilderness upon whose verge we sit waiting for Moses.50

This pronouncement attacked at its roots a fundamental tenet of many in the Christian social movement, especially the Christendom group, that progress could be made towards the coming of the kingdom on earth and that a society approximating to reason and justice could be achieved. The purpose of Christian sociology, said Casserley, was 'to serve and glorify God', not to preserve western civilization from catastrophe.51 The Church must await and prepare for

the redemptive, cleansing, divine act of judgment which sets free both man and history from the ever accumulating burden bequeathed by generations of disordered living and permits the initiation of a new and more hopeful phase of the earth's story.52

What, then, should the Christian do? Here Casserley was less specific: he evoked a mood and an atmosphere, but provided no concrete detail. The Christian was to watch and pray rather than attempt to reform a doomed

50. Casserley, 'Interpretation of Catastrophe', p.121.
52. Ibid., p.189.
society. For some this might mean complete detachment from secular life in a religious community; for others, the prophetic task of 'interpreting the times to the vast masses trapped by them without apparent hope of escape', or participation in 'the great and merciful work of human rescue'. For some too, 'prophetic detachment' would mean pacifism in the event of war. Casserley believed that the significance of pacifism lay not in any Christ-like attitude exhibited by the individual pacifist, but in its appropriateness as a response to the contemporary situation. For, he asked,

Who are we to defend what God has condemned? Why should the Christian take arms in the service of one secular interest warring against another?54

Mackinnon urged a similar response to the contemporary crisis. He exhorted his Anglican audience at the Malvern conference, in 1941, to appreciate the dangers 'implicit in an establishment' and to recognize the fundamental contradiction between the assumptions of modern civilization and the Christian faith. Like Casserley, he regarded the pacifist stand as symbolic of that prophetic detachment for which the Church should aim and perhaps even the condition on which the majority of the Church could admit the legitimacy of modern warfare. Those who could not embrace the pacifist position must work against identification of Church with nation and aim to increase the tension

53. Ibid., p.192.
between them. 56

The prophetic detachment urged by Casserley and Mackinnon was essentially a product of the crisis atmosphere of the late 1930s. During the war years, its sharp outlines were blurred as its proponents gradually became convinced that certain elements of western civilization were, after all, worth preserving. Mackinnon, although he held to his pacifist position, urged Christians to be concerned with contemporary social problems such as the dehumanizing effects of total war and the implications for individuals of the totalitarian techniques inevitably employed in its prosecution. 57 Casserley, writing in 1940, against the background of fighting Churchillian Britain, believed he saw a reviving civilization in which pacifism was an inappropriate response. He now identified pacifism with 'second religiousness' rather than 'prophetic detachment'. It was a symptom of the spiritual malady of a dying civilization; providing religious sanction for the defeatist outlook of a period of cultural decay. 58 Casserley now believed that there was 'something gravely wrong with moral scruples whose only result is to make certain the victory and survival of the unscrupulous'. 59 This change in attitude was a remarkable example of the relativity of all theological judgements. Yet Casserley

56. Ibid., pp.109-12.
57. Ibid., pp.101-2 and 106-7.
59. Ibid., p.79, note 1.
had always maintained that the task of the prophet was not to foretell the future, but to answer the question, 'What's the time?'. The answer to this question would always be 'the time is at hand', which was a reminder that man lived perpetually under God's judgement and that 'the redemptive, cleansing, divine act of judgment' was always an 'immediate possibility'. For the prophet, said Casserley, was like a man whose watch had stopped without his knowing it, so that his reply was only accurate every twelve hours.\(^60\) Presumably by 1940 it was no longer accurate.

3. New Directions

After the Oxford conference there were important changes in the ideology of the Christian social movement. Under the guidance of men like Alec Vidler and J.H. Oldham, and through new outlets like the CCFCL and the CNL, the movement presented a fresh approach which avoided both the utopianism of its erstwhile leaders, the Christendom group and the Anglo-Catholic summer school, and the position of retreat advocated by the more dramatic spirits of the younger generation.

The theology of the movement in its new phase was eschatological. As Vidler described it, the 'eschaton', the last thing or the kingdom of God, was a teleological rather than a chronological concept. It denoted not so

\(^60\) Casserley, 'Eschatology and Social Action', p.189.
much the end of historical existence as 'the final thing, which both explains and fulfils all that has gone before'.  

The 'eschaton', actualized in history through Christ, continued to impinge on man at all points of his temporal existence. It 'for ever intersected' the historical sphere, proclaiming the perfect way of life and the final criterion by which all history would be judged. 

The Christian lived in two worlds at once, he was both a member of the kingdom of God and of earthly society. His life involved the always impossible task of achieving the perfection revealed in the kingdom of God.

Realized eschatology had definite social implications. Its adherents were not prepared to accept the Barthian 'Sit down, O men of God' standpoint any more than the ethical outlook it was replacing. The fact that the 'eschaton' was realized in history provided a point of connection between the revelation of perfect justice and love and man's always imperfect attempt to achieve these in personal and social life. This position was similar in many respects to that of Niebuhr and Paul Tillich and was summarized neatly by Tillich's dictum that the certainty that the historical conflict would be decided in eternity did not relieve Christians of 'the duty of working towards a concrete solution in finite

time, in which the eternal decision appears'.

The approach was, above all, existential. Vidler emphasized that there were no standard implications of the Christian faith for society and no ideal pictures of a Christian social order. The Christian response to God's purpose was determined by encounter with the eschaton in each individual circumstance. The primary task was to examine the forces contributing to the current situation and assess them in the light of God's revelation at that particular time. It was useless to attempt to transpose the solutions found by Christians in former eras (for example, medieval Christendom) to modern conditions. Although there were certain broad social principles, such as justice and equality of opportunity, the application of these would vary according to circumstances.

Vidler firmly rejected the doctrine of the prophetic minority as an immediate response to the apostasy of western civilization. Christians must try, urgently, to subordinate the collective State to Christian values. Only if this failed were they justified in detaching themselves from the fate of civilization. In short, Christians could not retreat into the catacombs, they


must wait until they were driven there. Vidler's fear of the powers of a fully collectivized State (like Oldham, he believed this would be Britain's version of totalitarianism) caused him to stress that anyway, there was no guarantee that a minority would survive in a totalitarian State. Between Christianity and totalitarianism there must be a fight to the death. 66

The battle between Christianity and totalitarianism must not, however, be identified with that between the western democracies and the Axis powers. Although the war was widely interpreted as God's judgement on a bankrupt and un-Christian civilization 67, Vidler feared that the total commitment demanded by modern warfare would blind Christians to the shortcomings of the society for which they were fighting.

It has been said that in this war we are defending a rotten citadel against aggressive hordes, and that we must defend it since that is our only hope of securing an opportunity for reconstructing it. The trouble is that, in order to defend it with unwavering conviction, we have to forget, if not to deny, its rottenness.


If the peace was to be won as well as the war, a concerted attempt must be made to re-order the social system in accordance with Christian principles.68

The belief that this task should be faced during the war rather than after it, was behind the launching of the CNL in 1939. Those who supported this enterprise were inspired, as earlier leaders of the Christian social movement had been, by the idea of a resurrected Christendom. But their conception of it was less exalted. The Christendom group had been, and still was, possessed by the dream of a Christian polity. In 1922 Reckitt had defined this as

the clear vision of a society in which the free activities of men are gathered together to create a social order which can be offered as a gift to the glory of God.69

In 1944 his definition was more elaborate. A Christian society would be

a community which acknowledges God's overlordship of His world, conforms to His laws for it as revealed in nature and - through Christ - in man, and strives to establish and safeguard the institutions appropriate to a Christian polity. 70

This ideal, filled out as it was with social concepts borrowed from medieval Christendom, was undeniably Utopian. The CNL group were far more prosaic. They emphasized that a new Christendom would not be a society in which all were Christians, but

a community of free persons united under the rule of law, directing its activities increasingly to Christian ends and leavened by Christian insight, values and standards.\(^71\)

In such a society there would, of course, be frequent lapses from Christian standards, but these would at least be recognized as deviations and an attempt made to remedy them.\(^72\)

There were four main ways in which the CNL conception of Christendom differed from the Anglo-Catholic notion. First, it recognized clearly and explicitly the gap which would always exist between the kingdom of God and any form of human society.\(^73\) No doubt the Christendom writers, if pressed, would have made the same distinction; but their continued insistence on the kingdom of God as the regulative principle of theology and on medieval Christendom as an embodiment of the idea of the kingdom, tended to obscure the difference. Secondly, a resurrected

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\(^{71}\) CNL, no.4, 22 Nov. 1939, p.3.


Christendom would be directed by a social philosophy and purpose which, while compatible with the Christian doctrine of man, could be defended also on grounds of reason. This philosophy, to be evolved through collaboration between Christians and non-Christians, was believed to be all that was appropriate and realistic in a mixed society. Thirdly, if changes in the social structure were actually to be achieved, there must be a political strategy which would involve co-operation with non-Christians. In contrast, the Christendom group continued to insist, as late as the mid 1940s, that the choice lay between action on purely Christian or purely secular grounds. Finally, it was urged that those working towards a new Christendom must harness technical and specialist knowledge to their purpose. This implied collaboration with economists, scientists, political scientists and historians in a manner never contemplated

76. M.B.R[ekkitt], 'Impasse or Opportunity?', Christendom, vol.13, no.56, Dec. 1944, pp.228-9. This was a reply to Donald Mackinnon's criticism that Christian sociologists failed to engage in Christian social action. See Donald M. Mackinnon, 'The Thought of Jacques Maritain', ibid., pp.248-51. See also Reckitt's introduction to Prospect for Christendom for a further elaboration of the argument that Christians should not compromise their ideals through participation in secular causes.
77. Vidler, editorial, Theology, vol.XXXIX, no.233, Nov. 1939, pp.322-3; Oldham, Resurrection of Christendom, pp.57-9; Barker and Preston, Christians in Society, pp.87-95.
by the Christendom group.

Those who gathered around Oldham and Vidler included clergy and laity, theologians and secular experts, Christians and non-Christians, Anglicans and Free Churchmen. There were familiar names like Temple, Demant, A.D. Lindsay, R.H. Tawney, Henry Carter, Christopher Dawson, T.S. Eliot and Reinhold Niebuhr. But there were also names less readily associated with the Christian social movement, such as Hector Hetherington, Arnold Toynbee, Stafford Cripps, Fred Clarke, Karl Mannheim, H.H. Farmer and O.S. Franks. This reflected the desire to encourage dialogue between Christians and non-Christians and between theologians and technical experts. It was evidence of the recognition that the Christian social movement needed to find a methodology; a way of translating Christian principles into meaningful social policies. For Temple, Oldham and Tawney, it was an attempt to pursue the idea of 'middle axioms' raised in their discussions at Bishopsthorpe ten years earlier. Then, as now, they believed it essential to define Christian principles in terms which could also be used by non-Christians and which were directly applicable to particular problems. 78

78. The 1929 group had given the idea of trusteeship as an example of 'a middle axiom between the ultimate principle of human brotherhood and the sacredness of the individual and the practical task of government'. Because it was a middle axiom rather than an absolute principle it would be applicable in some situations (e.g. East Africa) but not in others (e.g. India). See Discussions on the Approach to a Christian Sociology, pp.12-13. The idea of middle axioms is further developed in chap.VIII below.
The Christendom group continued to show the weaknesses of the inter-war period; clinging to its optimistic theology and its belief in the possibility of getting society to conform to a pre-conceived pattern. This hope underlay the publication of Prospect for Christendom in 1945.

The group was not impervious to criticism; several articles in Christendom were devoted to debate between the older members and their critics, and Reckitt dealt with some of the charges levelled against the group in his introduction to Prospect. The confidence of the older generation did falter in the face of the apocalyptic views aired by the younger men in the years before the war. Reckitt found himself questioning how far Thomism could be made 'the working philosophy of an age of crisis'. He admitted that

in truth we are not 're-building Christendom'; we are desperately holding on while Europe is pulling its remains to pieces, until it has now got perilously near the foundations themselves.79

But he was scathing about the idea of retreating 'into the proverbial catacombs':80

Civilization in the West may be about to make shipwreck of itself; if so, shall we not desire and strive to appear rather as mariners who will, when every effort is exhausted, if need be go down with the vessel, than as rats who seek in a perilous hour to leave the sinking ship?81

80. Ibid.
Some concessions were made to the post-Oxford perspective. An essay contributed by Noel Davey (a son-in-law of Widdrington and also a pupil of Hoskyns) to *Prospect*, introduced an eschatological note. Davey stressed the existential possibilities of every human situation, but the inadequacy of any human vision of Christendom. Demant was sufficiently open to new approaches to be willing to participate in the CNL venture.

But the group retained its hope in the possibility of restoring the natural pattern of a society which did have Christian roots and which, they believed, had not lost all resemblance to Christendom. Replying, in 1938, to Casserley's interpretation of crisis, Reckitt asked

> Is it our portion only to rejoice in the impending downfall of the modern Babylon (to carol lustily in our Barth, as someone has put it), and prepare the remnant which shall enter upon humanism's devastated heritage? Or are we to agonize with the (largely innocent) victims of world crisis, struggling so to understand the will of God in that situation that at once through and despite of us there may be preserved the framework of that European civilization which, after all, had its roots in Christian origins.

Even by the end of the war, Anglo-Catholic sociologists were reluctant to abandon their hope of achieving a Christian society. An introduction to the (postponed)

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1945 summer school on 'The Christian Faith in a Secularized Society' showed that secular society was viewed not as the reality with which Christian social action must start, but as an apostasy which pointed to the need for a theological synthesis as the pre-condition of an integrated society.84

To a large extent, the Christendom group managed to lick its wounds and bind together the cleavages of the pre-war years. Prospect contained contributions from both the younger and older generations and even Casserley returned to the fold. In a review of Vidler's Secular Despair and Christian Faith, contributed to Christendom in 1941, he made it clear that he rejected Vidler's 'realism' on the grounds that by recommending Christians to learn to live as best they could with a secular society, he was abandoning the apocalyptic hope. Casserley criticized the Christendom group for its tendency to allow theological discussion to cloud sociological issues and called for 'detailed and factual social analysis'. But this was to be unmistakably on Christian and not on secular terms. He affirmed unequivocally his belief that the Christendom hope was always possible and necessary. By this he meant that Christians were

84. 'The Christian Faith in a Secularized Society', Christendom, vol.13, no.55, Sep. 1944, pp.213-6. Reckitt's introduction to Prospect for Christendom (pp.7-9) is a further example of the Christendom failure to accept the reality of a secular society.
confronted in history with recurrent opportunities for re-ordering the pattern of society which ... [justified them] as Christians in hoping and working for a state of earthly being which would have a similar analogical relationship to the Kingdom which descends from Heaven at the end of time.\textsuperscript{85}

Despite the brave hopes of \textit{Prospect}, the group was, by 1945, becoming an anachronism. The rural fancies in which it increasingly indulged\textsuperscript{86} were perhaps even further removed from reality than the social analysis offered during the inter-war period. By 1944 it was losing more support than it was gaining. Reckitt suspected that young Anglo-Catholics were not as interested in social questions as in former times.\textsuperscript{87} This may well have been true, but to have remained at the spearhead of the Christian social movement, the group would have to have offered a social philosophy which appealed to a spectrum broader than Anglo-Catholicism. It would also have had to find a way of relating its vision of Christendom to the problems and possibilities of British society in the war years.

\textsuperscript{85} J.V. Langmead Casserley, 'Darken our Lightness', \textit{Christendom}, vol.11, no.43, Sep. 1941, p.182.
\textsuperscript{86} See e.g. Patrick McLaughlin, 'The Faith and the Farm: Notes on the Relation of Christian Doctrine to Agriculture', \textit{ibid.}, vol.13, no.55, Sep. 1944, pp.204-9; R.H. Daubney, 'The Task of the Church in the Post-War World', \textit{ibid.}, no.56, Dec. 1944, p.244.
\textsuperscript{87} Reckitt, 'Impasse or Opportunity', pp.227-8.
V. THE MORALIZATION OF INDUSTRY AND PROPERTY

1. The Ethical Outlook of the 1920s

The major concerns of Anglican social criticism in the 1920s were the organization and management of industry and the ownership and distribution of wealth. This reflected heightened awareness, since the 1880s and 1890s, of the social consequences of relatively unbridled capitalist enterprise. Christian social ideas developed in a secular intellectual milieu of Fabian collectivism, guild socialism, distributism and syndicalism. Persistent industrial unrest and an increasingly vocal Labour party kept these issues alive throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Social Christians confidently expected that industry and property could be moralized. They argued that economics was not a purely mechanistic discipline, but a human science; and that human nature was eminently capable of improvement. This view was believed to have the authority of economists like Alfred Marshall who had defined economics as 'a study of Mankind in the ordinary business of life'; the attainment and use of the material requirements of human existence. Economics was, in Marshall's words, 'on the one side a study of wealth, and on the other, and more important, side a part of
the study of man'. On the basis of this definition, Paul Bull of the Mirfield community, in a treatise on the economics of the kingdom of God, distinguished between 'pure political economics', which embraced laws of necessity grounded in the nature of things; and 'social economics', which was the study of the voluntary relations between men, embodied in social institutions, customs and laws. The latter aspect involved 'an element of contingency, of freedom or self-determination' which implied the possibility of change. Temple put it another way: he argued that while there were some laws of political economy which were independent of all religious considerations, such as the fact that it was impossible to distribute what had not been produced, there were others which assumed a certain human motivation and would become quite different if that motivation were to change. The law of supply and demand, for example, rested on the assumption that everybody wanted to sell dear and buy cheap. This was true of human motivation in the contemporary situation, so that the law itself was broadly accurate and the price of commodities was fixed at the point which equalized supply and demand. But if a man wished to sell, not for the highest price he could get, but for what he believed the


2. Bull, Economics of the Kingdom of God, p.53.
right price, then the law would not be relevant. It was, therefore, legitimate and realistic to talk about applying Christianity to economics.³

The argument was not merely that economic and social structures were amenable to ethical influence, but that such influence provided the only method of change. The Copec Commission on Industry and Property claimed (without evidence) that all successful changes in the order of society had embodied spiritual and moral ideas.⁴ Tawney made a similar point in his introduction to The Acquisitive Society⁵:

An appeal to principles is the condition of any considerable reconstruction of society, because social institutions are the visible expression of the scale of moral values which rules the minds of individuals, and it is impossible to alter institutions without altering that moral valuation.⁶

Social Christians believed, as Gore put it, that the Church must work for a change in the spirit of economic and industrial life because the evils of society were the result, not of the operation of inexorable laws, but of faults in human motivation.⁷

5. According to sales figures provided by Bell and Hyman Ltd., London, this book sold 14,524 copies between 1927 and 1945. The references in this thesis are to the American edition.
Confidence ran high. Social Christians absorbed the mood of enthusiasm and optimism about reconstruction which characterized the immediate post-war years. They believed that the fellowship and social dedication of wartime could be carried over into the peace. Man, if not perfectible, was at least capable of making progress in the organization of his social life. This optimistic view of man was evident in Bull's claim that many people condoned the current economic system through ignorance rather than wickedness. Shareholders, for example, often had little idea of the conditions obtaining in the businesses from which they drew an income 'If', he declared, 'the truth can penetrate through the thick layers of cotton-wool of convention in which their souls are encased, they will in large numbers prefer justice to dividends'. Bull based this judgement on his experience during the railway dispute [of 1907?] when thousands of shareholders had, apparently, agreed to sign a declaration waiving their claim on dividends until they were assured that the workmen were well paid. Bull was confident that there was 'a vast store of moral righteousness at the heart of our nation's life'.

It was only necessary, it seemed, to outline the implications of Christianity for social life and set about inculcating society with those values. Broadly, this involved a revival of the social-religious values of the medieval period when, as Tawney maintained, the social order had 'stood as one rung in a ladder which stretched

from hell to Paradise, and all departments of life had been directed to a spiritual end. Reflecting Tawney's influence, Anglican social theory in the 1920s looked to a functional society in which social institutions derived their significance and measure of value from their relation to a common end and in which status and privilege were directly related to duty and responsibility.

2. The Christian Critique of Modern Industry

In *The Acquisitive Society*, Tawney claimed that industry was,

> in its essence, nothing more mysterious than a body of men associated, in various degrees of competition and co-operation, to win their living by providing the community with some service which it requires .... its function is service, its method is association. Because its function is service, an industry as a whole has rights and duties towards the community .... Because its method is association, the different parties within it have rights and duties towards each other; and the neglect or perversion of these involves oppression.

In practice, the social purpose of industry had been subordinated to an acquisitive spirit which might enable men to 'inherit the earth and change the face of nature' but would not necessarily enable them to 'possess their own souls'.

Tawney's view of the essential nature of industry and his judgement of contemporary industrial organization

was reflected in the reports of the Fifth Committee and the Copec Commission on Industry and Property, of both of which he was a member, and the report of the 1920 Lambeth conference committee on the Church and industrial problems. The position taken in these reports was that industry should be directed towards, and organized according to, its central purpose, the satisfaction of human need, but that in practice, its true purpose was subordinated to the pursuit of profit. The general consensus was that the modern industrial system exhibited deep-rooted deficiencies, rather than occasional maladjustments. As the Copec commission put it, it was 'not merely defective, but vicious and radically unchristian'.

This resulted from its lack of social purpose and its unchristian motive. The Fifth Committee stressed that industry was not an end in itself. Because the ultimate end of human existence was the development of the human spirit and its preparation for the kingdom of God, so too should industry be directed towards spiritual ends and judged by spiritual criteria. As industry was a social function it should be concerned with service to the community above profit and gain and its predominant spirit should be co-operative rather than competitive. The committee acknowledged that the competitive spirit had, in the past, given a strong impetus to productive efficiency, but was adamant that


it was 'alien to the teaching of Christianity' and that modern industry would need to be profoundly modified if it were to be compatible with Christianity. Economic efficiency was not the supreme value and ultimately, society might have to 'choose between being Christian and being rich'.\(^{16}\) The Lambeth committee's reminder that self-interest (legitimate in its place) had been subordinated to higher motives during the war\(^{17}\), was characteristic of the altruism of the period.

Tawney's belief that the co-operative nature of industry should be reflected in its direction and government, was also evident. His insistence that it was 'the condition of economic freedom that men should not be ruled by an authority which they cannot control'\(^{18}\) was echoed by the Fifth Committee, the Lambeth committee, Copec, and individuals like Gore and Bull. The Archbishop's Committee drew attention to the 'unjustifiable position of subordination in which many wage earners are placed by the organisation of modern industry'. The injustice was evident on four criteria: the worker was placed in a position of 'economic inferiority' in that he was dependent for his livelihood on an undertaking whose general policy he was powerless to control or even influence; he was regarded as 'an accessory to industry rather than a partner in it', this being exemplified in

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the common description of workers as 'hands'; he was treated as having neither a mind which merited consultation nor a personality which demanded consideration; and his sense of vocation was destroyed by his participation in 'simple and monotonous processes' over which he had no control and for the results of which he had no responsibility. In short, the committee believed that large numbers of working people were employed on terms which suggested they were 'means to the production of wealth rather than themselves the human end for whom wealth is produced'.

The Copec commission expressed similar views. To talk of partnership in industry was, it believed, 'tragically unreal'. A more realistic description of the relations between capital and labour would be 'two armed camps, ever on the watch'. The primary cause of this was suspicion, based on ignorance. The worker, ignorant of the policy and financial state of the business, suspected he was 'a mere pawn in the employer's game'. The employer, through lack of imagination rather than want of knowledge, failed to understand the deep lack of security felt by working men and feared that they aimed only to snatch control of a system painstakingly built up by capital. This situation was deplorable: labour, 'the indispensable instrument of Capital', had no control of its own work conditions and no opportunity

to offer potentially valuable insights into the state of industry. It was the conclusion of the commission that all those engaged in industry should have a voice in determining the conditions of their work and lives.  

Poor wages and insecurity of employment were further evidence of the low status of workers. If the purpose of industry was to supply human needs, then the primary reason for work was the same: to provide home, food, clothing and other requirements of life. In a sophisticated economy the worker must be able to exchange his labour for the means to purchase what others produced - he was dependent on social co-operation. These factors were not given due consideration in the modern industrial system. Employment was offered not as a means to a livelihood, but in accordance with the requirements of industry: workers were hired in times of prosperity and discarded when trade was bad. In areas like the dockyards, work was on a casual basis even in times of prosperity; and men were often able to find work only one to four days a week. Chronic unemployment and underemployment were evidence of the inability of the modern industrial system to cater for human needs. In the opinion of the Fifth Committee this was a terrible indictment:

An organization of industry which allows men who are capable of working and willing to work to be deprived of adequate means of livelihood through no fault of their own is contrary to the first principles of justice, and is therefore contrary to the principles of Christianity.22

Similarly, low wages reflected the preoccupation of industry with profit rather than with the requirements of human life. The Copec commission believed this set of priorities immoral. Its report emphasized that it was not a question of what it would be desirable to give as wages, if it could be afforded, for increasing the amenities of life for the workers, but of the minimum needful for a healthy and decent life. We are on the bedrock of the moral position and are entitled to say that this is one of the essential ethical conditions which industry must fulfil.23

As industry was an exercise in social co-operation to serve the community, it should not subordinate the needs of either the consumer or the producer to the interests of profit. The Fifth Committee concluded that an industrial system which treated workers as tools was fundamentally anti-Christian:

the whole body of economic tradition and practice which permits industry to repose upon a human foundation of workers who are underpaid, overworked, or casually employed ... must be renounced by Christians and abandoned by the community.24

22. Christianity and Industrial Problems, p.68. See also ibid., pp.78-84; Conference of Bishops, 1920, p.70; Industry and Property, pp.47-8, 88-91 and 194.

23. Industry and Property, p.93. See also Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.60-6; Bull, Economics of the Kingdom of God, chap.IV.

24. Christianity and Industrial Problems, p.75.
An industry directed towards its true social purpose would accept certain principles. The first of these was that the worker had a right to a decent livelihood and reasonable leisure. The principle of a living wage, first accepted by the Lambeth conference of 1908, was reaffirmed by the conference of 1920 and also by the Fifth Committee and Copec. The Archbishops' Committee defined this concept as

not merely a wage which is sufficient for physical existence, but a wage adequate to maintain the worker, his wife and family in health and honour, and to enable him to dispense with the subsidiary earnings of his children up to the age of sixteen years. 25

The explicit assumption underlying this definition was that children should be engaged in full-time education at least to the age of sixteen and that the employment of married women was prejudicial both to family life and to the community. The committee claimed, on the basis of some evidence, that married women worked only from economic necessity and that this 'bad alternative to a worse evil' would be diminished if men's wages were sufficient to enable them to maintain their families in comfort. As far as unmarried women were concerned, the committee was definite that all its recommendations were applicable. A legal minimum wage was even more necessary for women than men because of their greater vulnerability to exploitation. Women were entitled to equal pay for

25. Ibid. See also Conference of Bishops, 1920, pp.70-1; Industry and Property, pp.93 and 194.
equal work, equal freedom in their choice of occupation, equal justice and consideration, and an equal voice in controlling conditions of employment.26

On the question of reasonable hours, the Fifth Report was explicit. These must be sufficiently short not merely to leave the worker unexhausted, but to allow him sufficient leisure and energy for home life, for recreation, for the development through study of his mind and spirit, and for participation in the affairs of the community.

On these grounds the committee recommended a normal working week of forty-eight hours. This would be an immense improvement on a situation in which the only enforceable legal maximums were for miners, forty-eight hours underground and fifty-four on the surface; for women and young people, fifty-five and a half hours in textile factories and sixty in non-textile factories and workshops; and for young people in shops, seventy-four hours.27

As a means of achieving these standards, the committee recommended the proliferation of Trade Boards, already established in thirteen industries under the 1909 act. The results achieved in these industries were believed to justify the creation of Boards in all industries where workers were not efficiently organized or not in receipt of a full living wage. The Boards

27. Ibid., pp.75-6.
should have power to fix minimum rates of pay, maximum hours, and other conditions of employment. The conditions thus fixed should be enforceable by law. 28

The serious social implications of unemployment and underemployment were stressed in Christian circles well before the numbers of unemployed reached their peak in 1933. As early as 1918, the Fifth Committee recognized unemployment as a 'normal feature' of the industrial system and 'a constant challenge to the conscience of Christians', which, hitherto, they had done too little to meet. The duty of Christians was to press upon the community two things: first, the adoption of measures likely to diminish unemployment; secondly, the provision of 'adequate and honourable means of maintenance' for those out of work. 29 On the second point, both the Fifth Committee and the Copec commission were adamant that the unemployed worker had a right to financial support and that to offer him 'doles' was an insult. Both believed part II of the 1911 insurance act provided the correct line of approach in that it accepted the principle of collective responsibility; the maintenance of unemployed workers being met out of funds to which workers, employers and the general public made joint contributions. The Fifth Committee suggested that the amount of benefit under the act should be increased, the period of eligibility lengthened, and its scope extended from the building and engineering trades to

all occupations, including those of women. Although reluctant to engage in any wide-ranging discussion of the causes of unemployment, the Archbishops' Committee pointed to certain of its features which could be overcome relatively simply. It singled out casual labour as 'the most mischievous, the most neglected, and the most easily remediable' form of unemployment. The committee claimed that it could be virtually abolished by the establishment of an industrial council in the transport industry, where the worst instances of casual employment occurred, and district councils in each of the main centres of employment. These bodies could regularize employment and earnings in the industry and put an end to 'the degrading system of casual employment'. As a supplementary measure, it recommended a system of allotments (said to be successful in Paris, Antwerp and Hamburg) on which workers could spend spare hours when employed, and more time when other employment was unavailable. This would also have the advantage of providing fresh food for the worker's family.

30. Ibid., pp.83-4; Industry and Property, pp.47-8 and 88-90. The benefit offered under part II of the National Insurance Act was 7 shillings per week for a maximum of fifteen weeks in any twelve month period. Bentley B. Gilbert, British Social Policy 1914-1939, Batsford, London, 1970, pp.52-3, points out that this amounted to only about one third of the average weekly wage of the lowest regularly paid city worker. Only about two and a quarter million in a total male labour force of over ten million were covered, while unskilled workers, agricultural labourers and women were almost entirely excluded. By design, those covered were well organized, did not tend to put their employees on short time during a depression and were believed subject only to reasonable and predictable seasonal economic fluctuations.

31. Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.79-82.
The Archbishops' Committee followed the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law (1909) in believing that cyclical fluctuations and seasonal variations in employment could be offset, at least partially, by intelligent public spending. It pointed out, quite rightly, that state departments and local authorities, as large consumers of goods and services, influenced a wide range of industries and that many projects, such as schools, post offices and repair work could be deferred in times of prosperity and used to counterbalance the declining demand for labour in times of depression.32

Technological unemployment was recognized as a growing problem, the social effects of which should be minimized through careful planning. The committee claimed that 'the path of economic progress ought not to be strewn with innocent victims' and commended the practice, current in some sections of the printing trade, whereby agreements were made between the employers' association and the trade union as to the conditions upon which machinery was to be introduced and the provision to be made for the workers affected. The report asserted that there was a 'strong obligation' on the organizers of industry to ensure, through shortening of hours or rearrangement of work, the minimum displacement of workers through the introduction of machinery.33

32. Ibid., pp.82-3.
33. Ibid., pp.78-9.
The committee paid particular attention to the plight of children and young people working in industry. It expressed strong disapproval of a system which, although legislation had removed its worst abuses, still allowed twelve year olds to receive partial exemption from schooling to work in the mills, and fourteen year olds to work the full legal hours. It quoted a Board of Education report on juvenile education and employment (1917) which indicated that some children were working up to ninety hours a week. The committee's chief objection to this situation was that it condoned the 'sacrifice of human potentialities to the alleged exigencies of industry': children were regarded primarily as wage earners, not as potential parents and citizens. A secondary objection was that it compounded the unemployment problem. Young people were enticed into industry at the age of fourteen, then discarded at eighteen when eligible for an adult's wage. Their education had been cut short, they had received no training which would qualify them for future employment, and they were turned loose on the unskilled labour market to become victims of casual employment or unemployment.

In this context, the report welcomed the provisions of the Fisher education act (1918) which raised the school leaving age to fourteen and required local authorities to provide part-time education, up to the age of eighteen, for those who left school at the legal age. In the long term, the committee recommended the raising of the school leaving age to sixteen, with the provision that children

between that age and eighteen, not engaged in educational occupations, should spend at least half their working time in continued school education.\textsuperscript{35}

The question of the school leaving age remained of concern to Anglicans throughout the inter-war period. The recommendation of the Hadow report (1926) that the age be raised to fifteen received strong support from churchmen on both educational and social grounds. The Council of Christian Ministers' manifesto on 'The Education of the Adolescent', issued in March 1928, gave the report its 'vigorous backing' and urged the government to take immediate steps to put its recommendations into effect.\textsuperscript{36}

The two abortive attempts of the second Labour government to raise the school leaving age were strongly supported by Garbett, Temple and Winnington-Ingram in the House of Lords.\textsuperscript{37} The persistence of juvenile unemployment made the question one of urgency. Lang claimed, in the course of the Lords' debate on the 1934 unemployment bill, that the problem of juvenile unemployment had to be approached from the educational end. He urged the government to raise the school leaving age to fifteen and pointed out that if the continuation schools recommended under the Fisher act had been implemented, the juvenile unemployed

\textsuperscript{35. Ibid., p.87. The part-time education provisions subsequently fell victim to government economy measures.}

\textsuperscript{36. The manifesto was reproduced as appended note B to the 1929 edition of Gore, Christ and Society, pp.183-6.}

\textsuperscript{37. 75 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 1655-60; 79 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 1075-83, 1096-9, 1145-52. The Bishop of Norwich (Bertram Pollock) spoke against raising the school leaving age: 79 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 1131-7.}
could now be attending them. A pamphlet written by Tawney on 'The School Leaving Age and Juvenile Unemployment' claimed that if the age were raised to fifteen, three to four hundred thousand children per annum would be held back from the labour market.

The question of worker participation in the organization and management of industry received considerable attention in Christian social literature. The Fifth Committee expressed the opinion that industrial autocracy should be replaced by 'some form of representative and responsible government' whereby all engaged in industry might exercise 'a genuine and increasing control over the conditions upon which their livelihood depends, and over industrial policy and organisation'. Trade unionism was believed to offer a means of achieving this. But the committee was divided on the question of how far the process of democratization should go. Its report recorded that some members believed individuals should retain ultimate responsibility for decisions on industrial

38. 92 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 830-6. A motion calling on the government to raise the school leaving age was passed in the Church Assembly in 1934, with the support of Lang and Temple. There was, however, strong opposition, led by Lord Hugh Cecil. See Oliver, Church and Social Order, p.165.

39. The contents of this pamphlet, issued under the auspices of the Archbishop of York's committee on unemployment, were reported in The Times, 11 Apr. 1934, p.11.

The measure was eventually enacted by parliament in 1936 but its implementation, due to have taken effect in September 1939, was prevented by the war. The question was not finalized until 1944 when, under the Butler act, the minister was empowered to raise the school leaving age first to fifteen and then to sixteen.

policy and organization, while others insisted that the employer or manager should eventually become merely one worker among many. Lansbury commented later that it had been he and Tawney versus the rest.

Nobody denied capitalism and landlordism were of the devil, but all, except Tawney, jibbed at Socialism. So we compromised...

Tawney was quite clear that if the motive of industry was to be service rather than profit, the control of production must be transferred from property holders or their agents to those engaged in production. But the majority of the committee was content to leave workers in a consultative rather than a responsible role and to curb rather than eliminate private profit. A more radical solution was hardly to be expected from a body whose twenty-seven members included two company directors, two Conservative MPs, four bishops, a canon and a dean.

The committee's compromise policy on worker participation was a system of 'Industrial Parliaments' and 'Workshop Committees' comprising representatives of employers and workers. These bodies would discuss matters affecting the livelihood of workers, such as piece-rates, security of employment and the introduction of machinery; together with those questions affecting the trade which

41. *Christianity and Industrial Problems*, p.89.
44. F.W. Gilbertson and W.L. Hichens.
45. W.C. Bridgeman and Lord Henry Bentinck.
were suitable for common consideration. The criteria of suitability, presumably, were to be determined by management. The proposal owed much to the report of a Ministry of Reconstruction committee, headed by Liberal MP J.H. Whitley. This had suggested, in 1917, a system of national industrial councils, district councils and works committees, comprised of both employer and trade union representatives, to discuss industrial problems and conditions of work. Similarly, the Fifth Committee's idea of a national industrial parliament, representing all parties in industry, bore strong resemblance to the National Industrial Conference, comprising representatives of employers, trade unions and Whitley councils, called by Lloyd George for 27 February 1919. The National Industrial Conference accepted a number of proposals also to be found in the Fifth Report; such as a legal maximum working week of forty-eight hours, organized short time, increased unemployment benefits and the stabilization of employment through regulation of government spending on public works. This indicates that the members of the Fifth Committee were in touch with the moderate reformism in vogue in the reconstruction years. But it is a comment on the academic nature of Anglican interest in this question that when the National Industrial Conference collapsed in 1921, due to trade union frustration with the government's failure to implement its recommendations; and when the Whitley councils began to fade through lack

of official encouragement, the Church was not conspicuous in its protest.

Copec's treatment of worker participation was more adventurous, although ultimately its recommendations were no more radical than those of the Fifth Committee. The Commission on Industry and Property argued that it was only historical development which enabled capital, one of the three partners in industry, to appropriate profit and control business. Logically, there was no reason why management and labour should not hire capital instead. Ethically, this would be far more satisfactory, because while capital was separable from personality, and could rightly be treated as a commodity, labour and management were not. The problem lay not in capital itself, but in the right to its possession, the determination of the return justly belonging to its possessor and the control of industry associated with it. This was almost pure Tawney; and the commission shared Tawney's qualified interest in guild socialist experiments in the building industry. It was nervous about the managerial inexperience of the National Guild of Builders and, like Tawney, believed these experiments were not applicable to all types of industry, but it was attracted by the proposals that labour (including managerial labour) should employ capital at a fixed rate, that the industry should be controlled by the producers, and that any 'profit' should be ploughed back into the industry.

47. Mowat, *Britain Between the Wars*, pp.36-7.
A more concrete expression of these principles was found in the Harty/Valder scheme in New Zealand, commended by some Anglicans as a system of profit sharing which also gave workers the status of partners in management. The scheme envisaged two classes of shares: capital shares, which entitled holders to a fixed rate of remuneration; and labour shares, held by all workers, including top managerial staff, in proportion to the degree of service rendered. Labour shares had no nominal value, but allowed the holder to attend and vote at meetings of shareholders and to share in the profits of the company, or its assets if wound up. After payments for wages, materials, hire of capital and other costs of production, any surplus profit would be distributed amongst holders of labour shares in accordance with the number of shares held. Legislation had been passed in New Zealand to allow the issue of labour shares, thus amending the situation in which profits and management had been the preserve of those who subscribed capital.

This was too heady for the Fifth Committee, which approved only token participation of workers in management and did not even contemplate profit sharing. Copec flirted with the idea that profits and management should belong to labour rather than capital, but was not prepared to commit

49. The New Zealand Companies Empowering Act of 1924.
50. For Anglican interest in this scheme see Bull, Economics of the Kingdom of God, pp.149-58; Gore, Christ and Society, pp.137-8; Reckitt, Faith and Society, pp.416-31; Guardian leaders of 4 Nov. 1932, p.854 and 24 Mar. 1933, p.198.
itself to any scheme embodying the principle. Like the Fifth Committee, it opted for leaving the organization of industry relatively unchanged and moralizing its operation. Although both reports claimed to challenge the whole basis of the industrial structure, they in fact accepted the basic capitalist framework and settled for reconciling its worst features with Christian principles.

3. The Christian View of Wealth and Property

The central concept in Anglican treatment of the question of ownership was Tawney's functional view of society, according to which the true principles of property holding were use and responsibility, not accumulation, power or right. Tawney argued that the development of the modern social system, in which possession of property endowed some men with power over others, was due to the divorce between property or wealth and function. In pre-industrial society, ownership, or at least secure occupation, of land and tools had been 'a condition precedent to effective work in the field or in the workshop.' Private property was defended as 'indispensable to the performance of the active function of providing food and clothing'. In such a situation, property was not a burden on society, but a condition of its health and efficiency. In modern industrial society, property had become concentrated in relatively few hands, and ownership had become passive rather than active. It was, Tawney argued, no longer
a means of work but an instrument for the acquisition of gain or the exercise of power, ... there is no guarantee that gain bears any relation to service, or power to responsibility.

Property which could be regarded as a condition of the performance of function, such as the craftsman's tools or the peasant's holding, formed an insignificant proportion of contemporary property rights. The danger to society implicit in such a predominance of property for acquisition, exploitation or power was not only that it turned the majority of mankind into a proletariat, but that it discouraged creative work. 51

A similar view was propounded by Liberal philosopher L.T. Hobhouse. In his contribution to a volume edited by Gore, on the duties and rights of property, Hobhouse argued that in a developed society, a man's property was rarely merely the basis of his labour. More often, it was the means whereby he could control another man, and make it the basis of his labour. With the exception of personal belongings such as furniture and clothing, modern economic conditions had virtually abolished property for use. Property in the means of production no longer existed for the great majority of people and had been replaced by the accumulation in a few hands of vast masses of property for power. With the process of accumulation had come the divorce between the possession of capital

51. Tawney, *Acquisitive Society*, pp.54-64.
and the conduct of business. This analysis appealed to Christian social thinkers, not least because it reinforced the belief that economic and social organization had deteriorated since the medieval period. Gore believed that Hobhouse had made 'a most fruitful distinction' and that modern civilization was open to 'the most serious indictment' on the grounds that 'vast masses of men and women' had no 'adequate measure of property for use' and had become 'hands' for other men to use. Reckitt, quoting directly from Tawney, claimed that neglect of the true purpose of industry had resulted in the use of wealth for power and exploitation, and in the degradation of the worker.

It was believed that the remedy for this situation was to be found in more equal dispersion of property holding which would allow a greater number of people to share its benefits. The Fifth Report pointed out that there was little emphasis in the New Testament on 'the ascetic merits of poverty'. Material possessions, providing they served rather than dominated man, made a legitimate and necessary contribution to human welfare.


This biblical view of property was reinforced by the Aristotelian idea that a limited amount of property was instrumental to the best and highest life. The Aristotelian principle enjoyed a revival amongst philosophers and social Christians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. T.H. Green and the British Idealists learned from Hegel a respect for property as the expression of personality. For Christians who emphasized the equal and infinite value of each child of God, the concept had obvious appeal. Hastings Rashdall, Anglican philosopher and priest, argued in his contribution to Gore's *Property*, that the institution of private property was fundamental to character formation:

Some liberty of action, some form of arranging one's own life in advance, some freedom of choice, and some certainty that a man will experience the results of his choice, are essential to the development of character; and this there cannot be unless there is some permanent control over material things.  

Temple outlined the connection between personality and property in his address to the Anglo-Catholic Summer School in 1927. He argued that the essence of personality was purpose: man found the meaning of life in the power to make the future different from, and better than, the past. He had developed personality, in part, by being a tool-using animal; a tool was part of his environment which man used as an extension of his organism. Tools, and the things man made with them, were the first kinds

of property; 'a man's fulfilment of his personality'. The Christian hope must be 'for every man a sufficient amount of property to sustain life while he snaps his fingers at the universe'. Property for use could form the basis of a functional society which fostered the growth of personality.

This ideal was obviously not achieved in British society, which divorced wealth from function and allied property to power. As the Copec commission put it, the contemporary system of wealth accumulation and property holding bore no relation to 'relative excellence, productive capacity or worth to the nation', but gave some members of the community 'artificial power' over others. Defended by many as a system of liberty, the social order was in fact destructive of the liberty and personality of a majority of the population. What its defenders meant by liberty was 'really power, the power of some over others, of the few over the many'. As Scott Holland pointed out, there was a contradiction implicit in a social order which connected property ownership with solid citizenship yet denied its virtues to a majority of its citizens. Individualism, he suggested, found 'its worst opportunity in an individualistic society'. If every man was to have the opportunity

59. Ibid., pp.182-3.
to fully develop his personality, accumulations of property for power must be redistributed so as to allow the majority of the population a small amount of property for use.\textsuperscript{60}

The suggestion of property redistribution raised the question of the nature of property rights: whether these were sacred, absolute and inviolable, or whether the State could legitimately appropriate property and distribute it to others. The general conclusion of Christian social thinkers was that on legal, philosophical and Christian grounds, the rights of property were relative to the common good: property holders had no absolute right against the claims of the community.

The legal argument was the simplest. Professor W.M. Geldart showed, in his contribution to Gore's volume, that in English law, private property was not based on natural rights. Like all other legal rights, it was subject to the sovereignty of parliament. The right of property did, however, occupy a somewhat privileged position in relation to others. The owner had an absolute power of exclusion, yet only 'narrowly limited' duties towards neighbours and the public.\textsuperscript{61} Copec's Commission

\textsuperscript{60} Henry Scott Holland, 'Property and Personality', in \textit{Property}, pp. 192-201. The quotation is from p.195.

\textsuperscript{61} W.M. Geldart, 'Some Aspects of the Law of Property in England', in \textit{ibid.}, pp.215-8 and 234-5. Geldart (1870-1922) was, from 1909, Vinerian Professor of English Law and Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.
on Industry and Property also pointed out that the rights of property were limited by law. There was no such thing as an unlimited legal right of either ownership or use. Legally, the community always retained the right to take that part of man's private property required for public needs (this was the rationale of taxation) and to prohibit any use of property believed prejudicial to the welfare of the community.\textsuperscript{62}

The general tenor of the philosophical arguments was that the justification of property must depend not on any a priori principle, but on its social effects. Arguments from a priori principle were based on the Lockian theory of natural rights. Locke had contended that private property depended not on laws made by the sovereign, but on the laws of nature: every man was entitled to the fruits of his own labour and to that which he mixed with his labour. This theory was rejected by social Christians on three grounds: inconsistency, injustice and inapplicability to a sophisticated modern economy. Rashdall pointed out that Locke's theory was inherently contradictory; private appropriation of land and capital denied to others the fruits of their labour. The logical conclusion of the Lockian theory, he claimed, was the Marxian tenet that the worker had the right to the whole produce of his labour, but this right was defeated by any private appropriation of the means of production. Secondly, there was a twofold injustice

inherent in the theory: much private property, especially land, could not be described as created by those who owned it; and insofar as wealth was created out of existing resources, private ownership denied equality of opportunity. This injustice was compounded by the tendency of capital to accumulate at an accelerated rate, causing the disparity between owners and non-owners to become progressively greater. Finally, in a sophisticated economy where the creation of wealth was the result of social co-operation, it was impossible to tell how much of the finished product was due to the labour of each individual. The Copec commission pointed out that much wealth privately appropriated was, in fact, socially created. The value of land was frequently due to the growth of towns or the discovery of minerals; and the source of industrial profit earned by shareholders was obviously social in that opportunities to secure points of vantage in business were created by social developments. To the extent that skill was involved in exploiting socially created opportunities, the reward should go to management rather than to capital.

Private property could be justified only insofar as it was beneficial to society as a whole. It survived only because it was secured by the community and its continuance must depend on society's convenience. The State existed to promote the welfare of its members, therefore the justification of private property must lie in its ability to conform to that purpose. Private
ownership, like personality, which it was believed to promote, was an individual phenomenon which could only exist through society.63

These philosophical arguments were supplemented by Christian ones. Christians had always assumed that property was a gift of God, to be held in trust for him, and that property rights were not absolute, but relative to God's purpose and contingent upon fulfilment of the duties of stewardship. The early Christian idea of property had assumed certain rights of private ownership, but these had always been conditioned by the claims of the brotherhood; the maintenance of the needy being regarded as a duty inseparable from the right of ownership. Although frequently contradicted in practice, this was the conception of property portrayed in the Old and New Testaments and in the writings of the early Fathers.

The later Fathers and the medieval writers, influenced by secular thinkers like Seneca and Cicero as well as by New Testament ideas, had accepted private property as a convention necessitated by man's greed. But acceptance of the legitimacy of private rights did not imply a denial of the claims of the needy on what had originally been given to the human race in common. Charity was seen as an act of justice, not of mercy.

The relativity of private property rights had been confirmed by the insistence of the great Christian philosophers, Augustine and Aquinas, that property was a creation of the State and not natural to man. Aquinas had argued that as a right to acquire and distribute, property was legitimate, but he had refused to recognize the right of any man to hold for himself more property than he needed. Theories about the absolute character of private property rights had developed since the collapse of the authority of the medieval Church and were contrary to Christian tradition.  

Although sharply critical of contemporary capitalist society, Christian social thinkers showed little inclination to condemn capitalism out of hand or to commit themselves to an alternative economic system. With the exception of the Anglo-Catholic group, which toyed with both guild socialism and distributism 65, they were deliberately vague about the type of property to which their discussions were applicable or the forms of ownership which they would endorse. It was frequently pointed out that the Aristotelian view of property did not imply any particular form of property holding and that the same system would not be suitable in every time and place. Rashdall's perorations on this subject were typical:

65. See below, chap.VII.
It is extremely important to realize that the question is not as to the rival claims of two sharply opposed, cut and dried systems - one a system of private Capitalism and the other a system called Socialism. Private property has meant an immense number of different things at different times and places. Everywhere there has been some subordination of private property to the authority of the State in the interests of general welfare; and everywhere some collective ownership has subsisted side by side with private ownership.... the practical question is, 'By what system will men be most stimulated to make a maximum contribution to the general welfare, and what system will lead to the widest possible diffusion of the highest kind of life?'

In effect, the view of wealth and property expressed in Christian social writing at this time was a Christianized version of new liberalism. Its emphases on the importance of personal development and responsibility, the possibility of a middle way between individualism and collectivism, the inherently social nature of property and the irresponsible character of many current forms of property holding all belonged to the political creed of pre-war liberalism.

It was in keeping with this general outlook that the only two concrete proposals for reform, profit limitation and strict supervision of inheritance, were means of curbing excess wealth without necessitating radical changes in the system of ownership. They were


67. Cf. e.g. the essays of Hobhouse, Rashdall and Lindsay in Property (pp.3-33, 37-68 and 72-86) with extracts from the speeches and writing of T.H. Green, J.A. Hobson, Winston Churchill, Lloyd George and Hobhouse in Alan Bullock and Maurice Shock (eds.), The Liberal Tradition from Fox to Keynes, A. & C. Black, London, 1966, pp.180-3, 190-2, 209-13, 220-3 and 227-30.
methods of reform which appealed to the principle implicit in Lloyd George's 1909 budget; that society had the right to appropriate that portion of wealth in private hands necessary for the common welfare.

The Fifth Committee declared that there was 'no moral justification' for profits which exceeded the amount necessary to pay adequate salaries to management, a fair rate of interest on capital invested and to maintain reserves for the development of industry. It suggested that information about the profits of companies should be publicized and perhaps made subject to a public audit. Surplus profits should be taxed.\textsuperscript{68} Copec's remedy for the accumulation of socially unjustifiable wealth was strict State control of inheritance: persons already in possession of sufficient income should be disqualified from inheriting more, or at least limited as to amount; no one should be entitled to bequests over a certain amount; distant and obscure claims to inheritance should be disallowed; and the residue of estates after legitimate claims had been met should be used to redress general inequalities.\textsuperscript{69}

Depending on the definitions given to a 'fair rate of interest' and 'sufficient income', these suggestions might, if implemented, have helped to redress the gross inequalities of a country in which two thirds of the wealth

\textsuperscript{68} Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.93-6.
\textsuperscript{69} Industry and Property, pp.157-61.
was owned by two or three per cent of the population. But these proposals left the ultimate control of industry in the hands of property owners or their agents, and industry organized to produce a profit. The worker remained dependent on management for his wage and on the State for additional benefits. At best, the proposals of the Archbishops' Committee and Copec amounted to moralized capitalism. Limitation of profits and inheritance, payment of a living wage, and a responsible attitude towards unemployment would have removed the most glaring evils of a free enterprise economy. At worst, the remedies offered were a case of what Demant called the attempt to moralize a contradiction. The Christian theory of industry and property, as outlined by the Fifth Committee and Copec, pointed to the need for radical changes in industry and society: personality, fellowship and co-operation were denied by a system which put profit before social function. Yet, ultimately, the profit motive remained sacrosanct; and the alliance between wealth and power unchallenged. To question the right of wealth to organize industry in its own interests would have required the bridging of an ideological divide too wide for most members of the Fifth Committee and Copec.

70. Arthur Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War: War, Peace and Social Change 1900-1967*, Penguin, 1970, p.169. Marwick claims that in 1929, two thirds of the wealth was owned by two and a half per cent of the population.

4. An Indifferent Performance

The immediate post-war years provided a major opportunity for the Church to press for the acceptance of Christian principles as the basis for the reconstruction of society. The time was ripe for change and it was widely expected that the reorganization of key industries such as coal, electricity and the railways would proceed at the end of the war. In the case of coal, this was specifically recommended by the Sankey commission in 1919 and again by the Samuel commission in 1926. The Church had an obvious chance to put forward the principles of the Fifth Report as guidelines for the reconstruction of industry.

There was, after all, a broad area of agreement between secular and Christian reformism. Lloyd George declared that the nation should provide a land fit for heroes; Christian social critics argued for a social order worthy of God's children. The Fifth Report reflected the promise of the peace: it was a Christian version of the reconstruction hopes of 1918, a charter for moderate social change. Well researched and thoroughly documented, it provided an effective link between principle and detail, translating the principles of brotherhood, fellowship, co-operation and personality into what its chairman called *media axiomata*72, such as the living wage,

reasonable hours, decent housing and the right of workers to participate in some aspects of management. Its principal recommendations took account of existing institutions and current developments such as Trade Boards and Whitley councils, and in this sense represented a realistic policy.

Yet little was achieved. On questions such as housing, where the Church as landlord had a prime opportunity to institute reform, her record was indifferent. On issues of wages and the reorganization of industry there were several occasions on which a clear stand could have been made for the principles of the Fifth Report. As it was, Lloyd George's coalition succeeded, between 1918 and 1922, in winding down the centralized economy of the war years without conceding anything to labour or the advocates of reconstruction. In allowing this to happen, the Christian social movement missed its first, and probably its best, chance to stimulate the re-ordering of society on more Christian lines.

Throughout the period of the coalition, two of the main contentions of the Fifth Report, that minimum standards of living and work should be guaranteed for all and that industry should be restructured, were consistently challenged by government and employers. During the immediate post-war years, wages continually lagged behind prices and real wages were frequently threatened with reduction, most noticeably in the coal

73. Mowat, Britain Between the Wars, pp.27-8 and 125.
and railway industries. The *Economist* estimated that, by 1922, the working man had lost three-quarters of his wartime wage increases. Yet in 1921, the government abandoned Agricultural Wages Boards, together with minimum wages for farm labourers and guaranteed prices for farmers. In 1922, Trade Boards, which had power to fix wages in sweated industries, were attacked by the Association of British Chambers of Commerce and in the press. As a result of this, they were investigated by a committee under Lord Cave which recommended that they be continued, but with limited powers. No new Boards were created. Meanwhile, the Excess Profits Duty, introduced during the war, was abandoned and employers made it clear that wages, not profits, would bear the brunt of the declining export market. In February 1922 the executive of the Federation of British Industries (FBI) accepted the report of a sub-committee on 'The Earnings of Labour and Costs of Production'. This unequivocally challenged the principle of the living wage - that 'the first charge upon any industry must be the proper maintenance of the labourer'. The report argued that the ultimate test of wage levels, even if the cost of living was rising, must be what industry could bear. As price reductions were deemed necessary for a revival of business, and as the greatest

77. Conference of Bishops, 1920, pp.70-1.
element in production costs was wages, there must be a 'substantial reduction' in wages. This could be achieved either by reducing wage rates or by workers producing a higher output, if necessary through longer hours. In case workers felt they were the only ones making a sacrifice, the report pointed out that employers and share-holders had suffered a reduction in dividends. 78

Hopes for the reconstruction of industry fared no better. The Whitley councils, welcomed by the Fifth Report as a means of enabling workers to participate in the management of industry, were initially encouraged by the government, and by 1920, fifty-six had been established. But they never extended to the staple industries and, like the National Industrial Conference summoned for February 1919, many of them languished for want of government support. 79 That the government intended to opt out of the vital question of restructuring the staple industries became painfully obvious when it side-stepped the reports of the Sankey commission, declared against the nationalization of the coal industry in August 1919 and decontrolled both the mines and the railways in 1921.

These rejections of the principles and recommendations of the Fifth Report and the Lambeth conference of bishops were allowed to pass without effective protest from the Church. For the most part, expressions of

79. Mowat, Britain Between the Wars, pp.36-7.
opinion on the current situation were confined to Convocation, the deliberations of which, as its members admitted, were heeded by a very small proportion of the population. Both Convocations passed resolutions during the industrial unrest of 1919 and 1921 but, with one exception, these were platitudinous rather than forthright and implied no criticism of the government or employers. The speeches made in support of the resolutions were often more spirited. In February 1919 Kempthorne, Gore and Woods were critical of the government's 'hand-to-mouth' industrial policy; and of its tardiness in implementing the Whitley report and in reconstructing industry. Woods stated bluntly that 'the Government must formulate its policy and give tangible evidence that its promises of producing a new Britain were going to be carried into effect'. Most speakers carefully avoided making judgements on the current coal dispute, with the exception of Garbett, who insisted that 'it was the duty of the Church to sympathize with the just and rightful demands of the men, and ... to proclaim those Christian principles which bore upon the situation'.

80. CCC, upper house, 1 May 1918, p.316; 27 Apr. 1921, p.256.
81. Ibid., upper house, 13 Feb. 1919, p.160; lower house, 14 Feb. 1919, p.239; upper house, 28 Apr. 1921, p.296; YJC, lower house, 12 Feb. 1919, p.50; upper house, 7 May 1919, p.178; upper house, 27 Apr. 1921, p.151. The exceptional resolution was that passed by the upper house of Canterbury on 28 Apr. 1921: this not only affirmed the principle of the living wage and the need for a fundamental change in the spirit and working of economic life, but recognized 'as the root of the present trouble the neglect to prepare for the critical moment of Decontrol by any constructive changes in the organisation of the industry'.
83. Ibid., p.141.
84. Ibid., lower house, 14 Feb. 1919, p.234.
In April 1921, Kempthorne, Woods and Talbot criticized the government for failing to implement the findings of the majority of the Sankey commission and for decontrolling the mines before adequate preparation had been made for reorganization of the industry. With Garbett, Furse, Wakefield, Temple and Lang, they pointed out the threat to the miners' living standards involved in the current dispute. 85 Woods declared that the miners and railwaymen had every right to be impatient when they were asked to accept a return to the status quo instead of the 'new Britain' and the reorganization of industry they had been promised. 86 Garbett described the motion before the house as 'excessively impartial', for he was 'frankly increasingly in sympathy with the miners'. 87

Convocation debates on the industrial situation were initiated by a few clergy who believed it important to relate the principles of the Fifth Report and the Lambeth conference to the current situation. There were only six or seven who were openly sympathetic with labour demands and critical of the government. Their success in getting a number of resolutions passed was due as much to the reluctance of the house to defeat this type of motion once it had been moved (for fear of the bad impression this would create), as to any conviction that

86. *CCC*, upper house, 27 Apr. 1921, p.250.
the body representative of the Anglican clergy should have something decisive to say about contemporary industrial problems. 88

Many speakers were uneasy about Convocation debating economic questions. Their main worry was that they would be represented as supporting one particular side (the non-conservative) in an industrial or political dispute. 89

In April 1921 their worst fears were realized when the press coverage of the debate in the upper house of Canterbury created the impression that the bishops were on the miners' side in the current coal dispute. An editorial in the Manchester Guardian included the following passage:

Episcopal opinion asserted itself strongly in favour of a levelling or pooling scheme for the mines, and while signs of grace in mineowner and Government were welcomed, there was a strong and decisive insistence on the equity of the men's demand.... one can feel the tug of working-class opinion in this transition from the general to the detailed discussion. Public opinion is forcing the pace for ecclesiastical opinion. 90

88. See e.g. ibid., 13 Feb. 1919, pp.157-9 and 7 July 1921, pp.129-33. Almost as many spoke against these 'economic' resolutions as for them.

89. See e.g. ibid., lower house, 1 May 1918, pp.353-6; upper house, 13 Feb. 1919, pp.147-53, 27 Apr. 1921, pp.259-60 and 7 July 1921, pp.124-7 and 131-2; YJC, upper house, 27 Apr. 1921, pp.154-6.

This, of course, was an inaccurate generalization based on the views expressed by a small minority of bishops. Lloyd George, however, was happy to take it at its face value and did not miss the opportunity to score a point. Claiming that an 'important conclave of very highly-placed divines' had 'expressed an opinion on the best method of settling the strike' (which they had not), he declared that it was 'not a question which they were in the least competent to discuss'.

All this publicity had a negative effect on Convocation. Woods' motion on agricultural wages in July, prompted by the jettisoning of the Agricultural Wages Boards, had a very cool reception. As the Bishop of Lincoln (W.S. Swayne) commented, there was a marked contrast between the gaiety with which that House had voted only a few weeks ago for a much more contentious Resolution on the subject of the miners' strike ...[and] the extremely delicate and gingerly way in which the House was now handling a much less debatable and difficult Resolution.

Expressed opposition to the discussion of economic questions in Convocation resulted in Woods withdrawing his motion and the disappearance of these issues from Convocation agenda until 1933.

Outside Convocation, there were only isolated attempts to make the Church's voice heard. Woods kept up a lonely vigil, using the occasion of each major industrial dispute to demonstrate publicly his sympathy and respect for the labour movement and its demands, and

92. *CCC*, upper house, 7 July 1921, p.136.
93. See *ibid.*, pp.117-41 for the debate on the motion.
his disgust at the 'crass selfishness' of some employers. 94 Archbishop Davidson entered the fray more cautiously, endeavouring twice to defuse the industrial tension by privately offering his services as a mediator. During the 1919 railway strike his initiative was cautiously welcomed by Thomas 95, but rejected by Lloyd George as premature: the prime minister insisted that the railwaymen must be persuaded of the 'folly' of their action. Davidson made a second overture to Thomas a few days later (October 4) but a settlement was reached on October 5 without his help. 96 When the threat of a general strike became apparent during the coal dispute of 1921, Davidson was again prepared to mediate. This time he even tried, with excruciating politeness, to exert pressure on Lloyd George to re-open negotiations. He suggested that the prime minister

should not allow technicalities of procedure and of logical fairness to stand in the way of a straight, open, unconditional discussion with those whose temper or whose suspicion seems sometimes to get the better of their patriotism and their commonsense.

95. J.H. Thomas, General Secretary, National Union of Railwaymen.
Again his overtures were rejected. 97

After the general strike had been averted, the coal dispute continued. Davidson, under pressure to break the silence of the Churches during the crisis 98, issued a press release affirming the principle of the living wage. The statement was guarded: it reiterated the Lambeth declaration that a living wage should be the first charge upon industry, but also quoted Lambeth on the Church's lack of authority on 'the technical side of economics'. It insisted that in the current dispute the Church was 'not called upon to express an opinion on matters of adjustment between district and district, or on the special questions connected with National Control'. 99 Davidson was determined not to be drawn into the dispute itself. He rejected a plea from the South Wales Miners' Federation 'to make a public pronouncement on the injustice of... [the] terms' offered in their local collieries. 100 In his reply he made it clear that he would not commit himself to stating what level of wages was reasonable

97. Davidson to Evan Williams, Frank Hodges and J.H. Thomas, 9 Apr. 1921; Davidson to Lloyd George, 9 Apr. 1921; J.T. Davies (for Lloyd George) to Davidson, 9 Apr. 1921; Evan Williams to Davidson, 9 Apr. 1921; Frank Hodges to Davidson, 12 Apr. 1921; Davidson Papers, Canterbury Official Papers, 1921 Coal Dispute.

98. A.E. Garvie to Davidson, 15 Apr. 1921; 'The Church and the Industrial Controversy', 16 Apr. 1921 (copy of Davidson's press release), Davidson Papers, 1921 Coal Dispute.


100. Gwilym Richards (chairman) and Thos. W. Morgan (secretary) of the South Wales Miners' Federation to Davidson, 16 Apr. 1921, Davidson Papers, 1921 Coal Dispute.
by Christian standards.

Everything depends upon the conditions and the possibilities. I have tried myself to say emphatically that I think a living wage ought to be interpreted as meaning a wage upon which a man can live a wholesome Christian life with his family. But all these phrases are of necessity liable to differences of interpretation in degree, and in my view the Church as such goes outside its proper province when it tries to lay down economic details of a statistical sort in a controversy of this kind. 101

Distressed at the willingness of some bishops to discuss economic questions 102, Davidson firmly drew the line at the level of moral principle. Needless to say, his theoretical pronouncement was ignored and the miners were eventually defeated in July.

If 'official' defence of the principle of the living wage was unsatisfactorily abstract in 1919 and 1921, it was non-existent in 1922. When the FBI declared that the ultimate criterion of wage levels must be, not the cost of living, but the capacity of industry to pay, and that in the current economic climate wage reductions were essential, only the CSL protested. It called on the bishops to inform the leaders of the Federation of British Industries that, since on their own showing their system cannot conform to what the Church has laid down as a fundamental Christian principle, the onus lies on them to find some radically new method of carrying on industry and commerce such as shall be compatible with Christian morality. If the principle enunciated by various Church authorities

101. Davidson to Gwilym Richards, 2 May 1921, Davidson Papers, 1921 Coal Dispute.
102. Davidson expressed this opinion with reference to the Convocation debate on the coal crisis. See W.C. Bridgeman to Davidson, 30 Apr. 1921 and Davidson to W.C. Bridgeman, 2 May 1921, Davidson Papers, 1921 Coal Dispute.
was a Christian one in the first instance, it cannot become less so when it is found to involve profounder changes than some of its propounders perhaps realized.103

This declaration was consistent with the Fifth Committee's dictum that Christian principles must be applied to social life because they were right and that 'an industry which ...[could] only be carried on by methods which degrade[d] human beings ought not to be carried on at all'.104 Given that real wages had, by 1922, fallen to a point which threatened living standards, while ordinary dividends were still averaging 8.4%105, a forthright statement from the Church would have been timely. But when it came to the point, the hierarchy balked at any direct confrontation with the captains of industry.

In a letter to The Times, in July 1921, after the defeat of the miners, Talbot looked back wistfully at the lost opportunities of the years since the war. What had been expected, he wrote, was not a Utopia, but 'definite and far reaching improvement': a limit to the fall of wages, a solution to the unemployment problem, better conditions of housing and education and an advancement of the status of labour in industry.

Can it be denied that these were reasonable hopes? Can it be doubted that we have seen them dwindle, or at least have watched with increasing anxiety for their fulfilment? Housing, education, unemployment, the struggle for wages - are they not, so many heads or topics of discouragement?106

103. Quoted in Reckitt, Faith and Society, p.122.
106. Bishop of Winchester, letter to The Times, 29 July 1921, p.6.
An accurate description; but what Talbot did not point out was that the failure was partly the Church's. During the years to which Talbot referred the Church had a unique opportunity to press for social change in accordance with Christian principles. The Fifth Report had called for fundamental reforms in the organization of industry. With key industries under government control at the end of the war, reconstruction should have been possible. There were specific recommendations such as the Whitley and Sankey reports which Lloyd George's government could have been pressed to implement. It is arguable that a strong lead from the Anglican hierarchy might have rallied moderate opinion and forced the coalition to deal more imaginatively with the problems of industry. \[107\]

The Christian social movement lacked a strategy for relating its main principles to current problems. Instead of encouraging public debate on the applicability of Christian social principles to particular issues, the leaders of the movement concentrated on attempting to popularize the conclusions of the Fifth Report within the Church. The key propositions of the report were aired frequently in the upper house of Canterbury Convocation and by individual bishops on various

\[107\] The *Manchester Guardian* certainly assigned an important role to 'ecclesiastical opinion' in mobilizing broader 'public opinion' and believed that Lloyd George could only operate within its parameters. See editorial, 'Aspects of Public Opinion', 29 Apr. 1921, p.6.
occasions\textsuperscript{108}, but they were rarely heard in the House of Lords\textsuperscript{109} or made the basis of a specific campaign for social change.

It needed someone to organize 'middle opinion'\textsuperscript{110} behind a policy of social justice and economic reconstruction. Shown to be consistent with both Christian principles and expert economic opinion, such a policy might conceivably have aroused sufficient support to pressure the government into substantial reform. This 'non-political' co-operation between Christians and non-Christians did not eventuate until the 1930s when eminent clerics and laymen were prominent in connection with Political and Economic Planning (PEP) and the Next Five Years Group. It was not exploited as a technique for Christian social action until Temple, and later Oldham, began to gather together groups of Christians and secular experts to consider specific social issues.\textsuperscript{111} Yet the potential for such

\textsuperscript{108} See e.g. Bishop of Birmingham, letters to The Times, 26 Feb. 1919, p.12 and 15 Oct. 1919, p.8; Bishop of Lichfield, address to a conference of representatives of labour and the Churches, \textit{ibid.}, 28 Apr. 1919, p.9; report of Church Congress, 1921, \textit{ibid.}, 13 Oct. 1921, p.5.

\textsuperscript{109} With the exception of housing, education and juvenile unemployment.

\textsuperscript{110} This is Arthur Marwick's term. See his 'Middle Opinion in the Thirties: Planning, Progress and Political "Agreement"', \textit{English Historical Review}, vol.LXXIX, no.CCCXI, Apr. 1964 and \textit{Britain in the Century of Total War}, p.242 ff.

\textsuperscript{111} The earliest example of this was a committee formed by Temple, in 1934, including Bell, Oldham, Walter Moberly, Thomas Jones and A.D. Lindsay. With money from the Pilgrim Trust, the committee employed a team of experts, including A.D.K. Owen from PEP, to investigate certain aspects of the unemployment problem. This resulted in the publication of \textit{Men Without Work: A Report made to the Pilgrim Trust}, Cambridge University Press, 1938. See below, chap.VII, part 2. Apart from this, Temple and about twenty other churchmen were signatories to \textit{The Next Five Years: An Essay in Political Agreement}, Macmillan, London, 1935.
collaboration was there much earlier. The Fifth Committee itself was something of an exercise in the 'agreement' of 'middle opinion' and its members had valuable connections with business, labour, politics and the non-political expertise of the educated middle class. Apart from the natural connections of the bishops with the governing classes, Henry Bentinck and W.C. Bridgeman were Conservative MPs, F.W. Gilbertson and W.L. Hichens\textsuperscript{112} were company directors, Fred Hughes and George Lansbury held positions in the organized Labour movement, and Tawney, a member of the Sankey commission, had a foot in labour, governmental, and academic circles.

Perhaps the most effective tactic would have been to exploit the growing dissatisfaction of Nonconformity with Lloyd Georgian Liberalism\textsuperscript{113} and to develop joint initiatives with Free Church leaders. This combined approach, when used later during the general strike of 1926, was at least successful in making Baldwin's government and the public aware of the Churches' viewpoint. There were signs that the ICF appreciated the potential of this sort of strategy. During the disputes in the coal industry

\textsuperscript{112} Hichens, who had been a member of the royal commission on decentralization in 1907, chairman of a board of enquiry into the Southern Rhodesian public service in 1909, and chairman of the Central Council of the Association of Controlled Firms which co-ordinated munitions production during the first world war, was in fact involved, with Thomas Jones, Josiah Stamp and others, in an attempt to facilitate this type of non-political agreement in the 1930s. See Marwick, \textit{Britain in the Century of Total War}, p.244.

(1921), the engineering and shipbuilding trade (1922),
and the tramways (1924), manifestos affirming the
principles of the living wage and the right of workers
to participate in the management of industry were issued
by the ICF and representatives of other denominations.114
In October 1923, the ICF organized a meeting of representa­
tives of all denominations at Church House, Westminster,
to discuss 'Unemployment as a Challenge to the Churches'.
The meeting accepted the Fellowship's view that the
government should be pressed to hold an enquiry into the
fundamental causes of unemployment and decided to ask
the prime minister to receive a deputation to this end.115

Immediate implementation of this decision was
prevented by the uncertainty of the political situation:
Baldwin's recently formed Conservative government decided
to go to the polls in December, and the ambiguity of the
election results was not resolved until he was defeated
in parliament on 21 January 1924. Meanwhile, the executive
committee of the October conference forwarded a copy of
its findings to all members of parliament and to the press.
The memorandum embodied several propositions which had been
put forward by the Fifth Committee. The key proposals were:
that, as a means of alleviating adolescent unemployment,
steps be taken to provide and staff the continuation

114. ICF executive minutes, 13 May 1921, 10 Mar. 1922
and 7 Apr. 1922; The Times, 15 Mar. 1922, p.14; Manchester
115. ICF executive minutes, 8 June and 13 July 1923;
Torch, Nov. 1923, p.(vii); The Times, 5 Oct. 1923, p.7.
schools contemplated under the Fisher act; that the existing system of maintaining the unemployed be unified and regularized; that maintenance of the unemployed be dissociated from social stigma; that a bold policy of house building be implemented as a means of alleviating unemployment; that periods of unemployment being predictable, the government should have ready complete schemes of relief works and maintenance so as to obviate delays; and that an immediate and authoritative enquiry be instituted into the working of the present system of industry and finance, with a view to discovering the root causes of unemployment.  

At the end of February, J.R. Clynes received a deputation on behalf of the Labour government. He expressed sympathy with some of the proposals and claimed that the government's housing plans would provide wider opportunities for employment. Labour's brief term did provide some relief: the Wheatley act of 1924 resulted in a considerable expansion of municipal house-building and Snowden's budget in July allocated £28 million for public works. Unemployment benefits were increased and 'uncovenanted' benefits (those not covered by

117. J.R. Clynes was Lord Privy Seal in the MacDonald government. The deputation, headed by Kempthorne, and Nonconformists A.E. Garvie and Scott Lidgett, included Isaac Foot (Liberal MP), Sir Henry Bentinck (Conservative MP), and Temple. *The Times*, 26 Feb. 1924, p.15.
insurance) were made a statutory right. In spite of intimations to the contrary from Clynes, nothing came of the deputation's key proposal: for an enquiry into finance and industry. This did not eventuate until Labour's second term of office in 1929. But at least it could be said that some Christians were exerting pressure in the political arena, where crucial decisions were made, and that they were prepared to take a stand in support of professed principles. With the notable exception of those who were outspoken during the 1926 general strike, the same could not be said of the Anglican hierarchy.

It was not just that the official Church was unprepared to exert political pressure. Its record on the question of housing suggests a deeper reluctance to take the hard decisions required to implement Christian social principles. There were, of course, many examples of Christian concern about the housing problem. It was the subject of numerous articles in the Church Times and the Guardian and debates in diocesan conferences, Convocation and the Church Assembly. It was a subject on which bishops were prepared to speak in the House of Lords, and Garbett especially made it his business to be well informed on the dimensions of the problem and

119. Mowat, Britain Between the Wars, pp.175-6.
possibilities for alleviating it. There was considerable support for programmes of slum abolition and housing renewal and some of the best known housing crusades were conducted by Anglican priests such as Basil Jellico in Somers Town and Charles Jenkinson in Leeds. Jellico's St. Pancras Housing Improvement Society, formed in 1925, was reputed to have rehoused three thousand people by 1933.

Despite the level of expressed concern about the housing problem, it was the social question on which the Church's own record was most vulnerable. A report to Convocation, in 1909, on the moral witness of the Church had laid it down that

as it is required of employers that the first charge upon industry should be a living wage for the workpeople, so it should be required of landlords that they should provide a 'living' house, and of manufacturers that they use 'living' workrooms, or, if land is let for building, that


122. For more detailed accounts of the Church's achievements in the field of housing see Lloyd, Church of England, chap. 15; Jones, 'Social Concern in the Church of England', p.306 ff.; Oliver, Church and Social Order, chap. 8.
they should, to the best of their ability, choose tenants who will carry out these requirements.

With regard to investment in and ownership of land and houses, the evidence given was clear that whatever difficulty an investor in any trading business may have in supervising the use made of his capital, the owner of land or house property can see for himself what is being done. He therefore can and without doubt should exercise fully all the responsibilities of ownership.¹²³

Measured against these standards, the Church's own record as a landlord was shabby. This was not acknowledged by the 1909 committee, but by the mid 1920s there was enough criticism of the Church's hypocritical position to cause the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry into the Property and Revenues of the Church. The enquiry found that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were in possession of large blocks of houses, 'worn out and barely habitable', in Islington, St Pancras, Paddington, Lambeth and Newington. These estates were clearly run for profit: full increases under the rents restriction acts had been made in nearly every case and the Commissioners claimed that they did not 'sacrifice any revenue out of consideration for sentiment'.¹²⁴

This blatant contravention of the standards laid down by Church bodies for others was carefully ignored. The Bishop of London, a member of the Estates Committee of the Ecclesiastical Commission, told his diocesan


conference that the position of the Commissioners 'had been vindicated by the report of the inquiry' and that they had been found to be 'really model landlords'. 125

A few months later, wearing his hat as chairman of the Church Assembly's Social and Industrial Commission, he signed its report on 'The Church and Housing'. This document condemned 'the terrible housing scandal', and exhorted Christian people to make themselves acquainted with the condition of housing in their own district and to exert influence on public authorities to stop rent profiteering, abolish unhealthy areas, and construct new houses for wage-earners at rents they could afford to pay. 126

The contradiction between the Church's condemnation of slum housing and her own position as slum landlord was largely ignored by churchmen until 1937 when the Church Union Housing Association appointed an independent investigator to survey the property of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. This enquiry revealed that on property directly controlled by the Commission, conditions were good, but that in many cases where management had been entrusted to agents, or where property was on long lease, the houses could only be described as slums. Christendom claimed that the position was not very serious and pointed out that restoration and rebuilding was undertaken as quickly as possible when control was returned to the

125. The Times, 10 June 1925, p.16.
Commissioners. But the Church Assembly implicitly accepted the gravity of the situation when it passed a motion calling on the Archbishop of Canterbury to appoint a committee to investigate the possibility of improvements being made on properties before they were returned to the Commission's control.127

Well might the Assembly's conscience have been troubled. The excuse that some of the Commission's property was not directly under its control was inadequate in the light of the criteria advanced by the 1909 Convocation committee. The fact that the return on the Commission's capital did not exceed three per cent, a justification put forward by one of its sympathizers128, was beside the point in view of the Fifth Committee's dictum that service, not profit, should be the motive in business. There is no doubt that the Church's performance as a landlord fell far short of its rhetoric as a reformer.

Another area in which the Church could have exercised effective social witness without becoming embroiled in party politics was the education of the Christian as investor and consumer. The general principle underlying the Church's attitude to investment had been clearly established in a number of documents. This was

128. Townroe, 'Church and Slums', p.299.
that the payment of interest was legitimate, so long as the enterprise in which money was invested was socially justifiable. The investor should regard himself as a steward of God's wealth, administering it for the benefit of the community. There were two main criteria to be used by Christian investors and consumers in assessing the worth of particular enterprises: the justifiability of the proposed commercial activity itself; and the ethical standards implicit in its management. Under the first head, trades like drugs and pornography were dismissed as socially harmful, while the liquor trade was regarded as highly dubious. The second criterion was intended to include consideration of business practices, the level of profit earned by a company, the level of wages paid and the general working conditions of employees. 129

Adherence to these guidelines was hardly likely to produce a radical reorganization of industry, not least because the conscientious shareholder could be expected to experience some conflict of interest. But education of middle class churchpeople in the ethics of consumption and investment was potentially a tool for gradual social change. It provided a means of impinging

on industrial practice at a level which meant something to the average citizen and at which he did have some power. Well informed and socially conscious Anglicans could have exerted considerable pressure at shareholders' meetings by asking pertinent questions about management and conditions of work.

Successful use of these tactics would have required an organization which could collect information about industrial practices and make this available to intending investors. A precedent for this sort of activity was readily to hand: one of the best known activities of the CSU, in the 1890s, had been the investigation of conditions in certain trades and the compilation of 'white lists' of those which should be patronized.¹³⁰ This function could easily have been undertaken by a body like the ICF or the Research Committee of the CSC. Indeed, it is arguable that it would have been far more effective than the repetition of rhetoric for which the ICF paid its messengers or the diatribes against the financial hegemony of the banks which came increasingly to absorb the attention of the CSC.

In explaining why it was not attempting to provide an organization for this purpose, the ICF fell back on the standard Christian social argument that the first

¹³⁰ Wagner, Church of England and Social Reform, p.226.
task was to lay down 'certain general principles' for
guidance in particular circumstances. Other concerns
were the probable expense of running an office of trained
experts and the risk of legal actions which might result
from statements critical of business practices. These
were merely excuses. The general principles had already
been enunciated and the need was for information which
would enable their application in specific cases. The
sort of information required would have been readily
available (for example in Labour Research Department
publications) and would not have necessitated a large
and expensive operation. As to the legal question, it
can be argued that an organization in the Church of
England would have had access to considerable legal
expertise on an honorary basis. In any case, resources
devoted to this sort of practical enterprise would have
been well spent. By outlaying money on conferences,
meetings and publications which added to the volume
of Christian rhetoric about society, rather than spending
on centres of expertise which could have facilitated
actual change, the ICF and other Christian social bodies
missed a valuable opportunity.

VI. THE LESSONS OF TWO CRISES

The continuities in Christian socialist thought between the 1880s and the 1920s were evident both in its social theology and criticism, and in the assumptions made about the way in which the Church should exercise its social witness. The persistence of the CSU tradition was apparent in the twin expectations that bishops and official assemblies would provide leadership on social questions, and that the Church could and should make a distinction between the ethical and economic aspects of these issues, confining its direct concern to the former. These assumptions were gradually undermined by the experiences of the post-war years which, as I have shown, revealed a gap between official pronouncements on social questions and the actual response of the Church's leaders to most of the social issues of the period. In particular, the Church's reaction to the industrial crisis of 1926 highlighted the constraints on episcopal action in times of social crisis and the practical difficulty of separating the moral and economic aspects of industrial questions. Its reaction to the financial and political crisis of 1931 demonstrated that the Church of England was truly an estate of the realm which, in the final analysis, placed a higher priority on order and stability than on social justice.
1. 1926: Best Foot Forward

The industrial crisis of 1926 elicited a far more positive response from the official Church than had been evident on earlier occasions. During the general strike of May, Davidson, in collaboration with other Church leaders, issued an appeal for conciliation which earned the Church considerable publicity. In July, Church leaders were again in the public eye when the mediatory activities of the Standing Conference were reported in the daily press. The story of the Church's response to the general strike is significant because the range of reactions to the strike itself, to the archbishop's appeal and to the Standing Conference's mediation raised important questions about the Church's proper role in society and the right of leading churchmen to speak for the Church as a whole on social, economic and industrial issues.

The background to the strike was the post-war coalition's failure to reorganize the coal industry. The inefficiency of the industry had been temporarily disguised by the French occupation of the Ruhr, in 1923, which had caused a decline in the output of German coal and enabled an increase in British exports. During 1924 the miners were able to sign favourable wage agreements on a national basis. By 1925 the situation had changed drastically: the end of the French occupation and revaluation of the British pound resulted in a sharp decline in exports. On June 30, the owners gave notice that the 1924 agreement would be terminated in one month. This would have meant either wage reductions or a return to the eight hour day (seven
hours had been standard since 1919). The Miners' Federation reacted by calling a strike for Friday July 31 and the General Council of the TUC supported this with the threat of a general strike. This day became known as Red Friday when the government capitulated and agreed to set up a royal commission into the industry for nine months, during which period it was to be subsidized.

The royal commission reported on 11 March 1926 and its findings (like those of the Sankey commission in 1919) recognized the inefficiency and the need for reorganization in the industry. To avert disaster the commission recommended a temporary reduction in wages (and hence in working costs) for the duration of the reorganization period. But its report insisted that

before any sacrifices are asked from those engaged in the industry, it shall be definitely agreed between them that all practicable means for improving its organization and increasing its efficiency should be adopted, as speedily as the circumstances in each case allow.¹

The two sides proved unable to reach agreement on this requirement. The owners harped on the necessity for wage reductions and the miners on the need for reorganization. Mistrust and suspicion prevented the working out of a modus vivendi. The government refused to fulfil a mediatory role, stating that its willingness to put the report into effect was dependent on the acceptance of its recommendations by those engaged in the industry.²

² See the government's statement of 24 Mar. 1926, ibid., p.21.
broke down. On April 30 the miners stopped work and on May 3 the general strike began.

The range of reactions within the Church demonstrated the difficulty of presenting an 'official' position. Well before the strike eventuated, the LKG came down firmly on the side of the miners, criticizing the Samuel report for recommending 'a lowering of the already inadequate wages of the miners - large sections of whom are existing on a wage which is a disgrace to the nation'. The League argued that a further drop in these living standards could be avoided by continuing the subsidy during the period of reorganization and it called on the bishops to stand by the principle of the living wage:

> the crisis ... calls for a definite and unequivocal pronouncement from your Lordships that you are not prepared to acquiesce in the lowering of the standard of life of one of the most deserving sections of the community ... if the policy of wage reductions is pursued and no protest made by the Church, the industrial workers will conclude, ... rightly, that the declarations of the Bishops in their solemn assembly are merely 'scraps of paper', to be thrown on one side whenever a definite issue is presented, and that once more the Church will have shirked its witness for fear of giving offence.3

A similar challenge came from Rev. Hubert Handley, author of *The Fatal Opulence of Bishops* (1901) and *The More Fatal Opulence of Bishops* (1920), who called on their lordships to state unequivocally that the miners should be the last

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to suffer a loss of income. Handley suggested the formation of a mining emergency fund, to which all clergy earning over £200 p.a. should contribute ten per cent of their stipends over the next two years. 4

These pleas brought no response from official quarters. With a general strike in the air, it was unlikely that Convocation or the Church Assembly would venture anything which might be interpreted as supporting the miners' case. Some individual bishops were prepared to stand up and be counted. On May 2, Garbett and Woods wrote to The Times, expressing the view that the coal industry's subsidy should be continued during the period of reconstruction. They claimed that the miners were being asked to make a sacrifice pending a reconstruction which everyone agreed must take place, but which was inadequately guaranteed. Like the LKG, these two bishops believed that if the subsidy were taken away, the burden of sustaining the industry, rightly a national burden, would be laid first on those least able to bear it. 5

A similar position was taken by Bishop David who told his diocesan conference in Liverpool, after the strike, that the wages of the lowest grade miners were too low, that the industry should be reorganized so that in future


5. Bishops of Winchester and Southwark, letter to The Times, 3 May 1926, p.15. Garbett's biographer suggests that Woods probably wrote the letter (the address was his) and claims that Garbett later commented, 'it was not a very wise letter, but we had to act in haste!' See Charles Smyth, Cyril Forster Garbett: Archbishop of York, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1959, p.431. This is interesting in view of Garbett's greater caution, later in life, about taking a public stance on economic issues. See below, pp.359-61.
a decent wage should be a first charge on it, and that this was a national responsibility. Sacrifice should be imposed on property owners rather than on the miners. Bishop Barnes was signatory to a manifesto from a group of Birmingham clergy which affirmed the principle of a living wage and insisted that it was 'a paramount social duty' to undertake reconstruction 'before any sacrifice is demanded from the wage-earners'.

Others were more cautious. Temple defended the living wage principle but was wary of taking sides. Instead of pointing to the obvious threat to miners' living standards, he took refuge in the Samuel report's declaration that the wages of the lowest grade coal workers should not be reduced at all. This ignored the strong possibility that the recommendations of the report would not be implemented. Kempthorne was also nervous of partisanship. He put the view that the Church had a duty to speak out only when moral right was clearly on one side. In the current crisis the industry did not appear to be in the condition to pay 'a really satisfactory wage'. Therefore a 'general sacrifice' was necessary.

Kempthorne's new conservatism reflected the growing caution of the ICF about the living wage principle. A

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Torch editorial of April 1925 had attempted to give the term necessary precision by examining its implications for the cost structure of industry. It asked:

When we say that a living wage 'should be a first charge on industry', do we mean that it should be a first charge after payment of taxes, rates, debts, debenture interest, insurance, and expenses of management? If so, we claim only that, in the case of a company, dividends on ordinary shares should not be paid at the cost of reducing wages below the living standard. Or have we in mind some greater reform which would make the maintenance of the workers on an adequate scale a charge either on the industry in which they worked or on the whole body of industry in the country? And if we mean the greater reform, what is the nature of our scheme, and how do we propose to carry it out?

The editorial went on to make the valid point that Christians 'cut a poor figure' when they proclaimed principles about the living wage and the control of industry but went no further than to suggest that industry needed reorganizing. More detailed study of the actual situation was necessary.  

Further investigation produced doubts and difficulties rather than precision. The writer of an article five months later confessed that it was 'not easy to define exactly what a living wage should be' and decided to leave its application to 'the conscience of those concerned'. He also found difficulty in deciding what should be done about an industry which was making no profits and could not afford to pay a living wage.

Some might argue that it should automatically be closed down, but unemployment was not necessarily preferable to working at a low wage and the best solution might be for workers and employers to agree to carry on until better times. Subsidies, it was suggested, were justifiable only as a temporary expedient, and then only for an essential industry. As a general rule, the price of a product essential to the community should be sufficient to provide a living wage.\textsuperscript{11}

This article was obviously written with the coal industry in mind. But the Fellowship did not issue a specific pronouncement on the coal dispute, despite having commissioned its research group, early in 1926, to prepare one.\textsuperscript{12} The problem could hardly have been one of insufficient information as the publication of the Samuel report should have provided an objective statement of the facts needed to answer the questions posed during 1925. It is more likely that political differences prevented agreement. A council meeting in 1924 had provided a glimpse of the problem. Speaking on the 'Wages Question in Relation to Unemployment', Fred Hughes, assistant general secretary of the National Union of Clerks, had condemned outright the current wages system, under which 'unemployment and under-payment were unavoidable', and called for a system which would make payment of a living wage possible. But W.L. Hichens, chairman of Cammell Laird's shipping line, had hedged

\textsuperscript{11} 'The Living Wage', \textit{ibid.}, Sep. 1925, pp.(i)-(ii).
\textsuperscript{12} ICF executive minutes, 8 Jan. 1926.
this principle with numerous qualifications, such as the threat of foreign competition and the need to pay interest on borrowed capital. 'They had first', he said, 'to discover whether or not it was possible for an industry to pay its workers a full wage'. No doubt these differences of interpretation prevented a clear statement from the ICF on the situation in the coal industry.

Before the strike, few churchmen were openly hostile to the miners' plight, but there were always a few like Henson prepared to put the other side. Henson claimed that the subsidy to the industry had been indefensible in theory and extravagant in practice. It had provided a precedent of the worst character in that it had stimulated the appetites of the poor and was, in effect, a policy of paying blackmail to revolutionary powers. No one could seriously hold that Christianity required mine-owners to pay higher wages than the earnings of the industry permitted. Henson believed the public statement of Woods and Garbett to have been 'mischievous' and likely to 'encourage the miners to regard themselves as the injured party' when the truth was that the nation had made 'immense and unprecedented sacrifices to save


14. Entry in Henson's journal for 1 May 1926, quoted in Henson, *Retrospect*, vol.2, p.116. Henson was not totally unsympathetic to the miners, as he revealed in a letter to the Marquess of Londonderry, 4 Mar. 1924 (quoted in E.F. Braley, *More Letters of Herbert Hensley Henson: A Second Volume*, SPCK, London, 1954, pp.27-9). Henson's sympathy for distress in his local area was evident during the depression, but his solutions were conservative and this often caused him to make harsh statements.

their industry'.

On the question of royalties, the Church emerged as a reluctant reformer. By 1926, its position as a large owner of mining royalties was becoming embarrassing. The nationalization of royalties had been recommended unanimously by the Sankey commission in 1919 and endorsed by the Samuel report in 1926. Moreover, there was an obvious inconsistency between the Church's ownership of royalties and the Fifth Report's condemnation of income for which no service had been rendered. Critics were quick to point out that payment of a living wage was impossible while thousands of pounds were siphoned off in unearned income. The Church was finally goaded into action and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners informed Baldwin that they would 'refrain from opposition to any Government scheme of State purchase based upon fair compensation to present owners in accordance with the value of their rights'. This moralization of the Church's position as


property holder was timely, but pusillanimous. Clearly it was seen as a concession of 'rights' and the Commissioners were far from putting pressure on the government to take this step as an act of justice. Lack of enthusiasm was apparent in Davidson's address to the Church Assembly:

They well knew that such nationalization would inevitably - or almost inevitably - entail an immediate loss of income to the Church, but they were ready to face that and endure it should the occasion arise. It was for the Government and Parliament to decide whether this compulsory purchase of property for a public purpose was, or was not, in the interests of the whole community either by the removal from the minds of the miners of a grievance, if such there were, or for promoting the better working of the mines, or for any other reasons.18

Wealth was not relinquished easily.

After May 3 the issues posed by the situation in the coal industry were lost in the maelstrom of the general strike. Many churchmen who might have been mildly sympathetic to the miners' case were horrified by what seemed to them an attempt to coerce the government and hold the community to ransom. The Church Times was a case in point. In mid 1925 it was a strong supporter of the principle of the living wage. Sidney Dark, the editor, declared that:

We must either run away from the consequences of the great declarations of our religion, or else we must recognise that an economic system that cannot continue unless men are underpaid, children are underfed, and families are vilely housed, must sooner or later perish in the wrath of the Eternal.

He was 'perfectly confident' that organization in the coalfields and other industries would soon ensure a return to something like pre-war prosperity, and adamant that miners should not be expected to work for less than a living wage.\textsuperscript{19} After Red Friday, Dark was slightly perturbed that the miners had proved themselves 'strong enough to intimidate a Government', but consoled himself that 'the miners' resistance was reasonable' and that if organized labour were to abuse its power, public opinion would be against it.\textsuperscript{20} The outbreak of the general strike sent the \textit{Church Times} into apoplexy. Convinced that it was part of a plot 'to establish...Soviet rule in this country', Dark retreated into Catholic authoritarianism and endorsed Cardinal Bourne's declaration that the strike was a sin. The TUC had given its Council 'power over the lives and actions of four million British citizens which no other body in this country has ever claimed, not even Parliament'. The strike was 'a conspiracy against Parliamentary government'.\textsuperscript{21} Most galling of all was the failure of the worker to be grateful for the paternalism of his betters. Said the \textit{Church Times}:

\begin{quote}
21. 'The Strike', \textit{ibid.}, 14 May 1926, p.547. At High Mass in Westminster Cathedral on May 9, Bourne (Roman Catholic archbishop) had claimed that because the strike was a challenge to lawfully constituted authority, it was 'a sin against the obedience which we owe to God, Who is the source of that authority'. See \textit{The Times}, 10 May 1926, p.3.
\end{quote}
a hand has been held out to the workers in all sincerity and friendship, and the answer has been a box on the ears.22

The Church Times' condemnation of the general strike used the three 'arguments' which were most common in the wider community: that it was a plot by the 'reds'; that it was a challenge to constitutional government; and that the strikers had broken a contract in not giving the required notice to their employers.

The first argument appealed to political conservatives, whether Catholic, Protestant or secular. Hensley Henson and the Evangelical Home Secretary, Joynson-Hicks, had little doubt that foreign money and communist inspired leaders were behind the strike. Dean Inge regarded it as an abortive syndicalist conspiracy.23 Those who took this view welcomed the trade disputes bill of 1927 as an attempt to protect the 'decent workman' against 'the Communist striker'.24

Those who subscribed to the conspiracy theory also claimed that a general strike was a deliberate attempt to

usurp the authority of government and undermine social
order. The editor of the evangelical Churchman described
it as

a challenge from one section of the community
to the whole order and constitution of the
country...[and] tantamount to a declaration
of civil war.25

This was a reflection of the government's attitude that
a general strike was inherently unconstitutional. The
corollary of this interpretation was that all loyal
citizens should support the government. For Christians,
the duty lay twice as heavy because obedience to the
secular authority and to God were complementary; indeed,
part of the same thing. As the Bishop of Norwich (Bertram
Pollock) wrote to The Times,

such a civilized society as our own hangs
together by constitutional government....
Our Lord put side by side 'Render to Caesar
the things that are Caesar's, and to God the
things that are God's'. These duties are not
rivals; the first is a part of the second.
Order is of God.26

For those who took a particularly high view of the authority
of the secular power, there was no position of neutrality
in a conflict between government and trade unions. Henson
criticized Winnington-Ingram for offering Fulham Palace
to Jimmy Thomas as neutral ground for negotiations towards
a settlement. He wrote in his journal:

26. Bishop Pollock, letter to The Times, 10 May 1926,
p.3.
the Bishop surrenders the Christian doctrine of the Divine Right of the Civil Power within its own sphere, and assumes that the Trade Unions are entitled to confront the State on equal terms.

He made the same objection to Davidson's appeal for conciliation on May 8.27

The third argument against the general strike was that the men had broken their contracts, and that the strike was illegal. This interpretation was given by Sir John Simon in a speech in the Commons on May 6 and confirmed by a decision of Mr Justice Astbury in the High Court on May 11. Legally the opinion commanded little respect, but it was readily accepted by many laymen.28 It appealed to the Church Times, which added that to break an agreement or to abandon work was a sin.29

The Church Times represented the extreme Catholic, Henson and Inge the extreme Protestant wings of the Church of England. Mainstream Anglican opinion was more moderate. Davidson had no doubts that a general strike was unconstitutional30: he found it 'intolerable' that

27. Journal entry for 6 May 1926, quoted in Henson, Retrospect, vol.2, p.120; Henson to Davidson, 9 June 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.

28. Mowat, Britain Between the Wars, pp.322-3. Simon was a Liberal MP and former Solicitor General.

29. 'The Strike', Church Times, 14 May 1926, p.547.

30. He was bemused by a private suggestion from Professor Edwin Bevan that the government should declare that if the TUC called off the strike, it would appoint a royal commission to consider the general question: what are the conditions in which a general strike is constitutionally legitimate? Davidson 'asked him whether he really thought the Government could with any self-respect submit to a Royal Commission an enquiry about which no thoughtful or sane men were at this moment in doubt'. Memorandum, 11 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.
'a kind of oligarchy' should make

the extraordinary claim to exercise the powers of the Government as regards the control of the Press, the country's communications and the ordinary living and well-being of the people.

He was convinced that Christian duty lay in loyalty to law and order. But he believed it to be of paramount importance that the general strike should be brought to an end. He therefore publicly urged the government, 'even at the risk of doing something illogical' to press for a solution. The archbishop regarded as impracticable Baldwin's declaration that he would not reopen negotiations unless there was first a withdrawal of the general strike. Davidson later explained his objection in a letter to Talbot:

this seemed to many of us to be unobtainable because of the difficulty of getting T.U.C. people who had been shouting defiance to don a white sheet and say 'We were wrong, we shall withdraw the strike'. Some of us determined to try and get some sort of compromise which would serve as a bridge to either side.

Others were thinking along the same lines. On May 7, 'a mixed crew of Churchmen and Nonconformists' went to Davidson with a draft conciliatory appeal, drawn up at a prior meeting at the offices of the ICF. After a long discussion with the archbishop and his chaplain,

31. 64 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 48-51. See also Davidson's sermon at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on May 9, reported in the Guardian, 14 May 1926, pp.381-2.
Haigh, a final version was agreed upon. The appeal advocated a return to the *status quo* of April 30. This was to be interpreted as involving 'simultaneously and concurrently': the cancellation on the part of the TUC of the general strike; renewal by the government of its offer of assistance to the coal industry for a short definite period; and the withdrawal on the part of the mine-owners of the new wages scales recently issued.

The final draft included three important modifications of the original. According to Davidson, Carter and Kirk ('the leader of the anti-Government section in the Group') had wanted a more 'trenchant' demand: an insistence that the government be conciliatory and not wait for any withdrawal of the strike. Use of the words 'simultaneously and concurrently' in the final version was a compromise. The second modification involved exclusion of a paragraph in an earlier draft which had insisted that discussions be based on acceptance by the parties concerned of the findings of the royal commission and that any difference of opinion over the meaning of the report should be interpreted by the commissioners. This paragraph had probably originated at the Fellowship House

34. Davidson Papers, Private Papers, vol.XV, entry no.87, dictated 23 May 1926, pp.10-12. Some of the words, those about the withdrawal by the owners of the wage scale, came from Lord Londonderry, with whom Davidson consulted in another room while the deputation was conferring. This was known only to Haigh.


meeting. It was similar to the proposals made later by the group which attempted to mediate in the coal dispute, and Kirk and Carter were common to both groups. Davidson would undoubtedly have been uncomfortable about associating himself with a statement which favoured a particular solution, and it seems likely that the paragraph was deleted at his request. The third modification came after the appeal was shown to Ramsay MacDonald, later in the day. He was 'enthusiastically in favour' of it, but suggested making the withdrawal of the strike the first, rather than the third point. Davidson was happy to agree to this because 'we had only given it a lower place for the sake of him and his friends'. The archbishop then went to see Baldwin who took exception to the words 'simultaneously and concurrently'. The prime minister still insisted that unconditional withdrawal of the strike must precede the beginning of negotiations. But Davidson stood firm at this point. Presumably with Kirk and Carter in mind, he craftily replied that it was not possible to alter the words because they had been drafted by a committee which was now scattered. Anyway, the appeal must go to the press.

Woodward had arranged with Reith of the BBC that the archbishop should broadcast the appeal on the night of May 7. A copy of the document, as it stood before

MacDonald's alteration, was sent to Reith in the middle of the day. This placed the renewal of the subsidy first, and the cancellation of the strike last. On reading the message, Reith refused to allow it to be broadcast on the grounds that the more bellicose members of Baldwin's cabinet might use it as an excuse to destroy the independence of the BBC. He claimed that the message 'would run counter to his tacit arrangement with the Government about such things'. It is possible that the final version of the appeal, with the withdrawal of the strike as the first point, might have been regarded with less suspicion by Reith. Certainly this was one of the objections to the appeal raised by Lord Gainford, a governor of the BBC and also a coal-owner. However Reith insisted that the final decision was his own and that neither Baldwin nor Gainford was responsible in any way. Not surprisingly, the appeal did not appear in Churchill's British Gazette, but The Times and the British Worker published it on May 8.

40. Ibid., pp.12-13 and Davidson to Reith, 7 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.

41. Reith to Davidson, 8 May 1926; Davidson to Reith, 8 May 1926; Gainford to Davidson, 7 May 1926; memorandum by Davidson, 8 May 1926; Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926. See also Private Papers, vol.XV, no.87, pp.15-16 and G.K.A. Bell, Randall Davidson: Archbishop of Canterbury, 2nd ed. (2 vols. in one), OUP, London, 1938, vol.II, pp. 1308-11. Julian Symons (The General Strike: A Historical Portrait, Cresset Press, London, 1957, p.184) claims that after receiving and reading the appeal, Reith contacted J.C.C. Davidson (Conservative MP) who told him that the statement should not be broadcast and that Baldwin, no matter what he might have said, hoped it would not be. Davidson believed that if the statement were broadcast it would provide Churchill with an excellent excuse for taking over the BBC.
The appeal became widely known. Although Davidson refused to sanction any official circulation of it, Kirk, Carter and Tawney worked hard on publicity. Carter wrote to Haigh on May 11 that considerable progress had been made and that both Anglican and Free Church leaders throughout the country were actively mobilizing local support. Haigh found the number of friends and agencies who were prepared to publicize the appeal 'quite remarkable'.

For many, it had obviously struck the right note. A week after its issue, Davidson had received hundreds of approving telegrams and letters. Its outlook coincided with that of meetings at Oxford, Cambridge and Birmingham which begged the government to allow nothing to stand in the way of negotiations. The response in Oxford was described by one academic as 'extraordinary'. There were public meetings endorsing the appeal and the Oxford Union passed, by an overwhelming majority, a resolution approving the archbishop's suggestions. Reynolds' Newspaper, normally fiercely anti-clerical, believed the nation would honour

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43. Haigh to Carter, 15 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926. Amongst those who wrote were public figures such as Ramsay MacDonald, Gilbert Murray and Sir Michael Sadler, as well as Church dignitaries, local parishes and private individuals. There are four bundles of letters and telegrams amongst the Canterbury Official Papers and another bundle in the Private Papers, vol.VI, no.108. The majority of the letters was approving.


45. W.B. Selbie, letter to The Times, 21 May 1926, p.12. See also Gilbert Murray, letter to Davidson, quoted in Bell, Davidson, vol.II, p.1315.
Davidson for his efforts and the *Guardian*'s political correspondent claimed that the archbishop's call was welcomed by many churchpeople, especially those in the north who were intimately acquainted with the strikers.\textsuperscript{46}

The *Guardian* itself described it as 'a spontaneous, Christ-like appeal, vibrant with the conscience-given judgment of a Christian community'.\textsuperscript{47}

Henson and Inge found the appeal far from 'Christ-like', preferring Cardinal Bourne's declaration that the strike was a sin. Inge's entry in his diary for May was scathing:

\begin{quote}
The Bishops have come out of it very badly, bleating for a compromise while the nation was fighting for its life. Cardinal Bourne won golden opinions by saying what our Bishops were too cowardly to say.\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

Later he wrote to Davidson expressing these sentiments and claiming that he had encountered a 'loud chorus of dissatisfaction' at the way the Church had let the nation down during the general strike.\textsuperscript{49} Henson also informed Davidson of his regret that Bourne had been allowed to become 'the mouthpiece of national sentiment and civic duty'. He believed it extremely unfortunate that the weight of the national Church

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{46} 'Politics and Persons', *Guardian*, 28 May 1926, p.412.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 14 May 1926, pp.381-2.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Inge, *Diary*, p.111.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Inge to Davidson, 14 June 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.
\end{itemize}
should not be frankly placed behind statesmen, (since God has been good enough to give them to us) whose utterances are both patriotic, and in the best sense, Christian.  

Davidson claimed that the comparison with Bourne was unjustified. He denied that Bourne's condemnation of the strike was 'one whit stronger' than his own and pointed out to his critics that the cardinal had in fact expressed approval of the appeal. Why Bourne's name was not publicly connected with it remains a mystery. Certainly his declaration the next day that the strike was a sin made it appear that he could not have been in agreement. Scott Lidgett was one who drew this conclusion. The impression was no doubt reinforced by the announcement over the BBC, on May 12, that a Te Deum would be sung in Westminster Cathedral the following day. It would have been easy to interpret this as a song of victory after the collapse of the general strike.

Those who condemned the appeal did so on the grounds that as the strike itself was wrong, a plea for compromise

50.  Henson to Davidson, 9 June 1926, *ibid*. The comparison with Bourne was made by others, e.g. Sir Joseph Nall and Major Kindersley (Conservative MPs) who called to see Davidson on May 10 to express their disapproval. See Private Papers, vol.XV, no.87, pp.25-6. See also R.A. Bidwell, letter to the *Guardian*, 16 July 1926, p.568.

51.  Davidson to Henson, 12 June 1926; Davidson to Inge, 17 June 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926; interview with Nall and Kindersley, Private Papers, vol.XV, no.87, pp.25-6.


was unjustifiable. The indispensable preliminary to negotiations was the abandonment of the general strike.  

Lord Hugh Cecil had written to Davidson, on May 6, suggesting

a very weighty appeal from religious leaders on religious grounds to the Labour leaders to call off the strike and so give opportunity for negotiations.

When, a couple of days later, a more conciliatory appeal was issued without his help, he complained that it had touched on economic facts instead of keeping to moral issues. This was a favourite ploy of those who wished the Church to keep out of political and economic affairs unless it supported the conservative side. Cecil's own objection to the strike, and his belief that any appeal from the Churches should demand a Labour surrender, was based on political as much as religious grounds. He took the typical conservative view that the general strike was a revolutionary attempt to coerce government and parliament. The essence of his opposition to the appeal, like that of Henson, Inge and others, was that the Church should uphold the authority of the State.

54. See e.g. H.D.A. Major, letter to The Times, 12 May 1926, p.3; Colonel Lane-Fox (Minister for Mines), conversation with Davidson, memorandum, 8 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926; Henson, journal entry for 8 May 1926, quoted in Retrospect, vol.2, p.121.

55. Cecil to Davidson, 6 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.


57. Cecil, letter to The Times, 11 May 1926, p.3.
Of those who approved the appeal, the majority would probably have supported the archbishop's position: that the strike was wrong, but that the damage incurred by the nation necessitated a conciliatory approach on the part of government and owners. Law and order could be upheld without a fight to the finish. A few churchmen denied that the general strike was either unconstitutional or sinful. For Tawney and Lansbury, it was a clear case of political allegiance. They argued that to call a sympathetic strike "a sin" without referring to the far graver sin of inhumanity and oppression by which it was provoked', was to ignore 'the tragic realities of industrial life'. They believed it unfortunate that the wage earners had no other means of defending their interests against 'the gigantic combination and interlocking of modern industry'; unfortunate, too, that by withdrawing their labour without the notice required by law, the railwaymen and other workers had committed 'an actionable wrong'. But misfortune was to be distinguished from fault, and certainly from sin. These two members of the Fifth Committee urged that there could be no peace until the wage earners had gained some measure of real control over the industry by which they lived.\(^58\)

Davidson found Tawney 'singularly obstinately in favour of the legitimacy of the General Strike' and believed him to be 'almost the only really thoughtful man' to hold

\(^58\) Tawney and Lansbury, letter to the *Church Times*, 4 June 1926, p. 614.
this view. Sir Henry Slesser, he found 'very reasonable' and 'clearly dead against the strike' although very sympathetic to the miners. In fact, Slesser argued against the view that a general strike was an attack on lawfully constituted authority. He refused to accept Simon's interpretation that it was illegal, or the subsequent extension of this legal argument which declared it also unconstitutional. In an article contributed to the *New Statesman*, Slesser argued that

under cover of a criticism of the possible illegality arising from breaches of contract in this case and the fact that the Trade Disputes Act may not apply to protect them, a grave constitutional thesis is being propounded on altogether insufficient grounds, namely, that the mere generality of a cessation of labour may, in itself, by reason of its wide extension, apart from all other reasons, be illegal and unconstitutional.

Slesser concluded that these propositions were not only contrary to judicial authority, but were based on wholly confused and confusing reasoning.

This argument was carried a stage further by Temple who maintained that Simon confused not only the legal and constitutional, but also the moral issues. The legal argument was easily dismissed. Temple admitted that


60. *Ibid.*, p.23. Slesser, a member of the LKG, had been Solicitor General in MacDonald's government.

insofar as no notice had been given to employers, the general strike had involved breach of contract. But this could have been avoided by allowing sufficient time for notification. It would be possible to call a general strike without any breach of contract or law. He doubted whether, as Simon suggested, an extended sympathetic strike was illegal, but in any case, legality was not the ultimate question.

The constitutional question was more important. A general strike contained a threat to the constitution in that there was the danger of civil war. But Temple was satisfied that this particular strike had not been initiated by a desire to overthrow the constitution, and could not therefore be called unconstitutional.

The ultimate question was really a moral one. What was at issue was the whole theory of sovereignty and the conception of loyalty. Temple denied that the government represented the whole country *de facto* as well as *de jure*. Legally, there was no doubt about the omnicompetence of the King-in-Parliament: it had the authority to pass whatever laws it liked. But the efficacy of parliamentary enactments always depended on the willingness of citizens to obey. The constitution was wider than the law, and because it was unwritten, there were immense difficulties in defining what was unconstitutional. Ultimately, obedience was a matter of loyalty rather than duty. It was a moral question, not a legal or constitutional one. If there were a failure
of loyalty on a large scale, the blame would attach as much to the government which had not won loyalty, as to the rebels who refused to give it. A good government avoided putting excessive strain on this loyalty; and a loyal people submitted to a government up to the point where submission was unbearable. 62

This was in sharp contrast to the view of authority held by other Anglicans. Bishop Pollock believed that order was of God; Henson, that statesmen were God's gift to the nation; and Davidson, that to be 'firmly and sternly loyal' to law and order was a Christian duty. 63

But Temple insisted that the right of rebellion was 'the indefensible right of man as a moral agent'. Individual conscience was ultimately to be obeyed, not the government. He asked that those whose natural interest lay in supporting the de facto government should not condemn on moral grounds those who felt unable to give the same loyalty. It was, after all, only a 'necessary fiction' to argue that the government acted for all classes. It was not necessarily identical with the community. 64

62. Temple, Essays in Christian Politics, chap.5, pp. 42-57. (This essay, on 'Industry and the Community', was originally published in the Pilgrim, vol.7, no.1, Oct. 1926, pp.84-99.)

63. Pollock, letter to The Times, 10 May 1926, p.3; Henson to Davidson, 9 June 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926; Davidson, sermon at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 9 May 1926, reported in the Guardian, 14 May 1926, pp.381-2.

64. Temple, Essays in Christian Politics, chap.5, pp. 52-6. A similar point had been made by Tawney in The Acquisitive Society, pp.134-5. He argued that it was meaningless to accuse strikers of exploiting the community, because in the sphere of economics, 'the community' was only an aspiration. Tawney asked: when the interests of the strikers and their sympathizers were deducted, what was 'the community' which remained? Was the public interest necessarily to be identified with the remainder?
Temple believed that, in principle, a general strike was justifiable. He could not accept a theory of sovereignty which 'admitted no directing authority within the State except the Government' and which attached insufficient importance to the individual conscience. But he did not believe the strike of 1926 to have been justified. In a democratic country, no government was ever likely to be guilty of oppression great enough to necessitate such drastic action. The strike, almost bound to fail, did great harm to the community and contained an implicit (although unintended) threat to the authority of constitutional government. Other methods could have been used to attain the same ends.65

This was a tame conclusion to a forthright argument. If the strike was defensible in theory, it was perverse to deny that it could be defensible in practice and that moral right might, in some circumstances, outweigh the negative implications of a general strike. In terms of Temple's own argument, moral right was on the miners' side in 1926. An objective report on the coal industry had been produced and this contained the seeds of a solution to the industry's problems. The government refused to use its authority to secure implementation of the report. With their living standards

65. Temple, Essays in Christian Politics, chap. 5, pp.56-7. He did concede that a general strike might be defensible if a government declared a war which labour believed to be wicked. It might then be possible (although this was unlikely) to justify paralysing the government's action.
seriously threatened, it could hardly be argued that the miners, or indeed other members of the working class, owed the government loyalty. Although able to emancipate himself, in theory, from the notion that the government automatically commanded the obedience of every citizen, Temple was, in practice, too bound up with the establishment to countenance any threat to law and order.

On May 12, the general strike collapsed when the General Council of the TUC capitulated to the government. With the miners refusing to give in, and the government failing to secure any agreement between the two sides, the coal dispute dragged on until December. During this period, two independent bodies attempted to mediate in the strike: one comprising Seebohm Rowntree, W.T. Layton and Frank Stuart; the other, the Standing Conference of members of the Christian Churches, convened by Kirk and Kempthorne.


The members of the Standing Conference were:
The actions of the Standing Conference were based on the assumptions that industrial peace could only be restored by a return to the recommendations of the Samuel report; and that the government, if assured of the willingness of both sides to accept a settlement on the basis of the report, would do its best to implement it. The importance of the report had been stressed by churchmen as early as April when the ICF, together with a number of Free Churchmen, had issued a call to prayer for the impending industrial crisis. Its appeal, signed by fifty-one Anglican and Free Church leaders, had expressed the following view:

If all sides approach the issue in the right spirit, the recommendations contained in the recent official Report give ground for hope that, provided a temporary bridge can be built, the way to peace and prosperity will be found, and the coal industry will be able to adapt itself to the new conditions obtaining in the commerce of the world.67

By June, it had become apparent that the government was capable neither of engendering this spirit nor of building temporary bridges. A number of churchmen were signatories to a letter to the press expressing the opinion that the public interest demanded an end to the 'disastrous deadlock' which was preventing more effective organization of the coal industry. The welfare of the community required a settlement which incorporated the changes recommended by the coal commission. The letter commended to the public a petition currently being circulated, which urged the government

to take the legislative and administrative steps necessary to put into operation the recommendations of the Coal Commission, irrespective of any decision which may be reached in the present wage dispute and of whether the parties in dispute agree to such steps or not. 68

The same conclusion had been reached by a group of clergy in Birmingham and by the Guardian which, as early as May 28, had urged Baldwin to return to the report, even at the expense of resignations from his cabinet. 69

The decision of the government to suspend the seven hours act precipitated further action. On June 21, several prominent Anglicans were part of a deputation to the prime minister protesting that the Samuel report had recommended against any extension of hours unless the miners freely preferred it to a reduction of wages. The group reiterated the belief that the solution of the coal problem lay in the

68. Guardian, 18 June 1926, p.481; The Times, 11 June 1926, p.15. Copies of the petition were available from Toynbee Hall, the Manchester Guardian, the Observer, the New Statesman and the ICF. The signatories were the Bishops of Winchester, Liverpool, Manchester, Lichfield and St. Albans; A.E. Garvie, Cyril Norwood, F.W. Norwood, W.E. Orchard, Lord Astor, Henry Clay, A.G. Gardiner, J.L. Garvin, A.D. Lindsay, J.J. Mallon, Gilbert Murray, Seabohm Rowntree, J. St. Loe Strachey, H.C. Gutteridge and C.G. Reynold. The five bishops, Garvie and Strachey were also members of the Standing Conference.

adoption of the report in its entirety.\textsuperscript{70} The \textit{Guardian}, too, roundly condemned the government for legislat ing in a fashion so clearly contradictory to the report.\textsuperscript{71}

On June 28, Kirk and Carter wrote on behalf of the Standing Conference to the Miners' Federation. They sought an assurance that the Federation would accept the Samuel report in its entirety, if the Standing Conference did all in its power to obtain the legislation necessary to give full effect to the report's recommendations. By this stage the Conference had also made overtures to the owners. No reply was received from the miners, but Baldwin's statement in parliament on July 1 produced fresh hope of a settlement. He declared that

\begin{quote}
if the Miners' Federation even now can accept the Report, with all that that Report implies, ... I believe that even now a settlement satisfactory to both parties can be arranged.
\end{quote}

In the light of this apparent change of heart, Kirk and Carter wrote an open letter to the Miners' Federation appealing for an explicit statement as to whether or not it would now accept the Samuel report and co-operate with the prime minister in securing a settlement.\textsuperscript{72}


\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Guardian}, 2 July 1926, p.519; 16 July 1926, p.567.

\textsuperscript{72} Kirk and Carter, letter to \textit{The Times}, 3 July 1926, p.10.
A few days later, the Standing Conference met with several representatives of the Coalowners' Association, headed by Sir Adam Nimmo. The owners were willing to discuss the situation at great length; but it became clear that they did not believe the report provided the solutions for the problems of the coal industry. Members of the Conference also met Herbert Smith, A.J. Cook and W. P. Richardson of the Miners' Federation at Westminster on July 14, despite the poor response to their previous overtures. After a meeting of two and a half hours, a memorandum was drawn up. On July 16, Kempthorne wrote to Baldwin, outlining the course of the Standing Conference's negotiations, and enclosing a copy of the memorandum (signed by Cook on behalf of the miners' executive) together with a letter accepting the memorandum (signed by the four executive officers of the Miners' Federation). He asked Baldwin to receive a deputation from the Standing Conference 'in the very near future'. Baldwin's reply the next day was far from encouraging but he agreed to meet a deputation on Monday, July 19 at 6 p.m. at the House of Commons. Meanwhile, the correspondence

73. This was the construction placed on these discussions by members of the Standing Conference. See Kempthorne to Baldwin, *The Times*, 19 July 1926, p.17; Kirk and Carter to *The Times*, 5 Aug. 1926, p.11 and Temple to *The Times*, 21 Aug. 1926, p.9.

74. Unbeknown to the Standing Conference, Cook and Smith had been meeting with Rowntree, Layton and Stuart during this time. See Briggs, *Rowntree*, p.256 ff.

75. *The Times*, 15 July 1926, p.16; Kempthorne to Baldwin, *ibid.*, 19 July 1926, p.17. Those at the July 14 meeting were the Bishops of Birmingham, Derby, Hereford, Lichfield, Southwell, St. Albans and Winchester; Canons Donaldson and Woodward; G.A. Studdert-Kennedy, P.T.R. Kirk and representatives of the Free Churches.
between Baldwin and Kempthorne, together with the memo-
randum and the letter of the miners' executive, appeared
in the daily press on the morning of the 19th. 76

The memorandum suggested an immediate resumption
of work under the conditions obtaining on April 30, including
hours and wages. To make this possible, financial assistance
should be granted by the government for a period not
exceeding four months. During this period, a national
settlement could be reached, based on the recommendations
of the Samuel report with regard to reorganization and
wages. The commissioners should be reappointed for the
purposes of organizing the financial assistance and working
out the details of the settlement, and the government should
guarantee that any necessary legislative action would be
taken as soon as possible. In the event of failure to
reach agreement within four months, a joint board, consisting
of representatives of both parties, should appoint an
independent chairman whose decision would be accepted by
both parties.

From the outset, Baldwin gave little hope that the
attempt at negotiation would succeed. Before even meeting
the deputation, he had virtually rejected the memorandum
and any idea that he should act as mediator. He made it
clear to Kempthorne that, in his opinion, the terms and
conditions upon which work could be resumed in the mines
were not within the power of the government to determine,

76. See e.g. The Times, the Morning Post and the
Manchester Guardian, 19 July 1926. According to the labour
correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, 22 July 1926, p.9,
these documents were published against the wishes of the
Standing Conference.
and could only be settled by agreement between owners and miners. The proposal for financial assistance was a further stumbling-block. Baldwin immediately interpreted this as a request for a subsidy and rejected it on the grounds that the commission had ruled out the continuance of the subsidy as indefensible. He conveniently forgot that the government had chosen to ignore the commission's prohibition on the lengthening of hours. Obviously Baldwin was not prepared to take the churchmen seriously. During a speech at Norwich over the weekend, he commented that if he saw the Federation of British Industries trying to bring about a reunion of Particular Baptists and Anglo-Catholics he would not be optimistic.

Monday's meeting was not a success. Baldwin reiterated the government's position on a subsidy and added, implausibly, that much of the problem in the coal industry was due to too much readiness on the part of past governments to intervene. The industry had been taught to expect public money every time it howled. He was equally unenthusiastic about the proposal of a loan to finance the industry during the reorganization period. This quite remarkable scheme had been organized by two barristers,

Clement Edwards and Dick Reiss, who had drawn up a memorandum incorporating the necessary details. Temple, obviously impressed, described the plan in a letter to his wife:

I was given the enclosed memorandum, prepared by Clement Edwards (a really big authority on Trade Union matters) and by Dick Reiss. This immensely increased my confidence, as they do know what they are talking about. You will see that it meets the P.M.'s refusal of a subsidy with a suggestion of a loan. They assured us that the Banks are ready to make the loan, if they are given statutory powers of collecting the sum annually due, and that the Miners would agree to it in place of the subsidy. This does seem to me a very fair proposition in principle.

The interest on the loan would be guaranteed by the industry itself and the responsibility of the government limited to granting the necessary statutory powers. But Baldwin's attitude was that if any type of government guarantee was required this would be, in effect, a subsidy in another form; if not, it was a matter for direct discussion between owners and miners.

80. Temple to his wife, Iremonger, Temple, pp.339-40. Edwards was a former Liberal MP (1906-10 and 1918-22) and Reiss had been connected with Lloyd George's land enquiry, 1912-14. Reiss was later awarded the Howard medal for services to town planning.

The idea of a loan had been raised earlier, during the general strike. The Bishop of Liverpool had suggested that the Churches might offer to raise a sum of, say, £2 million for the purpose of continuing the subsidy for a month while negotiations were resumed. He had been told by locals that the money could be raised, as business men were losing an aggregate of millions every week. One donor had already offered £200,000. The idea had been rejected by other churchmen to whom it was mentioned (e.g. Garbett, Woodward, Lidgett and Carter) and also by Ramsay MacDonald, on the grounds that it would be interpreted by the TUC as a capitalist bribe to end the strike. See David to Davidson, 6 May 1926 (2 letters) and Davidson to David, 7 and 10 May 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926; Private Papers, vol.XV, no.87, p.10.

It was unfortunate that Baldwin had seized on the question of financial assistance and interpreted it as meaning a subsidy. By stating his position bluntly and publicly before even meeting the deputation, he had left himself little room to manoeuvre. In focussing attention on this one issue, he overlooked the very real achievements of the Standing Conference. As some of the participating clergy later pointed out, the memorandum represented a genuine change of attitude on the part of the miners who had withdrawn their militant slogan and shown their willingness to accept the principle of arbitration. It was widely recognized, even by some who criticized in principle the intervention of churchmen in an industrial dispute, that a new opportunity for settlement had been created. The *Morning Post*, which on July 19 ran an editorial entitled 'Ignorant Interventions', had conceded two days earlier that there were 'unmistakable signs of some approach to reason' for which the intervention of the Churches was, 'if not responsible, at least the medium which ... [would] probably secure a reopening of negotiations'. The *Morning Post* admitted this in spite of its belief that the idea of

82. Kirk and Carter, letter to *The Times*, 5 Aug. 1926, p.11; Temple, letter to *The Times*, 21 Aug. 1926, p.9; *Guardian*, 23 July 1926, p.591 and 30 July 1926, p.611. The miners' slogan was 'not a penny off the pay, not a minute on the day'. See Mowat, *Britain Between the Wars*, p.300.
a four months' subsidy was 'impossible'. Clearly, the memorandum was thought even by the severest of critics to have some chance of success. If the Standing Conference erred by not stating explicitly what it meant by 'financial assistance', Baldwin blundered by taking up an intransigent position from the outset.

In any case, a further subsidy was not, as Baldwin claimed, contrary to the Samuel report. The Standing Conference pointed this out in a manifesto which appeared in the press on July 24. They argued that the terms of their memorandum resembled, in general, those advanced by Samuel himself in a memorandum of May 12. The Samuel memorandum, which had been accepted by the General Council of the TUC as a basis for reopening negotiations in the coal dispute and calling off the general strike, was interpreted as a statement 'filling out some of the Samuel Report's recommendations'. Its first clause had proposed that

83. 'Activities of the Bishops', Morning Post, 17 July 1926. The labour correspondent of The Times, 19 July 1926, p.12, attributed the miners' change of attitude to the intervention of the churchmen. The Manchester Guardian commented in its leading article of 20 July 1926, 'A Disappointing Reply', that the Church leaders had succeeded where Baldwin had failed by inducing the miners' leaders to accept, for the first time, the recommendations of the Samuel report with regard to wage reductions. In parliament, Ramsay MacDonald, Henry Slesser and Lloyd George all claimed that the intervention had created new possibilities for settlement, 198 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 1720-34, 1743-51, 1783-8.


85. Mowat, Britain Between the Wars, pp.324-5, claims that this was the aim of the memorandum as conceived by the Industrial Committee of the General Council and by Samuel himself. See also Symons, General Strike, p.190.
the negotiations on the conditions of the coal industry should be resumed, the subsidy being renewed for such reasonable period as may be required for the purpose.

Samuel had also recommended that

there should be no revision of the previous wage rates unless there are sufficient assurances that the measures of reorganization proposed by the Commission will be effectively adopted

and that for this purpose detailed schemes of reorganization should be worked out before any revision of wages was undertaken. On these two points, and on the 'general undesirability of lengthening hours', the Standing Conference's position concurred with Samuel's. They had, therefore, good reason to believe that their proposed terms of settlement would facilitate a return to the general principles of the commission's report.

No doubt Baldwin recognized the logic of this argument. Defending his actions in the House of Commons two days later, he avoided alluding to the merits of the proposals and made much of the practical problems they posed. He found it 'difficult to see how a loan could be arranged' and stressed that it was 'not as simple a matter as it appears to contemplate the reappointment of the Royal Commission'. This, of course, was no answer to the Standing Conference's arguments.

On July 30 the Delegate Conference of the Miners' Federation decided to refer the Churches' memorandum to

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87. 198 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 1734-7.
the districts for ratification. It was rejected by 34,614 votes; 333,036 voting for it and 367,650 against. On August 16 the National Delegate Conference of Miners declared the Standing Conference's proposals 'dead', but it was Baldwin who had dealt the mortal blow.88

The Standing Conference did not take Baldwin's 'no' of July 19 as final. Its manifesto of July 24 pressed the government again:

We reiterate ... our appeal to the Government to consider the terms submitted by us .... It is our considered judgment that the substance of the proposals set out above, although not approved by the Government, holds the field. The standing conference ... will continue in existence and will leave no stone unturned to secure the resumption of negotiations and the establishment of a just and lasting peace.89

Another chance appeared in October. Arthur Pugh, president of the General Council, wrote to The Times, expressing the view that the only solution to the coal dispute lay in the application of the Samuel report. He claimed that

88. The Times, 31 July 1926, p.12; 11 Aug. 1926, p.12; 17 Aug. 1926, p.10; 18 Aug. 1926, p.10. It is clear from the minutes of cabinet for July 30 that even if the memorandum had been accepted by the delegates, there was little hope of it becoming the basis for a settlement. In the event of a deputation from the miners, Steel-Maitland proposed to reiterate the government's position on a subsidy and perhaps to suggest a conference between miners and mine-owners. As the owners had not accepted the memorandum, this was a sure way of killing discussion. Obviously the government still had no intention of playing a constructive role in the search for a settlement. See Great Britain, Cabinet Office Records, Minutes of Meetings of Cabinet, Cab. 23/53, p.286.

responsible trade union leaders would co-operate in an endeavour to arrive at a temporary arrangement that would enable the mines to resume production, pending the working out of a permanent national agreement on the basis of the commission's report.\textsuperscript{90} Four days later, \textit{The Times} published a letter from the Standing Conference which warmly endorsed Pugh's appeal and reiterated the terms originally presented to Baldwin on behalf of the miners. It pointed out that Pugh's letter did not raise explicitly the question of financial assistance, and claimed that the virtual disappearance of this issue should enable the government to grasp Pugh's overture with hope and determination. The letter concluded:

\begin{quote}
The national interests ... necessitate ... an immediate and earnest attempt by the Government to seize what in all probability will be the last opportunity for a peace rational in its scope and just and abiding in its effect. The alternative is a wearing down of the miners by privation, with the certainty of a continuance of unrest and the possible outbreak of industrial strife in the future.\textsuperscript{91}
\end{quote}

The government did not seize this 'last opportunity', but accepted the alternative; with the result that the miners continued to drift back to work on the owners' terms.\textsuperscript{92}

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textsuperscript{90}. Pugh, letter to \textit{The Times}, 22 Oct. 1926, p.19. \\
\textsuperscript{91}. \textit{Ibid.}, 26 Oct. 1926, p.17. The letter was signed by the Bishops of Lichfield, Winchester, Birmingham, Bradford, Hereford, Manchester, St. Albans, Kensington and Woolwich; Gore, Strachey, Kirk, Carter and other Free Church representatives. \\
\textsuperscript{92}. In general, the miners returned to an eight hour day and wages at the 1921 rather than the 1924 rate. Mowat comments: 'The owners had won and the miners lost on all counts: the miners lost the national agreement, and had to work longer hours for lower wages', \textit{Britain Between the Wars}, p.334.
\end{tabular}
1926 had seen two abortive attempts by combined bodies of Anglicans and Free Churchmen to facilitate an industrial settlement. The general strike had ended as a result of Samuel's intervention rather than the archbishop's; and the miners had eventually capitulated to the owners in spite of the Standing Conference's attempt to secure an agreement on the basis of the Samuel report. It is possible that the Standing Conference's intervention even prolonged the dispute. This was certainly the opinion of Seebohm Rowntree who claimed, with some justification, that his own attempts at mediation had been spoiled by the churchmen's intervention and that a settlement could have been reached on the basis of his proposals. 93

Rowntree, Layton and Stuart had met Cook as early as June 29 and 30, and on July 3, had managed to get him to put his signature to some proposals. Cook had undertaken to recommend these proposals to his officials and committee, as a basis for discussion, on condition that the government did not proceed with the eight hours bill. Rowntree informed Steel-Maitland of this, but the minister claimed it was not sufficiently definite to justify holding up the bill. Rowntree and Layton persisted. With Cook temporarily absent overseas, they contacted Herbert Smith, but got less from him than from Cook. On his return from overseas, Cook promised to inform his executive of the discussions. A meeting was arranged between Cook, Rowntree and Layton for July 13, but Cook broke the appointment to

93. Briggs, Rowntree, pp.261-6. The following discussion of this accusation makes substantial use of Briggs' account.
see Kirk and Carter, with whom he arranged to meet the Standing Conference the following day. 94

Rowntree's group continued to negotiate with Cook until the end of July, but to no avail. Rowntree became progressively more furious. When he heard that the Standing Conference intended to issue a manifesto to the press, he wrote to Stuart, 'For Heaven's sake, let them keep quiet. If you and [X] would ring [sic] all their necks, it would really be the best thing'. 95 A week later he wrote, 'I find it difficult to control my language when I think of those blank! blank! blank! Bishops, and the harm they have done'. 96 Stuart agreed that if the bishops were out of the way, 'we should be right in the thick of it'. 97

Rowntree's pique was understandable: the Standing Conference was failing where he believed he could have succeeded. Working in close association with the government, he knew that the proposals of the Standing Conference (more favourable to the miners than his own) would not be accepted. This was why he believed the intervention of the churchmen had been disastrous. By entering the fray with unrealistic proposals, they had queered the pitch

94. Ibid., pp.256-61 and Iremonger, Temple, p.338. According to Iremonger's account, the meeting was arranged for July 15, but this is clearly inaccurate. The Times reported on July 15, p.16 that the meeting had taken place the previous evening and Kempthorne's letter to Baldwin, The Times, 19 July 1926, p.17, said that the meeting was on July 14.
for those who had a real chance of reaching a settlement.

Years later he explained this in a letter to Temple:

There is no doubt at all that the memorandum would have been laid before the [Miners'] Federation, had it not been for the intervention of the Churches' committee .... What convinces me that the strike would have ended in July rather than in December but for the intervention of the Churches is that up to the date on which that intervention took place we were steadily succeeding in bringing the two parties closer together and everything pointed to the fact that we were rapidly approaching a successful issue of the effort in which we were engaged. But from the moment that the Churches intervened the atmosphere changed completely. The miners thought that they had the whole of the Christian Churches behind them, and they were no longer prepared to consider making any concessions beyond those which were contained in the terms they had offered to the Church delegation.98

Yet Rowntree's assessment of his own chances of achieving a settlement was overly optimistic. From the outset, Cook had been a reluctant participant in the Rowntree negotiations. He was difficult to pin down and Stuart had been forced to chase him around the country to secure his signature on July 3. The result even then was not satisfactory. Cook appended a note to the proposals accepting them only as 'a basis for discussion'. Rowntree admitted later that the document therefore 'amounted to very little' and that it did not tie Cook at all. Cook refused to call a meeting of some of the members of his executive to rephrase the

98. Rowntree to Temple, quoted in Iremonger, Temple, pp.340-1. See also Briggs, Rowntree, pp.260-1. Iremonger does not date this letter but it was probably 3 July 1942 - a letter of this date is referred to by Briggs (note 113). Briggs also claims in note 113 that Iremonger wrote his account of the intervention after lengthy correspondence with Rowntree.

For a comparison of the proposals offered by the two groups, see the Standing Conference's manifesto, The Times, 24 July 1926, p.14 and the Rowntree/Layton proposals signed by Cook on July 3, Briggs, Rowntree, Appendix B, pp.359-60.
formula after it was rejected by the government and flew off to Berlin to collect funds being supplied from Russia for the relief of the miners. The conversations with Smith, while Cook was away, revealed that he knew nothing of what had been going on and, although not prepared to let Cook down, was unenthusiastic about the draft Cook had signed. He would not sign anything to commit his men until he himself had put the whole thing before them.99

There was no guarantee that any of the parties to the dispute would have accepted Rowntree's proposals. They never went before the miners' executive, and even if they had been approved there, they might have been defeated in a ballot of the districts.100 This was the fate of the Standing Conference's more generous proposals when submitted to the districts in August. Rowntree and Layton, as they themselves admitted, had made little headway with the owners. After finding them 'absolutely hopeless' at a meeting on July 23, Layton confessed that the only possibility was to get the government to impose terms on them.101 But the government never gave any firm indication that it would do this.102

99. See Briggs' account of the negotiations, Rowntree, pp.258-60 and Stuart's report of his meeting with Smith, 7 July 1926, ibid., Appendix B, pp.361-2.
100. Ibid., p.267.
101. Note of 23 July 1926, ibid., p.264. Rowntree wrote to Carter that he did not wish to meet the owners himself 'because I have no doubt they regard me as an idealist', letter of 23 July 1926, ibid., note 124.
102. Briggs makes this point, ibid., p.266.
Rowntree denied that the Standing Conference had obtained new concessions from the miners. He wrote to Carter on July 24:

we could have got all that you got from the miners at the beginning of July. We got a great deal more than you got from Cook on 2nd July, but we knew that it was no good putting the proposals before the Government.103

Apparently Cook had indicated to the Rowntree group willingness to withdraw the miners' slogan a fortnight before he made this offer to the churchmen.104 Similarly, the idea of a loan to finance the industry during the course of negotiations had been part of the Rowntree/Layton proposals and did not originate with the churchmen.105 But although the Standing Conference's proposals may not have been as original as they would have liked to claim, the fact remains that they were accepted by the executive of the Miners' Federation. The Rowntree proposals were signed by Cook only, and then merely as a basis for discussion. Herbert Smith refused to sign them and they were never submitted to the executive. The Standing Conference did secure agreement from one party in the dispute, while Rowntree seems to have been surviving on promises. If he was so sure that he had the government's ear, he might have used his time more profitably trying to

103. Rowntree to Carter, 24 July 1926 quoted in ibid., p.264, note 123.
104. Iremonger, Temple, p.343. Iremonger gives no source for this information which presumably came from Rowntree.
co-operate with the Standing Conference, instead of holding up his hands in horror.\textsuperscript{106}

Neither of the Christian interventions in 1926 shortened the industrial conflict. In the case of the archbishop's appeal, it was hardly to be expected. It has been suggested by one historian that if the appeal had been fully publicized, it might have caused 'a decisive change of informed opinion, in favour of a compromise settlement',\textsuperscript{107} by another, that because it was ignored by the government, it 'looked silly in retrospect' and was only saved from total tragedy by the BBC's suppression which ultimately brought it greater publicity.\textsuperscript{108} Both these judgements are beside the point. The appeal was a piece of window-dressing; designed to indicate that the Churches had something to say at a moment of industrial crisis. It was not intended as a basis for negotiation in the dispute. Davidson showed it to Baldwin and MacDonald, and two of the mine-owners saw

\textsuperscript{106}. The lack of co-operation between Rowntree, Layton and Stuart, and the Standing Conference is somewhat bemusing in view of the fact that Rowntree had, in June, been a signatory, with seven of the Standing Conference, to an open letter to \textit{The Times} on the coal dispute (see above, note 68), while Layton had been part of the deputation to the government over the suspension of the seven hours act. This deputation, on June 21, had included four members of the Standing Conference (see above, note 70). Kirk and Carter had first written to the Miners' Federation on June 28 (Kirk and Carter to \textit{The Times}, 3 July 1926, p.10) and the Rowntree group first saw Cook on June 29 and 30 (Briggs, \textit{Rowntree}, pp.256-7).


But Davidson placed no pressure on the owners to withdraw their terms or on the government to offer financial assistance, and would have believed it improper to do so. The appeal was not even shown to the General Council or the miners before its publication. It was a general statement, directed to nobody in particular, and steering well clear of involvement in technical details. It satisfied the feeling that something ought to be done, without really doing anything. Left to himself, Davidson probably would not have acted at all. After the appeal was issued he was careful to assure Baldwin that it had only been a suggestion and that he was not placing himself in a position of hostility to the prime minister. 110

The appeal was quite different from the Standing Conference's involvement, about which Davidson was distinctly uneasy. 111 The Conference did try to achieve something positive and was prepared to go down into the ring and referee. It failed: possibly because of inexperience; certainly because of the government's intransigence. 112 But it convinced the miners, at least, that the Church was not always ranged unequivocally on the

109. Londonderry and Gainford.
111. Davidson, address to Canterbury Diocesan Conference, reported in The Times, 7 Oct. 1926, p.9; Davidson to Kempthorne, 9 Aug. 1926, Davidson Papers, Coal Strike 1926.
112. Rowntree certainly believed the Standing Conference to be too inexperienced. See Briggs, Rowntree, pp.263-4. Rowntree himself did have experience in negotiation and had successfully acted as a mediator in the railway strike of 1919. He was also well versed in the problems of the coal industry. See ibid., pp.248-54.
side of conservatism. 113

The interventions of 1926 were a classic expression of the spirit of ethical idealism. They rested on the belief that the problems of industry could be solved by a change in motivation and that the Church's role was to facilitate the process of conciliation. The May appeal had claimed that a real settlement would be achieved only 'in a spirit of fellowship and co-operation for the common good, and not as a result of war'. 114 The July manifesto of the Standing Conference was concerned, above all, with 'the injury to the spiritual ... life of the community which must be caused by a continuance of the present dispute'. It expressed disquiet that the 'temper of mutual trust, forbearance, and good will, which should be the note of a Christian society' was subordinated to 'the spirit of self-assertion and domination'. The Conference believed that the mode of arbitration proposed in its terms of settlement was 'a practical expression of the New Testament ethic' and that a lasting settlement must be based on 'justice and co-operation'. 115 The churchmen claimed to enter the fray not as advocates for the miners, or even the principle of a living wage, but as ministers of reconciliation. Temple, for one, would have had no part in it on any other basis. 116

113. See statement by a member of the miners' executive, reported in The Times, 17 July 1926, p.12; and statement by Cook, ibid., 21 July 1926, p.14.
114. Ibid., 8 May 1926, p.3.
The intervention of 1926 was the swan-song of episcopal radicalism. Although the transformation of the Standing Conference into the permanent Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions appeared to foreshadow further activities of a similar kind, the promise remained unfulfilled. In a situation of growing unemployment and depression, the Church's leaders had little of use to offer.

The reasons for this were several. First, the CSU bishops who had coloured the Church's social pronouncements since the 1880s were no longer active by the early 1930s. At the end of 1934, Gore, Talbot and Woods were all dead and Kempthorne had resigned as chairman of the ICF. Although they had always been a minority, this group, together with Bell, Temple and Garbett, had managed to exercise a disproportionate influence on the Church's social attitudes.

They had, of course, been greatly assisted by the mood of repentance and reform which had pervaded the Church at the end of the war. The reconstruction atmosphere of those years had, to a large extent, overshadowed the currents of conservatism in the Church. But during the social crisis of the late 1920s and 1930s, the innate conservatism of Anglicanism began to reassert itself. The first sign of this was the sharp criticism aroused by the Standing Conference's activities. Protests that the bishops had stepped beyond the legitimate role of the
Church in society and that they did not have the right to act in the name of the Church, acted as a deterrent to further episcopal social action. The debate over the 1926 intervention revealed, too, the naivety of the assumption at the heart of official Church pronouncements on social issues; that a clear distinction could be preserved between the moral and economic aspects of social questions.

It became evident during the financial and political crisis of 1931 that episcopal radicalism had finally collapsed. Cautious after the furore of 1926 and preoccupied with other matters, the official Church had failed to confront the social dilemma of the depression. The 1931 crisis showed that the Church's social critique was outdated and that, in the absence of an understanding of economic issues, the hierarchy fell back on the orthodox remedy for shoring up the system. Although couched in terms of moral principle, the bishops' support for the policies of the National government was, in reality, a vote for economic and political conservatism.

The ten bishops who had intervened in the coal dispute had not purported to represent the Church as a whole. On the contrary, they had denied that they were speaking for other Christians or that they had presented the only Christian solution. They claimed only to be pursuing the Church's ministry of reconciliation. Temple asserted that

as members of the Church, and, if ministers, then as representatives and official representatives of the Church, they had responsibility
for setting forward the cause of goodwill...
and to press this by whatever means seemed
available upon any portion of the community
which seemed in their judgment to be ignoring
those principles at any time.117

The difficulty was that pursuit of 'the cause of goodwill',
an incontrovertible part of the Church's social witness,
was one of those statements of moral purpose which secured
widespread agreement only so long as it was not translated
into specific measures. By acting as a body called the
Standing Conference of the Christian Churches and attaching
their names to a document advocating a particular course of
action, the bishops and their colleagues were bound to
attract criticism.

Henson and Headlam were amongst those anxious to
publicly dissociate themselves from the Standing Conference
and to deny it any representative function. Henson found
it reprehensible that bishops 'should boldly adventure
into the arena of political and economic controversy without
any mandate from their dioceses' and suggested that 'in
future when bishops intervene in public disputes without
other authority than their own they should use their own
names and not their official signatures'.118 Headlam was

117. Temple at an ICF meeting, Southport, reported in the
Guardian, 15 Oct. 1926, p.834. See also Temple to The Times,
21 Aug. 1926, p.9; Kirk and Carter to The Times, 5 Aug.
1926, p.11; Kempthorne in his diocesan magazine, quoted
in the Guardian, 27 Aug. 1926, p.680; Kempthorne to his
118. Henson to The Times, 13 Aug. 1926, p.11. This letter
bore both Henson's official and his private signature.
irritated at the Standing Conference's 'somewhat arrogant claim' that theirs was 'the Christian solution of the problem'. Like Henson, he was sufficiently annoyed to write to The Times, and pointed out that the so-called representative character of the Conference was 'entirely self-assumed'. Its actions were 'looked on by a large body of Churchmen as in every way unfortunate'.\(^{119}\) In the same vein, an archdeacon from the East Riding lamented 'the tendency to identify any particular course of action with the authority or sanctity of Christian truth'; and Inge pointed out that the wide range of opinions on questions of economics and politics held by Christians made it impossible for anyone to claim to speak for 'the Church' in these matters.\(^{120}\) Indeed, many were prepared to credit Baldwin with 'the highest Christian motive'.\(^{121}\)

Underlying the issue of representation was the more fundamental question of the legitimacy of the Standing Conference's conduct which had been based on the premise that it was possible to pronounce on the moral aspects of economic questions without becoming entangled in the

\(^{119}\) Headlam to The Times, 27 July 1926, p.13.

\(^{120}\) J. Malet Lambert to the Guardian, 27 Aug. 1926, p.682; Dean Inge, interview with editor of the Guardian, 2 July 1926, p.526. See also Major Kindersley (Conservative MP and Anglican layman) in the House of Commons, 26 July 1926, 198 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 1788-92.

intricacies of economics itself. Criticism of the attempted mediation came from two groups: those who accepted this assumption but believed that the Standing Conference's actions had not been in keeping with it; and those who denied that Christianity had anything to do with economic questions.

The latter argument was a favourite of conservatives. In a leader entitled 'A Questionable Intervention', the Morning Post claimed that the action of the Standing Conference was an example of interference by a religious organization in the task of government and was behaviour dangerous to both Church and State. Dismissing the churchmen's claim that they had intervened on moral grounds, the editorial of July 24 concluded:

As to the 'spiritual and moral aspects of the crisis' they are so completely confused with economic issues that our eternal salvation might be thought to depend on the acceptance of an utterly impossible industrial scheme.122

Similarly, Headlam claimed that humanitarian sentiment made for bad economics. He told his diocesan conference that

the idea that there was a Christian economics as opposed to ordinary teaching was a mistake. However great the public spirit or moral virtues of an employer, his industry would come to grief if he gave his workmen more than an economic wage fixed by the selling price of the manufactured article. The Coal Commission's Report showed that the industry could not be carried on economically if the present wages were paid.123

122. Morning Post, 24 July 1926. See also the leader of 19 July 1926, entitled 'Ignorant Interventions'.
123. The Times, 3 June 1926, p.11. See also Headlam's letter, ibid., 27 July 1926, p.13.
A firm believer in *laissez-faire* economics and, indeed, in a crude wages fund theory, Headlam could not countenance either State subsidizing or nationalization of an uneconomic industry. Economic reality was *laissez-faire* capitalism.

Henson, too, claimed that economics was a non-moral process:

> Rhapsodies about a 'living wage' are easier and pleasanter than a reasoned examination of the causes which have made it indispensable for an embarrassed industry to reduce its expenditure on wages. Generous definitions of men's 'rights' cost little, and please much, but they leave the economic situation unaltered, and disincline men to face it.

Although they both claimed to believe that there should be a complete divorce between religion and economics, neither Henson nor Headlam hesitated to append his official signature to an apologia which rested on secular as well as on religious arguments.

The criticism that the Standing Conference had failed to separate the moral from the technical aspects of the coal dispute highlighted the ambiguities in the Church's social witness in the 1920s. The 1920 Lambeth conference's committee on the Church and industrial problems had tried to define the bounds of official Christian social

action. It had emphasized that

while individual members of, or special groups within, the Church may rightly advocate some specific programme on policy, the Church should never, as a Body, concern itself with a political issue unless it involves a clear moral issue, and then only in the interest of morals and righteousness, and not in the interest of parties.\textsuperscript{126}

The intention of this statement was clear, but it left some perplexing questions of definition: such as what was meant by 'a clear moral issue'; and whether to 'advocate some specific programme or policy' meant to initiate one, or whether this included support for an existing policy. It is not surprising that the first major attempt to put these sentiments into practice should have produced uncertainty about the justifiability of the action taken.

The confusion of churchmen on this question was presented in microcosm by Davidson's equivocal reaction to the Standing Conference's intervention. 'Were they', he asked his diocesan conference,

simply to form a ring and stand helplessly round, hoping that the combatants would come to terms? Or had they all, as citizens of a country in which coal was a key industry, an inevitable share of responsibility?

Clearly Davidson would have preferred the former alternative. He paid lip-service to the Church's social pronouncements; denying that economic problems could safely be left to the expert or the play of economic forces, and defending the

\textsuperscript{126} Conference of Bishops, 1920, p.67.
right of Church officers to be prominent on the side of conciliation. But he was nervous of any attempt to implement these sentiments. Referring explicitly to the Standing Conference's action, he expressed the belief that it was always 'an extremely delicate and difficult task' for Christians, especially clergy, to apply 'what seemed to them clear Christian principles' to a contemporary economic or industrial problem. These problems had two sides: 'one strictly economic and the other ethical'. There was a danger of forgetting economic reality in the pursuit of moral goodness; of forgetting 'such a simple and yet profound economic principle as underlay the statement that one could not get more than a pint out of a pint pot'. There was the further risk that the moral enthusiast, with no knowledge of technical matters or practical details, would blunder in on someone else's territory. Davidson obviously believed that the Standing Conference had trespassed on forbidden ground.

Others shared this belief. The members of the Conference itself claimed that they had intervened because of the 'grave moral issues' involved in the dispute, but critics alleged that they had acted improperly in going beyond the moral aspects and discussing schemes of financial assistance to the industry. H.R. Wakefield, recently retired from the see of Birmingham and not unsympathetic to the Christian social cause, expressed his disquiet in

a letter to *The Times*:

I cannot help feeling that if only reference to the subsidy had been kept out of the Bishops', &c., suggestions, they would have been more effective. The effort to unite the whole nation upon the moral points is a fitting work for the religious bodies, but for a number of great ecclesiastics to enter upon one of the financial methods of dealing with the coal trade is almost ridiculous....

The Churches must work to establish great principles; they must hesitate before they advocate methods as to the value of which they can know but little. They must be careful not to use their position of vantage for anything which savours more of party than of Christ.129

The conservative press took the opportunity to ridicule the Standing Conference and through them, the idea that churchmen could contribute to the conduct of secular affairs. *The Morning Post* commented on July 31:

> the intervention has proceeded on a total misreading of the economic facts....To support a scheme of settlement which is acceptable only to one side and would lead to the bankruptcy of the other cannot possibly lead to peace, but might quite probably prolong the struggle and worsen the lot of the miner. The ten Bishops, in short, have proceeded in the light of faith upon a question of arithmetic, and their answer happens to be wrong. It would be most unfortunate if it got into people's heads that belief in Christianity involved the assumption that two and two make five.130

The clear implication here was that the expertise of bishops did not include arithmetic or economics. *The Times* was even more blunt. It attributed 'this sort of confused thinking' to 'plunging without preparation into a difficult and

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130. 'The Church and the Strike', *Morning Post*, 31 July 1926.
unfamiliar problem'. The same result might be expected if
the National Union of Railwaymen were suddenly to claim the
right to formulate their views on ecclesiastical courts, or
if the revision of the prayer book were entrusted to the
Stock Exchange committee. ¹³¹ (This, of course, became a
rather hollow joke two years later when the House of Commons,
an unmistakably secular body, rejected the revised prayer
book.)

The Standing Conference's supporters argued that it
was competent to act in the role of mediator. As responsible,
well-educated citizens, its members had a right and a duty
to use their influence in the interests of peace. As the
editor of the *Manchester Guardian* put it,

> there is no reason why those who have risen to
> the most distinguished positions in the churches
> should be supposed, as some people would apparently
> have it, to lose both the capacity to form and the
> right to express opinions on matters of burning
> public interest.¹³²

The Anglican *Guardian* made the valid point that the education
of bishops had not necessarily been more incomplete than that
of the average cabinet minister or leader-writer for *The Times*. It reminded the editor of *The Times* that a member of
the Stock Exchange was not required to be 'an expert
liturgiologist', while bishops were certainly citizens.¹³³

¹³¹ 'Mr. Baldwin on Subsidies', *The Times*, 19 July 1926,
p.13. See also 'Christianity and Economics', *ibid.*, 17 Nov.
1926, p.15.

¹³² 'A Christian Appeal', *Manchester Guardian*, 24 July
1926. This was quoted approvingly by the *Guardian*, 30 July
1926, p.618.

¹³³ *Guardian*, 23 July 1926, p.591. For general support
of the Standing Conference's actions see letters to *The Times*
1926, p.11; John Burnaby, 16 Aug. 1926, p.6; and E.S. Talbot,
17 Aug. 1926, p.11. See also C.S. Woodward to the *Guardian*,
23 July 1926, p.592 and 'Politics and Persons', *Guardian*, 20
But the supporters of the Standing Conference's action admitted the legitimacy of the argument about expertise. Defence of the bishops and their fellow-churchmen rested, not on any claim to economic knowledge, but on their competence as citizens. Furthermore, members of the Conference went to great pains to point out that they had not entered into technical details in the sense of proposing solutions to the coal dispute. They had merely tried to secure an agreement on the basis of the Samuel report. The royal commission was the expert, the Standing Conference the mediator. The churchmen claimed to have made no proposals of their own, but merely to have passed on the suggestions of the miners as a way of facilitating a settlement on the basis of the report.

The protracted debate stimulated by the Standing Conference's intervention demonstrated the impossibility of separating moral judgements from economic and political beliefs. Henson and Headlam claimed to do so; but they only eschewed moral judgements which had non-conservative social implications. Headlam's claim that 'Christianity does not recognize any rights of man; it only recognizes man's duties' was intimately connected with his politics and his economics. In his view, the worker had an obligation to work hard, while the man of property must


acknowledge the responsibilities and obligations of wealth. Christianity did not bid the paying of too high wages to employees, but it did require wise investment, which was the modern equivalent of selling one's goods and giving them to the poor. The observance of these moral duties would, of course, preserve a clear division between social classes. Obviously there would always be opposition, from both religious and secular sources, to the claims of morality as long as they threatened middle and upper class sensibilities or political positions. Lloyd George, who had warned the bishops off in no uncertain terms in 1921, was not nearly so troubled by their activities in 1926. By then it was Baldwin's problem.

The Standing Conference's claim to have drawn a line between moral principle and economic details was scarcely more credible. Technically, it had not made proposals of an economic nature. But it did favour a particular solution to the problems of the coal industry - that of the Samuel commission. To have confessed to this, or to the fact that its intervention clearly favoured the miners, in that the prolongation of the dispute was causing them more suffering than the owners, would have been to invite the criticism not only of conservatives, but of many who favoured cultivation of the Church's social conscience. The intervention of the Standing Conference could only be justified as a

137. 198 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 1720-34.
ministry of reconciliation - an impartial pursuit of peace.

Yet the impartiality of the Standing Conference was always somewhat tenuous. From the outset, Temple had been worried that they were acting as spokesmen for one side only; but he allowed himself to be reassured by Kempthorne, who pointed out that they had contacted both sides and only one had been responsive. There was always a danger that the Conference's members would swing around behind the miners. According to Temple, Kirk wanted them to tell the government that if it did not agree to the loan proposal, they would 'join the Miners in a fight on that basis'. Apparently he got no support, 'though some thought it might come to that'. Temple was ambivalent. He believed that they must stick to their job as impartial mediators and not 'take the field saying that some technical proposal... is certainly the righteous line of action'. But he commented to his wife: 'Cook, of course, will call us rats if we do not fight; and perhaps will be right to do so'. Kirk's impartiality was even more precarious. He reiterated the dictum that the Church had a duty not to take sides, but added a rider: while both sides in an industrial dispute were usually in the wrong, one might be 'more in the wrong than the other'. It was, he claimed, always the Church's duty 'to champion the distressed'.

140. Kirk, Place of the Church in Industrial Issues, p.2.
The events of 1926 demonstrated the limitations of official Christian social action. The long-standing conservatism of the Church imposed constraints on those who wished to link Christianity with demands for social justice. It was necessary to preserve the fiction that the Church could confine its witness to lofty moral principle and avoid both partisanship and technical decisions. More seriously, fear of arousing the wrath of conservatives had the effect of confining forthright action to times of social crisis when it was far less likely to be effective. If the situation in the coal industry had not erupted into a general strike, the Church's leaders would probably have preserved their silence. Convocation had burnt its fingers in 1921; the employers' challenge to the principle of the living wage had been allowed to pass in 1922; and neither the threat to the miners' living standards in 1925 nor the attack on trade unionism implicit in the trade disputes act of 1927 called forth expressions of episcopal sympathy. A general strike, though, could not be ignored. Paradoxically, it was the worst possible time for the Church to attempt a demonstration of social compassion. The issues of the living wage and the reorganization of industry were lost in concern for industrial peace and the common belief that a general strike was an attack on constitutional government. Defence of the miners could too

141. Not a single bishop spoke against the trade disputes bill in the Lords and Henson actually supported it. See 68 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 132-7.
easily have been interpreted as support for disruptive social forces. In an atmosphere of confrontation, moral appeals were destined to fall on deaf ears.

If the Church's leaders had really been serious about the moralization of industry, they should have exerted pressure in the immediate post-war years when it was most likely to have been effective. That they did not, was indicative of the contradiction implicit in their position. Their social pronouncements challenged the industrial order, but as bishops of the Established Church they were loath to pursue the challenge to its logical conclusion. They were part of the very system they condemned.

In the years immediately following the general strike, all signs of episcopal radicalism disappeared. For the most part, the Church's official assemblies were preoccupied with the revised prayer book and paid little attention to social questions. Even on this issue, which was undeniably the Church's business, its leaders were reluctant to fight for what they believed right. The revised book was rejected twice by the House of Commons - first in December 1927 then, after some modifications had been made, again in June 1928.\textsuperscript{142} Parliament's action had serious implications for the relations between Church and State, and churchmen were quick to assert the right of the Church to direct its own spiritual life. They pointed out that the House of Commons could no longer

\textsuperscript{142} See Iremonger, \textit{Temple}, chap.XXII for an account of the prayer book controversy.
be regarded as an assembly of Anglican laity, and therefore had no right to defeat a measure which had the approval of Convocation, the Church Assembly and a majority of diocesan conferences. Parliament's presumption to overrule the Church's judgement on its own forms of worship made the enabling act and the creation of the Church Assembly a mockery. The rhetoric was impressive; but its emptiness became sadly apparent when parliament threw out the measure a second time and the Church meekly submitted. With the exception of a few like Henson, who advocated disestablishment, there was no effective challenge issued against the Erastian pretensions of the House of Commons. This in spite of the fact that only two bishops had voted in the


Assembly against the amended measure. Neither fully accepting nor openly confronting the situation, the bishops authorized *de facto* use of the rejected book, in 1929.

The following year a commission was appointed to enquire into the relations of Church and State. Its report, issued in 1935, repeated the arguments of 1928 and 1929 but was effectively shelved. Garbett claimed later

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145. *Guardian*, 4 May 1928, p.280. The dissentients were Exeter and Norwich. Worcester was overseas and Birmingham, Truro, and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich were absent from the division. Overall, the majority for the prayer book had declined since the vote of July 1927.

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146. The Church Assembly voted 382 - 105 in favour of the appointment of a commission. Only one bishop voted against. The commission was to examine how far the present relations of Church and State allowed effective exercise of the Church's spiritual freedom and what legal and constitutional changes, if any, were necessary to secure its effective exercise. The debate on the motion gave a good indication of the range of opinion on the Church/State nexus: from the Erastianism of Inskip to the pro-disestablishment position of Henson. Most fell between these two extremes; believing the present arrangement out of date, yet not wishing to advocate disestablishment. The Church of Scotland was seen as a good example of an establishment which combined full State recognition with absolute freedom in the Church. See *CA, Report of Proceedings*, vol.XI, no.1, spring 1930, pp.60-108.

147. Iremonger, *Temple*, p.357. The main gist of the report was that spiritual liberty had not been secured by the enabling act and that the Church was subordinated in these matters to a parliament which might consist largely of non-Christians. But disestablishment was rejected in favour of a complicated procedure for gaining the royal assent to purely spiritual matters without parliamentary discussion. See the following reviews of the report: *I.C.F. Journal*, June 1936, p.94; Dudley Symon, 'Church and State', *Christendom*, vol.6, no.21, Mar. 1936, pp.68-72; Norman Sykes, 'The Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Church and State', *Nineteenth Century*, vol.CXIX, no.709, Mar. 1936, pp.361-75; Victor Raikes, 'The Future Relationship between Church and State', *Nineteenth Century*, vol.XCCI, no.722, Apr. 1937, pp.545-52.
that he would have liked the bishops, with the support of the Convocations and the Assembly, to have openly sanctioned use of the rejected book, at the same time making it clear that the Church would not resist disestablishment if the State held that use of the book was inconsistent with the traditional relationship between Church and State. But this policy was never seriously discussed as it was believed to imply a direct challenge to the State. Most preferred to leave it to the State to make the first move.

The weakness of the bishops was a cause for concern amongst bolder Anglican spirits. In 1930, Dick Sheppard edited a book entitled *My Hopes and Fears for the Church* which urged that the forthcoming Lambeth conference be used as an occasion for reasserting the Church's leadership in the world. Sheppard's plea was that the bishops should abandon the language of compromise and make straightforward statements comprehensible to the ordinary man; they should end preoccupation with internal, ecclesiastical affairs, and declare the Christian message in the face of the grave problems confronting civilization. This plea was echoed by the other sixteen contributors. The Church, wrote


149. H.R.L. Sheppard (ed.), *My Hopes and Fears for the Church*, John Murray, London, 1930, pp.(v)-(vi) and 3-9. According to the publishers, 1700 copies of the book were distributed. The other contributors were: R.G. Parsons (Bishop of Middleton), V.F. Storr, F.S.M. Bennett, O.C.Quick (Canon of Carlisle then St. Paul's), Hewlett Johnson (Dean of Manchester and later of Canterbury), F.R. Barry (later Canon of Westminster and Bishop of Southwell), F.A. Iremonger (former editor of the *Guardian* and subsequently BBC Director of Religion), Maurice Child, Kenneth Ingram, C.E. Raven (Canon of Liverpool and later Professor of Divinity at Cambridge), J.C. Hardwick, J.K. Mozley, T. Guy Rogers, F.G.H. Williams, E.S. Woods (Bishop of Croydon) and H.W. Fox.
Hewlett Johnson, the famous red dean, was sacrificing its life to machinery and must shift its focus from the institution itself to the tasks for which the institution existed. F.R. Barry wrote of a 'rising sense of disappointment' with the Church's failure to speak to civilization's condition. The primary Christian duties were not in ecclesiastical politics, but in the world Christ came to save, and in the redemption of its social order. The fiercest criticism came from Charles Raven, who had been active in the Copec movement. Raven claimed, with justification, that the Church's de facto leaders were to be found not on the bench, but amongst men such as Sheppard, Studdert-Kennedy and 'Tubby' Clayton. Vital religion was centred not in the diocese, the deanery and the assemblies, but in societies like the ICF, Toe. H. and the English Church Union. Raven did not spare ecclesiastical sensibilities:

Our bishops who ought to initiate and control our whole activity stand for conservation rather than for progress. They are so concerned with keeping the Church safe from disruption that they hesitate to lead or even to allow movement. At the last Conference, for a few glorious months, it seemed as if they had seen a vision, and determined to obey it... we hoped that at last the days of compromise and inaction were over. Yet as soon as the Conference broke up they faltered, procrastinated, and played for safety. And since then a series of blunders culminating in a combination of magniloquent assertions and inept performances over the Prayer Book has seriously impaired their authority.150

The call of these sixteen churchmen was echoed in a special Lambeth conference number of the New Age, the social credit weekly. Here Anglican social creditors Reckitt, Demant, Stacy and N.E. Egerton Swann argued that the Lambeth conference provided a chance for the Church to challenge the assumptions of financial orthodoxy. Demant pointed out that when in 1926 the Church leaders who had made a 'bold stand for social justice' were 'snubbed by politicians and some episcopal colleagues and told that what was economically unsound could not be ethically considered', they had provided no effective answer. In fact, as Reckitt was never tired of reminding them, the bishops had not faced up to the economic implications of their demand for a living wage. It was time for Church leaders to reconsider their position in the face of the realities of the economic situation and capitalism's refusal to pay a living wage.\textsuperscript{151}

Few would have accepted the New Age's assumption that the solution lay in social credit. But there was increasing dissatisfaction with the comfortable belief that the assertion of moral principle satisfied the Church's social obligation. J.K. Mozley believed that by 1930, people were looking for 'more particular and detailed guidance ... from the Church'. He sympathized with the argument that bishops should be silent on

controversial issues because they were not experts and because the Church should not be committed to one side on a political issue. But he was not convinced:

Where the Bishops are sure that Christian moral judgment points in one direction they cannot rightly be blamed for following in the footsteps of the Old Testament Prophets and making that judgment plain. To ask the Bishops never to take sides would be equivalent to asking them never to apply their moral judgments in detail. But is is just in the region of detailed application of moral judgments that whatever guidance spiritual leaders can give is so greatly needed.152

Mozley had highlighted the crucial issue: behind the plea that the Church must never take sides was the reluctance of Church leaders to translate their moral judgments on the economic order into details. This raised questions which they preferred not to face; such as whether social justice was really possible without radical alteration of the economic and social system.

Hopes that these questions would be faced at the 1930 Lambeth conference were disappointed. In a meagre three paragraphs devoted to unemployment, the 1930 report stated twice that the Church must not enter into 'difficult technical considerations' but must urge the 'human, social and spiritual issues'.153 What was meant by this was made


153. Lambeth Conference 1930, p.105. The main concerns of the committee on the life and witness of the Christian community were marriage and sex, race, and peace and war.
clear by one of the resolutions of the conference on marriage and sex which condemned propaganda that treated birth control as 'a way of meeting those unsatisfactory social and economic conditions which ought to be changed by the influence of Christian public opinion'. This was cold comfort for the unemployed. But more than this, the Church's refusal to become involved in the details of the economic situation was shown to be essentially hypocritical. On the issue of the League of Nations, the Church's leaders had no such scruples. The Lambeth report described the League as 'the first and greatest political organisation for promoting world peace' and endorsed the Archbishop of Canterbury's assertion of the previous year, that support of this political institution was a Christian duty. These were Lang's words:

I am persuaded that the principles of the League of Nations are in accord with the spirit of Christ. If this be true, then it is upon the citizens who bear the name of Christ that the duty of standing by and behind the League of Nations is most clearly laid....With whatever authority belongs to the office which I hold, I would call upon all my fellow-Churchmen to be foremost in their support of the League of Nations, and of the Union which in this country exists to strengthen its cause.

It was, it seems, a Christian duty to support the League of Nations, but it was not a Christian duty to support, say, the Samuel report as a basis of reorganization and social justice in the coal industry or Lloyd George's schemes for conquering unemployment. The willingness of

154. Ibid., p.44.
the bishops to support a particular method of achieving the ideal of peace, but their reluctance to enter into discussion of the means of achieving social justice, raises questions about the seriousness of their commitment to the idea of a Christian social order.

The Church of England entered the new decade with no effective message for social crisis. Its social pronouncements belonged to the period before 1926, when industrial unrest had been prevalent and the major issues had been the equitable distribution of income and responsibility amongst those engaged in the productive process. In a situation of unemployment, underconsumption and recession, Church leaders, like their secular contemporaries, were at a loss. The Council of Christian Ministers devoted its attention to international affairs and issues like public Sunday entertainment and gambling, and did not consider the economic situation until 1932 when unemployment was almost at its peak. Similarly, Canterbury Convocation did not debate unemployment until 1933 and York Convocation avoided the topic altogether.

In July 1931, Britain began to feel the effects of the financial crisis which had already hit Austria and Germany. By the last two weeks of July, the Bank of England was losing gold at the rate of £2.5 million a day. The orthodox

remedy for this situation was to balance the budget, thereby restoring foreign confidence in the pound and enabling Britain to obtain credit to tide her over the crisis. Disagreement over the means of doing this caused a split in the Labour government in August and the formation of a National government under Ramsay MacDonald. The particular point at issue had been whether a cut in unemployment benefit should be part of the economies necessary to balance the budget. Eleven of the Labour cabinet, including two churchmen, Parmoor and Lansbury, refused to demand this sacrifice from the poorest section of the community. The National government did not share these misgivings. On September 10 Snowden introduced a budget which proposed to meet the deficit through increases in taxation and economies of £70 million. The economies included a reduction of ten per cent in unemployment benefit, together with increased contributions, limitation of the benefit period to twenty-six weeks per year, and the introduction of a needs test for 'transitional' payments.157

This abandonment of the most economically distressed section of the community produced scarcely a murmur of disapproval from churchmen. Neither the Church Assembly nor the Convocations questioned the assumptions that economy was necessary and that the unemployed should make a further sacrifice to alleviate the nation's financial difficulties. Faced with a situation they could not understand, churchmen

157. This account is based on Mowat, Britain Between the Wars, pp.379-402. 'Transitional' payments were those made by the State after the recipient had exhausted insurance benefits.
fell back on condoning the actions of the National government, and the Assembly even prorogued its autumn session in the interests of economy. 158

It was probably too much to expect that churchmen should question the orthodox view on the necessity for a balanced budget, although the idea of public spending in times of unemployment had been commended in the Fifth Report. 159 It is harder to understand the failure of the Church's leaders to stand by the Fifth Committee's assertion that it was 'the evident duty of Christians' to press for 'the provision of adequate and honourable means of maintenance' for the unemployed. 160 It is not inconceivable that a campaign of protest led by the Church Assembly or a number of bishops in the House of Lords might have forced the government to reassess the contribution expected from the unemployed. 161 A 'mutiny' at Invergordon over the

158. There were some protests against the adjournment of the Assembly. See above, pp.32-4. Kirk and Carter initiated a discussion on the political and financial crisis at the executive committee meeting of the Council of Christian Ministers, on September 28. It was agreed that the secretaries should call a further meeting if the political situation indicated that a public pronouncement might profitably be made. But nothing came of the discussion and the executive did not meet again until December. See Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions, Minute Book, Executive Committee, Nov. 1927-Nov. 1933, Industrial Christian Fellowship, Leadenhall St., London, entry for 28 Sep. 1931.

159. Christianity and Industrial Problems, pp.82-3.

160. Ibid., p.84.

161. Garbett was the only bishop who spoke on the National Economy Bill in the House of Lords. He recognized that the curtailment of social service payments would inflict hardship, but believed that the methods adopted by the National government were necessary to prevent disaster. See 82 H.L. Deb. 5s., cols. 204-8.
large reductions expected in the pay of able seamen and a campaign by teachers against the proposed fifteen per cent reduction in their salaries wrung an assurance from the government that no reductions would exceed ten per cent.\textsuperscript{162} The case of the unemployed, if pressed by those with some resources at their disposal, might well have won public sympathy as readily as the teachers did.

The call for economy kindled in most bishops a premature display of the Dunkirk spirit. Lang spoke for many of them when he insisted that, although the demands of the budget were severe, there should be no grumbling. It was a call for 'the sacrifice which the country has a right to expect its citizens to be willing to make at a grave and urgent crisis in its history'.\textsuperscript{163} The Bishop of Chelmsford (H.A. Wilson) pointed out that some nation had to lead the way, and Britain was particularly fitted for the task:

\begin{quote}
I think our British grit will extricate us probably quicker than their characteristic qualities will extricate any other nation, provided always we play the man and are loyal to our country, to one another, and above all to God.\textsuperscript{164}
\end{quote}

The Church's leaders did not lose the opportunity to make a moral point. The crisis was interpreted as an indictment

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{162} Mowat, \textit{Britain Between the Wars}, pp.404-6.
\item \textsuperscript{163} \textit{The Times}, 6 Oct. 1931, p.15.
\item \textsuperscript{164} \textit{Guardian}, 9 Oct. 1931, p.695. For the opinions of other bishops, see \textit{ibid.}, 4 Sep. 1931, p.609 and 11 Sep. 1931, p.625.
\end{itemize}
of the nation's laxity and overspending, and the need for sacrifice seen as a chance to strengthen its moral fibre. Woods claimed that the 'orgy of easy finance, national and personal, which followed the war, was now presenting its account'.

Lang, inspired, it seems, by the National government's appeal, in October, for a 'doctor's mandate', explained that indulgence had ruined the nation's health:

> The malady...was that we were living beyond our income. We were spending, often upon most admirable objects concerning the welfare of our people, more than as a nation we were earning. We were drifting into the position of living, not only upon capital, but upon borrowed capital, and the malady steadily, slowly, and insidiously was creeping into the body politic. Suddenly, at the end of August, its gravity was made plain. There was something in the nature of a haemorrhage, a draining of gold, which was the very life-blood of our economic welfare, and there arose the need at once of an immediate and drastic surgical operation.

In such a time of crisis, said Lang, it was necessary to fall back on 'a policy of trust'. It was not difficult to see whom the archbishop regarded as worthy of that trust. He claimed that, quite apart from considerations of party, they should pay their tribute to the 'conspicuous courage of the Prime Minister and those who stood by him' in taking realistic action to meet the emergency.

The October general election was the occasion for other thinly-veiled appeals to support the National government. Under cover of the plea that the nation's health

should be put above party politics, Church leaders canvassed votes for what was, in all but name, a Conservative government. The Bishop of Bristol (G. Nickson) argued that the nation needed 'unity of purpose as against mere sectional advancement' while Paget of Chester claimed that the country must make up its mind 'to set aside all bitterness, party feeling, political animosity, class prejudice, and all that was unfair'.\(^{167}\) A manifesto from the Birmingham Christian Social Council disclaimed any right for the Churches to enter the political arena or even to advise their members how to vote, but undertook the duty to dispel misunderstanding and suspicion. It insisted that the ordinary elector did not realize the gravity of the position: the nation was passing through a financial crisis which, if badly handled, might end in economic ruin. The manifesto urged readers to do nothing which might aggravate the situation or be liable to misinterpretation abroad ... to approach the issue in a spirit which excludes purely selfish or class interest.\(^{168}\)

The Guardian's column, 'The Week', contained an even more pointed directive to vote National. A few days before the election it commented that

if the national party wins and is carried away by its extreme right wing the mistake can be quickly rectified, whereas if Labour wins and the pound goes, the calamity will be irreparable for at least a generation.\(^{169}\)

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After the National government had been returned to office, the same columnist commented thankfully that the nation had been 'saved from a dreadful menace'.

The reaction of Church leaders to the 1931 crisis made a mockery of the claim that the Church's social witness should be confined to the level of moral principle and that it should never endorse particular solutions or political parties. Although pronouncements were carefully couched in moral terms, they clearly urged support for the National government's handling of the financial crisis and implied that Labour had run away from its duty. Support for economy was made a moral virtue, higher on the scale of priorities, apparently, than a previously enunciated Christian social principle - the right of the unemployed to adequate maintenance. The assumption that the interests of all classes were best served by acceptance of the National government's leadership was in the best traditions of Tory democracy.

Often there was little comprehension of what sacrifice might mean for less privileged sections of the community. The comfortable belief that even the unemployed were not too badly off was fed by assurances from some vicars in the north that there were 'no signs of starvation and degradation'. Bishop Wilson was able to claim, in a pastoral letter to the churches of Essex, that a little self-denial and thriftiness would do no one any harm, for

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170. Ibid., 30 Oct. 1931.
happiness had 'nothing to do with possessions'. Lady Hope gave Guardian readers some helpful tips on economy. She believed the English could learn from the French, who had a much simpler idea of 'country-house life' and for whom dinner would usually consist of three courses, instead of 'the four, five, and six that convention demands'. But economy need not be too rigorous. Lady Hope cited the example of an acquaintance who had, reputedly, substituted bowls of bread and milk for late dinner. This was 'going rather far'. Lady Hope feared that if the family included male members, it would not be long before mutiny broke out. In the same vein, the Guardian rejected the suggestion of one of its correspondents that bishops should surrender ten per cent of their incomes. The Guardian believed that many would readily do so if they were relieved of the heavy overhead charges that fell on them. But they lived in highly rated houses which were very expensive to keep up, and had to do a great deal of entertaining. As bishops had to pay their own staff, a cut of ten per cent would mean their lordships either writing their own letters - 'a thoroughly uneconomical proceeding' - or moving to a smaller house and leaving the palace empty. This, of course, was frequently the fate of large domestic establishments during the second world war, but it was a sacrifice too awful to contemplate in 1931.

173. 'About Economy', by Lady Hope, Guardian, 6 Nov. 1931.
Some were obviously troubled by the ten per cent cut in unemployment benefit. Temple pointed out that 'no Christian could acquiesce light-heartedly in an action which deliberately increased the burden which rested upon the poorest members of the community'. Bell recognized that the lot of the unemployed was often tragic enough as it was; and Garbett acknowledged that the cut in the 'dole' would 'affect the very necessities of life in many cases'. The Church Times admitted that equality of sacrifice was in fact a myth. But none of these sympathizers was prepared to criticize the government for asking this sacrifice of the unemployed. Garbett was 'perfectly certain' that MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas, who had all been closely associated with the Labour party, 'would never have consented to this unless they had been convinced that it was absolutely necessary. There was agreement that, as Bell put it, failure to implement the economies would have represented a shirking of responsibility.

175. The Times, 13 Nov. 1931, p. 20.
176. Ibid., 15 Oct. 1931, p. 16.
177. 82 H.L. Deb. 5s., col. 206.
179. 82 H.L. Deb. 5s., col. 206.
If the failure of these sympathizers to oppose the cuts was disappointing on grounds of social justice, it was doubly disillusioning in view of the fact that none of them was totally convinced of the credibility of orthodox arguments about economy. The *Church Times* was suspicious of the influence of the banks and not unaware of Keynes' arguments. Its editor, Dark, claimed to believe that the capitalist system was cracking, but he seemed to lack the will to widen the fissure. In Garbett's view, the case for the cuts had been lessened by the abandonment of the gold standard. He claimed that by helping to stimulate the export trade, devaluation would cause a rise in prices which would be particularly hard on low income groups. Bell and Temple seemed to recognize the futility of cutting back expenditure in a time of depression and counselled their parishioners not to make cuts which would aggravate unemployment.

Why, then, did they not oppose the cuts in benefit? A partial explanation can be found in the gravity of the financial crisis and the belief that, after the abandonment of the gold standard, it was more than ever important that Britain should demonstrate her credibility by balancing the budget. Yet balancing the budget did not necessarily entail cuts in unemployment benefit. It seems impossible

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182. Leader, 'Property and the People', *ibid.*, 11 Sep. 1931.
183. 82 H.L. Deb. 5s., col. 206.
to escape the conclusion that, in a time of crisis, conservative impulses were stronger than the concern for social justice. Certainly the *Church Times* had shown during the general strike that, in a crisis, its sympathies lay with the government and law and order. Dark was no lover of the capitalist system, but his ideal was not so much a socialist commonwealth as a revived peasantry, which was not necessarily egalitarian. Garbett's sympathies on social questions were generally with the Labour party: in May 1926 he had demonstrated in his letter to *The Times* his compassion for the underprivileged and this was evident time and again in his speeches on housing. Yet he was temperamentally a conservative and privately regretted his impulsive letter to *The Times*. He was not likely to say anything rash in the midst of a financial crisis. Bell and Temple both seem to have been going through a stage of unwonted conservatism in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Although they had been active in the Life and Liberty Movement after the war, they failed to take a lead on disestablishment after the prayer book crisis. This had disappointed many in the Church. Later, during the second world war, both men were again outspoken on social issues. Bell was critical of indiscriminate bombing of German cities (a position which possibly cost him Canterbury after Temple's death), while Temple aroused considerable

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185. Leader, 'Property and the People', *Church Times*, 11 Sep. 1931.
wrath by his statements on credit reform. Perhaps they were, at the time of the financial crisis, over-conscious of the responsibilities of preferment: Temple had been translated to York in 1928 and Bell to Chichester in 1929. Certainly Temple went through a stage of withdrawal: he had resigned from the Labour party a few years earlier, and from the Council of Christian Ministers in 1928. Bell, for his part, was increasingly absorbed in the ecumenical movement.

The failure of leadership did not go unnoticed by the Christendom group. The December issue of its journal was scathing. In the past few months, Reckitt commented in his editorial, religious leaders and journals, with one or two exceptions, had 'either fallen back upon platitudes or allowed themselves to be stampeded into the crudest imitations of conventional panic-mongering'. Kenyon asked why the bishops had allowed themselves to be 'swept away by the tide'. Her answer was to the point:

We had hoped that 1926 marked a milestone where the official Church registered a mind of its own, and ceased to be merely chaplain to the political forces of the day. Regrettfully we have to recognize that in 1931 it failed of this. Lambeth in 1920 had declared for the Living Income. Was it only because it met in the immediate post-war atmosphere of social enthusiasm?

The most distressing feature of the situation, as was pointed out in the LKG's manifesto on 'The Duty of the

189. See below, chap.VIII, part 2.
190. Temple had joined the Labour party in 1918 and resigned seven years later. Iremonger, Temple, pp.332 and 509-10. Council of Christian Ministers minutes, 15 Nov. 1928.
191. Jasper, Bell, p.94 ff.
Church in Present Crisis', was the failure of Church leaders to protest against a further lowering of the standard of life of those already on the poverty line. They had endorsed the 'hypocritical appeals for "equal sacrifice"' and made of sacrifice a virtue. If sacrifices were necessary they should have been borne by those sections of the community that were 'exempt from the fear of actual cold, hunger and thirst'. To inflict 'further privation' on the unemployed was 'no call to Christian sacrifice'.

In October 1932, George Lansbury made a public appeal for religious leadership on the problem of unemployment. In a letter to The Times, he begged the leaders of Christendom to initiate a campaign of prayer and action which would force parliament to do something:

> We cannot escape our responsibility, and I ask, Is there no religious leader in our land who in the name of the Founder of our Faith will come out and lead a crusade against these man-made evils?

The letter produced a range of responses; from hostility, through satisfaction with the work being done by the Churches

192. *Christendom*, vol.1, no.4, Dec. 1931, pp.248, 251 and 299-302. One of the ICF's missioners, F.E.A. Shepherd was also critical of the sacrifice mentality. He deplored the tendency to 'preach starvation for others as the supreme duty of man, and continue our neglect of the human aspect of lack of work and inadequate maintenance'. As well, he questioned the wisdom of practising economy when a revival of trade was needed. *Torch*, Feb. 1932, p.(viii).


for the unemployed\textsuperscript{195}, to sympathy with Lansbury's position.\textsuperscript{196} Christendom applauded the appeal and the Council of Christian Ministers was sufficiently jolted out of its apathy to issue a manifesto on 'The Present Economic Distress'.\textsuperscript{197} But no action resulted. The reason for this was expressed succinctly in a reply from John C. Carlile, chairman of the Baptist Social Service Committee:

\begin{quote}
Many will agree with Mr. Lansbury that the Churches should do their part. What Mr. Lansbury has to think out is the part the Churches should do.\textsuperscript{198}
\end{quote}

For Lansbury, Christianity obviously issued in socialism\textsuperscript{199}, but, as both Carlile and Reckitt pointed out, this political


\textsuperscript{198} John C. Carlile to \textit{The Times}, 12 Oct. 1932, p.8.

\textsuperscript{199} Lansbury was chairman of a new body, the Christian Socialist Crusade, formed early in 1931. The group was formed by a number of Labour MPs and ministers of religion who believed that 'the main proposals gathered under the general name of Socialism are essential to the economic expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ'. In 1932 the Crusade amalgamated with the Society of Socialist Christians, under the title of the Socialist Christian Fellowship. See \textit{ibid.}, 12 Jan. 1931, p.14; 17 Mar. 1931, p.9; 9 June 1932, p.9.
solution was not acceptable to all. 200

The crisis of 1931 revealed that episcopal radicalism had finally collapsed and that the reluctance of Church leaders to go beyond moral pronouncements on social issues was, in reality, a refusal to indict in practice the system which they had criticized in theory. As the LKG manifesto put it,

> the Church, through its lack of vision and refusal to question the unproven and fallacious assumptions of the governing classes, has once again laid itself open to the charge of being 'Counsel retained for the defence' of a social order condemned by the enlightened Christian conscience. 201

Intellectual leadership of the movement now passed to the Christendom group. While this resulted in more deliberate confrontation of economic issues, it did not solve the problem of relating Christian social theory to concrete problems. For the Christendom group was interested, not in working for change in the here and now, but in drawing the outlines of a Christian social order. It was not until after the Oxford conference that the Christian social movement began to develop a methodology.

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VII. FROM MORALS TO ECONOMICS

1. A Christian Economics?

In the 1930s, social Christians no longer claimed to believe that if they expounded Christian principles loud and long, politicians and leaders of industry would feel obliged to put them into practice. There was a growing realization that if Christian values were to be reflected in the structure of society, Christians must themselves be familiar with its workings and the points at which change might be achieved: they could no longer afford to profess ignorance of business and economics or to accept an artificial distinction between a Christian social principle and its practical implications. Meeting in mid 1931, the Standing Committee of the SCM called for a 'new integration' of Christianity with politics and economics:

There must be a new meeting between the people who have studied the will of God and the people who have studied the facts of economics. Those who study economics have already had to take the whole world in their survey; so must the Church.\(^1\)

This belief was strengthened by the crisis in 1931 which revealed, as H.J. Hutchinson commented in The Torch, how little people were acquainted 'with even elementary matters'. Hutchinson pointed to 'the gap between ideal and achievement' in the Christian social movement. Christian

reformers looked for 'the creation of an order which shall express the mind of Christ' but they lacked the basis for building such an order - 'an instructed Christian opinion'. If Christianity and economics were to be brought together, it must be by people who understood both. This meant that economists and the leaders of labour and industry must be 'converted to a belief in the Christianizing of industry'. But more immediately, it meant that Christians should become better informed about current issues: they must familiarize themselves with the rudiments of economics and the solutions offered by others to contemporary problems. This was the only way to prevent a recurrence of the Church's recent inarticulateness in the face of economic crisis.  

Although the insistence of the official Church that it was legitimately concerned only with the moral aspects of social problems had provided a convenient cloak for its reluctance to confront the injustices of society, it was also a recognition of the fact that Christians qua Christians did not possess authority on secular questions. This admission was never made by the Christendom writers. Reacting against the sharp distinction drawn by the official Church between the moral and technical aspects of economics, they insisted not only that Christians should study economics, but that their faith provided them with special insights into economic problems. This, of course, was a denial of the autonomy of secular spheres of knowledge - an attempt

2. H.J. Hutchinson, "Christianity and Economics". An Appeal for Study', *Torch*, Dec. 1931, pp.(i)-(ii). Hutchinson, who held a B.Sc. (Econ.) was a member of the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly and the executive committee of the ICF.
to subordinate the discipline of economics to the normative outlook of Christian sociology.

The dangers of this approach were recognized by a group within the SCM who acknowledged the authority of economists in their own sphere, but, unlike the ethical idealists of the 1920s, stressed the importance of dialogue between theologians and secular experts on the basis of middle axioms which expressed Christian principles in terms acceptable to non-Christians. This provided a means of relating Christian social theory to scientific knowledge and to actual problems. Until the late 1930s, though, the main focus of the SCM in worldly matters was on international affairs and the implications of totalitarianism for the Church. In the absence of a strongly argued alternative, the Christendom philosophy dominated the Christian social movement.

The key to the approach of the Christendom group was its adoption of the theo-philosophical outlook of the medieval Church. This determined its attitude to secular knowledge, its view of the methods and possibility of achieving a Christian social order, and the content of its social analysis. In each case, the medieval starting-point lent an air of unreality to Christendom thought.

Refusal to accept the autonomy of secular branches of knowledge stemmed from the desire to re-establish theology as queen of the sciences. Christendom writers believed that the emancipation of economics, law and politics from the aegis of the Church had resulted from the collapse of
its authority during the reformation and its failure to develop a social doctrine applicable to modern commerce and industrialization. This was a practical failure which left unchallenged the right of the Church to restate the purposes and pattern of social life and to demand the subordination of thinking and living in all spheres of life to that spiritual purpose. On this basis, the group challenged the validity of the assumptions and laws of modern economics.3

Demant argued that the economic crises and dislocation which accompanied modern industrialism were not a purely secular problem. He condemned industrialism, not only because it failed to fulfil its own aims of prosperity and work for all, but because it inflicted suffering and despair and affronted the Christian view of the significance of human life. Christianity was concerned with truth and 'rightness' and Christians should ask, as Aquinas would have done, whether the policies of industrialism were rational and in accordance with nature. Demant firmly believed they were not, and called on Christians to attack 'the bad science, bad logic, bad sociology which underlie the contradictory aims of industrialism'.4 They must no longer be content to accept the obiter dicta of secular experts:

3. See e.g. Reckitt, Faith and Society, pp.71-81.
4. Demant, This Unemployment, chap.1. The quotation is from p.19.
The occasion presents us with a challenge to examine the very principles which are regarded as immutable by the sociologists and economists of the world. When we have arrived at a point where experts can speak of inevitable consequences of trade dislocation and the rigidity of economic law, the Christian conscience must have the audacity to question these very assumptions themselves, and face the possibility that, if experts 'see no way out', their body of doctrine, however coherent, may be, like any other, an expression of unenlightened specialism.5

In short, what was wrong on Christian grounds could not be right on other grounds. Ruth Kenyon was even more blunt. She claimed that it was not only economic experience which has the right to criticize economic dogma. The faith of Christendom holds that a right social order necessarily corresponds with the Christian law. Therefore, if economic laws or necessities are alleged which appear to contradict that law, it is for the Church to state firmly that on the face of it some mistake has been made.6

This dismissal of the canons of economics left the Christendom group free to develop its own brand of economics based on the social ethics of medieval Christendom and supplemented by the economic nostrums of Major Douglas7, Professor


7. C.H. Douglas, a consultant engineer, was the originator of the theory of social credit. His ideas attracted considerable notice in England following the publication by Cecil Palmer, London, of Economic Democracy and Credit-Power and Democracy in 1920, and The Control and Distribution of Production in 1922. But his theory was rejected by socialist writers and the Labour party and, apart from a revival of interest during the depression, was not taken seriously in political circles. Greater interest was shown in New Zealand and in Alberta, Canada, where a social credit government was elected in the 1930s.
Soddy\(^8\) and Dr Demant.

Their medieval outlook blinded the Christendom group to the improbability of achieving a Christian social order as they imagined it. Confident of the 'rightness' of their analysis, they assumed that this would eventually be conceded by others and envisaged for the Church a social authority which it had not enjoyed since medieval times. A predominantly clerical group, they never seemed to face the fact that they were living in a secular society in which the majority did not view the world through Christian eyes and were not subject to Christian sanctions. They saw no need to compromise with the temper or conditions of twentieth century industrial society. Peck told the 1932 summer school that it was impossible to talk merely in terms of principles because Catholic dogma implied particular political and economic methods and certain social arrangements. In other words, Catholic sociology was all of a piece - there was no point of co-operation or dialogue with those who did not accept Catholic assumptions. The secular mind must be absorbed by Catholicism, and secular economics by Catholic sociology. This, of course, obviated the need for action to apply Christian principles to concrete situations; for the method of Christian sociology was

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8. Professor Frederick Soddy, who in 1921 had received the Nobel prize for chemistry, turned his attention later in life to questions of economics and monetary reform. His writings on economics impressed the Christendom group but were not taken seriously by professional economists.
conversion. 

Although the idea of recreating the conditions of Christendom was disclaimed, the group's social analysis was substantially an attempt to clothe the social forms of the medieval period in modern garb. Anglo-Catholic sociologists hoped to re-establish the subordination of economic matters to spiritual purposes through a revival of the medieval social principles of a functional society, the just price and the prohibition of usury.

The idea of a functional society, popularized by Tawney, appealed to Anglo-Catholic sociologists who abhorred the injustice and the immoral use of power in the capitalist system, but were temperamentally opposed to the egalitarianism of socialism. They were attracted to the medieval conception of society as an organism of different grades, with human activities forming a hierarchy of functions, all directed towards a common spiritual end. The duties and rights of each class correlated with its ownership of property. Within classes there was equality, but between classes there was inequality - each class fulfilling its own function.

The guild socialist movement seemed to provide a step towards this conception. To the young Reckitt, who

9. W.G. Peck, 'Our Present Problems', *Christendom*, vol.2, no.7, Sep. 1932, p.194. There were exceptions to this Anglo-Catholic myopia. In his introduction to Demant's *The Just Price*, Reginald Tribe emphasized the importance of forming a 'middle term' between theologians and expert economists. He also recognized the difficulty of enforcing Christian principles in a divided Christendom whose geographical area contained many who did not acknowledge Christian sanctions. See also the *Church Times*, 22 July 1927, p.118 for an article (on the 1927 summer school) criticizing the easy assumption that the world was Christian.

graduated from Oxford in 1911, it offered a welcome alternative to the 'servile state' of collectivist Fabianism which, he believed, threatened individual liberty and group autonomy. Furthermore, it fulfilled some of the requirements of Catholic social doctrine. The 'idea of responsible control for the workers of every grade in the industrial process' fitted the medieval emphasis on function and vocation; the promise of regulation of the principles of price-fixing, marketing, conditions of labour and standards of craftmanship recalled the medieval guilds and the doctrine of the just price.\textsuperscript{11}

From 1913 to 1919, Reckitt was a keen participant in Cole's National Guild Movement which was strongly supported also by the CSL.\textsuperscript{12} Subsequently, he followed the \textit{New Age} from guild socialism to social credit, but the guild idea remained part of Anglo-Catholic sociology.\textsuperscript{13} At the summer schools of 1927 and 1928 it was envisaged as the model of 'genuine functional association' into which trade unions and employers' associations might some day be transformed.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1932, Reckitt welcomed the call of the recent papal encyclical for 'the re-establishment of vocational groups',

\textsuperscript{13} The role of the \\textit{New Age} in shaping Reckitt's ideas was considerable. See \textit{As it Happened}, pp.108-18 and 164-8.
\textsuperscript{14} Kenyon, \textit{Catholic Faith and Industrial Order}, pp.64-5. See also Wagner, \textit{Church of England and Social Reform}, p.305.
and reaffirmed his support for the guild idea which had not, he believed, received its most authentic form in the guild socialist movement. The latter had suffered from two main weaknesses: its perpetuation of socialist hostility to the principle of individual property; and its failure to confront the demon, finance. A genuine social synthesis required that the truths of the guild idea be supplemented by those of distributism and social credit.

The attraction of distributism for Anglo-Catholic sociologists highlights the affinity between Roman and Anglo-Catholic social thought. Reckitt had been strongly influenced by Belloc's *The Servile State*, when it appeared in 1912, and in subsequent years he had remained within the orbit of Belloc's Catholic circle. In 1924, he accepted an invitation from Chesterton to join the editorial board of *G.K.'s Weekly*, launched mainly to preach distributism; and when the Distributist League was founded a year or two later, he attended its meetings.


17. Another good example of the close links between Anglo-Catholic and Roman Catholic social thought was the interest shown by some Anglo-Catholics, during the late 1930s, in the doctrine of the just war and in the Roman Catholic society, Pax. See e.g. Donald M. Mackinnon, 'The Task of the Christendom Group in Time of War', parts I and II, *Christendom*, vol.9, nos. 34 and 35, June and Sep. 1939.
meetings. Distributism was an attempt to embody in social arrangements the Catholic conception of property as instrumental to personality. Medieval theology had upheld the right to private property but had denied that this right was absolute; insisting that it must be conditioned by the rights of others. The defence of private property, as had been pointed out in Gore's volume in 1913, rested on its equitable distribution. This was the basis of distributism, described by Reckitt as

the contention that an economic resource for every citizen in the form of tangible assets was essential to the demands both of social freedom and individual happiness.

The doctrine received considerable attention at the 1927 summer school on 'Catholicism and Property'. Temple's address on 'The Christian Conception of the Individual in Relation to Property' was followed by Gabriel Gillett on 'The Right to Property'. Gillett strongly advocated Belloc's distributive State in which the majority of families would own enough of the means of production to be 'free from the necessity of selling their labour for wages'. This implied a society of peasant proprietors; small, independent manufacturers and tradesmen; and guilds. The discussions at the school revealed strong sympathy for distributism as 'the social system most in accordance with

Catholicism', and an equally strong antipathy for 'all modern forms of Socialism'. It was recognized that distribution of concrete forms of property was never likely to be sufficiently universal to become the basis of economic liberty and independence for each person. But there were other means of assuring to 'every citizen in virtue of his citizenship alone... some form of resource which can serve as an economic expression of free will'.

The favoured method was a universal social dividend - a concept which satisfied the chief tenets of medieval social doctrine. Not only did it express the Catholic conception of property, but, by guaranteeing the bare necessities of life, it fulfilled the principle underlying the just price - the right to live and to live decently. By freeing each man from dependence on the allotment of work and wages by State or capitalist, and allowing greater freedom to choose an occupation, it embodied the medieval principle of vocation. In the words of the report, it achieved the demand of the Catholic tradition that 'to every man shall be secured an income on which he can live and a function through which he can serve'.

The concept of a social dividend was borrowed directly from Douglas social credit theory. This illustrates the synthetical character of Anglo-Catholic social thought;

21. 'Catholicism and Property', report of the third Anglo-Catholic School of Sociology, Church Times, 29 July 1927, p.130.
the unifying basis of which was to be found in Catholic theology and medieval social doctrine. Douglas credit, like guild socialism and distributism, seemed to embody the principles of that teaching — in particular, the just price and the prohibition of usury. It also seemed to provide an answer to the chronic unemployment and ineffective demand which were seen as endemic to the capitalist economic system.\textsuperscript{24}

The way in which social credit fitted into the medieval framework was made clear at a CSC conference, in 1929, on the relevance of the just price to contemporary social issues.\textsuperscript{25} Four papers on the historical background of the concept presented it as the arbiter of justice in medieval society. The value of an article had resided in its capacity to satisfy human needs. The just price had measured that value, as well as the amount sufficient to recompense the merchant for his labour and risks, and to enable him to maintain his family in accordance with his 'state' in life.\textsuperscript{26} In a paper on the modern application of the concept, Demant argued that the principles of the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item See e.g. Kenyon, \textit{Catholic Faith and Industrial Order}, pp.176-81 for a statement of the synthesis.
\item The papers delivered at the conference were, with one exception, published in \textit{Stockholm} in 1929 and in a book of essays (edited by Demant) in 1930. The references here are to the original publication in \textit{Stockholm}.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
just price revealed the primary importance which the Schoolmen had attached to the human significance of economic activities and the secondary importance given to money. Money was accorded only a mediatory significance, as a measure of real values. Hence the prohibition of usury, a practice which assumed money had a value in itself. But the influence of this doctrine had not survived the expansion of commerce;

the Church lost her theoretical grip of the situation when money came to be not merely a means of exchange and a measure of value, but a potent economic factor with 'laws' of its own, which no longer reflected but also affected the real economic situation.

Money had become a commodity, or an end in itself, which dictated the operations of the economy. It was bought and sold like property, interest being the price charged for the use of it. The cost of this money (created by banks as loans) had come to be included in prices which therefore measured the value, supply and demand of both goods and money. This had resulted in maladjustment between prices and incomes and had created a situation in which the community's purchasing power was insufficient to buy its production at current prices. In short, the operation of the just price was prevented by an unsound monetary system.27

This analysis of the impact of money was a mixture of medieval and social credit theory. Douglas claimed to

offer an 'Ultra-Modernist' version of the just price and the prohibition of usury. His chief contention was that the fundamental weakness of the economic and financial system was its inability to distribute as purchasing power the proceeds of its productive process. The crux of the problem lay not in inability to produce sufficient goods to satisfy human needs, but in devising a financial system which enabled those who needed them to purchase the goods. Douglas argued that purchasing power was a function of price, which was artificially inflated by the cost of bank loans required by producers to finance capital expenditure. The banks were administering for private profit, credit which actually belonged to the community. The situation could be remedied by the institution of a clearing-house to advance interest-free credit for production and retailing. It would then be possible to fix a just price which would accurately reflect costs and would be the price at which the product could be effectively distributed in the community. Douglas also advocated a social dividend. This would not only supplement inadequate purchasing power, but distribute equitably the 'Real Credit' of the community which was rapidly increasing as technological

progress enabled new feats of production. As technological developments diminished the demand for labour, the dividend would be an alternative to wages as a source of purchasing power.

The mechanics of Douglas credit were never investigated by the Christendom writers who could dismiss the technical details of economics when it suited them. They did not stay to consider how a social dividend was to be financed, how the just price was to be fixed, or how credit was to be administered. They seemed to avoid the rather obvious point that administration of the system would, conceivably, have required that very servile state which they deplored. Douglas himself believed his theory was compatible with decentralization; but the complicated structure of national and international finance and of business organization hardly suggested the feasibility of this.

The Christendom writers were interested in social credit only in so far as it served their medieval purposes.

30. Ibid., pp.54-5, 57-9, 93-4, 102-4, 120-1 and chap.10. 'Real credit' was the communal inheritance - a reserve of energy which accumulated through technological progress.

31. Douglas viewed the dividend as 'the logical successor to the wage'. See Credit-Power and Democracy, 2nd ed., 1921, p.43 and Economic Democracy, pp.110-5. For an exposition of Douglas' ideas see Finlay, 'Religious Response', pp.363-83. Finlay's interpretation of the reason for religious interest in social credit - that it fitted into a pattern of movement from an immanentist to a transcendentalist outlook - seems a little far-fetched.

32. See e.g. Kenyon, Catholic Faith and Industrial Order, p.143; Reckitt, Faith and Society, p.386.
and confirmed their diagnosis of the evils of modern society. This it did very well; and monetary reform became something of an obsession. They regarded modern finance as the obstacle to sanity in modern life, the cause of social distress, and a symbol of the Church's loss of social authority. At times the group's attitude bordered on paranoia, as was evidenced in Reckitt's claim that

finance is the Black Magic of our age. It operates as a sort of alchemy, transmuting values in accordance with its own mysterious principles, and demands - what it has long enjoyed - the blind, unquestioning submission of the millions whose precarious fortunes it dominates.33

The group was able to perceive a difference between usury and legitimate interest and did not condemn out of hand the unearned income of shareholders.34 But the argument that interest was reward for abstinence was dismissed as puritan nonsense. Peck tartly pointed out that abstinence was experienced, not by the fifteen per cent of the population who had money to invest, but by the majority who did not.35 Psychologically, the Christendom group retained the medieval outlook to the whole question of finance. Reckitt affirmed that 'the core of Christian tradition on this subject was the restraint of usury,

34. Recognition of the legitimacy of interest was implicit in discussions on the duty of Christian investors. See e.g. ibid., pp.402-16 and Kenyon, Catholic Faith and Industrial Order, pp.40-5.
35. 'Catholicism and Property', Church Times, 29 July 1927, p.130.
both as a power over others and as a temptation to ... insatiableness' and that the characteristic features of the modern economic system were 'essentially in conflict with the spirit of that tradition'.

Douglas' condemnation of modern finance fed this medieval prejudice. Douglas' denial that economic activity was an end in itself further endeared him to Christendom writers. He argued that the purpose of production was to serve human need and that

the whole argument which represents a manufactured article as an access of wealth to the country and to everyone concerned, no matter what its description and utility, so long as by any method it can be sold and wages distributed in respect of it ... [is] a dangerous fallacy based on an entirely wrong conception.

Real demand was the proper objective of production and this must be met from the bottom upwards: necessities before luxuries. An economic system must be devised to ensure the 'practically automatic and universal distribution' of necessities.

That industry should serve man, and not man, industry, was a basic tenet of the Christian social movement, expressed over the years in pronouncements such as that a living wage should be the first charge on industry and that workers should not be treated as hands. Its characteristically Anglo-Catholic expression was the belief that modern society represented an inversion of

the natural order: that man had become subservient to industry, and industry to finance. In a true social order, money would be merely a means of facilitating the economic process, and not an end in itself - all man's activities, including economics, would be directed towards a spiritual end. The fact that the economic problem loomed so large in modern society was, Demant believed, evidence of its disorder. 38

One of the most obvious examples of the subservience of man to the economic and social system was what Reckitt termed 'the obsession of "employment"'. Modern social and economic thought was bedevilled by 'a disastrous confusion between industry regarded as the means of supplying economic needs and as a system happily contriving to keep people employed'. 39 Historically, pursuit of the former, industry's true purpose, had necessitated the latter. But this was no longer the case. Modern technology did not require that all men should be employed in the productive process. Despite a situation of over-production, economic orthodoxy persisted with the assumptions that purchasing power should generally be distributed only as a reward for employment and that every effort should be made to increase employment,


irrespective of its social usefulness. Christendom writers argued that this was an inversion of the true social order: man was being subordinated to the needs of the system. Logically and ethically, man as consumer was prior to man as producer. He should 'produce to live' rather than 'consume in order ... [to] produce and trade'.

Demant ridiculed a system in which

We go to work to earn the cash
To buy the food to get the strength
To go to work to earn the cash
To buy the food to get the strength
To go to work ... 40

The 'employment obsession' prevented the emergence of a true philosophy of work and leisure. Modern society confused work with employment and made too sharp a distinction between work and leisure. It assumed that work was an uninspiring duty, for which one was paid; while leisure, unpaid, was pleasurable but frivolous. Anglo-Catholic sociologists argued that the puritan ethic was not only economically out of date, but spiritually unsatisfactory. They wanted a return to the medieval appreciation of the virtues of play, and the religious principle of vocation. A sense of vocation could not survive where the worker was regarded primarily as a tool of the system; to be employed when it needed him, but to be discarded and treated as a problem when it did not. The assumption that these 'problems' must be re-employed in some way, socially useful or not, was

40. Demant, This Unemployment, p.137.
a further violation of the idea of vocation and prevented the full use of labour-saving devices which would 'lighten the sheer toil and drudgery of men and increase the output of goods which society can truly be said to need'. 41

Rejection of the idea that employment was an ultimate social principle, and the introduction of consumer credits to distribute the 'wages of the machine', 42 would pave the way for the development of a true philosophy of leisure. Men might begin to regard leisure as a justifiable and worthwhile means of serving God and cast aside the puritan assumption that this was only to be achieved through work.

Widdrington envisaged the coming of a 'Leisure State' within half a century, and urged that the Church take up its task of teaching people how to convert the raw material of free time into leisure. 43

41. Reckitt, Faith and Society, p.333.
42. Ibid., p.380.
Christendom's emphasis on vocation and leisure stemmed largely from discontent with the conditions of modern industrial life and a desire to recreate the supposedly simple social and economic patterns of medieval days. This tendency was exhibited even more strongly in the late 1930s and early 1940s when Anglo-Catholics began to turn their attention increasingly to agriculture and the rural community. In a sense, the importance attached to the social dividend and the cultivation of leisure reflected inability to come to terms with the working environment of secondary industry. There was little attempt made to examine the concept of vocation in relation to the factory floor and the assembly line: it was more or less assumed that man's creative impulses, in a modern industrialized society, would have to be realized in leisure activities rather than in the workplace. Leisure was virtually to replace meaningful work as a means of glorifying God. This outlook was superficial; not only because it evaded the problems implicit in a twentieth century doctrine of vocation, but because it assumed that the effects of mechanization and centralization would be confined to the workplace. There was a strong possibility, as Casserley pointed out in 1940, that leisure pursuits in the hands of the 'pleasure industry' would become 'increasingly

44. Reckitt's sections on 'Motive and Vocation in Industry', and 'The Worker and Industrial Technique', in Faith and Society, pp.336-58, are good examples of the half-hearted and generalized approach to the problem of relating vocation to large-scale, highly mechanized production.
standardised, impersonal and vulgar'.

This lack of realism stemmed from the ambivalence of medievalists towards the whole problem of technical progress. Never comfortable with a phenomenon which was a sharp reminder of the inapplicability of medieval social doctrines to twentieth century society, they resolved the contradiction either by decrying modern technology altogether, or by exaggerating its potential. The anti-machinery lobby, led by Henry Slesser and Arthur Penty, argued that modern society was 'entirely in the grip of the machine', the advent of which had broken down an organic society into 'a mere aggregation of atomic units' and 'replaced the folk by the proletariat'. The solution lay in a return to 'simpler conditions of life and society' which would reduce the complexity of human relationships. Penty believed the first steps were a revival of agriculture and the promotion of emigration. By contrast, the social credit group disguised abhorrence for the machine by lauding its possibilities and hoping that its worst effects would be avoided if it was directed towards desirable social objectives. By accepting Douglas' estimate of the


increasing dimensions of technological unemployment, they were able to envisage a leisure state in which humans were only minimally involved with the operations of the machine itself. If Penty contemplated a return to the beautiful, creative life in spite of industrialization, the social creditors envisaged this because of it. In either case the prime motive was escape.

Social credit appeared to provide the final thread in a synthesis woven on the basis of medieval social forms. Yet its very premise, technological advance and an age of plenty, made it incapable, ultimately, of fleshing out a social model belonging to an age of scarcity. The assumption behind the social dividend was that every man should share in the common inheritance by virtue of his membership of society. But this, together with the notion that a diminishing proportion of the population would, in future, need to be employed, cut right across the principles of a functional society — that there should be no payment without the performance of service and that property should be related to function. Confrontation of those aspects of modern society which seemed to frustrate medieval social teaching led, ironically, to the adoption of a theory which rendered the original model well and truly out of date. The Christendom writers never recognized this contradiction.

47. See above, chap.V, part 3.
Reckitt had become a social creditor in November 1919, largely at Orage's persuasion, and in May 1926, he and Demant had been foundation members of a group of social creditors who met fortnightly at the Chandos restaurant, throughout the inter-war period. But social credit did not make a significant impact on the wider Christian social movement until the depression when, in the hands of the Christendom group, it filled the vacuum created by the collapse of ethical idealism. The group had, by this time, reached a position of influence in the movement. Its close contacts with the ICF and the Social and Industrial Commission, its position of influence in the CSC, and a bond of sympathy with Temple, all put the Christendom group in a position to push its social synthesis as the authentic Christian sociology.

48. The other members of the Chandos group were, for a short time, Egerton Swann, Alan Porter and Albert Newsome; and over a longer period, Philip Mairet, W.T. Symons, B.J. Boothroyd, Hilderic Cousens, Geoffrey Davies, R.S.J. Rands and, occasionally, T.S. Eliot. See Reckitt, As it Happened, pp.168 and 189-94. Swann, an Anglo-Catholic, was a former member of the CSL and a fellow contributor to the New Age; Porter (according to Reckitt) was a poet and psychologist; Newsome was a contributor to both the New Age and the New English Weekly; Mairet, A.R. Orage's biographer, was a contributor to the New Age and Orage's successor as editor of the New English Weekly, a contributor to Prospect for Christendom (1945), and the author of a retrospective review for the Church Assembly's Social and Industrial Council on The National Church and the Social Order (1956); Symons, a businessman, wrote on social credit, including articles in Christendom and the New Age; Boothroyd was a journalist; Rands was an old history pupil of Reckitt's; Davies was a member of the Sociological Society and the Distributist League; and Cousens also wrote on social credit, including a contribution to Demant's volume on The Just Price (1930). Finlay, 'Religious Response', p.367, note 16 and p.369, claims that T.M. Heron, an Anglo-Catholic, and director of Cresta Silks, was also a member of Chandos.
Its key manoeuvre was getting Demant into the directorship of the CSC's Research Committee. Reckitt obviously appreciated the significance of this position as he contributed Demant's salary for three of the four years he was there (£1,200). With Reckitt, Kenyon and Tribe also on the committee, it was possible to co-opt four social creditors: Heron, Cousens, the Marquis of Tavistock (an evangelical Anglican) and J.E. Tuke (a Quaker). The CSC's activities reflected this social credit membership. In 1929, a sub-committee of the Research Committee worked with the Chandos group on the problem of 'Christian Conscience in Politics'. In the same year, the committee organized a CSC conference on the just price which gave the Christendom group an excellent opportunity to outline the relationship between medieval social principles and credit reform. Malcolm Spencer, himself a social creditor and joint secretary of the CSC, conceded that the social credit analysis had not carried the conference entirely, but publication of the papers later, both in Stockholm and in a separate book edited by Demant, widened the audience. In 1930, the CSC conference discussed the Christian attitude to interest and investment and in 1931, unemployment.  

51. These conferences resulted in an edited volume by Reckitt, The Christian Tradition regarding Interest and Investment, SPCK, London, 1930 and Demant's This Unemployment.
to the Churches' on unemployment, published early in 1931, showed strong evidence of Demant's hand. In 1935, another conference, on 'The Christian Approach to Reconstruction', provided a further opportunity for the airing of social credit views. Apart from this, the CSC was a base from which the Christendom writers could operate and cement contacts with other branches of the movement. It gave them a status which they would not have had merely as organizers of the Anglo-Catholic summer schools and editors of Christendom. When Bell consulted Reckitt and Demant in 1933, in connection with a statement on the economic situation which he was preparing for the Council of Christian Ministers, it was in their capacity as members of the CSC. Most significantly, the CSC provided an ecumenical audience for a group which, in its own right, would hardly have reached Evangelicals and Broad churchmen, let alone Nonconformists. As it was, the group and its fellow-travellers gained a European audience through Stockholm, and social credit was obviously behind some of the pronouncements of the Congregational Union in England.

52. Reckitt believed the message showed 'more originality and penetration than such officially sponsored documents are accustomed to show' - a sure sign that a Christendom sympathizer had written it. He quotes a section of the document in Faith and Society, p.375. See also pp.139-42 for Reckitt's account of the work of the Research Committee.


55. In 1933 the Congregational Assembly passed a resolution which stressed that the triumphs of modern invention should result in higher living standards and increased leisure for the impoverished classes. It urged all Christians to seek this just and possible result through the application of Christian principles to the production, distribution and consumption of wealth. (The Times, 10 May 1933, p.19). A similar resolution was passed in 1934. Finlay sees this as evidence of the temporary influence, through Spencer, of 'a brand of Anglican thinking'. See 'Religious Response', pp.364-5.
The Christendom group's economic analysis, linked as it was to a theological explanation of man's disorder, provided the Christian social movement with a plausible explanation of social crisis. In marked contrast to the moral judgement of the official Church, that the financial crisis was the wages of sin, the Christendom group suggested that the present distress was a result, not of faulty human motivation, but of an economic system which contravened the natural order and deprived human beings of the bounty of God's creation. The idea that the current situation was not 'natural' or 'right' had meaning for a generation which had seen resources devoted to war only a decade and a half earlier, but which now saw families without enough to eat. Translated into economic terms, the Christendom diagnosis explained the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in terms of a monetary system which failed to distribute the goods. The influence of the group's ideas was evident in the manifesto of the 1932 ICF clergy conference which declared that

a situation in which millions of men and women are denied a share in God's abundance, opened to the world by scientific invention, is plainly contrary to the Will of God and, therefore, the deepest concern of the Church.56

Christian social groups did not commit themselves

to social credit as such, or adopt the Christendom writers' complete disregard for economic expertise; but they were prepared to assert that economics should serve spiritual ends and that Christians should give their attention to economic schemes and details.57 Although they would have vehemently denied it, many of their pronouncements on the depression adopted some of the assumptions of social credit theory, mediated through the theo-sociological language of the Christendom group. The popular Christian diagnosis of the depression as poverty in the midst of plenty, for example, echoed the Douglasite stress on technical achievement, the potential of production, and the inadequacy of purchasing power. Much was made of wheat and coffee being burnt in Canada and Brazil and of barrels of herrings being thrown back into the sea: if this occurred while people were starving, something must be radically wrong with the distributive function of the financial system.58

Monetary reform was, of course, topical in the 1930s. The Macmillan Committee on Finance and Industry, appointed


58. See e.g. CA, Report of Proceedings, vol.XVI, no.1, spring 1935, pp.64-5 and 67-8; CA 484, pp.4-5; and Council of Christian Ministers, 'The Present Economic Distress'. 
by Labour in 1929, presented its report in 1931. Strongly influenced by Keynes, who was one of its members, it was critical of orthodox financial policy. 59 In 1935, the treatise of the Next Five Years Group advocated public control of the Bank of England and the joint stock banks 60 and in 1936, Keynes published his General Theory. Christian social thinkers imbibed this general concern. But their outlook was Douglasite rather than Keynesian, and in many cases pre-dated the depression. In 1922, Temple had commented in the Pilgrim that Douglas and the New Age were 'doing a great service in calling so insistently for attention to the manipulation of credit'. He promised to give the scheme some publicity, although was careful not to advocate it. 61 He fulfilled this promise in the next issue with an article from Hewlett Johnson, at this time a confirmed social creditor, and there were subsequent articles from Egerton Swann and Demant. 62 In the 1930s, monetary reform became very popular in Anglican circles. The Church Times, in 1931, commended the CSC's assertion that the outstanding feature of the depression was 'the failure of the buying and selling process to distribute

60. The Next Five Years, chap.V.
the goods which modern applied science produces in such abundance'. Four years later it commented that the victory of Abbehart's social creditors in Alberta would not give the scheme a fair chance because the government did not have the power to issue or control currency. It would be 'a thousand pities if the failure of an ill-conceived programme' obscured 'the inescapable truth that in the peak years of prosperity Major Douglas was alone in accurate prediction of the course economic forces were to take'. The conversion of Kirk to monetary reform meant that it was discussed at several ICF conferences and featured in the Fellowship's crusade syllabus. His interest, and that of the Christendom group, was reflected in the Social and Industrial Commission's report on unemployment, in 1935, which treated social credit as one of three ways of dealing with the problem of poverty in plenty. From 1937 to 1939, Kirk's Anglican group devoted its attention to the Church and monetary reform. This group was largely a front for the Christendom group but its report, published by the ICF, was finally accepted by both the Fellowship and the Anglican Evangelical Group

63. This was a quotation from the CSC manifesto. See Church Times, 17 July 1931, p.67. See also 'Summary', ibid., 25 Sep. 1931.
64. Ibid., 13 Sep. 1935, p.259. See also letters to Church Times, 28 June and 5 July 1935.
66. CA 484, pp.9-11.
Movement (AEGM). 67

The Christendom stress on technological unemployment was also influential. The Council of Christian Ministers and the ICF claimed that mechanical improvements and labour-saving devices would result in increased leisure which had important implications for human life. The Social and Industrial Commission linked technological unemployment with insufficient purchasing power and argued that distribution of material wealth should be related to 'potential resources rather than to opportunities for employment'. This, of course, implied a social dividend. 68

Of the groups influenced by the Christendom group, the Council of Christian Ministers was the least susceptible. Its ranks included a high proportion of bishops and Nonconformist establishment figures, although the Christendom group had important contacts in Kirk and Spencer, and meetings were held on ICF territory. The language and concepts of the manifesto on 'The Present Economic Distress' clearly reflected the role of Demant and Reckitt in its composition. But it was briefer and more restrained than ICF and Social and Industrial Commission publications and retained the character of a semi-official pronouncement which dealt in generalities rather than

68. 'The Present Economic Distress', p.18; Unemployment: With Special Reference to the World Financial Crisis', p.(ii); CA 484, pp.4-5.
The situation with the ICF was quite different. Kirk was convinced of the need for monetary reform and gave the Christendom group every chance to present its views. Indeed, the Christendom outlook replaced the Fifth Report as the main source of the ICF's ideas. This is not to say that the Fellowship accepted social credit. Far from it: it was always careful to balance conference addresses by Christendom members with more conventional speeches and it carefully dissociated itself from social credit views. One of the best examples of this was the executive's reaction to the Anglican group's treatise, 'The Church and Monetary Reform'. While accepting the theological section, members were distinctly uneasy about the economic part, which they recognized as definitely supporting social credit. Clearly, the whole enterprise had been dominated by the Christendom group, and the ICF members of the Anglican group had been pushed aside. The executive decided to submit the document to a number of economists and then ask the Anglican group to revise it in accordance with their criticisms. After this procedure had been followed the ICF did authorize publication of the document although it was clearly pointed out that


this did not constitute full agreement with its conclusions.\textsuperscript{71} It is not clear how much re-drafting took place. Certainly some of the economists consulted would not have taken kindly to social credit and their criticisms would have been stringent.\textsuperscript{72} Yet the final document, although not specifically advocating social credit, was clearly based on the theory. This was typical of the ICF's position: it would have nothing to do with the technical theory, yet its pronouncements were heavily influenced by it. The report of the 1932 clergy conference had declared that

\begin{quote}
the real wealth of a nation consists in the productive capacity of the people and of the possible production of the fields, factories, and workshops. The productive capacity of the nation is immense, but only a small percentage of its potential output is available for consumption by the people.... there is a radical defect in our present monetary system.\textsuperscript{73}
\end{quote}

This did not come from the Bible.

The same was true of the Social and Industrial Commission. Its 1935 report on unemployment only acknowledged social credit (not by name) as one of three views, yet it was permeated by Christendom language and assumptions. Reckitt, Widdrington and Kirk had obviously

\textsuperscript{71} ICF executive minutes, 8 July, 14 Oct., 9 Dec. 1938, 10 Mar. and 12 May 1939; Kirk, foreword to The Church and Monetary Reform, p.4.


\textsuperscript{73} 'Unemployment: With Special Reference to the World Financial Crisis', p.(iii).
carried a lot of weight on the Commission and secured that half the evidence came from social creditors. The general, 'objective' section of the report read as though drafted by Reckitt: it made the Christendom distinction between 'work' and 'employment'; pointed to the confused social objectives of a system which attempted both to produce goods with technical efficiency and provide employment for as many people as possible; and argued that the Christian conception of vocation was violated when people had to find employment 'as a condition to being given the means of livelihood'. The section expounding the three divergent economic views devoted two pages to social credit, but only a short paragraph to each of the other two views.

The Assembly's debate on unemployment was significant. When finally put to the vote, the report was accepted unanimously, but discussion had lasted two days and there had been considerable opposition. Its favourable treatment of social credit had obviously aroused suspicion of the report before the debate. The two Commissioners who introduced it were defensive from the outset. Winnington-Ingram denied that they were 'proposing to go baldheaded

74. Reckitt, Demant and Spencer. CA 484, p.2.
75. Ibid., pp.3-6.
76. The first of these views was that there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the structure and aims of industrial society. The second view was that some sort of national organization of economics and finance was necessary to promote greater financial equality and create employment.
for the Douglas system of Social Credit'; and his fellow bishop, R.G. Parsons, insisted that the report did not aim to secure assent to any one proposal, but asked only a fair hearing for each point of view. Several speakers were not convinced. Conservative MP, Ralph Assheton, expressed their disquiet: it was wrong, he claimed, to commend to the scrutiny of Christians 'an economic system which had not the support of any sound economist throughout the world'. He pointed out that Douglas had given evidence before the Macmillan committee and that his theories had also been examined by a Labour party committee. Neither of these bodies had commended them. Assheton was particularly concerned about the suggestion in the Social and Industrial Commission's report that the government devote further attention to social credit by appointing a commission which should not contain among its members any persons who have a controlling interest in the present financial system which it is proposed to investigate, nor any who are directly concerned with the propagation of any system advocated as a substitute for it.

This, Assheton pointed out, amounted to requesting that the government appoint a commission containing no financiers and economists to investigate a financial theory which had already been dismissed by a government committee.

The Assembly's acceptance of the report cannot be interpreted as an endorsement of social credit. Members seem to have accepted the Commission's assurance that it.

78. CA 484, p.11.
did not support the Douglas scheme more than any other, and were no doubt mindful of the impact on public opinion if a major report on unemployment were rejected. But there was resistance, even from supporters of the report, like Temple, to the idea that economic expertise could be neglected. What the whole debate did assume, was that a Church body had the right to be discussing an economic problem. Even those who claimed that the Church should only consider the moral aspects of unemployment were drawn into economic debate through their determination to reject an unorthodox theory.79 This showed clearly that the moral approach to economic and industrial issues was merely a first line of defence of the status quo, to be abandoned if an alternative system really seemed to be gaining support.

Temple's speech on the report, though commendatory, did not reveal his personal interest in social credit. This went back to the previous decade when he had encouraged discussion of Douglas' scheme in the pages of the Pilgrim. He became seriously interested during the depression. The cut in unemployment benefit, in 1931, obviously distressed him; and, like Bell, he was uneasy about the effects of drastic economy on the level of unemployment. Although he and Bell supported the government's economy measures in September, doubts about financial orthodoxy were brewing. In November, Temple was influenced by reading Demant's This Unemployment. In a speech delivered a few days later

to York Diocesan Conference, he reiterated Demant's thesis, suggesting that the problem was not one of scarcity, but of abundance; that it was not a matter of employing more men, but of distributing purchasing power; and that the consumer, rather than the producer, should be the pivot of the economy. Temple was sufficiently taken with this analysis to expand his speech into an article for the Contemporary Review the following April.\(^\text{80}\) In 1934 he demonstrated his continuing interest in the Christendom diagnosis by inviting Reckitt to lecture to the York Diocesan Clergy School. Two of the three lectures, especially the last, favoured social credit and, when published the following year, earned Temple's approval.\(^\text{81}\)

In 1933, Temple got together a small committee to investigate unemployment. Interestingly, Peck, Demant and Reckitt were not invited to join this committee, although Spencer was.\(^\text{82}\) Temple was in personal contact with these three and was always willing to listen to their ideas\(^\text{83}\), but he recognized, no doubt, their inflexibility and their

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\(^\text{81}\) Reckitt, conversation with the writer, 28 Apr. 1976 and Religion and Social Purpose, pp.40-5 and 71-3.

\(^\text{82}\) William Temple Papers, Archbishop of York's Committee on Unemployment, 1936, Lambeth Palace Library. The official letterhead of the committee included a list of its members.

\(^\text{83}\) Peck, 'William Temple as Social Thinker', p.68; Demant and Reckitt, conversations with the writer, 21 and 28 Apr. 1976.
lack of enthusiasm for the type of practical enquiry which became the committee's main concern. Nevertheless, its discussions were influenced by Christendom ideas. Two manifestos written by Temple, on the committee's behalf, condemned a society which frustrated God's purpose and abused his gift of abundance by allowing food to be destroyed while multitudes were undernourished. It recognized unemployment as a permanent feature of industrial society, and urged that a new attitude be developed towards it. At present, the committee suggested, unemployment was a curse - 'an affront and a corrosive poison' to personality. Yet the increased leisure made possible by technical progress ought to be 'pure gain'. The opportunities of leisure should not be confused with a condition of enforced idleness due in the main to acute poverty.84

The committee hoped that community service centres would develop out of the occupational centres being run by Christians and other groups for the unemployed. Supported by an adequate allowance from the government, men could come to these centres and learn the joy of using their skills for the benefit of the neighbourhood, without expectation of reward.85 The centres would be a recognition of the fact that in an age of machinery, men no longer needed to spend as much time in production for subsistence needs. Christians should

84. The Times, 23 Jan. 1934, p.9 (reprinted as a pamphlet).
learn to regard the occupational centres both as forerunners of the cultural centres of the people in a more justly ordered society, and as a means of restoring to the unemployed the opportunity of serving the community.

Mankind was confronted with a turning-point in history which should be recognized as part of God's purpose. Temple told a capacity crowd in the Albert Hall, in November 1935, that unemployment or involuntary leisure must be perceived as 'a tolerable alternative life'. This could only happen if 'work' was defined to include not only commercial employment, but active service of neighbours and community. As Demant had argued in 1931, unemployment should be regarded not as a disaster, but as an opportunity.

2. The Empirical Approach

Because of its apparent ability to explain the phenomena of unemployment and underconsumption in both theological and economic terms, the Christendom group exerted a strong influence on Christian social thinking during the depression. Nevertheless, much Christian social concern about unemployment and the distressed areas was unaffected by this theoretical diagnosis. For the most part, Christian compassion was demonstrated through

86. Ibid., 23 Jan. 1934, p.9.
donations of food and clothing, provision of odd jobs, and support for occupational centres and schemes of parish adoption. Christians were also critical of State provision for the unemployed. Under the current system, the unemployed person was supported initially by insurance benefits, then, when these were exhausted, by 'transitional payments', subject to a family means test. On the basis of the principle (enunciated by both the Fifth Report and Copec) that unemployment was a social rather than a personal failure and that the unemployed person had a right to adequate maintenance by the community, Christians criticized both the amount of assistance offered and the operation of the means test. The level of transitional payments was widely regarded as inadequate for subsistence. Kempthorne and Garvie, as joint chairmen of the CSC, wrote to the press in 1932, claiming 'unimpeachable evidence' that even before the 1931 cuts, 'the standard of life possible for large numbers of the

88. The ICF was prominent in the organization of occupational centres and parish adoption. This latter scheme, commended by Lang and Bell to their dioceses, encouraged prosperous southern parishes to take particular responsibility for a parish in one of the distressed areas. See e.g. Torch, June 1932, pp.(iii)-(iv); July 1932, pp.(i)-(ii) and 102-3; Jan. 1933, pp.5-6; 'In the Service of the Unemployed', Feb. 1933; Mar. 1933, pp.33-4; G.K.A. Bell to The Times, 10 Dec. 1932, p.12; Rev. P.H. Rogers to The Times, 14 Dec. 1932, p.8 and 13 Jan. 1933, p.8; The Times, 24 Jan. 1933, p.7; 3 Apr. 1933, p.8 and 11 Nov. 1933, p.7; Guardian, 18 Nov. 1932, p.895; 25 Nov. 1932, p.917; 9 Dec. 1932, p.960; 16 Dec. 1932, p.986.

89. For expression of this principle see e.g. 'Unemployment: With Special Reference to the World Financial Crisis', p.(ii) and 'Notes and Comments', Christendom, vol.6, no.23, Sep. 1936, p.171.
unemployed' had fallen 'far below a reasonable subsistence level'. There was widespread support for a letter to The Times from Temple, in March 1934, appealing to the government to use its budget surplus to restore the cuts in unemployment benefit rather than to reduce taxation. Chamberlain, announcing shortly afterwards his intention to restore the cuts, acknowledged the effectiveness of public pressure on this issue. For the rest of the decade, the low level of unemployment benefit and the poverty of the distressed areas remained a major concern of Christian groups. The means test was criticized both in principle, because it established need as the criterion and denied the right of the unemployed person to relief, and in practice, because it undermined self-respect and family unity. Christians were particularly concerned that


because the test included the earnings of the extended family, it often presented children with the choice of supporting their parents or leaving home. Apart from this, the test was frequently administered by the Unemployment Assistance Committees with little sensitivity or social skill.  

There were, of course, many Anglicans who denied that the State had a responsibility to maintain the unemployed. Lord Hugh Cecil, for example, insisted that the primary responsibility for supporting the unemployed should remain with the family. He claimed that relief was given, not because men were out of work, but because they were in need. Because unemployment was a 'pure misfortune' rather than the result of a defective industrial system, it was reasonable that relatives should be the first to bear the burden. As Cecil saw it: 'no-one has a right to employment ... but poor men have a right to our compassion and charity'. The existence of these attitudes, even within the ICF, is a warning against assuming that radical criticism of the social order was a popular Anglican pastime.


Within the SCM, dissatisfaction with the theoretical character of Christian sociology was prompting a more self-consciously empirical approach to the question of relating Christian belief to secular life. Where ethical idealists had endeavoured to bridge the gap by intellectualizing about the moralization of industry and property, and the Christendom writers had tried to unify existence by incorporating secular life into a theological pattern, the SCM approached the problem through the experience of the individual - urging students to relate their faith to their future careers. As Davis McCaughey, a prominent SCM member, later explained it, there was 'a self-conscious movement away from the search for Christian principles towards the discovery of the obedience of the involved man, personal and corporate'.

The heart of the matter, as it appeared to the SCM, was what Dutch ecumenicist, W.A. Visser 't Hooft, called the problem of the Christian as thinker in a secular environment. Visser 't Hooft suggested that Christian intellectuals had little sense of vocation: they were unable 'to establish a connection between their Christian convictions and their daily task'. Very few Christian doctors, lawyers, or politicians had thought through 'the implications of their faith for their profession'. Under

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the leadership of Ronald Preston and Edwin Barker, the Industrial Department of the SCM deliberately addressed itself to this question, focussing attention on the experience of people already engaged in industry. Christians familiar with the world of employment were invited to meetings and conferences to discuss with students the personal and social problems they had encountered as Christians. The aim of this approach was to provide potential professionals with a philosophical framework into which their technical expertise could be fitted. Conferences were also devoted to the analysis of trends in modern society and industry in the light of the Christian faith, and were addressed by academics as well as industrial experts. At one such conference, in 1934, businessmen, workers, students, and economists met to discuss industrial reconstruction. Speakers included G.C. Allen, professor of economics at Liverpool University; R.L. Barclay, of Barclays Bank; Clifton Robbins of the International Labour Office; A.W. Ashby, professor of agricultural economics at the University College of Wales; and Colin Clarke, lecturer in statistics at Cambridge.

In these ventures the SCM worked closely with the Christian Auxiliary Movement, established in 1912 to provide a continuation of SCM work amongst ex-students. Together, the two movements kept a register of those who had passed through the SCM into industry and might wish a further opportunity to discuss the relationship between work and faith. The Auxiliary supervised the formation of groups
of Christians in industry in an attempt to facilitate this type of discussion. It also encouraged the development of institutes of industrial affairs in larger industrial towns to enable Christians and non-Christians from different spheres of industry to study its problems in the context of the immediate locality. Through SCM members such as Barker, Vidler, Oldham and Walter Moberly, there were also strong links with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the CCFCL. 97

Temple's unemployment investigation was a good example of the empiricism favoured in SCM circles. The committee he formed operated from SCM headquarters and included several who had been active in the movement - Bell, Moberly, Oldham, Eleanora Iredale, Alice Cameron, Zoe Fairfield and Herbert Gray. Financed by the Pilgrim Trust, the committee sponsored a study of unemployment which deliberately combined Christian values with empirical investigation and secular expertise. 98 The committee believed that 'in order to discover the most fruitful and rewarding lines of action' it was necessary to draw to the fullest extent on the contributions both of specialists in different fields and of the experience of


98. The group which Temple had convened at Bishopsthorpe in 1929 had favoured this sort of approach. See Discussions on the Approach to a Christian Sociology, pp.12-13. Oldham, Tawney and Moberly had all been part of this group.
those who, in a large variety of practical ways, are engaged in dealing with the problem.

The actual work of the study was done by A.D.K. Owen of PEP, a trained economist and sociologist; Walter Oakeshott, a Winchester College master; and H.W. Singer, a Cambridge economist. They were assisted by a psychologist, Dr Wagner, who had previous experience in surveying unemployment.

While the task of writing the report was entrusted to the investigators, it was made clear that they were responsible to the committee and that the enquiry should be conducted within the terms it laid down. Iredale told Owen that the committee 'saw the significance of the enquiry in terms of the value of the person and his relation to eternal values'. This concern with 'the moral and spiritual aspects of the problem' was reflected in the stated objectives of the investigation: to discover the physical, psychological and moral effects of unemployment on the unemployed and on others in the community; and in the light of this knowledge to assess the value and relevance of work being done by voluntary agencies.

99. First page of an unsigned memorandum submitted to the York meeting of the Pilgrim Trust Unemployment Committee of Enquiry on 27 Feb. 1936, William Temple Papers, Archbishop of York's Committee on Unemployment, 1936. It is clear from the minutes of the York meeting that this was written by Iredale and that it became the basis of the enquiry.

100. Minutes of Pilgrim Trust Unemployment Committee of Enquiry, 20 Apr. and 30 June 1936, ibid.; Men Without Work, pp.(ix)-(x). Oakeshott was described in the minutes of April 20 as one who had 'the humanistic outlook, first rate intellectual qualifications and the ability to approach the task without any preconceptions and study it from an objective point of view'.

The study concentrated on the phenomenon of long-term unemployment in an attempt to discover what types of men had been long out of work; whether there was any connection with their previous employment history; what were their attitudes towards the possibility of re-employment; what effect unemployment had on standards and values; and whether the opportunity was being taken to develop leisure activities. Although its survey of six towns—Deptford, Leicester, Liverpool, Blackburn, Crook in County Durham, and the Rhondda urban district in South Wales—provided ample evidence of the demoralizing effects of unemployment on its victims, the report ended on a note which reflected the Christendom hope of a coming leisure state. It commented that unemployment, if handled properly, could become 'a time of recreation, and a time of hope'. But the report was no polemic: it was a detailed and objective empirical study which provided valuable information on the plight of the unemployed.

The empiricism of the SCM was reinforced by the theological standpoint developing in ecumenical circles. Emil Brunner's The Divine Imperative, published in English in 1937, was important for its stress on the existential nature of Christianity as a faith to be confronted in the reality of the present. Brunner denied that the pattern

103. Marwick has described it as 'a classic of objectivity and sensitivity'. See his Britain in the Century of Total War, p.230.
of a true social order could be deduced from theological and natural knowledge. The divine will for society could only be discovered 'on each particular occasion, in obedience to the revealed will of God'. In contrast to neo-Thomist theology, which stressed that nature was restored by grace, Brunner posited a sharp distinction between the orders of redemption and creation. There was always tension for the Christian between God's command, which was personal, and the requirements of the natural order (the institutions of the family, the economic system and the State). This tension was the source of all the problems of Christian ethics.

This existential view of Christianity was evident in the writing of British ecumenicists such as Barker, Preston, and Oldham, and in the theological basis of the Oxford conference. Oldham insisted that 'the spring of Christian action is response to a God ... Who makes known His will in the living present'. The primary concern of the Christian ethic was with 'faith and obedience'. It was 'an ethic of inspiration rather than an ethic of ends', concentrating on personal fellowship with God rather than on goals to be attained. To do God's will in the concrete

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situation was the supreme consideration.106

This was not to deny the social implications of Christianity. While it was not a system of ethics, as the idealists suggested, nor a hierarchy of ends, as the Thomist system claimed, it continually demanded a response from Christians in the social order. As Barker and Preston put it,

the continuous coming of God into situations whenever the Gospel is preached or apprehended...far from lessening the ethical significance of the faith, puts man under a permanent moral demand.107

The Christian constantly experienced a conflict between his life in worship and communion with God, and his life in personal and social relations with his fellow-men. He was at war with the standards of the world. Because the kingdom of God, although established through Christ, was not yet completed, the Christian must discover the best means of checking evil and increasing the possibilities of love in a sinful world. God's love must be mediated to the world through the concept of justice. In the words of the Oxford report on the economic order,

the relative...standard for all the social arrangements and institutions, all the economic structures and political systems, by which the life of man is ordered, is the principle of justice. Justice, as the ideal of an harmonious relation of life to life, obviously presupposes the sinful tendency of one life to take advantage of another. This sinful tendency it seeks to check, by defining the rightful place and privilege which each life must have in the harmony

106. Visser 't Hooft and Oldham, Church and its Function in Society, pp.236-7. See also CNL, no.6, 6 Dec. 1939, pp.2-3.
of the whole and by assigning the duty of each to each. 108

The realities of social justice would always fall short of the law of love. But this was no reason to conclude that Christians could not discriminate between one social system and another. Their personal relationship with God would always provide a criterion by which to judge the possibilities of a situation. But there were no 'Christian' social solutions. Christians were not faced with choices between absolute good and absolute wrong, or choices in terms of vast generalizations such as an egalitarian society or its opposite. At each historical moment a choice had to be made between a number of sinful alternatives thrown up by the world. To choose the best of these alternatives was to make the absolutely right decision; but because Christian judgements were always relative to time and place, and varied in accordance with knowledge and opinions, Christians would always differ on immediate practical issues. 109

This was diametrically opposed to the Christendom approach. In a forthright theological criticism of their views as presented at the 1941 Malvern conference, Preston argued that the neo-Thomist position erred in assuming that all Christians, if they had a sound theology, would reach the same judgements about social order. This was to

ignore two important factors: 'that any particular interpretation of truth and right is contingent and relative, and to a certain extent corrupted, and in any case involves an element of specialized knowledge.' These two errors were implicit in the Christendom group's medieval outlook. First, they mistook the historically conditioned social system of the middle ages for a Christian system, thus confusing the eternal truths of the gospel with one society's attempt to secure justice - the medieval solution bore no relation to the social alternatives thrown up by the modern world. Secondly, the Christendom outlook perpetuated the medieval fallacy that the outlines of a Christian social order could be established on the basis of theological truth alone, without recourse to specialist knowledge of the political and social system. The task of integrating social life was not helped by the 'attempt to make theology short-circuit the work of the social sciences, and proclaim from above what a "Christian" social order shall be.' Knowledge could only be unified when Christians accepted that the material provided by different branches of learning formed an indispensable element in the formation of Christian judgements. When this was recognized, said Barker and Preston,

we can proceed to the task, as yet hardly begun, of bringing unity with freedom into the intellectual world, by relating specialized

knowledge in a new and living way to theology.

3. Christians in a Post-Christian Society

Meeting at Oxford in 1937, representatives of the ecumenical movement were conscious of the need to re-think the whole question of the relationship between Church, community, and State. The starting-point of discussions was the belief that the Christian Church was placed in a world which was rapidly abandoning Christian values. It was recognized that Christian social thinking must begin, not with the ideal of a Christian society, but with the fact of a post-Christian society. Oldham's description of the occasion and setting of the conference captured this feeling of historical change:

There is a widespread sense, which finds expression in the writings and utterances of many serious thinkers, Christian and non-Christian, that we stand to-day at one of the major turning-points in history. The basal assumptions which have hitherto given a meaning to life, and unity and stability to civilization, have lost their unquestioned validity. An epoch in the life of mankind is drawing to a close, and we are on the threshold of a new age in which new conceptions of life still struggling in the womb of time will rule men's minds and direct their conduct.112

This message was distilled from a variety of sources: Niebuhr, Berdyaev, Dawson and Maritain argued that Godless western civilization had reached a point of crisis; Karl

Mannheim, G.D.H. Cole and Peter Drucker traced, from a secular standpoint, the crucial changes taking place in modern society. The most ominous development, from the Christian standpoint, was the conflict between the Church and pagan totalitarian states in Europe; a conflict which they feared would be experienced, in more subtle form, in the liberal democracies. Oldham warned that democratic forms of government might well obscure the threat to Christianity from the 'far-reaching secularization of thought and life'. Influenced by Mannheim's stress on the powerfulness of modern social techniques, Oldham feared that centralized public services such as education and the media would be used to permeate the modern community with 'a philosophy of life and a pattern of living ... wholly, or in important respects, contrary to the Christian understanding of the meaning and ends of human existence'. Democracy, as Dawson and Eliot agreed, could be both totalitarian and non-Christian.


The need to counteract these modern tendencies was the central concern of an informal group of intellectuals which began to meet, at Oldham's instigation, in April 1938. The Moot, as it came to be called, included Eliot, Dawson, and Mannheim, and was largely composed of people who had been to the Oxford conference and were concerned, broadly, with the task of influencing society in a more Christian direction.116 Eliot's Boutwood Lectures, delivered in March 1939 and published subsequently as *The Idea of a Christian Society*, reflected some of the outlook and discussions of the Moot.117 Eliot argued that there were three positive historical points in the relationship between Christianity and society: that at which Christians were a new minority in a society of positive pagan traditions; the point at which the whole society could be called Christian; and the stage when practising Christians must be recognized as a minority in a society which had ceased to be Christian. Modern English culture was balanced precariously between


the second and third points. Assuming that a society had not ceased to be Christian until it had become 'positively something else', Eliot argued that western liberal democracy was 'mainly negative', but that in so far as it was positive, it was still Christian. Britons must make a conscious choice between 'the formation of a new Christian culture, and the acceptance of a pagan one'.

Eliot was professedly less concerned with investigating the means of attaining a Christian society than with outlining its essential features. These he described as the Christian State, the Christian Community, and the Community of Christians. The Christian State was 'the Christian Society under the aspect of legislation, public administration, legal tradition, and form'. Its rulers would not necessarily be Christian, or even incapable of committing un-Christian acts, but they would work within a Christian framework which demanded the evaluation of political behaviour in Christian terms. They would have received a Christian education which, while not compelling belief, would train them 'to think in Christian categories'. The essential thing would not be the Christianity of the statesman, but 'a minimum, conscious conformity of behaviour'.

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118. Eliot, *Idea of a Christian Society*, pp.12-19. Eliot defined democracy as an empty framework which could be filled with totalitarian content as easily as any other; and liberalism as a movement away from, rather than towards, something definite.
Eliot also defined the Christian Community in terms of a minimum of Christian behaviour. Religion would be habitual and unconscious rather than an object of thought. The social and religious life of ordinary individuals would be integrated in a 'unitary' community based on the parish and it would not be necessary for them to distinguish between 'distinctly religious and Christian' and 'merely social' aspects of the community's code of behaviour.

It was only from the Community of Christians that 'a conscious Christian life on its highest social level' would be expected. This smaller unit would perform the vital task of framing a Christian philosophy of life and educating the wider community. Eliot's intellectual élite was inspired by Coleridge's clerisy, but adapted to the conditions and requirements of modern society. It would be wider than Coleridge's concept in that it would have to include some who were not professing Christians and who did not necessarily accord theology a position of supremacy. It would be narrower, in including not the whole teaching body, but only those of 'superior intellectual and/or spiritual gifts'. By their 'identity of belief and aspiration' and their background of a common education and culture, this élite would be able 'collectively to form the conscious mind
and the conscience of the nation'.

Eliot's lectures were inspired by the desire to define more clearly the role of the Moot - the prototype of the modern clerisy - in the creation of a positively Christian society. In many respects his thinking ran along the same lines as that of other members. The disintegrative effect of liberalism on culture, and of democratization on the functioning of the intelligentsia, had long been a theme of Mannheim's work. Mannheim believed that 'the genuinely creative intelligentsia' was crucial to the rational planning of a democracy. A revival of Coleridge's clerisy had been urged by Middleton Murry in a paper on a Christian theory of society, delivered to the Moot in September 1938. At its next meeting, in January 1939, the Moot had discussed a paper by John Baillie which drew

119. *Ibid.*, pp.26-42. In later years, although he maintained his belief in the importance of an intellectual élite who would 'at the top ... originate the dominant ideas, and alter the sensibility, of their time', Eliot modified his requirement about identity of belief. His experience in the Moot led him to suggest that agreement amongst clerics would be negative, in the sense of dissatisfaction with the *status quo*, but opinions about the best ways of changing society would often be completely opposed. T.S. Eliot, 'On the Place and Function of the Clerisy', a paper written for the Moot meeting of Dec. 1944 and published as an appendix in Kojecký, *Eliot*, pp.240-8.


attention to Maritain's conception of Christendom as a society inspired by Christianity and led by a Christian cives praeclari: 'the most politically evolved and most devoted section of the Christian laity'.

Similarly, Oldham envisaged an intellectual élite - a 'Church within the Church' - which would produce something like a Christian parallel to Mein Kampf and influence substantial social change. His *The Resurrection of Christendom*, published in 1940, argued along lines broadly synonymous with Eliot's.

Recognition of the strength of secular influences in modern society had important implications for the idea of a Christian social order. Maritain, Eliot, and Oldham all accepted that a Christian society of the future would be pluralist. Oldham described his resurrected Christendom as a society 'leavened by Christian insights and standards', but he hesitated to label its social purpose Christian. As practising Christians were a minority, a social philosophy which was to influence public policy would have to gain support from non-Christians and must be defensible on rational, not specifically Christian grounds.

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123. Kojecký, Eliot, pp.168-9; Oldham, *Resurrection of Christendom*, pp.(v)-(vi), 21-2 and 53-4. Like Eliot, whose work he acknowledged, Oldham argued that a 'consciously post-Christian world' was emerging but that in Britain 'the die' was not yet cast.

be maintained between Church and society. Christ's call to 'uncalculating allegiance and to moral perfection' was only indirectly applicable to the collective activities of a society not fully committed to Christian ends. If it were 'levelled down to what the generality of men in their present spiritual condition' could understand and accept, the Christian faith would be compromised. The unconditional obedience of the Christian must not be confused with the relative and time-conditioned judgements of the citizen. The proper basis of a social philosophy was not 'the full Christian faith' but the natural virtues of truth and justice. The natural law provided common ground for co-operation between Christians and non-Christians in the ordering of social and political life. Christians must assert the truth about man as man as a basis for the full Christian message.

There remained a wide gap between the ecumenical and the Christendom conceptions of a future Christian society. In many respects Eliot shared the Christendom outlook: the Anglo-Catholic love of order and tradition;

the belief that liberalism was subversive of this; and the conviction that social credit was a means of restoring true order. All were deeply influenced by Maritain's neo-Thomism. But the Christendom group was incapable of accepting that a revived Christendom would be a pluralist society. Eliot was careful to dissociate himself from this rigid conception, insisting that his 'idea' was Coleridgean as much as Thomist:

In using the term 'Idea' of a Christian Society I do not mean primarily a concept derived from the study of any societies which we may choose to call Christian; I mean something that can only be found in an understanding of the end to which a Christian Society, to deserve the name, must be directed.

The Christendom group would not compromise its ideal to fit reality. In a critical review, entitled 'Idea of a Pre-Christian Society', Peck argued that Eliot's 'idea'

128. Eliot also pursued this theme in After Strange Gods (1934). See Kojecky, Eliot, pp.114-5. Demant, Religious Prospect, pp.11-25, argued that a basic contradiction between liberalism's dogma, or fundamental outlook about man, and its doctrine, or consciously held theory of man, resulted in a tendency for it to evolve into totalitarianism. The drift into a pagan culture could only be averted by reassertion of the Christian dogma about man. See also Maurice B. Reckitt, 'Religion and Politics', in V.A. Demant (ed.), Faith that Illuminates, Centenary Press, London, 1935, pp.142-5, for a similar argument about the relationship between liberalism (or toleration, as he calls it) and totalitarianism.

129. Kojecky, Eliot, pp.21-2 and 76-84, claims that Ezra Pound first interested Eliot in social credit, in the early 1930s. His interest was reinforced through contact with the Chandos group when editing the New English Weekly after Orage's death in 1934.

could only be a stage in the development of a truly Christian society. Eliot envisaged 'a society in which the natural end of man - virtue and well-being in community' was acknowledged for all; but 'the supernatural end - beatitude' - only for a few. Peck questioned whether the majority of men could participate in a community in which religious and social life formed a natural whole, if religion was only a matter of largely unconscious behaviour. This precluded, for all but the clerisy, any specifically Christian thinking about the relation between religion and society. Furthermore, outward Christian behaviour would not endure unless sustained by inward Christian belief. Peck refused to call that a Christian society in which sacramental grace and the light of the Gospel had no greater effect upon the majority than to produce in them only 'unconscious behaviour'.

Demant, too, clung to the hope of a society not merely nominally, but actually Christian. In a broadcast address in 1941 he urged the importance of changing inner as well as external behaviour:

the deepest cause of our national sickness is loss of the religion which has formed our culture. We cannot get the Christian results we expect, in the behaviour of men to one another, so long as our souls and minds are not continually being re-formed by Christian devotion and thought.

In 1945, he returned to the same theme:

there is very considerable discussion about the possibility of a more Christian pattern of society, among circles of believers and un-believers, who hold that the ethical content of our Western Civilization is still fundamentally Christian. But the confusions of that discussion, the emptiness of its advice, the prevalent conditional note 'if only men acted Christianly' instead of the authentic Christian indicative 'this is the true nature and end of man'...all this establishes the truth that moral aims for society cannot be effective if they stand alone as objects of the social will. Such aims require support in metaphysical certainty or dogma, in emotional and cultural bent largely induced by the habits of a community, and in the organization of social activities.\textsuperscript{134}

Ultimately, the Christendom group could not accept any minimal definition of a Christian social order. This was partly because they could not separate the natural law from its fuller expression in the Christian faith. By contrast, the ecumenicists distinguished between the law of justice which was applicable to society, and the law of love which commanded the obedience of the Christian. As Oldham pointed out, the charge that Eliot ignored the need of conversion and envisaged a Christian society which did not embody 'the uncompromising demands' of Christianity, rested on a misunderstanding. Eliot's purpose was not to describe the Church and its members, but to outline the minimum requirement that would justify calling a society Christian.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{134} Demant, 'The Idea of a Natural Order', pp.28-9.
\textsuperscript{135} J.H. O[ldham], 'The Idea of a Christian Society', \textit{CNL}, supp.18, 28 Feb. 1940, p.3.
As late as 1945, Christendom writing side-stepped 'the question of Christian duty in a post-Christian world'.\textsuperscript{136} The older members wrote, in \textit{Prospect for Christendom}, about the importance of a recovery in politics, but they remained unable to comprehend the possibility of Christians entering the political world as it was and working towards a more Christian society. Reckitt's introduction acknowledged the need to 'get something done' in the social situation of the moment, but he questioned the validity of Christian participation in secular movements. He believed this activity rested on the assumption that in the controversies and alignments which have arisen out of so many centuries of development unguided by Christian doctrine and unrelated to the social conditions of Christendom, Christians can expect to find parties and movements into which they can fling themselves without reserve.\textsuperscript{137}

Unable to find a mid point between the thoroughly Christian and the totally secular, the group continued to focus on the ideal of Christendom, writing about the natural patterns of society which, more and more, they perceived in the forms of rural and agricultural life.\textsuperscript{138}

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\textsuperscript{136.} Mackinnon, 'Prospect for Christendom', p.30.
\textsuperscript{137.} Reckitt, introduction to \textit{Prospect for Christendom}, p.8. The essays in part III, pp.158-219, were concerned with the importance of recovery in politics.
\textsuperscript{138.} See e.g. the papers delivered to the 1938 summer school on 'The Church and the Rural Community', published in \textit{Christendom}, vol.8, no.30, June 1938 and the report of the school in \textit{ibid.}, no.31, Sep. 1938, pp.204-10. The rural question was considered extensively by CSA during the war. See CSA minutes, 11 Mar. and 25 Nov. 1943, 7 Dec. 1944 and 19 Oct. 1945. A CSA memorandum on 'The Church, the Clergy and the Rural Community' was published in \textit{Christendom}, vol.13, no. 49, Mar. 1943, pp.17-19. Reckitt's editorial in the same number (pp.3-6) was a defence of Christian sociologists' preoccupation with the agricultural question.
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Some of the younger generation openly rejected politics. Denying that public life provided a path towards Christendom, they advocated concentration on 'the basic realities of life' - homes, land, and immediate associates. McLaughlin claimed that it was in 'these smaller, more intimate spheres' that Christian social action would be most effective. The old order was doomed to catastrophe and the new order must be built up from inside. This demanded

both the method of the enclave, the exhibition of a pure norm of the Christian life which merely by being there becomes a centre of new life, and also the method of the cell, the transformation of institutions by organic groups within them.

McLaughlin believed that the Church had lost the opportunity for 'large-scale influence': the world of politics and industry was 'no longer moored conveniently at the Christian quay', and Christian fishermen were best occupied in mending their nets so as to be prepared for the return of the tide. This meant promoting 'healthy living' in the pre-political spheres of life; the development of a sense of community and local responsibility through rural and urban district councils, parish councils, voluntary societies and a revived system of functional

139. Patrick McLaughlin, 'Ananias or Peter?', Christendom, vol.10, no.37, Mar. 1940, p.34.

140. Widdrington, introductory address to the fourteenth summer school. Although one of the older generation, Widdrington shared the views of the younger men on this issue. See the report of the school, ibid., vol.8, no.31, Sep. 1938, p.206. See also George Every, 'The Feet of the Young Men', ibid., vol.10, no.37, Mar. 1940, p.25.
guilds. The recovery of the 'Polis', a community small enough to allow the development of civic responsibility in everyone, was a pre-condition of a return to politics. This was most easily achieved in the rural community which encouraged communal identity more readily than the impersonal environment of industry and city. McLaughlin believed that the war had finally convinced some people of the decadence of urban life:

with some there is a final determination to abandon the old outlook and ways of living, and to mould their lives according to true values. Perceiving the inhumanity of modern urbanization, they leave the city and make their home in the village... recognizing the unnaturalness of childlessness and small families, they choose freely to have families of comparatively large size; disgusted by conventional standards of 'taste', they pledge themselves to observe...a true 'culture'.

This retreat into a Catholic rural paradise was the logical conclusion of the medievalism of the Christendom group. Oldham was quick to point out the unreality of their position: the majority of Christians did not have the opportunity to keep rabbits and grow potatoes, and had to earn their living 'amid the hustle and pressure of industrial life'. The assumption that 'cultivation of soil and soul' was the only proper sphere of Christian living was highly questionable. Even more dubious was the supposition that the basic areas of life could remain independent of State control. The Christendom

141. McLaughlin, 'Ananias or Peter?', pp.33-7.
142. CNL, no.24, 10 Apr. 1940, pp.2-3.
group never came to terms with the conditions of a post-Christian society in which community life was increasingly and unavoidably determined by the nature of the State.

After the Oxford conference, the Christian social movement in England took its orientation from the empirical, existential outlook which had developed in ecumenical circles. Influenced substantially by crisis theology, this approach made a sharp distinction between Church and world, recognizing the autonomy of secular spheres of knowledge and the importance of interpreting theological truth in the light of secular expertise and the context of actual living. Christian social thinkers began to place a new emphasis on the relation between the ultimate and the particular, on the technical expertise and vocation of the laity, and on the reality of living and working in a post-Christian society. This cut right across the medievalist assumptions of the Christendom group: that the pattern of a Christian society could be outlined on the basis of theological and natural knowledge and that the social model thus revealed would have inherent appeal and authority. The Christendom group had assumed that secularism was an aberration which would dissolve in the face of an authoritative Christian message; the ecumenicists acknowledged the secularization of modern society and the futility of expecting anything like a return to the social authority of the medieval Church.
VIII. THE RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY

1. The Impact of Oxford

The major preoccupation of the Christian social movement, in both its ethical and Christendom phases, had been the recovery of the Church's social teaching and the delineation of a Christian standard of social life. The main concern had been to overcome the dichotomy between Church and world by demonstrating the relevance of Christianity for worldly affairs. In its ecumenical stage, the leaders of the movement were concerned to direct attention beyond the formulation of broad Christian social principles to the actual conditions and experiences of social life. Walter Moberly expressed the Oxford perspective in a *CNL* supplement in 1942. 'To the outsider', he commented, 'the pronouncements of the Church have seemed to be remote and irrelevant generalities'. The work of the Church had been 'largely stultified' because it was 'unable to express its message either to outsiders or to its own members in terms of contemporary issues'. There was a need for 'new bridges ... between the worshipping Church and the working world'. Using an analogy from everyday life, Moberly pointed out that when it was desired 'to bridge over a chasm or to tunnel under a hill' it was 'usual to start from both ends at once'. But the Church had been working only from its own end. There was 'need also of a body tunnelling ... from the other end, and consisting of persons who, while having a Christian outlook, are themselves
mainly engaged in practical affairs'.

The corollary of this outlook was a greater emphasis on the role of the laity in relating Christian principles to actual problems. There was a concern to discover the nature of Christian obedience at all levels of social and economic life. Oldham pointed out that 'a recall to religion must necessarily mean a recall to politics'. The increasing complexity of corporate life was narrowing the sphere of effectiveness of the isolated individual and necessitating political action. While the official Church should not become involved in politics, 'it must train its members to see that it is an essential element in their Christian dedication to fulfil their responsibility to God in the political sphere'. It was recognized, though, that policy making and political action could only be the contribution of a minority. The role of the ordinary layman, faced with the small tasks and decisions of everyday life, had been stressed by Oldham in his introduction to the Oxford reports.

It is very plain ... that if the Christian witness is to be borne in social and political life it must be through the action of the multitude of Christian men and women who are actively engaged from day to day in the conduct of administration, industry, and the affairs of the public and common life.... [That life] involves a multitude of decisions from day to day by countless individuals, and there can be no deep change except by the

2. Ibid., no.10, 3 Jan. 1940, pp.2-3. See also Barker and Preston, Christians in Society, pp.50-60.
progressive transformation of the insights and motives which prompt these decisions.  

Although central planning was an increasingly evident feature of modern life, local initiative and action were crucial. Individuals must work to change their immediate environment. The social responsibility of the ordinary Christian would be fulfilled primarily in the sphere of the family and the neighbourhood; secondly, through local government and social services; and thirdly, in the workplace.

The immediate goal of the Christian social movement in its post-Oxford phase was not so much a Christian society, as a responsible society. While earlier Christian social criticism had sought a change in motivation - the substitution of co-operation and service for competition and the pursuit of profit - the Oxford report and subsequent writing assumed man's egocentricity and sought to control it. The exercise of power was recognized as an inevitable part of social life which must be regulated by legal and institutional checks and balances. Discussions began with the reality of a secular society and a powerful State and attempted to discover how rights and responsibilities could be exercised in a manner consistent with human personality and freedom.

This approach required a more detailed conception of Christian social principles (middle axioms) and greater

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4. *CNL*, no.10, 3 Jan. 1940, p.3.
familiarity with the working of modern society. The report of the economic section of the Oxford conference provided a starting-point. The report began with a critique of modern industrialism which summarized the main points of Christian social criticism during the inter-war period and showed the continued influence of Tawney.5

It claimed that the Christian conception of man was 'affronted' in four respects 'by the assumptions and operation of the economic order of the industrialized world'. A system which encouraged acquisitiveness at the expense of dedication to a social purpose; which perpetuated inequalities that seriously impaired the physical and mental growth of large sections of the population; which allowed a few individuals or groups to wield enormous economic power without being responsible to any organ of society; and which frustrated the Christian idea of vocation through socially undesirable work or unemployment, deserved to be condemned. While Christians would always differ about methods of changing society, Christianity provided guidance for decision-making in the form of standards of social justice. The report suggested five such standards: abolition of extreme

inequality of wealth and possessions; the guarantee to every child, irrespective of race or class, of an education, health and environment adequate for the full development of his particular capacities; care of persons disabled by sickness, infirmity or age from economic activity; restoration of a sense of Christian vocation, together with a living wage, wholesome surroundings and a recognized voice in the decisions of the workplace; and use of the resources of the earth with due consideration for the needs of future generations.

The question of property was intimately connected with the achievement of these standards. Again summarizing the key points of earlier discussions, the report emphasized the relativity of all property rights and insisted that accumulations of property should be examined in the light of their social consequences and with due regard to the contribution of the community to wealth production. Clear distinctions should be made between various forms of property; in particular, between personal possessions for use, and ownership of land and the means of production. The latter, which represented power to determine the lives of others, should be subjected to special moral scrutiny.6

The Oxford report was a general statement of the principles of a responsible society, designed to act as a guide for Christians in a variety of countries and social situations. During the war, amidst general talk

of reconstruction, the Commission for International Friendship and Social Responsibility produced a document entitled *Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction* which provided more specific formulations of the Oxford principles and geared them to the concept of a new Britain. Beginning with a reiteration of the four-point Oxford judgement on the economic order, the pamphlet argued the case for planning as a prerequisite of social justice. The justification was partly empirical: the free play of economic forces had not achieved a wise distribution of capital, labour or profits. Instead, it had produced degradation, war, and the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty. The Commission insisted that the supply of human needs should not be left to the chance of their being satisfied as a mere by-product of industrial and commercial processes governed primarily by other considerations.

There was also a theological argument: man, although fundamentally social, was universally prone to assert his rights and neglect his duties. He needed the support and check of institutions and customs. Human

7. Published by SCM in 1941, this pamphlet sold at fourpence a copy. The original draft of the document had been substantially revised in the light of criticism from a committee of York Convocation, Canterbury Convocation, an ICF subcommittee and various Free Church bodies. See *YJC*, full synod, 22 Jan. 1942, pp.14-16 and Report of the Committee on Post-War Reconstruction [no. 455], Appendix, p.(xv); ICF executive minutes, 30 July 1941. The pamphlet also had an Australian edition, published by the Presbyterian Bookroom, Melbourne, circa 1943. The Australian edition is cited here.
selfishness and weakness had long been recognized in the provision of personal incentives to stimulate enterprise, but the need to curb greed of gain and pride of power had been ignored. The Commission endorsed Oxford's condemnation of a society which failed to make the wielders of economic power responsible to any organ of the community. The correlation of power with responsibility should be ensured through law and economic organization. Machinery should be established to provide legal protection for all in the industrial sphere.

As a step towards a responsible society, the Commission offered an economic charter which, it believed, provided criteria for judging current institutions, law and practice. The charter comprised sections relating to the individual, to industry, and to the world economy. The principles proclaimed in the first two sections were a more detailed expression of the five standards of the Oxford report. The charter demanded, for each individual, the opportunity of a decent house, a healthy childhood, an education suited to his abilities, and a chance to develop and express his personality in work, leisure and retirement. The Commission acknowledged that the fulfilment of these requirements was limited by the extent of the nation's wealth. But, unlike the bishops of the 1920s, it recognized that so-called economic arguments against the payment of a living wage frequently treated certain features of the existing system as sacrosanct. The Commission was adamant that the existence
of necessity and superfluity side by side must be condemned in the name of justice.

On employment, the charter declared that every man should be permanently entitled to a suitable position in industry. He should be protected against arbitrary dismissal or arbitrary reduction of his standard of life and work, and should have an effective share in determining the policy of his industry. Adherence to these principles would necessitate conquering unemployment and countering the disruption and monotony which often accompanied mechanization.

The assumption underlying the charter for industry was that business should be directed towards maximum service to the community instead of being determined primarily by financial profit. It was suggested that each industrial unit should implement organization to ensure that the standards outlined for the individual were achieved. The authority established should contain representatives of all parties concerned. Further, businesses should be safeguarded against 'vicious forms of competition' such as undercutting of accepted wage levels and evasion of recognized labour conditions. The State should provide information and administrative services to assist in the determination and maintenance of fair prices and conditions of labour, and accurate estimates of market needs. There should be provision for orderly transfer of labour from one industry to another.
The Commission outlined certain immediate political objectives as 'steps towards a far-reaching national reconstruction'. These included, under the heading of home and family, continuance of the wartime policy of making all incomes adequate to healthy subsistence and keeping prices of necessary commodities within reach of all; some system of family allowances; and a national rebuilding programme to provide sufficient homes of adequate physical and cultural quality. The government should be asked to give assurances on these points and to submit for public consideration the broad outlines of its policy. In the sphere of education, immediate attention should be given to ending the socially unjust system which created 'a cultured élite' without giving the great majority of the nation's youth an adequate education. The governing principle must be that youth, up to the age of at least eighteen, should undergo continuous training whether in school or (after sixteen) in 'some form of liberal apprenticeship for working life'. Developments in adult education were also regarded as 'urgent and necessary'.

The country should develop immediately a post-war re-employment policy. The unemployed should be absorbed into a national scheme which recognized their entitlement to employment equivalent to experience and training, and which prevented loss of industrial status. Each large industry should be responsible for engaging a certain proportion of the working population. These people should
be retained in employment, or in reserve, unless provision was made for transfer to other industries. Any person who suffered unemployment for more than, say, ten weeks, should have the opportunity of retraining in a scheme supervised by the relevant trade bodies. This should lead to continuous, appropriate employment and wages. Alternatively, the unemployed should be able to enrol in a labour organization which, in return for appropriate services, offered pay higher than unemployment benefit. As a last resort, those out of work should receive pensions on a scale appropriate to retirement from the industry for which they had been qualified. Implementation of this employment policy would necessitate the foundation of a labour research department to survey maximum and minimum needs of different industries, and to advise on scale and rate of expansion and geographical location. The assumption underlying this would be that full-time occupation was available for all able-bodied industrial workers. A department of the Treasury should also be established with power to obtain for each industry the loans and credit necessary for it to expand to the extent required in the national interest.

On the question of finance, the Commission urged as a priority the education of public opinion to disapprove any form of financial transaction which yielded a profit without providing commensurate service, or which endangered the rights of others. All speculation in currency or industrial shares, and some forms of share
issue, were to be condemned from this point of view. A second need was for reform of the monetary system to ensure that the issue of money and credit was scientifically directed with the aim of keeping the value of the currency steady, the level of production satisfactory, and the purchasing power of the public in line with production. The wartime practice of subordinating finance to production and of financing public expenditure at minimum interest rates should be extended to post-war programmes of house building, agricultural development, and stimulation of those industries necessary to a balanced economy.\(^8\)

The Commission believed that immediate attention should be given to

the true relation of man to the land, the renascence of village life, and the creation of a right relation between country and town, and between agriculture and other industries.

It commended the Malvern conference's emphasis on reverence for and conservation of natural resources and on the importance of reviving agriculture in the interests of a truly balanced national life.\(^9\)

The Commission pictured 'a new Britain arising from the ashes of the present conflagration'. It would be a society inspired by the principles of justice, security, freedom and responsibility. A new Britain would

\(^8\) Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction, pp.7-8, 10-11, 14-16, 19-20 and 23-7.

\(^9\) Ibid., p.24.
no longer allow the major decisions in industry and finance, which determine the country's wage standards, work standards, and unemployment totals, to be taken as now by a handful of people who are not bound to answer for the social consequences of their decisions.

The nation will no longer allow the rights of its citizens to be jeopardised by anti-social forms of private enterprise.

The Commission did not believe that adherence to these principles necessarily entailed nationalization. But it was prepared to assert that if private enterprise and voluntary associations failed to discharge their obligations the situation should be rectified - either through moral or legal pressure, or by transformation of offending organizations into public utility trusts.\(^{10}\)

The report concluded with a plea to Christian citizens to rally public support and encourage discussion of its proposals, particularly in industrial and political circles where decisions were actually made.\(^{11}\) It was the strength of the report that it did provide specific proposals which could be instrumental in the formation of policy and that, unlike earlier Christian social writing, it did not evade the practical implications of the principles it espoused. The crucial factor was its ability to accept, quite apart from ideologies and theories, a large role for the State in the pursuit of public welfare. As Temple commented elsewhere, Christians had 'talked in

\(^{10}\) Ibid., pp.16 and 18-23.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., p.28.
a doctrinaire fashion about socialism and individualism long enough, it...[was] time to try to get the best out of both'. Treatment of the financial question was a case in point. The Christendom group, for all its diatribes against the black magic of finance, and its espousal of social credit, never came up with any practical proposals for subjecting credit issue to State control. Ultimately, control of the demon finance meant risking the servile State.

The conviction that planning for a responsible society must begin with the reality of the powerful modern State was central to the outlook of the Moot. This small group, though its existence was known to very few people, exercised an important influence on Christian social thought through the Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life and its weekly publication, the CNL. The membership of the Moot was predominantly Christian, Anglican, and lay. The main exceptions to this were John Baillie, a Church of Scotland cleric, Gilbert Shaw, an Anglican priest, Middleton Murry, an unorthodox Christian, and Karl Mannheim, a German Jew. In terms of attendance,

12. Temple, Christianity and Social Order, p.75.
the nucleus of the group was Oldham, Vidler, Mannheim, Baillie, Murry, Shaw, Eliot, Moberly, H.A. Hodges (Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading), Fred Clarke (Professor of Education at the University of London), Eleanor Iredale and Eric Fenn (formerly secretary of the SCM and the Oxford conference). Others who attended a few meetings were Walter Oakeshott, Oliver Tomkins (later Bishop of Bristol), Christopher Dawson, Adolf Loewe (like Mannheim, an academic who had left Germany), Hector Hetherington (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow) and Kathleen Bliss (assistant editor of the CNL). From the point of view of influence, the central figure was probably Mannheim. Not only did his concept of 'planning for freedom' become central to the Moot's outlook, but the group's formal activities began with Mannheim's accession to its ranks and ceased when he died in 1947. Vidler claims that it was Mannheim who convinced him of the feasibility and urgency of working consciously towards an alternative to both British laissez-faire (which was doomed) and totalitarianism.

The purpose of the Moot, as Kathleen Bliss has put it, was 'to form a kind of intellectual Christian think-tank and put its thinking at the disposal of the churches'.

16. Vidler, Scenes from a Clerical Life, p.119; Kathleen Bliss, letter to the writer, 25 Mar. 1978. Walter Oakeshott has commented that the papers of Hodges were 'among the most important things the Moot produced'. Walter Oakeshott, letter to the writer, 5 Jan. 1978.
The group's meetings were quarterly and residential, lasting from 6 p.m. on Friday to 9 a.m. on Monday. Because of Oldham's deafness, discussion was based on written papers, and comments on those papers, which were circulated in advance of the meetings. Bliss recalls that when the group met

Oldham was in the chair, going round the room on a stool. Everybody had one innings before any general discussion. He would begin by summarizing (in the afternoon) what he thought needed further discussion from the morning.

Eric Fenn acted as secretary and produced summaries of the discussions which were later duplicated and circulated to members. Some of this material was later published; much of it as unsigned supplements in the CNL.17

The thinking of the Moot was influenced substantially by Mannheim's analysis of the functioning of modern society and the alternative directions it might take in the future. Mannheim, since 1933 a lecturer in sociology at the London School of Economics, accorded an important role to religion in the formation of social values and his work had an obvious appeal for a Christian élite looking to influence the direction of social change.

Mannheim began with the fact of a mass society, increasingly governed by advanced social techniques. These techniques resulted in forms of social organization which concentrated power in the hands of a few people in important positions, thus opening the way to totalitarianism.

The technical character of modern society made planning inevitable: the important question was whether or not it could be directed to the preservation of freedom and made compatible with democratic control. Discussions which tried to balance the virtues of planning against the value of liberty were beside the point, for it was necessary to plan to ensure the survival of liberty. Mannheim was convinced that planning inspired by a common purpose, a sense of social justice, and respect for individual freedom, would produce an alternative to totalitarianism. But if this was to be more than a vague aspiration, machinery must be set up to make a thorough investigation of technical problems, and of the practical steps necessary to make planning effective.  

The importance of religion lay in the creation of a common purpose: social reintegration must take place at the deeper levels of society with which religion was concerned. The challenge to Christianity was to reinterpret its basic message in terms relevant to a world entirely different from that in which it had been formulated. Its

18. Karl Mannheim, letter published in CNL, no.135, 27 May 1942, pp.1-2. See also J.H. O[lldham], 'Planning for Freedom', ibid., supp. 104, 22 Oct. 1941. This review of Mannheim's Man and Society made the point that both Mannheim and G.D.H. Cole traced the failure of parliamentary democracy to the inability of the masses to keep pace with rapid social change. Emotion had taken over from rationality and provided a situation which dictators, armed with new techniques, were able to exploit. See Cole, 'Democracy Face to Face with Hugeness'.

The sort of 'old-fashioned' discussion about the Leviathan State which Mannheim deplored was frequently found in the Guardian. See e.g. the following editorials: 'Planning', 15 Nov. 1940, p.551; 'Freedom in Crisis', 14 Mar. 1941, p.127; 'Religion in a Planned Society', 31 July 1942, p.245; 'How can Liberty Survive?', 30 July 1943, p.249.
success in the task of reinterpretation depended on close collaboration with social scientists who had studied the processes of social change.\(^{19}\)

Mannheim's analysis provided a justification, from the sociological viewpoint, of the belief that an intellectual élite, conscious of Christian principles and armed with an understanding of contemporary society, could help to steer it in a more Christian direction. This assumption underlay the discussions of the Moot and was evident in the outlook presented in the *CNL*.

The newsletter, launched as the result of a discussion between Lang and Oldham, in the first week of the war, was produced for the CCFCL by Oldham and an editorial board comprising Bliss, Eliot, Vidler, Philip Mairet and Lord Hambleden.\(^{20}\) Oldham also enlisted the support of some sixty 'collaborators' who contributed supplements to his weekly letter and provided general advice. These included, in addition to most of the Moot, Temple, Garbett, Arnold Toynbee, F.R. Barry, Demant, Canon Oliver Quick, A.D. Lindsay (Master of Balliol), and Nonconformists


\(^{20}\) *CNL*, no.121, 18 Feb. 1942, p.4; Vidler, *Scenes from a Clerical Life*, p.120. Hambleden (William Henry Smith) was Governing Director of W.H. Smith and Son Ltd. He was also a member of the CCFCL as were Lang, Temple, Moberly, Oldham, Eliot, Tawney, Fred Clarke, A.D. Lindsay and Oakeshott.
Henry Carter, S.M. Berry and Nathaniel Micklem. By April 1940, the CNL had a circulation of ten thousand and by July, there were forty-five groups in existence in connection with the newsletter.

In the first couple of years, Oldham concentrated on the general question of the development of a social philosophy. He urged that Britons must prepare for a 'drastic transformation of ideas, values, relationships and social habit'. It was up to Christians to ensure that those changes were in the right direction. Contributors to the newsletter emphasized the importance of education in developing a free Christian society. Defining education as a process which involved social agencies such as the family, as well as the school, they argued that freedom for each individual within a common society would only be assured if citizens were agreed about what they wished to be free to do and achieve. The negative freedom of the liberal age must be replaced by a positive conception of social goals and a determination that each individual should share in the common inheritance. This meant equalization of educational opportunity; extension of the period of learning (raising the school leaving age at least to fifteen and continuing part-time education to eighteen); and deepening the purpose of education so that it went beyond the narrow

21. Lists of 'collaborators' were published from time to time in the CNL. See e.g. no.0, 18 Oct. 1939; no.4, 22 Nov. 1939; no.11, 10 Jan. 1940 and no.61, 25 Dec. 1940.
23. CNL, supp. 0, 18 Oct. 1939, pp.2-3.
traditional concepts of critical appreciation of the written word, intellectual instruction, and individual scholastic success. The individual must be educated with a view to his participation in the full life of the community. It was essential that these educational issues be faced immediately because education could play a determinative role in shaping the future. The effort to ensure that education was broadly compliant with Christian values would hasten the development of a coherent purpose to guide the forces remaking Britain.24

From 1942, an increasing number of CNL supplements was devoted to examining particular issues in the light of Christian principles. Topics discussed ranged from matters like full employment and social security, increasingly regarded as national political objectives, through the industrial system to the familiar context of family and community.25 Many of the supplements were directed

24. 'Educating for a Free Society', ibid., supp.14, 31 Jan. 1940. This supplement, described by Oldham in the accompanying newsletter as 'the result of much private discussion among an influential group (no doubt the Moot)', evoked an interested response. Oldham reported, ibid., no.16, 14 Feb. 1940, that he had received 761 requests for copies. For further evidence of the importance attached to education, see T.S. Eliot, 'Education in a Christian Society', ibid., supp.20, 13 Mar. 1940; ibid., no.23 and supp.23, 'Can Education Survive Organization?', 3 Apr. 1940; Oldham, 'The Need for a Fresh Approach to Christian Education'; Eliot, Idea of a Christian Society, pp.35-41.

towards the ordinary Christian trying to make everyday decisions. Contributed by laymen rather than clerics, they demonstrated an awareness of the intricacy of social and industrial structures and of the difficulties involved in achieving social objectives. There was little evidence of the sweeping generalizations of the 1920s, or of the desire to impose a particular set of ideas on the wider Christian social movement. Discussions aimed to stimulate thinking and to illustrate that Christians could differ markedly on the best means of achieving agreed ends. These tendencies were illustrated particularly well in papers on the Beveridge report, full employment, and responsibility in the economic system.

Oldham's supplement on the Beveridge report was balanced and judicious. He suggested that in determining their attitude to the proposals, Christians should distinguish between the aims, methods and probable effects of their implementation. The objective of the report, to abolish want, must, and did, have the 'instant sympathy of Christians'. To alleviate want was a demand of 'natural justice' which received particular emphasis in the New Testament. In modern society, duty to the needy could not be adequately fulfilled by 'the good neighbour', and the Beveridge report was 'an attempt to translate that duty into terms ... applicable to a large-scale society'.

26. See Moberly, 'The Christian Frontier', p.4, for a deliberate statement of this policy.
During the war the nation had accepted without question the principle that distribution of necessities should have first priority; and this principle should be made a permanent feature of national life.

Christians must next consider whether the means proposed to abolish want were well chosen and considered; if not, they would break down in practice and the end would not be achieved. The report was a plan to abolish want by a particular method. It was proposed to bring everyone, irrespective of need, into an insurance scheme; and to give relief as a matter of right, without any means test. These proposals should be examined on their merits and not on the mistaken assumption that they were essential to the abolition of want. Technical questions, such as finance of the scheme, were an inseparable part of any judgement, and must be decided on scientific, not Christian, grounds. Christians should be concerned to ensure that disinterested answers were received from those with expert knowledge. But, accepting the objective of abolishing want, Christians should not allow any found defect in the proposed methods to be an excuse for evading responsibility.

It was important, Oldham suggested, to consider the indirect effects of the scheme. It was possible that, even if it succeeded in its aim of abolishing want, the total result might be more harmful than good. As Beveridge himself accepted, the report dealt only with economic
security. Man also needed 'status and social function' - to be 'occupied in useful and significant work'. It needed to be asked whether the proposals of the report would make these other purposes difficult to achieve, and whether the plan would 'limit seriously the individual's freedom of choice and exercise of responsibility'. There was, for example, a proposal that after a limited period, unemployment benefit should be conditional on attendance at a work or training centre. Refusal to accept work, even if it meant moving from the current place of residence, might mean disqualification from benefit. Oldham believed this to be potentially dangerous because it would give the State powers which could be used 'for wrong ends and in wrong ways'.

There were three possible Christian decisions about the report. Those who believed that it was unworkable and would not achieve its end, or that the total result would be more harmful than beneficial, could oppose it. Oldham conceded that this was a possible Christian decision; but he believed it 'a serious responsibility' for any Christian to take this stand, given the undoubtedly Christian objective of the scheme. The prevailing realism of his outlook was evident in the comment that it was academic to debate the question whether a society in which everyone could find a job and earn good wages would be better than one in which a comprehensive State-controlled scheme of social insurance was necessary. This he regarded as
merely an evasion of the question to be decided here and now, which is whether our society, being what it is, and many of its less privileged members being as a result of past neglect what they are, the provision of economic security may not be the immediate need as a form of first aid. This may be the indispensable means of renewing hope, restoring self-respect and creating the sense of belonging to a community.

It was possible also to give 'blind and uncritical support' to the Beveridge plan because it appeared to be directed to a Christian end. But to support a good end without considering the ways of reaching it was not to exercise 'a responsible Christian judgment'. Oldham advocated the third alternative of 'active and discriminating support'. This meant accepting the overriding importance of the scheme's objective while critically examining the methods and the effects on the whole plan of any proposed amendments. It was particularly important to distinguish between disinterested criticism designed to improve the scheme and merely selfish objections. Above all, economic security should be pursued not as an end in itself, but as 'a foundation on which to build a society that will secure to all its members social status and social function, freedom and the exercise of responsibility'.

The *Church Times* leader on the report, quite probably written by Vidler, was a similarly measured discussion which discriminated between means and ends

and invited careful scrutiny of both. Like the CNL supplement, it welcomed the report as an attempt to embody a Christian principle in the social system, but did not commend it as a specifically Christian scheme. Other sources of Anglican comment were less discriminating. The frankness with which the report was discussed was evidence of growing acceptance that Christians must look beyond broad social principles and consider specific measures in the light of those principles. There had been no comparable discussion, in earlier times, of the Hadow, Samuel and Macmillan reports. But Christian comments on Beveridge's scheme all presented a particular point of view (generally favourable) rather than an examination of the process through which Christians should go to form their own opinions. This was what distinguished discussions in the CNL from those elsewhere. It was concerned less with presenting an interpretation for the consumption of its clientele, than with encouraging a considered approach to Christian social problems.

This approach was evident also in discussions on the objective of full employment stimulated by

28. Vidler, Scenes from a Clerical Life, pp. 121-2, comments that during his period as warden of St. Deiniol's library, Hawarden, 1939-48, he wrote leading articles for the Church Times.


the publication, in 1944, of the White Paper on Employment Policy and Beveridge's Full Employment in a Free Society. In March 1945, John Maud, chairman of the economic section at Oxford, contributed a CNL supplement on 'Full Employment and the Responsibility of Christians'. Maud argued that because abolition of unemployment was now believed by economists and politicians to be technically possible, it was part of the Christian's duty to his neighbour to ensure that mass unemployment did not reappear. It was also a Christian duty to recognize and be determined to overcome the 'terrific difficulties' involved in putting an employment policy into practice. Although there would inevitably be differences of opinion about tactics, Christians should regard the abolition of unemployment as a 'Holy War' which could only be won if a 'crusading spirit' were generated.

Maud explained that the achievement of full employment would require the satisfaction of certain technical conditions: the maintenance of effective demand at an optimum level, the avoidance of inflation, a distribution of industry that would not perpetuate pockets of unemployment such as had occurred before the war in areas dependent on declining export industries, and a degree of labour mobility. Fulfilment of all

31. Maud (later Lord Redcliffe-Maud) contributed this supplement under the pseudonym 'Civis'. He is identified as the writer of the supplement in Kojecký, Eliot, p.185.
these requirements would necessitate some diminution of individual and corporate freedom. Christians could play an important role in influencing attitudes to the State and encouraging acceptance of its 'increased responsibility for economic affairs'. At the same time, they should remember that full employment itself was not enough: care must be taken that the right decisions were made about the purposes to which productive resources and full employment were directed.\textsuperscript{32}

This interpretation of Christian duty was challenged by Eliot in a subsequent supplement.\textsuperscript{33} Eliot agreed that eradication of unemployment was a Christian responsibility, but declined to treat it as such an absolute end. Because it might be regarded by some Christians as less important than other social objectives, and because it was only a reform undertaken 'by the temporal power for temporal ends', use of the term 'Holy War' was inappropriate. Indeed, Eliot believed that Maud came dangerously close to suggesting that the scheme he advocated for full employment was the only means of achieving it and that all Christians must, therefore, support it. This was to accord to economists the power to 'draw up secular programmes for secular ends, approval of which the Church would then prescribe to its members'.\textsuperscript{34} Eliot, for one, was not prepared to accept a scheme which assumed that the State could insist on its


\textsuperscript{33} Eliot wrote under the pseudonym 'Metoikos', the Greek term for an alien living in the same city. See Kojecký, \textit{Eliot}, p.185.

\textsuperscript{34} 'Metoikos', 'Full Employment and the Responsibility of Christians', pp.10-12.
interpretation of the general good.\textsuperscript{35}

Oldham pointed out in a commentary on the papers by Maud and Eliot that the Church could neither make support of secular schemes binding on its members, nor do the State's work for it. It must encourage Christians to make their own decisions on particular policies in the light of Christian principles.\textsuperscript{36} This clear distinction between the sphere of Church and State was a healthy reaction against the tendency of the Christendom group to present a particular economic philosophy as deducible from Christian principles.

\textit{CNL} supplements on economic questions were frequently contributed by laymen with industrial experience and a pragmatic approach. A good example of this was a supplement on 'The Profit Motive in Industry' contributed by Basil Smallpeice, an industrial accountant who later became managing director of BOAC and chairman of the Cunard Steamship Company. Smallpeice began by making a fundamental distinction between the profit motive as it applied to individuals and as it applied to industry as a whole. In the former case, it was 'a personal incentive', local in effect. In the latter, it was a 'directive' which governed the whole conduct of industry: 'almost every decision having financial implications must be reached primarily by reference to the question of profitability'. The profit rule provided a guide to making decisions, 'a

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., pp.8-9.
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{CNL}, no.231, 4 Apr. 1945, pp.2-3.
rough and ready rule of thumb' which was both convenient and readily intelligible. Its use as a criterion for judgement would not necessarily disappear with a change in the ownership of industry.

But Smallpeice believed the profit rule to be unsatisfactory on both economic and ethical grounds. Not only did it fail, for a number of reasons, to provide the community with the necessities of life, but it encouraged the growth of social and personal irresponsibility and produced a set of false values. Yet it was simplistic to suggest, as people were doing, that service to the community must replace the profit motive. This could only occur in the realm of personal incentives. It would not dispense with the profit rule as a criterion for decision making. Unable to envisage an alternative to the profit rule, other than totalitarianism, Smallpeice concluded that the solution lay in hedging it with a system of checks and balances which would ensure that industry produced the goods and rendered the services really required by society. Taxation, for example, could be used to encourage certain types of activity and 'take all the profit out of others'.

A series of articles on responsibility in the economic system displayed a similarly non-ideological

approach. The group responsible for the articles\textsuperscript{38} suggested three criteria for measuring responsibility in the exercise of power: it should be directed towards its proper end (God's purpose); it should be employed by legitimate means which had due regard for personality; and it should be accompanied by proper safeguards and guarantees to ensure that it was not diverted from its true purpose. On the first criterion alone, it was possible to detect several signs of irresponsibility in the current system: the primary responsibility to the consumer was frequently not fulfilled and secondary responsibilities to workers, other suppliers, shareholders and the community were neglected. The group's first article concluded that 'in a wide and important variety of cases the exercise of power in our economic system is irresponsible'.\textsuperscript{39}

Such irresponsibility could be traced partly to the assumption that companies were owned by shareholders. Because company law recognized shareholders as the source of power in limited companies, the primary concern of directors was shareholders' interests, that is, financial return. Defence of profit rights ultimately depended on a theory of property. The group argued that shareholders held no property rights justifiable on Christian

\textsuperscript{38} A small group associated with the Christian Frontier Council (successor to the CCFCL). See \textit{ibid.}, no.190, 8 Sep. 1943, p.4.

\textsuperscript{39} 'Responsibility in the Economic System-I', \textit{ibid.}, supp. 190, 8 Sep. 1943, pp.2-3 and 6-8.
grounds. The traditional justification of ownership was that it was personal, and that it was accompanied by individual responsibility and rights. This did not apply in the limited liability company where the shareholder had no responsibility whatsoever for the property of the company or for those employed in it. He did not even have effective control of his property. He certainly had no right to personal ownership in it, his claim being merely financial in character. As shareholding conveyed neither 'a right to administer nor a duty to care for property, but merely a right to participate in a cash surplus', it was not truly property. A company was not the possession of its shareholders, but a human association - a social organism which could not be owned or possessed. It could itself own property, because legislation had made it a legal entity capable of doing so, but the company itself was not property.  

This series of articles provided no solutions to the problem of irresponsible power. It certainly did not offer nationalization as a panacea. For the shareholder, even if not entitled to consideration by virtue of his supposed ownership of industry, was believed to fulfil a valuable and necessary function as risk-bearer (for which he was entitled to certain rewards).  

Presumably, too, if a company was a human association, 


it could not be owned by a government any more than it could be by shareholders. Neither was external regulation by government sufficient to guarantee economic responsibility. Unless totalitarian controls were to be assumed, responsibility must issue, ultimately, from industrial units themselves. The answer must lie in establishing a new principle of power for the human associations of industry.\(^\text{42}\)

The group's enquiry ended with a question mark. But it provided a useful examination of how power was actually exercised in industry and government instrumentalities. It recognized the employment of power as an essential part of social life which could only be controlled by legal and institutional checks and balances. By questioning the assumption that shareholders possessed property rights, the group broke through established patterns of thought and opened up fruitful lines of enquiry.

Although it came closer than most Christian groups to confronting the realities of politics and economics, the Moot/CNL circle did not solve the problem of translating Christian social discussion into effective action. As early as 1939, two poles were beginning to emerge within the group, one expressing a priority for philosophical/theological analysis, the other urging

action. The philosophers were mainly Hodges, Vidler, Eliot, Moberly, and Murry, although Hodges later moved towards the activist pole which attracted Mannheim, Oldham, Loewe, Hetherington and Clarke. Mannheim advocated action (albeit rather academic in nature) through organizations like the National Institute for Economic and Social Research, of which Hetherington was president. Eliot and Vidler claimed that the Moot's influence should be exerted more subtly through individual contacts.  

Any move to exert collective pressure on, say, politicians, would have destroyed the unity of the Moot. This became clear in June 1943 when Hodges delivered a paper on 'Politics and the Moot' which criticized the group's evasiveness and urged it to support the principle that large industrial concentrations of capital should be owned and administered publicly. When Eliot produced a critique of Hodges' paper, revealing distrust of legislative and structural change, he aroused support from other Moot members, especially Vidler. A subsequent note to Oldham was revealing. Eliot wrote that it seemed to him

very doubtful whether the Moot, by the nature of its composition, is fitted to frame any sort of 'programme' to which all the members would spontaneously and wholeheartedly adhere with no qualifications to blunt its force.

We are actually people of as dissimilar backgrounds and activities as we could well be and still have the common concern for Christianity and Society that we have. Hardly any two are even of exactly the same brand of Christianity. This variety is what has given the Moot its zest, and even its cohesion.... But I am not sure whether these benefits are compatible with the fruits of collective effort to change the world.... if the action is emphasised - thinking in the direction of a political philosophy, then I find that other forces of temperament come into play. 44

Clearly, an élite which found its unity in the aim of a Christian society rather than in support of particular methods of achieving this had to rely on general educative techniques for its influence.

The establishment of the Christian Frontier Council (CFC) in 1942, after the amalgamation of the CCFCL and the Commission on International Friendship and Social Responsibility in the British Council of Churches, was a step in the direction of social action. As its name suggests, the CFC, a predominantly lay body, was concerned with 'the frontier between organized religion and secular society'. 45 Its twenty-six members included both Protestant and Catholic laymen, politicians, civil servants, industrialists, educationalists and scientists. The CFC aimed to encourage discussion, outside the sphere of organized religion, on the application of Christian principles to current problems. To this end, it developed a number of specialist groups of doctors, psychologists,

educationalists, lawyers, politicians and industrialists. 46

2. The Church on the Map

The second world war provided the Church with another major opportunity to popularize Christian social principles and to set forth the Christian concept of social order. Bomb attacks, evacuation of women and children to the country, and the complete disruption of settled patterns of life, created tolerance of change and receptiveness to the notion of reconstruction. As in the previous war, the extension of social, political, and economic control by government was immense and attitudes to State intervention changed as familiarity bred greater tolerance of government instrumentalities. The idea of social planning, already canvassed in the 1930s, became popular. Enthusiasm was stimulated by a series of reports of government commissions and committees

46. Kojecký, Eliot, p.162; Vidler, Scenes from a Clerical Life, pp.134-5; Bliss, letter to the writer, 25 Mar. 1978. Amongst the members of the CFC at various times were Moberly, Eliot, Maud, A.D. Lindsay, Henry Brooke (Conservative MP, later Minister of Housing and Home Secretary), Sir Wilfrid Garrett (later chairman of the Social and Industrial Council of the Church Assembly), O.S. Franks (Professor of Moral Philosophy, University of Glasgow and temporarily a civil servant in the Ministry of Supply), H.U. Willink (from 1940-8 a Conservative MP and from 1943-5, Minister of Health, later Vice-Chancellor of University of Cambridge), J.F. Wolfenden (Headmaster of Shrewsbury School then Vice-Chancellor of Reading University), George Woodcock (Secretary to TUC Research and Economic Department and later TUC General Secretary), Barbara Ward, assistant editor of the Economist, Samuel Courtauld (businessman and philanthropist), and Humphry Mynors (from 1949 a Director and from 1954 Deputy Governor of the Bank of England). Vidler became a part-time secretary to the CFC in 1948.
in the early years of the war: the Barlow report on redistribution of the industrial population (1940); the Scott report on land utilization in rural areas (1942); the Uthwatt report on public control of the use of land (1942); and the Beveridge report (1942). The appointment, in 1943, of a Minister of Reconstruction institutionalized the concept of a reconstructed society.

Social Christians took the chance to make clear the principles which would guide reconstruction in a Christian direction. Exchange and debate within the Christian social movement helped to refine statements of Christian social objectives and resulted in closer examination of some of the concepts freely employed in reformist ideology, such as 'planning', 'full employment' and 'the profit motive'. The ideas of the movement received unprecedented publicity; partly because of public receptiveness, but also because they were discussed by the Church's leaders, especially Temple. As a result of this, public attention was focussed, as it had been in 1926, on the questions of the relationship between the Church and the social order and the right of churchmen to interfere on social and economic issues.

The war saw a new type of ecumenical co-operation on social questions. Earlier enterprises, such as Copec and the Life and Work movement, had lacked the co-operation of the Roman Catholic Church. But the friendship between Temple and Cardinal Hinsley, Archbishop of Westminster from
1935, resulted in closer relations between Catholics and Protestants. In December 1940, both were signatories, with Lang and Walter Armstrong, Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, to a letter to The Times, enumerating ten peace points. The first five of these, relating to international peace, had earlier been put forward by Pius XII; the others were an abridged version of the five standards of social justice established by the Oxford conference.47

The letter received strong approbation in the Church of England. It was welcomed by the Church Times and the Guardian and endorsed by both Convocations.48 In the Catholic Church, Hinsley founded a movement called the Sword of the Spirit to work for 'the restoration in Europe of a Christian basis for both public and private life, by a return to the principles of international order and Christian freedom'.49 In January 1941, A.C.F. Beales wrote to the Church press on behalf of the Sword of the Spirit, urging the formation of 'A Christian Front' as a follow-up to The Times letter.50 The result was described by the Bishop of London (Geoffrey Fisher) as 'a measure of joint action such as has not happened in

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47. *The Times*, 21 Dec. 1940, p.5. The Pope's five-point peace plan was part of an address to the College of Cardinals on Christmas eve, 1939. See The Pope Speaks: being a compilation of his allocutions, messages, broadcasts, addresses, and encyclicals since his accession to the Holy See, Faber and Faber, London, 1940, pp.171-3.


49. *Church Times*, 16 May 1941, p.282.

50. *Church Times and Guardian*, 3 Jan. 1941. Beales was a lecturer in education at King's College, London.
this country since the Reformation'. The Sword of the Spirit and the Religion and Life movements formed a joint committee which aimed to unite Christians in common action on broad lines of social and international policy.\textsuperscript{51} Large public meetings were held to popularize the ten points. The \textit{Church Times}' report of the largest of these, held in the Stoll Picture House, Kingsway, on the weekend of 10 and 11 May 1941, claimed that Londoners rallied in their thousands, only a day after serious bombing raids, to hear Church leaders talk about the new Christian order.\textsuperscript{52} These, and several smaller meetings in other parts of the country, were significant not so much for what was said, for this was not new, but because they presented a united Christian front and publicly connected the Anglican and Roman Catholic hierarchies, and the Free Church leaders, with the idea of a Christian social order.\textsuperscript{53}

Attempts were also made to spell out the steps which would need to be taken if the ten points were to

\textsuperscript{51} Iremonger, \textit{Temple}, p.423. The Religion and Life movement was an offshoot of the Commission of the Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Church Times}, 16 May 1941, pp.282 and 284.

influence the ordering of international and social life. In May 1941, York Convocation set up a joint committee of both houses to collaborate with the Commission of the Churches in providing this sort of commentary. A popular book of essays was considered by the committee to be the best means of publicizing the ten points and in April 1942, SCM Press published *A Christian Basis for the Post-War World*, edited by A.E. Baker, Canon of York, and introduced by Temple. The volume comprised ten essays, each of which concentrated on one of the points and offered an interpretation of the measures necessary and the difficulties to be overcome if it was to be implemented. Contributors included Dorothy Sayers, A.D. Lindsay, Sidney Dark, Anglo-Catholic author and journalist, Kenneth Ingram, and the MPs, R.R. Stokes and Margaret Bondfield.54

There is no doubt that the chief publicist for the Christian social movement during the war years, and consequently the prime target for its critics, was Temple. Not only was he involved in the ecumenical ventures already described, but he emerged, in his own right, as an ardent advocate of social and international justice. In a series of BBC broadcasts, late in 1940, he forged a clear link between the ideas of reconstruction

54. *YJC*, full synod, 29 May 1941, pp.26-41 and report 455, Appendix, p.(xvi); Baker, *Christian Basis for the Post-War World*, pp.7-8. It was anticipated that the book would sell at 2/6 per copy.
and a Christian society. Like Eliot and Oldham, he argued that modern English culture was permeated by principles which derived their validity from the Christian faith; but that it ignored the root of those principles and fell short, in many respects, of being a truly Christian civilization. Britons were fighting, therefore, not so much to preserve a Christian civilization, as for the opportunity to create one. Christians must take a share in moulding society so that the nearest possible approximation to justice was actually established.

Temple's interpretation of the un-Christian features of pre-war society showed the continued influence of the Christendom group. He began with the concept of a natural order in which there was a proper place for each person and each function: the object of production was the satisfaction of man's needs, and money was a means of facilitating the exchange of goods. The modern economic system inverted that order: goods were produced, not primarily to satisfy the consumer, but to enrich the producer, and finance controlled production. In many cases the property owner no longer performed a social function; yet the rights of private ownership had been

55. William Temple, The Hope of a New World, broadcast talks and other addresses, SCM, London, 1940, pp.10 and 64-5. See also address entitled 'Are we fighting for Christianity?', Garbett Papers, Sermons and Addresses, vol.40, 1942.
56. Temple, Hope of a New World, p.46.
asserted over the rights of society, and land was developed with scant regard for the general good. The profit motive and finance had come to exercise the control which should belong to the hungry and needy public.  

Temple believed that the monetary system was a classic example of this disorder. He found it ridiculous that when the nation needed credit for carrying out its own purposes, it should borrow from a section of itself, and pay interest. In a passage which manifestly owed something to social credit theory, Temple argued that the source out of which repayment has to come is... the whole national production. That is the real security, and I cannot see why anything more should be paid for it than the actual administrative cost, which a very high authority has told me is perhaps one-eighth of one per cent.  

The true function of money was to act as an intermediary, and it should not be possible to make a living (let alone a fortune) by manipulating it. Temple disapproved the earning of profits on money created and lent by book entry, or through speculation in the value of money over against goods. Currency speculation destroyed the proper social purpose of money. The modern system of mortgaging was not unlike usury:  

58. Temple, *Church Looks Forward*, p.122. Cf. Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, p.86, where he puts the ethically justifiable rate of interest at $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.
If a man is engaged in an enterprise in which he has borrowed money on the security of his plant, and he then does... fail to make a success of it, very likely the lenders - or those who have acted for the lenders, who in the last resort are always the public itself, or some portion of it - must be guaranteed something in return; but if what is taken over in return is the whole plant, so that the man who has undertaken the business is simply turned out of it... on the moral ground it is at least an extraordinarily dangerous method which wants constant vigilance lest it be applied in a tyrannous manner.

The danger of this situation, Temple believed, stemmed from the opportunity provided for the stronger to exploit the weaker and for financiers to control production. It is doubtful if Temple ever became a social creditor. Although he readily acknowledged his debt to Thomism, he never publicly endorsed Douglas' theories. Heron claims he did so in private but Reckitt's evidence does not confirm this. There were aspects of social credit which Temple never accepted and the source of his economic ideas was always wider than the Christendom group. He was, for example, a member of the Next Five

59. Temple, Church Looks Forward, pp.148 and 154 and Christianity and Social Order, p.86.
60. Temple, 'Thomism and Modern Needs'.
61. Personal information from Heron, cited in Finlay, 'Religious Response', p.370; Reckitt, conversation with the writer, 28 Apr. 1976.
62. Temple never accepted the idea of a social dividend as a permanent successor to the wage. Although in the 1930s he emphasized the merits of unpaid community service, he did not envisage this as a permanent alternative to paid employment. Unlike Reckitt, he believed that economic incentive would always be necessary to induce men to offer their best. He envisaged a stage in which all would have abundant employment and leisure. Cf. Reckitt, Faith and Society, pp.397-9; Temple, Hope of a New World, p.51 and Church Looks Forward, p.111; The Times, 5 Feb. 1935, p.10.
Years Group which advocated public control of credit yet had little sympathy with currency theories like Douglas'. He was also on close terms with Beveridge, Tawney and Keynes, and he consulted the latter two while writing Christianity and Social Order. Basically, Temple accepted the diagnosis of social credit, as expressed in the language and concepts of the Christendom group, without believing in the remedy.

His own remedy for the monetary system was in line with his general approach to the disorders of the economic sphere. He believed that life must be deliberately planned if it was to subserve its true ends and argued for a responsible society in which acquisitiveness and power were subordinated to the public interest. This meant, in particular, social control of urban land use, restrictions on the power and return enjoyed by industrial shareholders, and the continuation of State controls over private enterprise, especially with regard to limitation of profits and national control of credit. Temple accepted as axiomatic that in the post-war world economic life would be planned to an extent unprecedented in peace-time and believed it futile to continue doctrinaire

63. The Next Five Years, chap.V, especially pp.97-100.
64. Iremonger, Temple, pp.438-9.
65. Temple, Church Looks Forward, pp.127-8 and Hope of a New World, pp.52-63.
discussions about socialism and individualism. The aim must be to plan efficiently, with the maximum of freedom. Temple himself, if he can be given a label, was a collectivist: he believed in considerable power for the State (although not necessarily in a centralized form) but he did not support nationalization of all means of production and saw a valid, although circumscribed, role for private enterprise.

This is illustrated by his treatment of the whole question of property. In the tradition of earlier Christian social writing, he argued that in common law land belonged to the king, as representing the whole community. Landowners had use of the land, though not absolute control over it, and could be restrained from a use or development which was detrimental to the public interest. In the case of agricultural landholding, public control should be minimal. The rural landlord did discharge social functions, and family tradition was a valuable social asset. Subject to the consideration of public welfare, ownership of rural property should not be restricted and agricultural land should be exempt from death duties. The social function of the urban landlord was less evident. Temple saw 'no reason why we should pay certain citizens large sums of money for merely

66. Temple, Christianity and Social Order, p.75. See also address entitled 'Religion and Life', Garbett Papers, Sermons and Addresses, vol.41, 1942-3.
67. Temple, Hope of a New World, pp.52 and 103-4 and Church Looks Forward, p.111.
owning the land on which ... cities are built.' He advocated greater public ownership of urban sites; for there were few services that private owners could render and public authorities could not. In this vein, Temple welcomed the proposals of the Uthwatt report which, he believed, aimed at combining the advantages of public ownership and ultimate control with private initiative.\footnote{68}

The report dismissed land nationalization as impractical but recommended that public authorities should have development rights in all land outside built-up areas and the power of compulsory purchase of land needing development in built-up areas. There should be a levy on any increase in land values caused by actual or projected development.\footnote{69}

Temple believed the ideal system of landholding was 'Occupying Ownership' accompanied by safeguards in the public interest. Non-owning occupiers should have security of tenure at fair rents with the right to make improvements and receive compensation on leaving. Much of the abuse of land ownership would be remedied if taxation were levied on the value of sites, as distinct from the buildings erected on them. This would overcome the 'inversion of the natural order' whereby improvement of house property (a social service) was penalized by increased rates and deterioration of property resulted

\footnote{68. Temple, *Hope of a New World*, p.53; Church Looks Forward, p.111; Christianity and Social Order, p.87. The quotation is from the latter. Temple made no reference to the Church's position as urban landholder.}

\footnote{69. Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War*, pp.314 and 358.}
in a reduction of rateable value. The initial valuation of sites should be made by the owner. The State would then be free to purchase the land compulsorily at the figure named, or levy a tax at that valuation. This would encourage full utilization of the land, and, of course, end speculation.  

Like the contributors to the CNL, Temple questioned the applicability of the concept of property to shareholding. He believed that no one, by investing capital alone, should

become possessed of a permanent and saleable right to levy a tax upon the enterprise in which he invests his money together with a voice in the control of it.

Where there was limited liability, there should be limited profit. There were a number of ways of achieving this. Shares could take the form of debentures and be repayable at a certain date. Dividends could be fixed and the articles of association amended to provide for the allocation of surplus profits to such purposes as

70. Temple, Christianity and Social Order, pp.88-9.

Because of the number of government reports on the topic during the early war years, town and country planning was widely discussed. For examples of Christian discussion see the Social and Industrial Commission's 1944 report, CA 753 (Sir Anderson Montague-Barlow was chairman of the Commission at this time); A. Trystan Edwards, 'Town and Country Planning' and A.E. Baker, 'The Revival of Rural Life', in Bishop of Chelmsford et al., Towards a Christian Order, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1942, pp.49-67 and 121-40; 'Housing and Planning' and 'Town and Country Planning', Garbett Papers, Sermons and Addresses, vols.58 and 59, 1944; Industrial Christian Fellowship, The World We Want, a Conference held in London on May 7th, 8th and 9th 1943 under the joint auspices of the Industrial Christian Fellowship and the Economic Reform Club and Institute, sessions 2 and 3.
an equalization fund for the maintenance of wages in bad times, a similar dividend equalization fund, a sinking fund for the repayment of invested capital, or a fund for the extension of fixed capital. This proposal would give both investor and workman greater security and minimize the urge to secure maximum profits.\footnote{Temple, \textit{Hope of a New World}, pp.53-5.}

Temple's final proposal was for enactment of the principle of 'withering capital' whereby as soon as the interest paid on any investment was equal to the sum invested, the principal would be reduced by a specified amount each year until the claim of the investor to dividends was extinguished.\footnote{Temple, \textit{Christianity and Social Order}, p.82.}

Temple's treatment of property reaffirmed the principle that ownership should be accompanied by function and responsibility. Where these were minimal, public surveillance should be greatest and, in the case of large business enterprises, should probably result in public ownership. Subject to the conditions laid down, and to the restrictions involved in planning for the basic needs of less fortunate members of society, there should be room for private enterprise and the initiative it facilitated.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp.82-4.}

On credit control, Temple was equally outspoken: 'the private manufacture of credit', he declared, had become 'an anachronism'.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp.85-6.} A commodity which was
universally necessary should not be the monopoly of private interests. The State should resume the right to control the issue and cancellation of every kind of money, including credit.\textsuperscript{75} To this end, he advocated converting the Bank of England and the joint stock banks into 'publicly administered institutions'. These would preferably be public utility corporations, rather than directly worked by the State.\textsuperscript{76}

In Temple's view, the function of the State was not only to check the irresponsible exercise of power, but to ensure that the basic needs of every citizen were satisfied. In \textit{Christianity and Social Order}, he outlined six objectives which he believed should be pursued by governments: every child should be the member of a family housed with decency and dignity and should have the opportunity of education which would develop his particular aptitudes; every citizen should be secure in possession of an income sufficient to ensure the health and education of a family; every citizen should have a voice in the conduct of the business or industry carried on by means of his labour and have the satisfaction of knowing his labour was directed to the well-being of the community; every citizen should have sufficient leisure to enjoy a full personal and family life - normally two days rest a week and paid annual holidays; and each citizen should have freedom of

\textsuperscript{75} Temple, \textit{Church Looks Forward}, p.112 and \textit{Hope of a New World}, p.56.
\textsuperscript{76} Temple, \textit{Christianity and Social Order}, pp.86-7.
worship, speech, assembly and association for special purposes.  

Temple made several suggestions for the implementation of these principles or middle axioms. The principles themselves, he believed every Christian should be able to endorse; but the means of achieving them were far more debatable and he deliberately put them forward as 'suggestions for criticism rather than for adoption'. To ensure the provision of decent housing, he recommended the establishment of a regional commissioner with power to allocate land for housing and to prevent vested interests or land speculators from interfering with the utilization of land in the public interest. Wages should be raised to a level sufficient to sustain a family of four. Until this was achieved, it would probably be necessary for municipal authorities to subsidize the rents of low income groups, for the State to pay family allowances to mothers, and for free provision of milk and one good meal a day to be universally established in schools.

Education was a topic which commanded much attention during the war years. As ever, Christian interest was aroused as much by the religious question and the fate of Church schools as by the issue of

77. Ibid., pp.73-4.
78. Ibid., p.75.
79. Ibid., pp.76-7. Family allowances had been favoured in Christian social circles since the late 1920s. See e.g. Men Without Work, pp.209-10 and Delahaye, Politics, pp.76-9. Family allowances and school meals were actually provided by the end of the war.
equality of opportunity. Temple, however, was one of those aware of both aspects. In *Christianity and Social Order*, he urged the case for wider educational opportunity, particularly with respect to adapting education to children's needs and developing part-time education to the age of eighteen. The Butler education act of 1944 went some way towards the provision of diversity and equal opportunity and was supported by Temple and other bishops in the House of Lords.

In Temple's opinion, the chief threat to security of income was unemployment. He believed that the State should maintain public works beneficial to the community which could be expanded or contracted, depending on the demand for labour. To supplement this, training centres for the unemployed should be instituted. For those in work, participation in management was essential. Like the Christendom group, Temple believed that 'a revival


of something like the mediaeval guilds' would be ideal. For the immediate future, he advocated continuation of the government's wartime practice of consulting with trade unions, and the institution of a special planning authority generally representative of industry. This should regulate the articles of association of limited liability companies and secure effective representation for labour on their directorates. There should also be provision for the State to nominate one or more directors to represent the public interest. The acceptance of a five-day week and paid annual holidays would be a further recognition of the status of the worker - it would repudiate the notion that he was an external factor to be hired only for his labour. It would also be acknowledgment that recreation was essential to quality in work and that freedom was necessary for a full life.  

As a general political principle, Temple advocated a combination of functional and regional devolution. The development of regional government would enable greater co-ordination of county and borough administration and the decentralization of more power than could currently be handled by local bodies. Support of the concept of functional devolution was further evidence of Temple's affinity with Anglo-Catholic sociologists. The essential principle was that whole departments of life should order their own affairs. It

83. Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, pp. 78-80.
should be applied, in particular, to education and industry. A board of education representing all types of educational institutions, all grades of teachers and teaching institutions, local education authorities, and the public, should have power to legislate on educational matters, subject to parliamentary veto. A statutory national industrial council representing labour, management, dividend-earning investment, and consumers, should have the same powers for industry. This policy was reminiscent of the Chandos group's suggestion of three councils - cultural, economic, and political - to legislate in their respective spheres.

Temple's role as publicist was of great importance. In commanding popular attention for questions of social policy he was, Arthur Marwick has pronounced, 'supreme among individual non-political figures'. As Primate of All England, he lent a new authority to the idea of a Christian social order. Bishops had advocated Christian social principles before, but not in the way Temple did. He was sufficiently committed to social justice to advocate specific proposals and to invite certain

84. The public representatives would be elected by the House of Commons from among its own members. They should be parents of children actually at school.
86. Marwick, Britain in the Century of Total War, p.303.
criticism by attacking the holy of holies, private enterprise. He made extensive use of the BBC which, because of the popularity of radio during wartime, carried his voice to millions, both in and outside Britain. He continued his prodigious rate of publication, producing several articles and books. The most widely read of these, Christianity and Social Order, sold 139,000 copies. 87

As a speaker and chairman, Temple was widely in demand. His most important contribution in this respect was the Malvern conference of January 1941 and its massive follow-up campaign. The conference was organized by the ICF and, in Temple's opinion, 'put the Church on the map'. 88 The addresses were mostly by the Christendom group, but it was really Temple's affair. Its 'conclusions', which bore little relation to the long and difficult speeches, were drawn up by Temple on the last night and presented to 'an astonished Conference' the next morning. 89 Temple claimed that the report registered a measure of agreement amongst the four hundred conference members. This was true in the sense that, with the exception of two clauses, it was accepted without objection. 90 But

87. Ibid., p.304 and Iremonger, Temple, pp. 435, 540 and 556.
88. Malvern, 1941, p.224.
89. Iremonger, Temple, p.431.
90. Archbishop of York's Conference, Malvern, The Life of the Church and the Order of Society, Edition for Study, ICF, Westminster, 1941. See Temple's introductory note, p.2. This claim was disputed by Vidler, Eliot and Hodges in a letter to The Times, 14 Jan. 1941, p.5. They suggested that the resolutions had not all been adopted unanimously, some being passed only nemine contradicente; that one of the controversial clauses had not been put to the vote at all and certainly would not have been carried unanimously; and that the arrangement and conduct of the conference detracted seriously from any value or authority which might otherwise have attached to its conclusions.
it was very much Temple's document, stressing the things he regarded as important, such as the right of the Church to speak, the importance of evangelism, the Christian doctrine of man, the perversion of man's true purposes and the need for reform in the life of the Church. The aspects of society to which the report drew attention were the ones which troubled Temple - the predominance of the profit motive, the tendency to unemployment and war, the monetary system and existing forms of industrial management.91

The clauses which received most notoriety were those amended from the floor. Clause fourteen declared that the Church could point to those features of society which were 'contrary to divine justice' and acted as 'stumbling-blocks' to the living of Christian lives. Clause fifteen continued:

In our present situation we believe that the maintenance of that part of the structure of our society, by which the ultimate ownership of the principal industrial resources of the community can be vested in the hands of private owners, may be such a stumbling block.92

By substituting 'may be' for 'is' the conference toned down Temple's original resolution93, but it still aroused comment in the press.94

91. The writer of Temple's obituary in the Church Times, 3 Nov. 1944, p.586, commented that the Malvern findings 'were almost entirely the archbishop's'.
92. Life of the Church and the Order of Society, p.8.
93. Iremonger, Temple, p.431.
94. See e.g. The Times, 11 Jan. 1941, p.2; Manchester Guardian, 11 Jan. 1941, p.8; Church Times, 17 Jan. 1941, p.27; Guardian, 17 Jan. 1941, p.35.
The Malvern report sold 200,000 copies, but this was not the end of the publicity. A committee of industrialists, economists, and theologians met subsequently, under Temple's chairmanship, to comment further on resolutions nineteen to twenty-five (those criticizing specific aspects of the economic order), and produced another report in January 1942. Temple made it clear in his introduction to Malvern and After that resolutions fourteen and fifteen were not being reconsidered. Their challenge was 'one which all Christians should face with deep seriousness and sincerity'. The committee met for three sessions, and like its parent conference, produced a report which reflected strongly its chairman's influence. Some new material was introduced, such as a discussion of the merits of the profit motive, but much of it was taken directly from Christianity and Social Order which was published the same year.

The chief responsibility for the Malvern follow-up fell to the ICF. Weaned from its dependence on the Christendom group, the Fellowship took up the Malvern message as if its life depended on it. It produced special study editions of the Malvern findings

95. ICF, Annual Report, 1940-1, p.7.
96. Malvern and After. Report of the Committee of Industrialists and Economists with Theologians on those parts of the Malvern Report especially Sections (19) to (25), on which further comments were desired by the Malvern Conference, ICF, Westminster, 1942, pp.2-4.
and Malvern and After, and encouraged the use of these as the basis of study group discussion. The idea of local cells of Christians of various denominations, meeting together to discuss the Christian view of society, had been discussed by the ICF executive before the war and was commended in the Malvern report. Between February 1942 and June 1943 the activities of 139 such groups were reported in the Malvern Torch.\(^98\)

The Malvern Torch was launched in December 1941 to replace the I.C.F. Review which had ceased publication in September 1939. It aimed to reiterate the 'challenge' of the Malvern conference to the Church. Sidney Dark, brought in from the Church Times as editor, made it clear in the first number that he wished to avoid 'mischievous' and useless repetition of 'attractive and sentimental phrases'. Christians must find a way of translating 'aspiration into action'. Under Dark, the Torch gave more space to left-wing views. Conscious of the ICF's declared neutrality, Dark frequently repeated that his opinions were his own, and that there was room within the Malvern framework for 'considerable divergence of judgment' about methods and about 'the economic and political structure of the new and Christian society'. But he made it clear that his own preference was for nationalization rather than distributism or the 'occupying serviceable

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\(^{98}\) ICF executive minutes, 14 July 1939; Life of the Church and the Order of Society, p.6; Malvern Torch, Feb., Mar., Apr. and Aug. 1942; Mar., May and June 1943.
ownership' of Temple and Malvern and After. The formation, in May 1942, of the Council of Clergy and Ministers for Common Ownership was dubbed as 'Another Malvern Development'. The expression of these views did not seem to worry the executive unduly. Kirk had insisted, on Dark's appointment, that manuscripts be submitted to the General Director before publication, but there is no evidence in executive minutes that the right of veto was ever exercised.101 There were, in fact, some notably left-wing churchmen on the executive: its vice-chairman, since the early 1930s, had been the Bishop of Malmesbury (R.E. Ramsay), who was also a vice-president of the new Council of Clergy and Ministers for Common Ownership; while Rev. H.E. Worlledge (also a member of the new body), Mervyn Stockwood (later Bishop of Southwark), Sir Richard Acland (Liberal and later Labour MP), and Kenneth Ingram were all co-opted during the war.102

The ICF's most spectacular publicity for the Malvern message was the organization of a series of mass meetings, during 1942 and 1943, at the Albert Hall, and in Birmingham, Leicester and Edinburgh. Addressed by

100. Ibid., Sep. 1942, p.8. The Council declared that private ownership of the means of production was contrary to Divine justice and that common ownership would more nearly express God's will. It pledged itself, as an essential part of Christian duty, to work for this end.
101. ICF executive minutes, 24 Oct. 1941.
102. Ibid., 24 Mar. 1941.
Temple and Garbett, together with other public figures such as the nutrition expert, Sir John Boyd Orr, the American Ambassador, John G. Winant, and Labour MPs Stafford Cripps and Ivor Thomas, these meetings commanded large audiences and considerable attention in the press. The Albert Hall and the Birmingham Town Hall attracted capacity crowds, and attendances of around three thousand were reported at Leicester and Edinburgh. It was claimed that there was a queue outside the Leicester venue two hours before the meeting began and that there were over twenty thousand applications for tickets to the Albert Hall.103

Temple either delighted or appalled with his call for social planning to ensure that the predominance of the profit motive did not obscure the public interest, especially in the cases of land and credit. Garbett, by nature more conservative, kept to housing, social security and Church reform. But he produced no joy for conservatives. According to the Church Times, he 'dealt trenchantly' with the two familiar arguments against proposals for dealing with poverty - that the nation would be too poor after the war to afford them and that social security would take away the incentive to work. He made no secret of his support for the Beveridge report. Neither he nor Temple supported Cripps' plea for disestablishment, but Garbett spoke about the need for the Church to put its own house in order, beginning with

inequalities in clerical incomes and the economically superior position of bishops.\textsuperscript{104}

None of this was particularly new. But advance publicity had persuaded the press that the spectacle of two archbishops appearing on the same platform (with Labour MPs) in support of radical reform was worth reporting.\textsuperscript{105} The day after the Albert Hall meeting, the \textit{Sunday Pictorial} was ecstatic. Something had happened in Britain at last; the Church had 'flung down a challenge' and 'jumped into the ring'. It would no longer be possible, the editor predicted, for people to ignore social evils: with the 'church-at-arms' on its side, the cause of social justice was undoubtedly advanced. Each of Temple's sentences was 'a bomb dropped on the crusted shell of tradition' and the Church would never be the same again.\textsuperscript{106} Some were as horrified as the \textit{Pictorial} was delighted. Sir Waldron Smithers, Conservative MP, criticized Garbett for irresponsibly raising 'the hopes of millions'. His article in the \textit{Daily Sketch} concluded:

\begin{quote}
By their political activities the Archbishops are doing a disservice not only to the Church but also to the nation. They make the task of responsible Ministers more difficult.

Two thousand years ago we were told to 'Beware of false prophets!'\textsuperscript{107}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Malvern Torch}, Oct. 1942, pp.2-4.

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Sunday Pictorial}, 27 Sep. 1942, p.4.

\textsuperscript{107} Sir Waldron Smithers, article in the \textit{Daily Sketch}, quoted in \textit{Malvern Torch}, Apr. 1943, p.8. See also critical reactions from Sir Herbert Williams (Conservative MP) and the Bishop of Rochester, quoted in \textit{Malvern Torch}, Dec. 1942, pp.5-6 and Mar. 1943, p.6.
A poem contributed to *Nineteenth Century* pilloried the modern archbishop:

... remark me in the market-place,
With thinking-cap and grave political face,
Wellsing and Joading it to congregations,
Authority on peace between the nations
And bread for all (but not the Holy Bread),
Economist-in-chief-in mildest red,
With manifestos, charters, and New Orders,
Where God at best may, here and now, reward us,
While hungry souls look up and are not fed.108

It was to be expected that the outspokenness of Temple and Garbett would arouse extreme reactions. Because archbishops had not made a habit of demanding far-reaching social change, the public was bound to see it as a sign that the Church had suddenly abandoned the *status quo*. Whether or not this was approved depended largely on political convictions. The fact that some immediately sprang to a doctrinaire defence of private enterprise and the profit motive, in spite of the general reformist climate of the war years, was a sharp reminder that the Christian social movement was a minority strand even within the Church.109

The significant point about the criticism is that it was directed, for the most part, not at the fact that the Church had something to say on questions of secular order, but at what was actually said. Most of the

108. L. Aaronson, 'For a Modern Bishop (or Archbishop)', *Nineteenth Century*, vol.CXXXI, no.784, June 1942, p.266.
archbishops' critics accepted that the Church had a right and a duty to influence political and social life. The *Daily Telegraph* and *Morning Post* suggested that there was 'nothing surprising or disputable in Dr. Temple's declaration of the duty of the Church to teach not only individual but civic morality' and even wished him well. Yet in 1926, the *Morning Post* had described the attempt of the Standing Conference to mediate in the coal dispute as interference in the task of government. Now it welcomed the fact that the Archbishop of York advocated immediate attention to the amelioration of poverty, malnutrition and bad housing.\(^{110}\)

Criticism centred on Temple's economic statements. The *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times* both chided him for going beyond principles into economic details which were the province of the expert. The *Economist* judged his 'excursion into the realms of high finance' as 'unfortunate'. It asked that the comments of churchmen on economic matters be 'properly informed and intelligent in argument', clearly implying that Temple's were not.\(^{111}\)


To a certain extent these criticisms masked a disinclination to see the profit motive and the competitive economy challenged. But they raised the perennial issue of the Church's right to issue judgements on matters involving economic knowledge. In 1926, the Standing Conference had been careful to claim that it had not entered into technical details. Now, both Garbett and Temple, while agreeing that the Church as such could only be concerned with ends, insisted on the right of individual churchmen to be concerned with the means of achieving them. Garbett believed that it was both the duty and the right of individual Christians, including clergy, to advocate specific remedies for social ills. Even an archbishop need not be silent if study and experience had made him well-informed on a particular topic.112 A similar point was made by A.C. Pigou in a letter to *The Times*: he argued that if the archbishop were denied the right to express an opinion on economic matters because he was not an expert, most letter-writers, leader-writers and politicians (many less informed than Temple) would be equally prohibited. This would leave the assumptions of the expert unchallenged.113

There were, however, two dangers associated with Church figures (especially archbishops) expressing opinions on economic matters. First, they might speak without proper understanding or knowledge (Austin Robinson believed that Temple was unduly influenced by the 'lunatic fringe' Christendom group and misguide those who accepted their authority. This would not enhance their credibility in the eyes of the secular world. Secondly, personal opinions might assume the appearance of official statements. Temple was always careful to indicate that his opinions were his own and quite open to criticism or dispute. In Christianity and Social Order he deliberately placed his suggested programme in an appendix to separate it from the general principles outlined in the text.

But, as several critics pointed out, it was not always easy to separate William Temple from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and there were always those willing to misconstrue the character of statements by archbishops. The Daily Telegraph commented:

an Archbishop is not well advised when he treats...
the organisation of banking and national credit as a matter on which ecclesiastical knowledge is complete and ecclesiastical judgment final.

Temple, of course, had done nothing of the sort.

114. Robinson, conversation with the writer, 7 May 1976.
115. Temple, Christianity and Social Order, p.75.
By about 1942, it could fairly be claimed not only that general Christian social principles such as fellowship and personality had been clearly formulated, but that these had been expressed in terms of middle axioms like the right of every child to a decent home, food, and education, and the need for economic power to be made responsible to the community. The need now was for deeper and more detailed discussion of how these axioms could be translated into specific reforms. It was to their credit that Garbett and Temple were willing to risk public censure by giving their own opinions on what these reforms should be. As a stimulus to other Christians to think about social issues this was invaluable. But Church leaders could only suggest preliminary steps towards the achievement of a more Christian social order. Even well-informed clerics could not bring about actual change. The responsibility for this had to rest with the laity in their capacity as economists, educationalists, politicians, business men and ordinary citizens.

This point had been made at Oxford, in 1937, and was behind the work of the Moot, the CNL, and the Christian Frontier. It was reinforced by prominent laymen. The sociologist A.M. Carr-Saunders reminded a conference

118. From the time of the Oxford conference, it was frequently argued that further reiteration of general principles was unnecessary and even harmful. See e.g. Tawney's memorandum to the economic section of the conference, _The Attack_, p.177; Garbett, 'Church Intervention in Secular Affairs'; Vidler's editorials in _Theology_, vol. XLII, no.249, Mar. 1941, pp.129-32 and vol.XLIV, no.263, May 1942, pp.257-9; _Church Times_, 14 Feb. 1941, p.87 and 21 Feb. 1941, p.103; _Malvern Torch_, Dec. 1941, p.1.
of the AEGM, in 1943, that the proper line of social action in a particular situation could not be deduced from first principles. The guidance of social change was an art, the practice of which required

a tradition of special skill based upon a habit of social observation and of social analysis and a close acquaintance with the way in which the social order responds to new influences.

Christians dealing with social problems would neglect the work of economists and sociologists 'at their peril'. The report of the Malvern conference had shown inadequate awareness of what had been done in these fields. The economist Austin Robinson was conscious of the lessons to be learned by both economists and Christians through mutual exchange. Reviewing *Christianity and Social Order* for the *Economic Journal*, Robinson urged his colleagues to consider the proper scope of economics. He deplored the recent tendency of economists to make their subject 'scientific' by denying themselves the right to discuss the ends of society at all. In the tradition of Pigou, Robinson argued that economics was scientific insofar as it was concerned with causation, description, interpretation and measurement of economic phenomena, but that the formulation of economic policy necessitated value judgements. It was here that collaboration between Christians

and economists could be valuable. Moreover, the distinction between the Church's task of formulating ends and the economist's, of indicating means, was not as clear as Temple claimed. The Church could, rightly, lay down a number of social objectives. But there was always the problem of 'the relative valuation of alternative ends'. It needed technical knowledge to 'present the alternative possibilities of practicable achievement, and work out a system of priorities'. Further, the achievement of a particular end, such as the necessities of life for every citizen, might be possible by various means, some of which could need to be ruled out on Christian grounds. Should not the Church call into council the first-rate experts, and not be too readily content with amateurs and men of good will in fields where real expertise and real hard thinking are fully as necessary as other qualifications?

Robinson suggested the creation of a small permanent body to facilitate this dialogue between Christian and economist. It was clear in what direction effective Christian social activity lay. But the success of this method depended on the quality and attitudes of those participating.

121. Ibid., pp.248-9. It is a comment on the poor communication (and possibly the cliquish nature) of the movement that Robinson did not seem to be aware, at this point, of the existence of the CFC, formed on 26 Feb. 1942 (Kojecký, Eliot, p.162).
Robinson's experience with Temple's post-Malvern group was less than happy. He was irritated by Kirk's emotional approach which hindered rational discussion of desirable social ends and of the economic implications of placing moral constraints on the means used to achieve those ends.122 No doubt the presence of Peck, Mairet, Demant, Mascall, and Heron in the groups123 frustrated any attempt to delineate the respective roles of economist and theologian in these discussions.124 Mairet's report on The National Church and the Social Order, written for the Church Assembly's Social and Industrial Council, was evidence that, even as late as 1956, some Anglicans were still reluctant to learn from economists.125 Yet it was in that direction that the path of progress lay.

122. Robinson, conversation with the writer, 7 May 1976.
123. Attendance lists for the meetings of these groups are available at ICF headquarters.
124. This is well illustrated by the correspondence between Ronald Preston, W.G. Peck and another Christendom sympathizer in Theology in 1942: 'Concerning Economics', vol.XLIV, nos. 263 and 264, May and June 1942, pp.300-3 and 365-6; vol.XLV, no.265, July 1942, pp.44-5.
125. The National Church and the Social Order: An Enquiry into the principles that have governed the attitude of the Anglican Church towards the State and the Secular Order, conducted by the Social and Industrial Council of the Church Assembly, Church Information Board of the Church Assembly, Westminster, 1956. The foreword by Sir Wilfrid Garrett acknowledged that Mairet was responsible for the report (p.4). A scathing review of the report and sharp criticism of the Christendom group's disregard for economic expertise produced a reply from Mairet which warned against conceding the claims of social scientists to prescribe a framework within which Christian social thinking must operate. See Munby, 'Disordered Economic Thinking of the National Church', pp.92-9 and Mairet's letter to the editor of Theology, vol.LX, no.443, May 1957, pp.199-202. Munby replied in vol.LX, no.444, June 1957, p.254.
CONCLUSION

The Christian social movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was based on the belief that Christian theology required the Church to hold a watching brief over society. Disturbed by the apparent indifference of the majority of churchpeople to social injustice, some Christians called for a re-examination of the social teaching of the Bible, the early Church, and medieval Christendom. The doctrines of the kingdom of God, the creation, and the incarnation were believed to point towards the idea of a Christian social order, lost to the Church since the collapse of Christendom. The recovery of this idea, and of the principles underlying it, was the inspiration of the Christian social movement throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

The liberal theology of the 1920s encouraged the belief that man could play a significant role in building God's kingdom - a Christian social order on earth. The League of the Kingdom of God reinforced this optimism by claiming that medieval Christendom had represented a good approximation to the kingdom, and that a Christian social order was still an achievable goal. The revival of interest in eschatology, in the late 1930s, brought a change of emphasis. It was argued that the kingdom would be established finally by God, not by men, and that the duty of Christians was simply to take the next step forward in the world in the light of faith. But even in this latter stage, the idea
of a Christian social order, in the Coleridgean sense of 'the idea' towards which society must be directed, exerted a powerful influence on Anglican social thought. Although T.S. Eliot and J.H. Oldham acknowledged the post-Christian character of contemporary society, they were not prepared to concede, as did a later generation, that its 'idea' had become secular.¹

The thinking of the movement was naturally subject to the influence of wider intellectual currents. In his preface to Lux Mundi, in 1889, Charles Gore had noted that the 'real development of theology' was the process by which the Church, 'standing firm in her old truths', assimilated the new insights of contemporary intellectual movements.² Gore wrote in the wake of scientific and rationalist criticism which made theologians particularly concerned to subject statements of religious belief to careful scrutiny. But even in periods of greater conservatism, few theologians would claim to have achieved a final statement of truth. The eclecticism of the early Christian social movement should be viewed in the context of contemporary theological liberalism. It was not only Christian socialists who imbibed some of the prevailing secular outlook. Theological modernists (many of whom did not necessarily share the outlook of the Christian social movement) argued, throughout the 1920s, for a demythologized

². Gore, preface to Lux Mundi, p.(ix).
faith consistent with modern historical and scientific enquiry. E.R. Norman's crude contention that Christian socialists merely took their ideas from secular ideology is not sustained by the evidence. The jibe that theologians have always reinterpreted their sources to correspond almost exactly to the values of their class and generation is an over-simplification of a subtle relationship.  

During the 1930s, liberal theology fell into disrepute. Depression and unemployment caused disillusionment with secular progress, and the challenge of totalitarian ideologies threw Christianity back on its own resources. Theologians were no longer disposed to accommodate the world, but rather, to confront it on Christian terms. This theological conservatism expressed itself in the Christian social movement in two distinct stages. In the Christendom phase there was a tendency to shelter both theological and social belief from secular criticism. The Christendom group made no apology for its emphasis on dogma and the supernatural. It made a deliberate attempt to deduce Christian social principles from theology, summarily dismissing secular knowledge which did not square with its neo-Thomist framework. In the next phase, in the late 1930s, the influence of continental Protestantism deepened theological conservatism. Stressing the Bible as the prime source of Christian revelation, neo-orthodox theologians minimized the contribution of natural knowledge to theological truth. But equally, they denied that theology as such could provide

social solutions, insisting that secular knowledge was an indispensable ingredient in Christian social judgements. Any attempt to label these decisions as Christian solutions compromised the unconditional demands of Christianity.

To argue that Anglicans derived their ideas from the general intellectual milieu, and then twisted their theology to fit their sociology, is to misconstrue the process of theological change and to ignore the impact of that change on Christian social thinking. Theology was the movement's form of expression - its way of describing the relationship between Church and world. The impact of secular influences on that outlook varied throughout the period. In the 1920s, theology itself was changing and adapting. Christian social theory reflected the process of absorbing secular ideas. The Christendom phase was a deliberate reaction - a reassertion of traditional theology and the Church's own social teaching. Subsequent criticism of the group's Christian sociology was essentially theological. It was argued that Christendom writers underestimated the effect of sin on God's creation and hence overestimated the capacity of human reason to perceive the outlines of a divinely given natural order. Furthermore, they exaggerated the authority of theology outside its proper sphere and ignored the development of secular branches of knowledge. The ecumenicists, for their part, turned deliberately to the general intellectual milieu for their concrete social ideas. But, equally deliberately, they refrained from labelling their social critique as Christian.
For them, Christian theology demanded that justice be sought in the social order, but secular justice was not to be confused with Christian love.

Throughout the inter-war years, there was a consistent search for a sound theological basis for Christian social concern and for principles which adequately expressed that concern. The primary Christian social principle was believed to be the dignity of man as a child of God. From this it was argued that freedom and personality were essential elements of Christian social ethics. Because personality was essentially a social phenomenon, freedom must be balanced by fellowship, service, and co-operation. A number of more concrete principles or middle axioms were deduced from these first order principles: that the value of each individual was independent of his usefulness to the State; that every man had a right to earn a living wage; that every child had the right to adequate nutrition, housing, and education; and that a sense of vocation should be restored to daily work. These and other middle axioms were intended to express fundamental theological beliefs in terms applicable to contemporary society. Naturally they reflected secular ideas and problems, but they were based on a view of God, man, and the world which regarded the search for social justice as part of Christian duty.

Anglican social thinkers believed that modern capitalist society fell far short of satisfying these principles. All too frequently, it affronted basic human dignity and allowed the wealthy to wield unjustifiable power over the lives of the poor. But few wanted a
socialist or egalitarian society. Slogans like co-operation instead of competition were largely rhetorical. The radical bishops of the 1920s looked for spiritual rather than structural change, while the Christendom group quite openly espoused a hierarchical society, based on class, status, and function. Equality was not regarded as a fundamental Christian principle, except in the sense that each person was equal in the sight of God; but liberty was deemed essential, and fear of the servile or totalitarian State kept alive the concern for individual and associational freedom.

During the second world war, Britons learned to live with more State intervention in social and economic life. Christian social thinkers were amongst those who began to accept the power of the modern State as a reality. With Karl Mannheim, they argued that the paramount concern must be to ensure that the State's authority was used to guarantee freedom. What the Christian social movement stood for, ultimately, was controlled capitalism - a mixed economy in which private enterprise was encouraged, but supplemented and supervised by the State. Property, the basis of personality, should be distributed as widely as possible and should never be considered an unconditional right. The State's function must be to work towards a just and responsible society. This necessitated economic and social planning and State ownership of some productive resources.
By the early 1940s, the movement had established criteria for measuring social justice, and had suggested the outlines of a responsible society. But the problem of translating social principles into specific policies or action was only beginning to be tackled. Until the Oxford conference of 1937, the problem was viewed exclusively in terms of the institutional Church. Acceptance that the Church could not dictate to the secular State, or properly endorse particular policies, precluded further examination of the question of Christian social action. Besides, Anglican social thinkers had little real knowledge of the forces and structures of society. There was, for example, no realistic appraisal of the operation of the profit motive and the implications of its abandonment, or of the economic results of insisting on the payment of a living wage under a capitalist system.

The first signs of an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and action were evident at the Oxford conference. Emphasis on the tension between Church and world and on the problems of Christians as citizens of both, focussed attention on the question of 'the secular obedience of a Christian'. The key to Christian social action was found in the concept of the laity, 'dispersed into the world', making social judgements in the light of both Christian faith and secular knowledge.\(^4\) The task

\(^4\) The quoted phrases are E.R. Wickham's. See his *Church and People in an Industrial City*, Lutterworth, London, 1957, p.230.
of forging a link between Christian principles and social reality, of providing a strategy for the Christian social movement, was taken up by the Council on the Christian Faith and the Common Life, and its successor, the Christian Frontier Council. These bodies tried to encourage dialogue between theologians and laymen in particular professions as a way of determining the meaning of Christian vocation in secular life.

Writing in the mid 1950s, Michael Ramsey commented that Christian sociology was 'noticeably under the weather'. A year later, Maurice Reckitt complained that much of what William Temple had stood for had been forgotten or 'implicitly repudiated'. The decrease in subscriptions to the Christian Newsletter - from 10,000 during the war years to just over 7,000 in 1948 - suggests some decline of interest in Christian debate on social questions. Explanations are not difficult to find. The death of Temple, in 1944, had removed a leader and publicist of great force and enthusiasm. The comprehensive social legislation enacted at the end of the war gave expression to many of the principles for which the Christian social movement had stood in earlier years; while the new

8. Ramsey and Reckitt both suggest that the existence of the welfare State created the impression that Christians need no longer be concerned with social questions. See ibid., p.110 and Ramsey, Durham Essays and Addresses, p.41.
problems of the post-war years - atomic power and the
cold war - raised different and perplexing questions
which did not fit neatly into established categories
of Christian social thought. One of the major concerns
of the Church in the post-war years was to re-establish
links with the Churches of Europe and to assist them in
the process of rehabilitation. There was renewed interest
in discussion of ecumenical issues, such as Church union,
and a revitalized concern with missionary activity. At
home, the physical destruction of bombing raids and the
challenge of rapid suburban development focussed attention
on church building and local parish life. Ministries,
manpower, and stewardship campaigns absorbed much of the
energy of churchmen in the late 1940s and 1950s.

The insecurity of the 1950s fostered a theological
environment inimical to Christian social thought. Preaching
tended to be existentialist, presenting Christianity as a
faith of inner encounter and decision, and evangelical,
stressing personal faith and action. Personal religion
was not always related to the full circumstances of human
existence. As Ramsey saw it, 'fundamentalist evangelism'
was helping 'to destroy the ground of a Christian sociology'
by abstracting Christians from their social setting and
appealing to less than their total being. E.R. Wickham,

9. This is not to say that there were no attempts to
broach these difficult questions. See e.g. The Church and
the Atom: A Study of the Moral and Theological Aspects of
Peace and War. Being the Report of a Commission appointed
by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York at the request of
the Church Assembly to consider the Report of the British
Council of Churches' Commission entitled 'The Era of Atomic
Power', and to report [CA 975]. Press and Publications
Board of the Church Assembly, Westminster, 1948.

10. Ramsey, Durham Essays and Addresses, p.43.
Canon of Sheffield and later Bishop of Middleton, warned against 'imprisoning the meaning of the Gospel into a sentence'. This, he believed, was 'the perennial error of revivalists seeking a neat formula to win a simple "yes" from the convert'.

The energies of the institutional Church were widely diffused in the 1950s, and the public face of religion was less closely connected with concern for social order than it had been in Temple's time. Yet public appearances are only part of the story. There is, at the moment, little evidence to suggest that, in the inter-war period, the theoretical analysis and public pronouncements of the Christian social movement had made any significant impact on either local parish life or the conduct of public affairs. The attention of Christian social thinkers had been focussed primarily at the theoretical level and they made little attempt to convey their ideas beyond a relatively small circle. A study of pews and parishes would, of course, raise its own problems of methodology. But it is conceivable that such a study would reveal an increase in Christian social discussion at the parish level in the post-war years, despite an apparent decline in public interest. Certainly some Christians who continued, after the war, to concern

12. Bell, Temple and Demant were all sceptical about the extent to which the Church's claim to be concerned with social questions was generally accepted. Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, p.7; Jasper, *Bell*, p.339; Demant, conversation with the writer, 21 Apr. 1976. See also Sir Wilfrid Garrett's foreword to *The National Church and the Social Order*, p.4.
themselves with the question of Christian social witness deliberately kept a low profile. Convinced that enough had been said about general principles, they determined to work quietly and relatively unobtrusively on the frontier between religious and secular life. The problems of the frontier were believed to exist not only in Church/State relations but, as Kathleen Bliss put it, wherever the Church existed. Every Christian lived 'on the frontier' and had 'to discover and act upon his Christian obedience' in his work, his leisure, and his political responsibilities.  

The Christian Frontier Council of the 1940s and 1950s comprised thirty or so members and a number of subsidiary groups. Its technique, as Bliss described it, was 'to take a slice of life as it is and see what Christians could be doing.' The 'slices' which various Frontier groups actually investigated included the role of the Christian in politics and in the civil service; Christian witness in the university; the training of young workers in industry; and the relevance of the concept of Christian vocation in large working class industrial areas.

These examples suggest a depth of enquiry and attention to practical detail which were rarely evident in the discussions of the Christian social movement in the inter-war period. During the 1920s and 1930s, the energies of Christian socialists and sociologists had, of necessity, been directed primarily towards establishing the general theological principles underlying Christian concern with the social order, and expressing these in terms of middle axioms which could be related to concrete social problems. In the 1940s and 1950s, the Christian Frontier Council was able to build on this theoretical foundation, examining the relevance of particular Christian social concepts in the context of particular work situations and in the light of professional experience.

The academic debate of the 1920s and 1930s was out of date in the world of the 1950s. The expansion of radio and the advent of television extended the discussion of social and religious questions beyond the pages of intellectual journals into the kitchens and living-rooms of ordinary people. The immediacy and directness of modern communications created an environment for speculation and debate vastly different from that which had fostered earlier, more abstract, discussions of the idea of a Christian social order.
APPENDIX. SELECT BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

BARKER, Edwin
Strongly involved in SCM being Leeds secretary, 1927-30; social study secretary and Birmingham secretary, 1930-1; social and international study secretary, 1931-2; social and international secretary, SCM and Auxiliary Movement, 1934-7; also member, CFC; assistant general secretary, National Council of YMCA, in late 1950s; and secretary, Church Assembly Board for Social Responsibility, 1962-72.

BELL, George Kennedy Allen (1883-1958)
Educated Westminster School, Christ Church, Oxford and Wells Theological College; ordained deacon, 1907 and priest, 1908; curate then priest, Leeds, 1907-10; lecturer and tutor, Christ Church, Oxford, 1910-4; domestic chaplain to Archbishop Davidson, 1914-24; Dean of Canterbury, 1924-9; lecturer in pastoral theology, Cambridge, 1926; Bishop of Chichester, 1929-58; member, Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems, Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions, Archbishop of York's committee on unemployment; chairman, Council of Life and Work Movement, 1932-4 and of its administrative committee, 1934-8; first chairman, central committee, WCC, 1948-54 and hon. president, 1954-8; chairman, Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, 1945-58; member, Royal Institute of International Affairs, from 1923.

BLISS, Kathleen Mary (1908-)

BULL, Paul Bertie (1864-1942)
Educated Worcester College, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1888 and priest, 1889; assistant master, Mansfield Grammar School, 1886 and Hurstpierpoint College, 1888-91; diocesan missioner, Chichester, 1891-2, assistant diocesan missioner, Gloucester and Bristol, 1892; curate, St Nicholas', Guildford, 1893-4; member, Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, from 1894; member, CSL.

CARTER, Henry (1874-1951)
Educated private school, Plymouth Public School and Handsworth College, Birmingham; Methodist minister in Bristol, Harrow and Birmingham, 1901-11; general secretary, Social Welfare Department, Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1911-42; joint hon. secretary, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926 and Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions; member,

CASSERLEY, Julian Victor Langmead (1909- )
Educated London School of Economics and King's College, London; ordained deacon, 1933 and priest, 1934; curate, St Luke's, West Norwood, 1933-5 and St Nicholas', Plumstead, 1935-8; rector, Little Easton, 1938-41; member, Church Union Summer School committee, from 1938 and CSA committee, from 1939; vicar, Oxhey, 1941-5 and St Decuman, Watchet, 1945-9; rector, Mamhead, 1949-52 and Ashcombe, 1949-52; lecturer in sociology, University of Exeter, 1948-52; Professor of Dogmatic Theology, General Theological Seminary, New York, 1952-9; Professor of Philosophical Theology, Seabury Western Seminary, Evanston, USA, from 1959.

CECIL, Hugh Richard Heathcote Gascoyne, from 1941 Baron Quickswood (1869-1956)
Educated Eton and University College, Oxford; although originally intending to take holy orders, became assistant private secretary to his father, the third Marquis of Salisbury and British prime minister; subsequently devoted life to Conservative politics and Church government being MP for Greenwich, 1895-1906 and for Oxford, 1910-37 and a member of the Church Assembly and London Diocesan Conference; appointed Privy Councillor, 1918; Provost of Eton, 1936-44.

DARK, Sidney Ernest (1874-1947)
Studied at Royal Academy of Music and was professional singer for short time; wrote gossip column, book notes and theatrical and musical criticism for Daily Mail; joined staff of Daily Express, 1902 and was special correspondent during Paris Peace Conference; joint editor, John o'London's Weekly, 1919-24; editor, Church Times, 1924-41 and Malvern Torch, from 1941.

DEMANT, Vigo Auguste (1893- )
Educated Armstrong College, University of Durham (BSc (engineering) and Blitt), Exeter College, Oxford (Diploma in Anthropology) and Ely Theological College; ordained deacon, 1919 and priest, 1920; curate, St Thomas', Oxford, 1919-23, St Michael and All Angels, Summertown, Oxford, 1923-4, St Nicholas', Plumstead, 1924-6, All Saints, Highgate, 1926-9 and St Silas', Kentish Town, 1929-33; Director of Research, CSC, 1929-33; vicar, St John the Divine, Richmond, Surrey, 1933-42; Canon of St Paul's, 1942-9; Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, 1949-71; member, Church Union Summer School committee, CSA committee, and advisory committee on research, International Christian
Institute, Geneva; Gifford Lecturer, 1957-8; fellow, Royal Anthropological Institute; hon. member, American Academy of Political and Social Science.

ELIOT, Thomas Stearns (1888-1965)

FENN, John Eric (1899- )

GARBETT, Cyril Forster (1875-1955)
Educated Farnham and Portsmouth Grammar Schools, Keble College, Oxford and Cuddesdon Theological College; ordained deacon, 1899 and priest, 1901; curate, Portsea, 1899-1909; vicar, Portsea, 1909-19; prison chaplain, Hon. Canon of Winchester Cathedral, and Rural Dean of Portsmouth, 1915-9; Bishop and Dean of Southwark, 1919-32, during which time he gained first hand knowledge of urban poverty; Bishop of Winchester, 1932-42; Archbishop of York, 1942-55.

GARVIE, Alfred Ernest (1861-1945)
Educated George Watson's College, Edinburgh and, after several years in wholesale drapery, at University of Glasgow and Mansfield College, Oxford; Congregational minister at Macduff and Montrose before becoming chairman of Scottish Congregational Union, 1902; appointed Professor of Philosophy, Theism, Comparative Religion and Christian Ethics, Hackney College and New College, Hampstead, 1903; principal of New College from 1907, of Hackney College from 1922 and of the united Hackney and New College (later New College) from 1924; resigned in 1933; chairman, Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1920; president, National Free Church Council, 1924; vice-chairman, Copec, 1921-4; secretary, continuation committee appointed after

GORE, Charles (1853-1932)
Educated Harrow, Balliol College, Oxford and Trinity College, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1876 and priest 1878; Oxford fellow of Trinity College, 1875-95 and lecturer, 1876-80; vice-principal, Cuddesdon Theological College, 1880-3; principal librarian, Pusey House, Oxford, 1884-93; founder and superior of Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, 1893-1902; vicar, Radley, 1893-4; Canon of Westminster, 1894-1902; Bishop of Worcester, 1902-5; Bishop of Birmingham, 1905-11; Bishop of Oxford, 1911-19; member, Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926, and Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions; Bampton Lecturer, 1891; lecturer in pastoral theology, Cambridge, 1899-1901; lecturer in theology, King's College, London, from 1919 and dean of theology faculty, 1924-8; Gifford Lecturer, 1929-30; a member of the CSU from its inception.

HEADLAM, Arthur Cayley (1862-1947)
Educated New College, Oxford and All Souls College, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1888 and priest, 1889; fellow, All Souls, 1885-97 and chaplain, 1888-96; lecturer in theology, Oriel College, Oxford and Queen's College, Oxford, 1888-93 and Trinity College, Oxford, 1895-6; rector, Welwyn, 1896-1903; principal, King's College, London, 1903-12 and Professor of Dogmatic Theology, 1903-17; member of Senate, University of London, 1903-13; Regius Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, 1918-23; Bampton Lecturer, 1919-20; Bishop of Gloucester, 1923-45; chairman, Church of England Council on Foreign Relations, 1933-45.

HENSON, Herbert Hensley (1863-1947)
Educated St Catherine's Society, Oxford and All Souls College, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1887 and priest, 1888; head of Oxford House, Bethnal Green, 1887-8; vicar, Barking, 1888-95; hospital chaplain, St Mary and St Thomas of Canterbury, Ilford, 1895-1900; chaplain to Bishop of St Albans, 1897-1903; Canon of Westminster and rector, St Margaret's, Westminster, 1900-12; Dean of Durham, 1912-8; Bishop of Hereford, 1918-20; Bishop of Durham, 1920-39; Canon of Westminster, 1940-1.

HOLLAND, Henry Scott (1847-1918)
Educated Balliol College, Oxford and Christ Church, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1872 and priest, 1874; senior student, Christ Church, 1870-85 and tutor, 1872-85; Hon. Canon of Truro Cathedral, 1883-4; Canon of St Paul's, 1884-1911;
Romanes Lecturer, 1908; Regius Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, 1911-8; a foundation member of the CSU; editor, Commonwealth, 1895-1912.

HUDDSON, Cyril Edward (1888-1960)
Educated Queen's College, Oxford and Bishop's College, Cheshunt; ordained deacon, 1911 and priest, 1912; curate, Great Berkhamsted, 1911-4, East Ham, 1915-7 and St Mary Abbots, Kensington, 1917-23; Director of Religious Education, Diocese of St Albans, 1923-7; diocesan chaplain to Bishop of St Albans, 1928-35; librarian, 1935-7; Hon. Canon of St Albans, 1933-43; hon. chaplain to Archbishop of Canterbury, 1943-4; Canon of St Albans from 1942.

INE, William Ralph (1860-1954)
Educated King's College, Cambridge; ordained deacon, 1888 and priest, 1892; assistant master, Eton, 1884-8; fellow, King's College, 1886-8; fellow and tutor, Hertford College, Oxford, 1889-1905; vicar, All Saints, Knightsbridge, 1905-7; Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and fellow, Jesus College, Cambridge, 1907-11; Dean of St Paul's, 1911-34; Bampton Lecturer, 1899; Paddock Lecturer, New York, 1906; Gifford Lecturer, 1917-8; Romanes Lecturer, 1920; Hibbert Lecturer, 1921; Rede Lecturer, 1922; Hulsean Lecturer, 1925-6; Warburton Lecturer, 1931-3; for some years president of the Modern Churchman's Union.

IREMONGER, Frederic Athelwold (1878-1952)
Educated Clifton College, Keble College, Oxford and Wells Theological College; ordained deacon, 1905 and priest, 1906; curate, All Saints, East Poplar, 1905-11; priest in charge, St Nicholas', Blackwall, 1908-11; head of Oxford House, Bethnal Green, 1912-6; rector, Quarley, 1916-22; editor, The Guardian, 1923-7; vicar, Vernham Dean, 1927-33; Director of Religion, BBC, 1933-9; chaplain to the King, 1927-39; Dean of Lichfield from 1939; chairman, Life and Liberty movement, 1919-21 and president, 1922; William Temple's biographer and his hon. chaplain, 1928-39.

KEMPTHORNE, John Augustine (1864-1946)
Educated Trinity College, Cambridge; ordained deacon and priest, 1890; curate, St Aidan's, Gateshead, 1890-5; vicar, St Mary's, Rochdale, 1895-1900 and St Thomas', Bishop Wearmouth, 1900-1; rector, Gateshead, and Master, King James Hospital, Gateshead, 1901-4; rector, Liverpool, 1904-10; Hon. Canon of Liverpool, 1905-10; vicar, Hesle and Bishop of Hull, 1910-3; Bishop of Lichfield, 1913-37; chairman, Lambeth committee on the Church and industrial and social problems, 1920, Copec Commission on the Social Function of the Church, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926, executive committee of ICF, to 1933, Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions, 1926-33, CSC, from 1932; also member, Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems, Copec executive committee, Copec Commission on Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity, and Social and Industrial Commission of Church Assembly.
KENYON, Ruth (died 1943)
Member, Copec Commission on Politics and Citizenship, executive committee of LKG, Research Committee of CSC, ICF council, Church Union Summer School committee, CSA committee and (briefly) Social and Industrial Commission of Church Assembly; contributed editorial notes for Commonwealth, 1922-9 and on editorial board of Christendom; member, Hastings Education Committee for over thirty years; one of first two women magistrates in borough of Hastings; member, Board of Guardians; supporter of Labour party.

KIRK, Paul Thomas Radford-Rowe (1878-1962)
Educated Wesley and Trinity Colleges, Dublin; ordained deacon, 1902 and priest, 1903; curate, Berriew, 1902-4, St Mary's, Dublin, 1904-6, St Matthew's, Surbiton, 1906-7, Walcot Street, Swithin, 1907-9; vicar, St Mary Magdalene, Peckham, 1909-15; chaplain to forces, 1915-8; vicar, Christ Church, Westminster, 1922-53; curate, St Andrew's, Ashley Place, 1941-6 and St Peter's, Eaton Square, 1941-53; Rural Dean of Westminster, 1941-52; Prebendary in St Paul's Cathedral, 1943-54; General Director, ICF, 1918-54; joint hon. secretary, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926, Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions, and CSC; secretary, Social and Industrial Commission of Church Assembly, 1931-48.

LANSBURY, George (1859-1940)
Educated elementary day schools; worked in various offices; Poor Law Guardian (Poplar) in 1890s; member, Central Unemployed Body for London; borough councillor, from 1903; member, Royal Commission on Poor Law, and one of four signatories to minority report, 1905-9; Labour MP for Bow and Bromley, 1910-12 and 1922-40; First Commissioner of Works, 1929-31; leader of Labour party in House of Commons, 1931-5; mayor of Poplar, 1919-20 and 1936-7; member, London County Council; instrumental in founding Labour's first daily paper, the Daily Herald, and, for a time, editor; member, CSL and Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems.

LINDSAY, Alexander Dunlop, from 1945 Baron Lindsay of Birker (1879-1952)
Educated Glasgow University and University College, Oxford; Clark philosophy fellow, Glasgow University, 1902-4; Shaw philosophy fellow, University of Edinburgh, 1904-9; assistant to professor of philosophy, Victoria University, Manchester, 1904-6; fellow and classical tutor, Balliol College, Oxford, 1906-22 and Jowett lecturer in philosophy, 1911; Professor of Moral Philosophy, Glasgow, 1922-4; Master of Balliol, 1924-49; Vice-Chancellor, University of Oxford, 1935-8; first principal, University College of North Staffordshire (Keele) from 1949; member, Copec Commission on International Relations; a friend of William Temple and, like Temple and R.H. Tawney, devoted considerable time to the WEA, as well as to the Oxford tutorial classes
and University extension lectures; a member of Temple's committee on unemployment in the 1930s; advisor on educational matters to Labour party and TUC; stood unsuccessfully on an 'anti-Munich' platform against Quinton Hogg in an Oxford by-election in Oct. 1938.

MACKINNON, Donald Mackenzie (1913-)
Educated Cargilfield School in Edinburgh, Winchester College and New College, Oxford; assistant to professor of moral philosophy, University of Edinburgh, 1936-7; fellow and tutor in philosophy, Keble College, Oxford, 1937-47; director, special philosophy course for navy and air force cadets, Oxford, 1942-5; lecturer in philosophy, Balliol College and Wilde Lecturer in Natural and Comparative Religion, Oxford, 1945-7; Regius Professor of Moral Philosophy, Aberdeen, 1947-60; Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity, Cambridge University and fellow of Corpus Christi College, from 1960; Scott Holland Lecturer, 1952; Hobhouse Lecturer 1953; Stanton Lecturer in the Philosophy of Religion, Cambridge, 1956-9; Gifford Lecturer, 1965-6; Prideaux Lecturer, University of Exeter, 1966; Coffin Lecturer, University of London, 1968; member, CSA committee, from 1939; a pacifist and a member of the Labour party.

MANNHEIM, Karl (1893-1947)
Educated universities of Budapest, Berlin, Paris, Freiburg and Heidelberg; lecturer in sociology, University of Heidelberg, 1926-30; Professor of Sociology and head of department, University of Frankfurt-am-Main, 1930-3; lecturing engagements at universities of Leiden, Amsterdam, Groningen and Utrecht, 1933; lecturer in sociology, London School of Economics, 1933-45; Professor of Education, University of London, from 1945; editor, International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction (London and New York).

MASCALL, Eric Lionel (1905-)
Educated University of London, Pembroke College, Cambridge, Christ Church, Oxford, and Ely Theological College; ordained deacon, 1932 and priest, 1933; curate, St Andrew's, Stockwell Green, 1932-5 and St Matthew's, Westminster, 1935-7; sub-warden, Lincoln Theological College, 1937-45; lecturer in theology, Christ Church, Oxford, 1945; student and tutor, Christ Church, 1946-62; lecturer in philosophy of religion, University of Oxford, 1947-62; Professor of Historical Theology, University of London, 1962-73 and Dean of Theology, 1968-72; Bampton Lecturer, 1956; Columbia University, New York, 1958; Boyle Lecturer, 1965-6; Gifford Lecturer 1970-1; Professor Emeritus from 1973 and Hon. Canon of Truro from 1974.

MAUD, John Primatt Redcliffe, from 1967 Lord Redcliffe-Maud (1906-)
Educated Eton, New College, Oxford and Harvard College, USA; junior research fellow, University College, Oxford, 1929 and fellow and dean, 1932-9; Rhodes travelling fellowship to Africa, 1932; councillor, Oxford City, 1930-6; tutor, colonial administrative services course, Oxford, 1937-9;

McLAUGHLIN, Patrick (1909- )
Educated Worcester College, Oxford; St Stephen's House, Oxford, 1933; ordained deacon, 1935 and priest, 1936; curate, St Benedict's, Bordesley, 1935-8; vicar, Berden, 1938-43; warden, St Anne's House, Soho, from 1943; perpetual curate, St Thomas', Regent Street, 1944-53; rector, St Anne's with St Thomas' and St Peter's, Soho, from 1953; secretary, CSA, from 1936; member, Church Union Summer School committee, 1936-46, from 1938 as secretary and treasurer; member, ICF executive, from 1940; converted to Roman Catholicism about 1958.

MOBERLY, Walter Hamilton, knighted 1934 (1881-1975)
Educated Winchester College and New College, Oxford; fellow, Merton College, Oxford, 1904-7 and Lincoln College, Oxford, 1906-21; lecturer in political science, Aberdeen University, 1905-6; Professor of Philosophy, Birmingham University, 1921-4; principal, University College of South West England, Exeter, 1925-6; Vice-Chancellor, University of Manchester, 1926-34; chairman, University Grants Committee, 1935-49; principal, St Catherine's, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, 1949-55; member, Church Assembly from 1928; headed Church Assembly Commission on the Establishment, 1949-52; member, Archbishop of York's committee on unemployment; member, CFC.

OLDHAM, Joseph Houldsworth (1874-1969)
PECK, William George (circa 1883-1962)
Educated University of Manchester; originally a Methodist clergyman, but ordained deacon, 1925 and priest, 1926; curate, St Margaret's, Whalley Range, 1925-9; rector, St John the Baptist, Hulme, 1929-36; Director of Clergy Schools, ICF, from 1936; lecturer, ICF training college, Theddon Grange, 1951-2; member, Church Union Summer School committee and CSA committee; Hale Lecturer, Seabury Western Seminary, Evanston, USA, 1933.

PRESTON, Ronald Haydn (1913- )
Educated London School of Economics, St Catherine's Society, Oxford and Ripon Hall, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1940 and priest, 1941; industrial secretary, SCM, 1935-8; curate, St John's Park, Sheffield, 1940-3; study secretary, SCM and editor, The Student Movement, 1943-8; warden, St Anselm Hall, University of Manchester, 1948-63; lecturer in Christian ethics, University of Manchester, 1949-70; curate, St Chrysostom's, Victoria Park, 1950-7; Canon of Manchester, 1957-71 and Hon. Canon from 1971; Professor of Social and Pastoral Theology, University of Manchester, from 1970.

Educated Magdalen College, Cambridge and Cuddesdon College; ordained deacon, 1928 and priest, 1929; curate, St Nicholas', Liverpool, 1928-30; sub-warden, Lincoln Theological College, 1930-6; lecturer, Boston, 1936-8; vicar, St Benedict's, Cambridge, 1938-40; Canon of Durham Cathedral and Professor of Divinity, University of Durham, 1940-50; Regius Professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge and fellow, Magdalen College, Cambridge, 1950-2; Prebendary and Canon of Lincoln Cathedral, 1951-2; Bishop of Durham, 1952-6; Archbishop of York, 1956-61; Archbishop of Canterbury, 1961-74; Privy Councillor, 1956.

RECKITT, Maurice Benington (1888- )
Educated Wellington College and St John's College, Oxford; taught history at Ipswich Grammar School, 1911-12; returned to Oxford, 1913-5 to write thesis for BLitt degree on relation of socialism to revolutionary thought from 1770 to 1870, and became interested in guild socialism; involved in foundation of National Guilds League and worked for guild movement during first world war; closely associated with Fabians such as G.D.H. Cole and Ellen Wilkinson; editor, Church Socialist, 1915-9; on editorial board of Commonwealth and G.K.'s Weekly; regular contributor, New Age and New English Weekly; editor, Christendom, from 1931; member, Copec Commissions on International Relations and Politics and Citizenship, Church Assembly, 1938-1960, Social and Industrial Commission of Church Assembly, from 1933; member, Church Union Summer School committee, from 1945 as vice-chairman; member, CSA committee, from 1940 as vice-chairman and from 1942 as deputy chairman; member, executives of LKG, ICF, Church Union and CSC, Research Committee of CSC, and British Council of Churches Department for Social Responsibility; Scott Holland Lecturer, 1946.
SHEPPARD, Hugh Richard Lawrie (1880-1937)
Educated Marlborough, Trinity Hall, Cambridge and Cuddesdon Theological College; ordained deacon, 1907 and priest, 1909; chaplain, Oxford House, Bethnal Green, 1907-9 and head, 1909-10; chaplain to Archbishop Lang, 1910 and 1911-28; curate, St George's, Hanover Square, 1911-14; vicar, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Westminster, 1914-26; Dean of Canterbury, 1920-31; Canon and Precentor of St Paul's, from 1934; with William Temple, responsible for inaugurating the Life and Liberty movement, 1917; one of the founders of the Peace Pledge Union, 1936.

SLESSER, Henry, knighted 1924 (1883- )
Educated Oundle and St Paul's Schools and University of London; called to Bar, 1906; Bencher of Inner Temple and King's Counsel, 1924; unsuccessful Labour candidate for Central Leeds, 1922 and 1923; Labour MP for South-East Leeds, 1924-9; Solicitor General, 1924; Privy Councillor, 1929; Lord Justice of Appeal, 1929-40; standing counsel to Labour party from 1910; member, Devon County Council, 1946-68 and alderman, 1956; chairman, Dartmoor National Park Committee, 1948-64; member, Faculty of Laws and lecturer in industrial law, University of London; vice-president, English Church Union, early 1920s; member, Copec Commission on Industry and Property; member, ICF executive until 1929, from 1926 as treasurer; member, LKG executive, from 1927 as vice-chairman; member, Church Union Summer School committee from 1934.

SPENCER, Malcolm
Congregational minister; member, Copec executive committee and Commission on Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity; secretary, Copec Commission on the Social Function of the Church and research continuation group on same subject; joint hon. secretary, CSC; member, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926; secretary, Free Church Fellowship; Social Service Secretary, Congregational Union of England and Wales; member, Archbishop of York's committee on unemployment.

TALBOT, Edward Stuart (1844-1934)
Educated Charterhouse and Christ Church, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1869 and priest, 1870; first warden, Keble College, Oxford, 1870-88; vicar, Leeds, 1889-95; Bishop of Rochester, 1895-1905; Bishop of Southwark, 1905-11; Bishop of Winchester, 1911-23; an early member of the CSU; chairman, Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems.

TAWNEY, Richard Henry (1880-1962)
Educated Rugby and Balliol College, Oxford; assistant, Glasgow University, 1906-8; teacher, Tutorial Classes Committee, Oxford University, 1908-14; member of executive,
WEA, 1905-47, from 1928-44 as president; member, consultative committee of Board of Education, 1912-31; Sankey commission on coal industry, 1919, Trade Board, 1919-22, Cotton Trade Conciliation Commission, 1936-9, University Grants Committee, 1943-8; advisor, British Embassy, Washington, 1941-2; Reader, London School of Economics, 1920-31, Professor of Economic History, 1931-49 and Professor Emeritus from 1949; member, Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems, Copec Commissions on Industry and Property and Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity, Archbishop of York's committee on unemployment.

TEMPLE, William (1881-1944)
Educated Rugby and Balliol College, Oxford; fellow and lecturer in philosophy, Queen's College, Oxford, 1904-10; ordained deacon, 1908 and priest, 1909; member, WEA from 1904, from 1908-24 as president; member, Labour party from 1918 for seven years; headmaster, Repton, 1910-14; rector, St James', Piccadilly, 1914-8; involved in Life and Liberty movement, 1916-19; Canon of Westminster, 1919-21; Bishop of Manchester, 1921-9; Archbishop of York, 1929-42; Archbishop of Canterbury, 1942-4; editor, The Challenge, 1915-18 and The Pilgrim, 1920-7; Scott Holland Lecturer, 1928; Gifford Lecturer, 1932; chairman, Copec, 1924, conference on Faith and Order, Edinburgh, 1937, Malvern conference, 1941; member, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926 and Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions; convened committee on unemployment in 1930s, under auspices of Pilgrim Trust.

THORNTON, Lionel Spencer (1884-1960)
Educated Emmanuel College, Cambridge; ordained deacon, 1908 and priest, 1909; curate, St Paul's, Lorrimore Square, Walworth, 1908-9 and Lingfield, 1909-13; member, Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, from 1915; chaplain, St Andrew's Deaconess Community, 1952-8.

VIDLER, Alexander Roper (1899- )
Educated Selwyn College, Cambridge and Wells Theological College; ordained deacon, 1922 and priest, 1923; curate, St Philip's, Newcastle, 1922-4 and St Aidan's, Small Heath, 1925-31; member of staff, Oratory House, Cambridge, 1931-8; warden, St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, 1939-48; editor, Theology, 1939-64; member, editorial board of Christian Newsletter, from 1939; Hon. Canon of Derby, 1946-8; Canon of Windsor, 1948-56; part-time secretary to CFC, from 1948; joint editor, The Frontier, and secretary, CFC, 1950-2; Birkbeck Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1952-3; Lady Margaret Preacher, Cambridge, 1953; fellow and Dean, King's College, Cambridge, 1956-67; lecturer in divinity, University of Cambridge, 1959-67; Sarum Lecturer, University of Oxford, 1968-9; supporter of Labour party.
WIDDINGTON, Percy Elborough Tinling (1873-1959)
Educated St Edmund Hall, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1897 and priest, 1898; curate, St Philip's, Newcastle, 1897-1901, Calderbrook, Lancashire, 1901-3, Halton with Aughton, 1903-6; vicar, St Peter's, Coventry, 1906-18; rector, Great Easton, 1918-55; Rural Dean of Dunmow, 1934-55; Hon. Canon of Chelmsford Cathedral, 1939-55 and Canon Emeritus from 1955; member, Church Union Summer School committee, from 1939-45 as vice-chairman; member, CSA committee, from 1942 as vice-chairman; member, Social and Industrial Commission of Church Assembly from 1933-4.

WOODS, Frank Theodore (1874-1932)
Educated Trinity College, Cambridge; ordained deacon, 1897 and priest, 1898; served in parishes of Eastbourne, Huddersfield, East Brixton, Kersal, Aucklund and Bradford before 1916; Bishop of Peterborough, 1916-24; Bishop of Winchester, 1924-32; an old CSU man; member, Archbishops' Fifth Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems, Lambeth committee on the Church and industrial and social problems, 1920, Standing Conference of Christian Churches, 1926, Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions, ICF executive, until 1929, Social and Industrial Commission of Church Assembly; first Anglican chairman of CSC, 1929-32.

WOODWARD, Clifford Salisbury (1878-1959)
Educated Jesus College, Oxford; ordained deacon, 1902 and priest, 1903; curate, Bermondsey, 1902-5; clerical secretary, Southwark Diocese and South London Church Fund, 1905-9; chaplain, Oxford pastorate, 1909-13; lecturer, Wycliffe Hall and chaplain, Wadham College, Oxford, 1910-13; rector, St Saviour's with St Thomas', Southwark, 1913-15; Canon and Precentor, Southwark Cathedral, 1913-8; rector, St Saviour's with St Peter's, Southwark, 1915-8; vicar, St Peter's, Cranley Gardens, 1918-26; Canon of Westminster, 1926-33; Bishop of Bristol, 1933-45; Bishop of Gloucester, 1945-53; associated with the ICF from its foundation, becoming chairman in 1934; member, Council of Christian Ministers on Social Questions.

Note on Sources
The information in these biographical notes has been drawn mainly from Crockford's Clerical Directory, the British Who's Who and Who Was Who, and The Dictionary of National Biography. Supplementary data has been obtained from The Official Year-Book of the National Assembly of the Church of England, Dod's Parliamentary Companion,
obituaries in *The Times*, membership lists of various organizations, and the publications of the people concerned. McCaughey, *Christian Obedience in the University*, has a useful appendix of SCM secretaries; the July 1925 and April 1929 issues of the *Review of the Churches* contained information on Spencer and Kenyon respectively; the Community of the Resurrection's journal, *C.R.*, published an obituary of Kenyon in no.163, 1943; *Current Biography* was a helpful source for Eliot; and Fenn provided the writer with most of the details for his entry.
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1. Unpublished Sources

(a) Private Papers

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Lambeth Palace Library.

C.F. Garbett Papers.

Sermons and Addresses, 1913-55 - 61 volumes.
Written permission to use the Garbett Papers must be obtained from the literary executor, Dr Gerald Ellison, Bishop of London.

Garbett's file on the International Missionary Council contains, amongst some letters dated 1942, a Memorandum of Discussions on the Approach to a Christian Sociology, York, October 1929. In the opinion of the archivist, Miss K.M. Longley, the state of the typewriting indicates that this copy was probably retyped in 1942 from an older one. There is no evidence that Garbett was actually involved in the discussions and it is likely that he came across the memorandum at Bishopsthorpe when he succeeded William Temple as Archbishop of York in 1942.

York Minster Library.

W.H. Frere
E.K. Talbot Papers and Correspondence.
L.S. Thornton

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R.H. Tawney Papers.

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William Temple Papers.


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(b) Minute Books

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(c) Interviews

Rev. N.F.P. Brown, then General Director, Industrial
Christian Fellowship, December 1975.
Dr V.A. Demant, 21 April 1976.
Professor D.M. Mackinnon, 7 May 1976.
Mr Maurice B. Reckitt, 28 April 1976.
Professor Sir Austin Robinson, 7 May 1976.

(d) Correspondence

Dr Kathleen Bliss, 25 March 1978.
Professor Eric Penn, 15 June 1978.
Mr Patrick Mclaughlin, 6 April 1976.
Dr Walter Oakeshott, 5 January 1978.
Bishop Oliver Tomkins, 8 February 1978.
Dr Alec Vidler, 29 December 1977.

2. Published Sources

(a) Debates and Reports

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Report of the Social and Industrial Commission on
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Industrial Christian Fellowship. The World We Want. A Conference held in London on May 7th, 8th and 9th 1943 under the joint auspices of the Industrial Christian Fellowship and the Economic Reform Club and Institute. Five parts, of which four are printed and one typewritten. Located at the British Library.


Vol.1 The Nature of God and His Purpose for the World.
Vol.IX Industry and Property.
Vol.XI The Social Function of the Church.
Vol.XII Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity.

Vol. V  K.S. Latourette and others, *Church and Community.*

Malvern and After. Report of the Committee of Industrialists and Economists with Theologians on those parts of the Malvern Report especially Sections (19) to (25), on which further comments were desired by the Malvern Conference. ICF, Westminster, 1942.


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(b) **Newspapers and Periodicals**


*The Guardian: The Church Newspaper.* London. The State Library of Victoria has substantial, although incomplete, holdings. Consulted for years 1918-44.


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SECONDARY MATERIAL

1. Biographies and Books on the Church and Religious Thought

Bell, G.K.A. Randall Davidson: Archbishop of Canterbury. 2nd ed. (2 vols. in one), OUP, London, 1938. (First published as two separate volumes in 1935 by OUP and Humphrey Milford, London.)


2. Articles


3. Political, Economic and Social Histories


4. Unpublished Theses


Jones, Frank William. 'Social Concern in the Church of England, as revealed in its pronouncements on social and economic matters, especially during the years 1880-1940'. Ph D, University of London, 1968.

Martin, Warham Lance. 'Joseph Houldsworth Oldham: His Thought and its Development'. Ph D, University of St Andrew's, 1967.