

None So Blind

Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants: it is the creed of slaves.

—William Pitt, 18 Nov., 1753

WHAT we are witnessing in government today is the culmination of myth confounded by error and ineptitude. The economics of collectivism is by no means a practice confined to Labour administrators; in our own society Conservatives and Liberals have adopted its tenets—no matter how much they protest that they stand for individual rights and freedom.

When a pre-war Tory government abandoned Free Trade they took the first steps towards a planned economy and it is irrelevant to the argument that this was not their stated purpose, it being done at the behest of the protectionist lobby. The main difference between a socialist administration and its allegedly non-socialist opposition, is that the former, believing its own propaganda and utopian creeds, moves that more rapidly in the direction of the collectivist state producing economic chaos that much sooner.

There is about the latest fracas over pensions, health charges, and education an element of farce which would be hilarious if the likely consequences were not so serious. What sends a chill down the spine is that the only alternative our future would-be rulers, the Tories, can offer is, as Antony Fisher said in a recent letter to the *Sunday Telegraph*, "sixpence off income tax." Reform for the Tory "think machine" consists largely of taking the same old worn out deck of cards, giving it a good (and not so good) shuffle and dealing out agricultural levies (tariffs) in place of agricultural support, capital gains tax in place of a land levy and so on without such much as a glance over the shoulder at basic principles.

That many of the most pressing problems of our times could be swept away by drastically reducing income tax, abolishing tariffs and exchange control, putting taxes upon the passive factor in production (land) and freeing industry and trade from the multifarious inhibiting and frustrating controls and regulations which abound, has been demonstrated time and again by honest and intelligent men who have a finer regard for justice than those petulant bourgeois, our socialist masters, who have forgotten nothing and learnt nothing.

Insult is added to injury by the self-styled saviours who blame the people for the manifold follies they have inflicted on them when the peoples' only crime was to naively believe the Marxian-Keynesian clap-trap which has been the mainstay of all political propaganda these past fifty years.

Liberals who not so long ago were prepared to stand by true liberal principles including free trade and land-value taxation have long since succumbed to the temptations of state direction and control in economic and social matters, thus demonstrating the debilitating effects that an intellectual conspiracy can have on an entire generation.

In paraphrasing Burke we might well ask when will a government arise which is prepared to "govern fifty millions of men and women impatient of servitude, on the principles of freedom?"

N.A.B.