

## The economic order.

I take the subject to contain three elements:  
the present economic ~~order~~ order,  
the position of the working class movement, both  
from the point of view of Christian insight.

As to the third, I will have the least to say about ~~this point~~ <sup>it</sup>.  
What the nature of religious insight is, and especially  
whether it has ~~relevance~~ relevance or not,  
is not a matter I should care to discuss. ~~MMMMMMMM~~ This  
will ~~be known~~ <sup>be known</sup> ~~show~~ by ~~itself~~ its ~~mitgs~~ mitgs. A religious insight  
divorced from its usefulness to the socialist working class  
movement is of no interest to myself.

I. What is the present economic order, in theory and in practice?

### a. In theory:

In theory there is a separate economic order. Production and distribution of goods is the right of a separate compartment. The economic order is a part of society, ~~not within society~~.

It is atomistic. It consists of a ~~finite~~ number of individual units chasing about (competing with ~~each~~ another) blindly.

It is autonomous. It stands under laws of its own. It is governed by principles that are economic principles, and do not brook interference from outside. ~~It is a cold, inhuman, taskmaster.~~ The price system. Prices for everything. Markets for everything. Life ordered by this "system". Land transformed into a commodity. Human labour transformed into a commodity. Nothing more absurd ever conceived.

It is automatic. Working by ~~itself~~ itself. ~~Coming round again.~~ No interference from outside allowed. It stopped working at once, resented it to the extreme.

A separate, ~~MMMMMMMM~~ distinct system, A cancer. A carry go round. A Satans ~~Party~~ art. Alice's tea ~~Party~~ Party.

A machine of wealth production, which produced wealth under the most artificial conditions.

In practice: The system was viciated, in two ways.

~~Take~~ The ~~same~~ change ~~MMMM~~ from ~~quantity~~ quantity to quality.  
Which means: How can a thing that is good become bad just by there being more of it? If competition (unregulated) is about why should more of it be a curse?

a. Take a road system: Introduce traffic ~~control~~ control. Slowing down average ~~speed~~ speed of the traffic. More cars. Increasing the average speed of the traffic!



### A different change

b. ~~But if cars were bigger (eventhough fewer)~~

Exactly this happened. The competition ~~is~~ between ~~more and more individuals~~, but between bigger and bigger and bigger units. Not individuals but whole countries, monopolists, nations, continents competing with one another. The ultimate maximum of production ~~may~~ become a transcendental principle altogether.: every single enterprise must be ruined first, in vast stretches, people, by the million, may have to die first-- nothing more absurd can be imagined.

This is the economic order, which we have to stand for and make workable.

Why? Because it is in accordance with human nature. J.M. Keynes: Anything that continues for two generations is accepted as being human nature. Never anything of the kind ~~in existence~~. Neither in Europe nor in other parts of the world. The ~~most~~ <sup>interest</sup> of artificiality.

Crisis: Fascism

It has broken down, in one respect: on the international side. 17 years economic crisis present (Lionel Robbins). The international organisation of economic life gone: international gold standard, the free movement of capital, the ~~free~~ movement of commodities on a world market with free exchange of goods and payments.

Rigid

Liberal capitalism has broken down, both at home and abroad. At home factory legislation, social insurance, trade unionism, but also customs tariffs, bounties to industrialists, state monopolies did away with ~~the~~ liberal competition. The price system, the economic system became inelastic, but ~~but~~ society could continue to function.

The break down came on the international side. The absurdity of the system ~~was~~ <sup>constituted</sup> in this: Every international maladjustment would have to be met by a ~~free~~ <sup>movement</sup> of the price level. The fall of price would have ~~to~~ <sup>be allowed to</sup> go unchecked, whatever the consequences. When the great maladjustment of ~~the~~ <sup>war</sup> came, this proved impossible. It was ~~tried~~ <sup>tried</sup> (return to gold standard), but broke down. Every country was suddenly thrown back on its own resources. To fend for itself. The Fascist dictatorship mainly the capitalist solution to this <sup>international</sup> situation.

But what about the international ~~field~~ <sup>field</sup>? The answer is ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Empire or international socialism.

This is the meaning of the world situation. The international economic order must be restored. This is impossible in any other way than through a catastrophe. Empire is the one, international cooperation the other. But can the present day nations proceed to such a cooperation? They ~~do not~~ <sup>lack</sup> the internal unity to do it. The coming wars will have one

They cannot act as nations.



content: the setting up of an international organisation of economic life.

The capitalist nations will have to disappear, as Jewry could not continue to exist. Jesus was prophetic. He understood the ~~condition~~ condition in which mankind was. So must we. There is no shirking the facts.

II. What is the position of the working class in this state of world affairs?

It is ~~quite~~ <sup>to</sup> obvious that while the Empire solution falls the Fascist middle classes, the internationalist solution ~~is~~ falls to the working class. No ~~other~~ group in society is in the position to ~~disidentify~~ ~~itself~~ itself of national sovereignty without a very serious ~~loss~~ loss.

Socialism will come for exterior necessities. And it will fall to the working class to usher it in, not on account of its ~~interests~~ recognised interests or wishes, or moral convictions, but on account of it being the ~~available~~ available class in society for this purpose. ~~no idealisation of it~~

The position of the working class is unique.

- a. It understands the socialist solution for its situation in the process of production makes it realise that man and nature are the only necessary elements in production;
- b. it ~~is~~ is the representative of common humanity (not on account of a superior morality) but because society can consist of working people could not of owning people or of exploited, but not of exploiters).  
its position
- c. because ~~it~~ can be international and therefore its solution can be the international solution; while capitalist ownership is bound to be organised in national frontiers, the association of working people denies nationality, is universal in the medieval sense.

The working class is out for the establishment of an economic system. The socialist ideal is the expression of it. A socialist society is the ideal end. But the essential thing the first step is the ~~socialist~~ socialist economic system Russia. The partial achievement of socialism will not by its partiality stop the working class. It is not ideological socialism, it is their world mission that leads them on.

The mission of the working class means that the working class has to lead. The theory of leadership. To subordinate its own interests to that of Russia (the mythika). But not subordinate its moral interests. For it is its class consciousness that makes the working class capable of leadership.



Reform of the consciousness might imply getting rid of the  
internal and external altruism. Class harmonism and pacifism.

Trade unionist danger.

The religious danger. Religions that dimm the consciousness  
is not good. Only that which makes it clear and keener is true.  
Which makes it fitter to carry out its task.

*S. Clement's, Barnsbury, London, N.7*

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## “Christian Realism.”

Those who attended our Tuesday Night Discussion Groups last year and the year before, will be glad to know that we are arranging this winter to hold similar Discussion Groups—not every Tuesday, as before—but on **Alternate Fridays**.

These **Fortnightly Discussion Groups** will be held at S. Clement's Occupational Club, 445, Liverpool Road, N.7, on the general subject of “Christian Realism,” commencing on **Friday, November 5th**, at 8 p.m.

The recently published Canadian Symposium, “Towards the Christian Revolution” (Gollancz, Left Book Club Edition), will provide the subdivisions of the subject and the basis of discussion,

Dr. Gregory Vlastos, one of the co-Editors of the book, will be with us on December 3rd, and Fr. Conrad Noel and Kenneth Ingram, both of whom have published this year books which are valuable contributions to the general subject, are amongst our speakers.

*A Silver Collection will be taken at each meeting to defray expenses.*



*The List of Subjects and Speakers is as follows :*

1937

- Nov. 5—Theological Principles ... Fr. MAXWELL  
19—Ethical Foundations ... Fr. CONRAD NOEL  
Dec. 3—Biblical Basis ... Professor GREGORY VLASTOS  
17—The Economic Problem and the New Economic  
Order ... ... Dr. KARL POLANYI

1938

- Jan. 14—The Political Task ... Fr. JACK PUTTERILL  
28—The Church's Role ... KENNETH INGRAM  
Feb. 11—The Marxist Challenge ... Dr. JOHN LEWIS  
25—The New Society... Professor JOHN MACMURRAY