

## THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE THEOLOGIAN

When a person attempts to account for the causes of the material differences in society, as wealth and poverty, such an attempt is an invasion of the domain of Political Economy, in the same way as an investigation as to the causes of the recurrence of daylight and dark leads one into the realm of Astronomy.

All persons who are thoughtful at all make some sort of attempt to explain the social phenomena that surrounds them, and they usually stumble around in the Science of Political Economy making a sad mess of the proceeding. If the every-day man has his explanations of Tariff, Money, Hard Times, Poverty, etc., it is to be expected that Theologians as well will try to construct hypotheses in the Science. Also it is to be expected that they will make sorry work of the same if they have no better perception of the laws and scope of Political Economy than the average mechanic, merchant, politician or statesman.

That this is the case is perfectly evident to even a tyro in the Science.

Following we give an extract from, "Inner Mission and Social Service, The Difference," published by the Inner Mission Board of the (now) United Lutheran Church in America. (Genl. Sec. 162 Mercer Street, Jersey City, N. J.)

There is no antagonism between True Social Service and True Inner Mission, as it is attempted to show in the excerpt. These two phases of work are complementary and not antagonistic. They are "but parts of one stupendous whole." They are perhaps poorly stated, especially the Social Service side, but this merely goes to show confusion of thought.

This criticism is in the kindest spirit and has only the truth of God for its aim. We insist that through Science we deal with the physical part of Nature that surrounds man, and this includes everything not included in the revelation of spiritual truths. (See "Elements of Religion," H. E. Jacobs, p. 29.)

It is notorious that theologians have made disastrous blunders in Science when they entered such fields as Geography, and Astronomy and Geology, and while the theologian may be a master of Theology, that does not give him any prestige in Geography or Astronomy or Geology, or even Political Economy. We go to the Astronomer for data and hypotheses on Astronomy; to the Geographer for knowledge of the surface of the earth; to the Geologist for knowledge of how the earth was formed; to the Theologian as to his hypotheses (Doctrines) and to the Political Economist for investigations in Social Phenomena.

It is true that there are false Sciences and false religions. But ever is it our duty to search for the truth. To no one is it given to say, "I am surely right, and the rest of the world is wrong." Everything must be submitted to criticism, and free discussion will finally sift the grains of wheat from the chaff. In Political Economy we most earnestly urge the study of "The Science of Political Economy" by Henry George, and a careful reading of "Progress and Poverty" by the same author. These books are thought producers and are worth reading from two to five times.

## THE DIFFERENCE POINTEDLY

(Quoted from pp. 20 and 21)

SOCIAL SERVICE	INNER MISSION
1—Emphasizes the rights of man.	1—Emphasizes the love of God.
2—Judges others.	2—Judges no man.
3—Relies on the law.	3—Works through love.
4—Has a cheap redemption: "Be good and do good."	4—"There is none good, no not one."
5—Strives for respectability.	5—Magnifies the Christ.
6—Believes in mass movements.	6—Believes in the individual touch.
7—Logically carried out would result in Protestant papacy.	7—Honors only Christ.
8—Makes the condition of things the cause of sin.	8—Makes sin the cause for the condition of things.
9—Believes in outward decency.	9—Believes in inward sanctity.
10—Drives the devil under cover.	10—Kicks the devil out of bed.
11—Deals with community problems.	11—Deals with the persons making up the community.
12—Works for a person because the community has wronged him.	12—Works for a person because he has wronged himself.
13—Practically says perfect outward conditions will make for perfect inward state.	13—Says that with a perfect outward state, all is lost without Christ.
14—Says that man's wickedness is due to his outward state.	14—Says a man can have every drawback physically, and still be a Christian.
15—Takes a small view of sin	15—Takes a small view of law.
16—Would lift men to ethical standards by the use of ethical measures.	16—Points to the perfect-manhood pattern and to the source of omnipotent power, saying, "By this power be ye like Him."
17—Is a new form of aims giving.	17—Makes the benefactor love his brother equally, as himself.

Social Service fails to see the depths of wrong behind social injustice; thinks to give men high motives, while their souls are still low; fails to see the need of new men for the new life; thinks it easy to make social workers and to improve society; gives a broad vision, but neglects a deep vision; points to churchmen their full life, but fails to see the need of a real Church to make real churchmen.

### TRUE SOCIAL SERVICE

1—Those who love God will insist upon Justice being done to their "brothers." God gave to men their "rights" and Just men will strive to retain for themselves and their fellows that which God has given them.

2—In social relations Society must judge men to the extent of preventing robbery, murder, etc., and must put such malefactors under restraint to protect the rest of Society. The Church quotes and says, "Thou Shalt Not Steal." (Theory). Society must say "Thou SHALT Not Steal." (Practice). How is it possible for the Church to sanction robbery?

3—Society may act in two ways—justly or unjustly. Society is not a human being and has no conscience like the human organism, man. A man with love in his heart would demand through his ballot and when elected to office, just laws. It is a contradiction in terms to say that a man with the love of God in his heart would demand injustice, which he would be doing if he did not demand justice. By failing to demand Justice he would foster unrighteousness and crime. "God's mercy is not exercised at the expense of His Justice." (H. E. Jacobs, "Elements of Religion," pp. 202, 75, 121.

4—While "there is none good, no not one," it is equally true that "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Righteousness means right-doing-ness, or justice, which is simply doing what is right. Single-Taxism means nothing more nor less than doing right socially. "Justice is the Aim; Taxation is the Means."

5—Since Society has no conscience, heart or soul and cannot attain to immortal life there is no analogue in Political Economy to this Theologic statement.

6—Where it is said "Believes in the individual touch" the impression is that the individual as such can change social conditions, and this is most emphatically NOT true. For instance, no person or no number of persons or legislators can individually abolish an iniquity like the Protective Tariff. This can only be done by collective action, thus making it a social problem. They cannot intelligently proceed without knowledge of Political Economy.

7—Answer practically as No. 5. Still any follower of Christ must believe in impartial Justice and not foster injustice. "Not every one who says 'Lord! Lord!' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father who is in heaven."

8—While all evil conditions come from sin, it is likewise just as true that sin can be multiplied by evil conditions. This was recognized by Christ himself when he taught his disciples how to pray. He taught them to say in the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." If bad environment, evil companionship, unsanitary conditions, etc., etc., have no influence on people what is the sense of "Lead us not into temptations"?

9—Believes that inward sanctity is shown ALWAYS by outward protest and fight against wrong, injustice. Truly, "Faith without works is dead." Rather there is no true faith without corresponding works. The ratio between Faith and Works is ever constant.

10—Kicks the devil out of bed. Right. The devil will have no place to lie down when there is Social righteousness as well as individual righteousness. The Kingdom of God is evidently a social institution (heavenly, it is true) and it is "Righteousness, Peace and Joy." Notice that it is "Righteousness" first.

11—This is a practical denial of the existence of Social Problems. It is the peculiar province of the Church to deal with individuals, and it is likewise the particular duty of Christians (those who make up the Church) to work to solve Social Problems. The Science of the Church is Theology. The science of Sociology is Political Economy.

12—Works for the wronged man because it hates injustice. Works to free the slave because of the degrading effects of slavery on the slave, and works for the slave driver (chattel or Economic), because of the blunting effects of slavery on slave and master. True Social Reform says "Thou SHALT Not Steal."

13—There can be no perfect outward state without a perfect inward state, but this should be no reason why Political Economy should not be investi-

gated. Theology would tell how to get the perfect inward state, but the perfect outward state can only be realized through the application of the laws of Political Economy which science treats of the nature of wealth and of the laws of its production and distribution. The unjust distribution of wealth is the cause of an enormous amount of degradation and crime (slavery in Egypt corrupted the Children of Israel) and it is also true that the unjust distribution of wealth is a result of man's wrong-doing, and that too often by the very best of men. It gives a bad impression to oppose, or remain indifferent to movements for justice in social relations.

14—Practically as No. 13.

15—To take a large view of law is not necessarily to take a small view of sin; for sin itself is a breaking of the law, or will of God. Even Love and Mercy are governed by Law. St. James speaks of the "Law of Liberty" as being the "Perfect Law." Love may be over all, yet law is through all and under all. We can think of Law and Justice, without love, but we cannot even begin to think of Love without previous Justice. Is it possible to conceive of a perfectly unjust God? To be a loving God the Almighty must first be Just.

16—Again we must say that "Faith without works is dead." Too often the cloak of the Church is thrown around evils to serve an as excuse for not insisting upon just laws. True Social service says, "If you believe in the Lord's Prayer, if you pray 'Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' then do something to abolish the unjust laws that foster vice and crime, and work to enact Just laws." Practice as well as preach. Let faith (with its accompanying works) take the place of credulity—faith without works is mere credulity.

17—When the benefactor loves his brother equally as himself, then will he work to abolish the unjust laws that oppress his brother. He cannot but say to the oppressor as Moses did, "Let my people go." To be really helped man must be led from the house of bondage into the land of freedom. Led through religion, and established through Just Laws.

"The depths of wrong behind social injustice!" Is that a mockery? Injustice is the depth of wrong. True Social Service (True Single Taxism) denounces the depth of wrong, but being very practical not only denounces, but demands that injustice cease. Its appeal is of necessity to those who desire the coming to earth of the kingdom of God. Many are called but few there are who hear. We think to get men with high motives, Christians (who we assume are right at heart) to do simple justice to their brethren.

At least one thing shines out clearly in the last of the paragraphs quoted and that is that the Church and the State must be kept separate. This implies two sorts of problems to be dealt with. First, the problem of individual life; and second, the problem of social life. The Church has the problems of the inner individual life of the soul (man's relation to God) to solve, and the State—through the science of Political Economy, has problems of social life (man's relation to man) to solve. Individual Economy has the problems that confront man's relations to himself to solve, that is such things as manual training, etc., etc.

Almost all social workers fail to see the problems of the Church in individual life, and practically all ministers likewise fail to see the problems of social life which only justice (applied love) can remedy. No one can hold for an instant that the mere word "love" backed by injustice can improve social conditions. Injustice is the opposite of Justice. The statements on Inner Mission quoted above are theologic. The idea conveyed however, is politico-economic. This is the Political Economy of the Theologians.

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(For an account of "The Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom," read Andrew D. White's book of that title. Mr. White's book is not an attack on Religion but upon the false science expounded by the Theologians. For a description of the manner in which theologians have arrived at false conclusions read the Chronometer story in Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks," lecture 3. "The Discoverable and the Revealed," published by Hurst & Co.)

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