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## **National Muddle**

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If the discussion of the international muddle, as it occurred in the January issue of *The Witness*, seemed to pass beyond the limits of acceptability for a religious journal, a discussion of national affairs will surely stimulate greater dissent. There is a closer connection with party politics. And yet in national affairs, as well as in international, there are issues of morality involved. Dissent there may be, but is not the Christian willing to consider national policy as it relates to the Ten Commandments?

The first of two points here to be mentioned concerns the eight and ninth commandments—commandments bearing on honesty and truth.

The shame of modern governments, including that of the United States, is their violation of their pledged word. And worse, not only is their word worthless, but also they attempt to justify deceit and claim that no moral issues are involved.

### **Stealing by Government**

The British government recently stole from its people a part of all the money owned by them. This theft is called devaluation. The United States government perpetrated a similar crime on us some years back. Bank notes on which the government had affixed its seal to the statement, Redeemable in Gold, were dishonored; and the gold metal itself was taken from us. In moral terms this should be called theft and repudiation. When Sir Stafford Cripps announced devaluation, after denying that he was going to devalue the pound, he said, "Even if we had then had some future intention of altering the rate of exchange, which in fact we had not, no responsible minister could possibly have done otherwise than deny such intention." In other words, a government minister who does not lie is incompetent. In the United States Allan Sproul, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, said, "I perceive no moral problem involved in this question

of gold convertibility.” In other words again, there is no moral problem involved in the violation of a solemn pledge.

Without considering the financial evils which in the past history of many nations have attended the debasing of coinage and the introduction of irredeemable paper, let us think what may be the righteous judgment of God on a nation that justifies theft and falsehood.

The matter of currency and devaluation seems remote and unimportant to a great many people. Not until the day of reckoning does the populace understand what has happened, and then it is usually the children rather than the parents who suffer. But however remote fiscal policy may seem, the widespread use of violence, brutality, and murder should be obvious to all.

### **Condoning Killing**

Fifty years ago or more certain serious abuses depressed the laboring class. Labor unions were developed to correct these abuses and to raise the standard of living for their members. With all this one can have the greatest sympathy. But since the Wagner Act the labor leaders need to be reminded of the sixth commandment: Thou shalt not kill.

A labor union should be a voluntary organization, but in recent years their membership has been swelled by means of bloody coercion. Collective bargaining has been carried on with the employer's head against the muzzle of a gun. At least one railroad president, who did not like the terms of the contract offered to him, was shot to death. The Allis Chalmers strike could have better been termed insurrection. The CIO used organized rioting in Michigan—the fighting was directed by trained men in recognizable uniforms, with disciplined squads and platoons, shock troops in reserve, and mobile command cars equipped with radio. Just this past year pickets at the Southern Cotton Oil Co. in North Little Rock, Ark., attempted to kill men who wanted to work. When these pickets were arrested under Arkansas law, the CIO took the case to the Supreme Court and argued that laws against murder and violence were unconstitutional when applied to labor unions. This winter's coal strike has been attended by violence and hardship. Men who have wanted to mine coal have been shot. Homes, hospitals, schools, and railroads are in immediate danger. If an employer had caused this trouble, what an

outcry would have been made! But a union leader can get away with murder, and his henchmen in Congress can call for the repeal of the mild Taft-Hartley Act and the restoration of the iniquitous Wagner Act.

The people of the United States are delirious. The nation is in danger, not only from external enemies, but also from internal moral degeneracy. The Ten Commandments are repudiated. Falsehood, theft, and murder are encouraged. Whether the United States will repent before God of its sin, and what the future may bring forth, we do not know. But it remains the duty of the Christian to preach the law of God. With renewed vigor let us tell a wicked world: Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness. God still enforces the Ten Commandments.