

# The Christian's Relations With The State



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**The Christian's  
Relations with the State**

**His Heavenly and Earthly Citizenships  
Compared and Contrasted**

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# The Christian's Relations With the State

## Our Heavenly Citizenship.

A wide, though far from impassable gulf exists between all true Christians and the people of the surrounding world. As Christians this we realize, and this we had perceived before we entered into covenant relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. This separateness was emphasized by Jesus when He, in His prayer to the Father, said of the apostles: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17: 14). And it was not exclusive to the apostles, but extended and does extend to all of like precious faith. This we learn from verses 20 and 21, wherein we read: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." And this gulf of separation is so definite that the apostle John wrote: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2: 15).

The reason for this last apostolic statement is not obscure. It is written "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1: 5). In contrast to this, the prophet Isaiah foretold: "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people" (Isa. 60: 2). The truth of this prophecy was manifest in apostolic times, as was testified by writers of Holy Writ. Thus Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, stated both the rule and the exception to it when he wrote: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4: 17, 18). And

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the apostle John did likewise, in even more explicit language, when he wrote: "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5: 19). From these testimonies it is clear that in apostolic times the world in general was walking in a state of ignorance and wickedness scripturally described as "darkness". And, regardless of how unpalatable the doctrine may be to the people of the world, regardless of how much our humanitarian instincts may cause us to wish it otherwise, the world, as judged by the same apostolic standard, is still living in this state.

In this age, as in preceding ones, God is visiting the Gentiles, "to take out of them a people for him name" (Acts 15: 14); and we of to-day, like the Christians of apostolic times, are the exception to the above mentioned rule. We are distinguished from those of whom it was written, "The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1: 5), in that we have been enlightened through hearing the gospel, which is declare to be the "power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16); and in that we have been cleansed by having our sins washed away in the waters of baptism, wherein we were buried with Christ, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 4). And having become related to things of the Spirit in this way, it may be said of us, as it was of the Thessalonian brethren: "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (1 Thess. 5: 5).

Having established, of our own free will, this new relationship, our position now is, according to the words of Peter, that of having been redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1: 19). It is described in somewhat different language by the apostle Paul in the words: "Ye are not your own, for ye were bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20, R.V.). The import of these figurative statements is unmistakable: we are no longer our own, we are bondservants; we have given our allegiance to the Lord Jesus, and through him to the Lord God. And having given it to them (the two being one in spirit), we can give it to no one else, for it is written, "No man can

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serve two masters" (Matt. 6: 24). From henceforth "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5: 29); and what the Most High expects of us is embodied in the exhortation Paul wrote to the Romans in the words: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12: 1).

This transfer of allegiance from man to God has wrought a great change in our outlook and in manner of life. The beliefs, aspirations, and works of the world have been left behind. Instead of being sceptics unenlightened worshippers, or idolaters, we are worshippers, in spirit and in truth, of the only true God (1 Cor. 8: 6). Instead of concentrating our thoughts and energies on earthly things, we obey the apostolic injunction: "Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth" (Col. 3: 2, R.V.). Instead of doing the works of the flesh, we "live unto God" (Gal. 2: 19), and labour to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12: 2). Instead of our lying in wickedness, God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1: 13).

All who have been translated into this kingdom have accepted the invitation, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," and thereby have become sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. 6: 17, 18). They constitute that peerless spiritual organization, the family of God; and in biblical language are spoken of as "God's elect" (Rom. 8: 33), "the church" (Eph. 1: 22), "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12: 27), etc. They are gathered, as the Apocalypse pictures them as singing, "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5: 9); and yet they are one family. Here we have two vital characteristics of the true church, namely, the oneness of its members and the internationalism of its scope. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, makes some clear and emphatic statements on these points. He writes: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 26-28). National, racial,

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and like worldly lines of division do not exist in the true church. Its members may be scattered far and wide in the earth; they may be of many different nationalities and races and speak a variety of languages; yet they are all "brethren" in God's spiritual commonwealth. And therefore the apostle Peter could write to them: "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2 : 9, R.V.).

We shall now examine some of the polity of this "holy nation" of which the apostle Peter wrote. Clearly, its subjects are the Christians; those of whom Paul wrote, "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3: 20, R.V.). And since they have given their allegiance to Jesus, and have been translated into his kingdom, it is manifest that the Lord Jesus is the King (John 18: 37); and to him all the subjects are accountable (2 Cor. 5: 10). The Legislator is the Lord God Almighty, who has disseminated his decrees through the prophets in earlier times, and latterly through his Son (Heb. 1 : 1, 2). The code of laws is found in the Scriptures, which are, as Paul wrote to Timothy, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17). And the present earthly administrators of these laws, in accordance with the practice of the apostles (Acts 14: 23) and early ecclesias, are the appointed elders of the various congregations.

Now concerning this kingdom Jesus said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews" (John 18: 36). It is "not of this world" in that it is a divine rather than a human creation; it is subject to the laws of God rather than those of men; it traverses the boundaries of existing human dominions. And it is "not of this world" in that it is at present in the formational stage only. Two of Jesus' parables illustrate this latter fact. The first is the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt. 13: 24), wherein the formation is likened to the growth of grain, the stage of growth being the period of human dominion. The second is the parable of the nobleman who "went into a

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far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Luke 19: 12); the time of return making the end of the formational stage and the beginning of the establishment of the kingdom on the earth in its complete form. And thus is explained the paradox of our having been translated into the kingdom of God's Son, and yet continuing to pray, day by day, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt. 6: 10). The time is yet to come when the Son shall take possession of the land that is required to complete his kingly organization.

Pending the coming of this time, what is our position in the earth? It is similar to that of the patriarchs, of whom it was written: "These all died in faith . . . and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11: 13-16). Like the patriarch Abraham, we have come out of our modern Chaldea, and our interest is no longer centred in it. Like him, we may buy a plot of land, and hold it for a season; but here we have no lasting interests or possessions. Consequently it is true of us, as it was of the Christians to whom the words were written: "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. 13: 14).

Christians will continue to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth until this heavenly and abiding "city" is established. And the time of its establishment, as previously indicated in our comment on the parable of the nobleman, is at the return of Christ. Jesus is now at the right hand of God in the heavens (Heb. 1: 3); and at the time of his ascension the apostles were told: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1: 11). When he returns he will complete the organisation of the kingdom of heaven and give permanence to it. He will fashion anew the bodies of us, his spiritual subjects, that the body of our humiliation "may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3: 21); and that in us may be fulfilled the saying that is written:

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"Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15 : 54). He will overthrow the existing world empires and commonwealths, and establish in their stead his own universal kingdom (Psalm 2 : 8, 9). Then shall be fulfilled the apocalyptic utterance : "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11 : 15). Then the land shall have been added to the citizens, kings, laws, and administrators ; and our heavenly citizenship shall have become an earthly one.

### **Our Earthly Citizenship.**

The facts of our heavenly citizenship are now manifest ; and if the kingdom of heaven were complete, instead of being in the formational stage only, our position as Christians would be obvious. But for the present we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth ; and while in this position we are, by the laws of our respective lands of sojourn, citizens of an earthly state also. With most of us this relationship is what is called a "natural allegiance" : our parents chanced to be resident in and subjects of a particular state at the time of our birth ; and we partake of a like status because of these circumstances. Thus we appear to have a dual citizenship : by voluntary action on our part we have become citizens of the kingdom of heaven ; and at the same time we are, without any action on our part, citizens of one or other of the existing worldly states. What is our attitude to be toward these respective citizenships ?

Some persons have quoted Jesus' statement, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17 : 14), and have made a sweeping application of it. They have said, "We are not of the world, and therefore have nothing to do with worldly organizations." Others have cited the words : "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers : . . . Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6 : 14-18) ; and they have applied them not only to state polity, but to business, social, and like relations also. In neither instance is the existing political machinery indicated in the context ; and in neither instance does the context warrant an indiscriminate application of the text. To separate ourselves entirely from worldly organisations, to never be "unequally



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yoked" with unbelievers, we must needs have a world of our own to live in; and Jesus' prayer for his followers (in the verse following the one quoted) was: "Not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

In contrast to those who adopt the above mentioned attitude, we have others who assert: "The apostle Paul used his citizenship rights on more than one occasion, so why shouldn't we make use of ours?" It is quite true that the apostle asserted his rights as a Roman citizen: but shall it be taken for granted that we are at liberty to do likewise? Paul, as we all know, was a specially appointed witness of and for Jesus Christ; and he was endowed with and guided by the Holy Spirit in his work. It may very well be that for the special task set before him, and under the direct guidance of the Spirit, some of his actions were of a kind that persons in different circumstances are not free to imitate. Further, we must consider whether the privileges and responsibilities of Roman citizenship were similar to those of our modern states. If radical differences exist, there may not be any sound basis for comparison. Then if and when we decide we **may** use these rights, we must consider the further matter of the **purpose** for which we may use them. Because Paul used his rights for one purpose, it does not necessarily follow that we are free to use ours for an entirely dissimilar purpose.

Obviously, then, it is not satisfactory to say, "We are not of the world," or, "Paul used his citizenship rights, so we use ours." These facts are the alpha rather than the omega of the matter; so we must not draw hasty conclusions from them. Before deciding our attitude we should ascertain the leading features of the two allegiances, and then compare them to determine whether they are compatible with each other. And when we have drawn our conclusions, we should govern ourselves accordingly. We have already examined the cardinal points of our heavenly citizenship: therefore we shall now consider the leading features of earthly ones.

The particular state a Christian chances to be residing in, is just one cog in a huge political wheel. This wheel is what we are in the habit of calling "the civilized world"; and it consists of an aggregation of earthly states, all of

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which have certain characteristics in common. Each of these states has its own geographical boundaries, which may be determined by many influences, the most common one being force. Each has its own particular form of government, which may be an absolute or limited monarchy, a federated or confederated republic, or some less common combination of these forms. Each has its own citizens, who owe their allegiance to it, and whose qualifications, privileges, and responsibilities it defines for itself. Each has, for the regulation of its internal affairs, its code of civil and criminal laws, which may be just and equitable or otherwise, and its appointed agents for the enforcement of these laws. Each has its own external interests, which are those of its members in their infinity of combinations; and since the general rule is, "All seek their own," the interests of the various states are usually conflicting.

In each of these states the status of "citizenship" has definite rights and obligations associated with it; and it is a basic principle of this form of polity that those who receive the rights and partake of the privileges must accept and, as required, discharge the accompanying responsibilities. Roughly speaking, the rights of citizenship may be defined as, participation (theoretically at least) in the government of the state, and enjoyment of the benefits of this government. Subject to any qualifications added by law, these include the right to hold public offices, to vote for candidates for such offices, to be employed in the numerous and varied branches of the public service, and to receive protection of persons and property, both within and outside the state. In the same rough way, the obligations of citizenship may be defined as those of being subject to, and of upholding the laws and institutions of the state. These duties will include personal obedience to the law, acceptance of public duties if and as required, and the obligation to uphold the organisation of the state when and by whatever means considered necessary and at whatever cost to one's self.

As previously stated, with most of us this status of citizenship arose by accident of birth and operation of law; and the concomitant allegiance arose in the same way. In the preceding paragraph we indicated that this "allegiance" is an unqualified one: that it implies all the Canadian Oath of Allegiance Act (since revised) specified

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in the words: "I will defend Him to the utmost of my power against all traitorous conspiracies or attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against His person, crown and dignity . . ." And since the matter of whether our earthly allegiance is, in the last analysis, unqualified in law, is one of major importance, we shall consider it in detail. In the Dominion of Canada, and probably in all other countries, this conception of allegiance is woven into the statutes. It underlies the laws dealing with treason, and is fully revealed in the Militia Act, which (Section 8, in part) reads as follows:

"All the male inhabitants of Canada, of the age of eighteen years and upwards, and under sixty, not exempt or disqualified by law, and being British subjects, shall be liable to service in the Militia: Provided that the Governor General may require all the male inhabitants of Canada, capable of bearing arms, to serve in the case of a *levee en masse*."

The next section of the Act (Number 9) specifies certain persons who "shall be exempt from liability to serve in the Militia"; and includes:

"Persons who from the doctrines of their religion, are averse to bearing arms or rendering personal military service, under such conditions as are prescribed."

From these quotations it is manifest that the exemption provided for is partial and conditional: it is partial in that it does not necessarily apply in the event of a *levee en masse*; it is conditional in that it is granted subject to our conforming to whatever regulations are enacted.

In Canada, then, a qualified allegiance is not provided in law; and in the present state of world society it appears improbable that any nation would make such a provision. It is part of the wisdom of "the children of this world" to assert the will and authority of the state, and have it take precedence over the freedom and conscience of the individual. This doctrine is one of the basic principles of existing politics; and with the doctrine being, "The state is supreme," the corollary is that the state's subjects are an integral part of it and accept its viewpoint. The individuals are absorbed in the state; and its will becomes their will. In its relations with other nations its interests are their interests, its enemies are their enemies, its wars are their wars. Its demands are their responsibilities; and they are expected to serve it in whatever way they are fitted and required to do. Perhaps often they will be unable

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to perceive the true cause or causes of the situation that has arisen. At other times they may believe that the state is not acting in its true interests, but in the interests of a minority of its members. But regardless of their own individual opinions of the issues involved, they are expected to obey. This is the state's point of view ; as was illustrated in the United States of America not long ago, when a theological teacher was refused citizenship papers because he would not promise this unconditional obedience.

We have sketched the leading features of earthly citizenships. How do they compare with those of our heavenly citizenship? We have given our allegiance to Christ, and, as our reasonable service, have covenanted to present our bodies to him as living sacrifices (Rom. 12 : 1). Earthly allegiances, being a product of the world that lieth in wickedness, do not (except in part) allow for the laws of God or the conscience of man. We know from history and experience that divine and human laws often conflict with one another ; and examples of this conflict will be cited later. We, therefore, follow the rule laid down by Jesus in Matt. 22 : 21, and obey the laws of men only when they do not conflict with the laws of God. As we cannot conform to the letter, neither can we to the spirit of earthly citizenships. As citizens of a holy nation (1 Peter 2 : 9) composed of people out of " every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation " (Rev. 5 : 9), we cannot accept a nationalistic point of view. Our attitude toward those of like faith is one of fellowship and brotherly love, notwithstanding existing differences of tongue, race, and like things. And among the people of the world we do not champion the interests of one group or nation as against those of another : to the extent that we take an interest in such matters, we view them detachedly, that is, from the viewpoint of the common good.

To accept in their full and proper sense the letter and spirit of earthly citizenships, would be to abandon Christ's service and take up that of man. It would be comparable to Abraham going back to the land of Chaldea, from whence he came out. It would be to centre our minds on things that are upon the earth : to return to the interests and aspirations, the loves and hates, that are characteristic of the world ; to present our bodies to the service of the world and the flesh. Why do we make these statements? Simply

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because of two facts: the first is, two unqualified allegiances—one to God, the other to man—are involved; the second is, the requirements of the two are not compatible with each other, and therefore we cannot conform to both. We asked earlier, "What is our attitude to be toward these respective citizenships?" Peter says, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29); therefore we should retain the heavenly one, and repudiate the earthly.

### **The Repudiation Partial Only.**

We have concluded that our earthly citizenship is incompatible with our heavenly one, and therefore we have repudiated it. We have rejected the state's oath of allegiance, in that we have reserved to ourselves freedom of action; and we have repudiated its point of view, in that we have said that its enemies are not necessarily our enemies. Does this mean that our repudiation is a complete one? If it does, we shall be required to forego every benefit and reject every responsibility that is exclusive to a citizen. This will mean that our status in the land in which we dwell will be that of residents only. We do not wish to place ourselves in the unseemly position of grasping all the benefits obtainable, having no regard for the associated responsibilities; neither do we wish to forego benefits we might properly enjoy, through drawing hasty conclusions from the words, "They are not of the world." Therefore we must enquire further into our subject, in order that we may determine whether our repudiation should be a complete or a partial one.

First, we shall consider the attitude of the early Christians toward these matters. Their attitude, of course, is no proof of biblical teaching; and it must be viewed in the light of the fact that in early times "the innumerable deities and rites of polytheism were closely interwoven with every circumstance of public and private life"; nevertheless it is of interest to us because it reveals how they understood and applied the Scripture teaching. Of them Gibbon, admittedly an unsympathetic historian, wrote: "Their simplicity was offended by the use of oaths, by the pomp of magistracy, and by the contention of public life; nor could their humane ignorance be convinced that it was lawful on any occasion to shed the blood of our fellow-creatures, either by the sword of justice or by that of war

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. . . They refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defence of the empire." These statements are based largely on the writings of Tertullian and Origen, who cannot be said to have represented the true church; but we may safely assume that the statements themselves did represent the church's views. And from them we learn that the early Christians did not take part in "politics," nor function as governors, magistrates, etc.

Next we shall consider the apostle Paul and his point of view. In part his attitude is indicated in his use of his Roman citizenship at Phillipi (Acts 16: 37), Jerusalem (Acts 22: 25), and Caesarea (Acts 25: 11). We have queried the applicability of these examples to later times; and space will not permit us to review them in detail. For the present it is sufficient to observe that the citizen's rights of Paul's day are the residents' rights in our day, and that Paul used the rights largely for purposes of self-protection. This latter fact is important, because two general principles underlie it. The Psalmist said, "Thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety" (Psalm 4: 8); and Paul instructed Timothy that prayer be made for those in authority, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life" (1 Tim. 2: 2). Clearly, then, our safety is in the Lord, who uses the powers that be to ensure it; and they in turn provide part of the necessary means, in that they enact laws and create agencies for enforcing them. Therefore, part at least of the contemporary legal machinery exists for the protection of the saints. Secondly, when a nation formulates laws for the regulation of its internal affairs, anyone affected is at liberty to demand that the nation's officials respect those laws: the will of lawless officials is not to be exalted above the laws they are appointed to administer. Paul's actions on the enumerated occasions are examples in point. We have another example recorded in John's gospel, where Jesus demanded of the officer who struck him, "Why smitest thou me?" (John 18: 23)\*. We observe, then, that Paul used existing machinery, even to the extent of claiming citizenship rights, to ensure his own protection.

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\* It is relevant to note that neither Jesus nor Paul demanded, of the authorities, the punishment of those who disregarded these laws; neither did they take measures to enforce the observance of them, although, undoubtedly, both had the power to do so.

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Thirdly, the apostle Paul has instructed us, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers . . . For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake. . . . Render therefore to all their dues: . . ." (Rom. 13 : 1-7). The apostle Peter penned very similar injunctions in 1 Peter 2 : 13-17, to which the reader is referred. These commandments are not confined to the payment of taxes, etc., but apply to many other things also, as their contexts clearly indicate. But while submitting ourselves to the powers that be, it is not to be expected that we shall blaspheme, for example, if they command us to do so. In such a case they would be a terror to good rather than evil, and the instructions would not apply. Our attitude was stated in our comment on Matt. 22 : 21, when we said we "obey the laws of men only when they do not conflict with the laws of God." This is, in fact, the admission of a qualified allegiance: and doing this involves more than the "local allegiance" required of all residents. Admittedly most of the laws we obey are applicable to us and others as residents; but probably in every land there are others to which we are subject as citizens. For example, if the state levied on its subjects a tax that it did not levy on resident aliens, we would be subject to the tax; and, conversely, if the state levied on resident aliens a tax that it did not levy on its subjects, we would be exempt from the tax.

To sum up the situation: We have concluded that the Most High, at times at least, uses the nations of the world as instruments in caring for His children. We have seen that Paul used one of their creations (his Roman citizenship) for his own protection; and we see no good reason why others should not do so in comparable circumstances. Therefore it is evident that in principle our repudiation of our earthly allegiance is not a complete one; and from the statements in the preceding paragraph it is manifest that in practice we do not treat it as such. Consequently we must make a survey of the leading facts, and thereby learn why the early Christians rejected some rights while the apostle Paul demanded others. And in the process we shall probably determine the extent of our relations with the state.

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### **Politics.**

We shall commence our survey with what is commonly called "politics"; — that group of activities that are connected, directly and indirectly, with the legislative functions of the state. Under this heading we shall include such things as: (1) becoming a member of parliament or some other legislative unit, and assisting in the making of the laws of the land; and (2) taking part in the election of such officials by voting and other political activities. As Christians, what is our relation to these things? Should we become some of the nation's lawmakers? Should we vote at the election of such officials? Should we link ourselves with one or other of the great political parties and engage in party strife? What shall be our answer to these questions? As far as the law of the land is concerned, there is no obstacle in the way; our interest is in their relation to the divine law. The Most High expects us to conform to His laws; and the powers that be, no matter how greatly they disagree with our views, expect us to be consistent in our practice.

The privilege of participating, directly or indirectly, in the government of the state is the distinctive prerogative of citizens; in a democratic or quasi-democratic polity it is the highest privilege of citizenship; and those who partake of it associate themselves with and become a part of the state. They have been granted and have accepted a citizen's privileges, and therefore must accept the accompanying responsibilities. They participate in the making of the laws, and so should obey them and, as and when necessary, assist in enforcing them. This is an equitable and common-sense conclusion. Previously we concluded that we could not accept the state's nationalistic viewpoint, and that we could not discharge some of its responsibilities: so that our allegiance to it is at best a partial one. Should we, then, partake of its most distinctive privilege? Here, we believe, the issue is clear and sharply defined; and the answer is, "We should not." Such action on our part would be inconsistent: it would be comparable to trying to mix oil and water; it would be an attempt to be of the world and not of the world simultaneously.

Now view the situation from another angle: consider the anomaly of Christians engaged as state legislators. Suppose for the moment we are directly and voluntarily



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engaged in law making activities. The legislation enacted reflects the state's point of view. Some of it we have already repudiated, and some of it is, by common consent, partizan. Is not the incongruity of the situation obvious? But let us not stop here; let us carry the matter further. Some of the laws enacted, even though based on principles of justice, are contrary to specific commandments of Christ. Therefore we are engaged in making for others, laws which are contrary to our own principles of conduct; laws which, we expect to show hereafter, we cannot conscientiously enforce. What a strange situation in which to find ourselves! And how caustic would be the comment of the men of the world at the spectacle of Christians lucratively engaged in making for others, laws which they themselves will not obey! Is not the impropriety of the presumed position obvious?

From both the political and the ethical point of view our participation in these state activities is inconsistent with our profession. We conclude, therefore, that our proper course of action is to refrain from exercising the franchise, to avoid and decline public office, to separate ourselves from "political" activities in general. In these matters we and the early Christians agree.

If some of the privileges, such as that of voting, become legal duties by being made compulsory\*, how are our conclusions affected? Such action on the part of the powers that be we regard as a device for compelling the citizen to perform the functions of citizenship; and we presume this is also the view taken by those at present affected by such laws. Obedience to such laws would imply acceptance of the associated obligations, and it would be so interpreted by the state. Therefore our reasons for non-participation are still applicable, and our conclusions are not materially affected. In neither instance do we participate: in the former we simply refrain from doing so, while in the latter we decline to do so.

Against these conclusions it has been urged: "Must we refrain from casting a vote in a good cause so that we

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\* It has been said: "It is not voting but attendance at the polls that is compulsory." Perhaps so; but for practical purposes the distinction depends on the use of a subterfuge. Is resort to deceit either justifiable or necessary? The use of it certainly will not enhance our reputation in the eyes of the powers that be.

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may conform to this conception of 'consistency'?" The irony of the question! There are certainly no countries, but perhaps there are a few lesser political units, in which the votes of Christians might be of some consequence. But let us take the expressed viewpoint seriously, for it is entirely wrong. A former president of the United States of America once said: "I have never seen the necessity for reliance upon religion rather than upon law better expressed than in a great truth uttered by Tiffany Blake of Chicago when he said: 'Christ spent no time in the antechamber of Caesar.' An act of Congress may indicate that a reform is being or has been accomplished, but it does not of itself bring about a reform." The wisdom of these remarks should be apparent to all. So we suggest that a Christian may wield much influence for good, but that he will not do it by voting; he will do it by engendering a higher standard of living in his fellow-mortals by his example and teaching.

### **Law Enforcement.**

The next group of activities to be considered is the one comprising the law enforcement machinery. In this group we shall include the duties of judges, magistrates, justices of the peace, police officers, jurors, etc. The question to be decided is: "To what extent, if any, should Christians be engaged in this class of work?" Before attempting to answer it, some comment on the nature of the work is desirable. It should be recognized that the work as a whole is a good one; that it is a necessary part of society as at present organized. While human kingdoms continue, machinery will be needed for adjusting men's differences with their fellow-men; and while "the lust of the flesh" is rampant, methods of curbing its lawlessness will be necessary. No other conclusion is tenable in the light of the history, laws, and institutions of the nation of Israel. Furthermore, the apostle Paul has declared that "the powers that be," whose officials discharge the above mentioned duties, "are ordained of God" (Rom. 13: 1); and that they are "not a terror to good works, but to the evil." As such they are to be respected, and while acting within their divinely appointed province, obeyed. Therefore the work is a necessary one, and the officials engaged in it are ordained of God; and any objections we shall have to it will depend not on the work itself but on our relation to it.

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In dealing with this relation the first point to be observed is that two different polities are involved. In this connection consider two of the apostle Paul's statements to the Corinthians. The first is: "For what have I to do to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5: 12, 13). The second follows immediately after, and reads (in part): "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" (1 Cor. 6: 1-8). Here Paul clearly teaches that in the present dispensation the judging of the saints is the prerogative of the church, and that the judging of the world is in the hands of God. In the first text a criminal case (to use modern terminology) was involved; and they were instructed to cast out the "wicked person," and leave his further judgment to God. In the second text civil cases were involved; and they were instructed to set up their own judges for handling them, and brother was forbidden to go to law with brother. Now consider the subject in relation to the world. The apostle Peter wrote: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (1 Peter 2: 13, 14). Linking these words with Paul's statements in Romans 13, to which we referred in the preceding paragraphs, we learn that in judging the world God frequently acts through intermediaries instead of directly, and that he has ordained the powers that be as His agents. We conclude, therefore, that two distinct fields of activity—that of the church, that of the world—are set before us. The duty of regulating the affairs of the church has been assigned to the saints; that of regulating the affairs of the world has been assigned to the powers that be; and where interrelations are involved the state's law governs as long as it does not conflict with God's law.

This is true of each group as a group: but we are asked: "What is to hinder us as individuals becoming appointees of the powers that be and engaging in their work?" In return we are impelled to ask: "When Paul used the phrase 'powers that be,' did he not visualize them, corporately and individually, as a body separate and dis-

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tinct from the saints?" Considering the language used in such texts as Romans 13: 1 and Titus 3: 1, and having in mind the conditions that existed in apostolic times, is any other conclusion possible? We think not; although it might be contended that the distinction was one of circumstance rather than one of principle. Further, let us examine more closely the language of 1 Cor. 5: 12, 13, and see if it will allow of such participation. Paul's challenging query was: "What have I to do to judge them that are without?" What did he mean? Simply that as an apostle appointed to other work and as lacking authority from "Caesar" it was not his province? We believe the words have a much wider application, because they are linked with the statement, "Them that are without God judgeth." From a survey of the text and its context we conclude that Paul's teaching is that he and the other members of the church have nothing to do with the judging of unbelievers; that such work is outside their field of activities. Such work is God's; and if He delegates it to worldly polities, their laws differ from those of our heavenly polity and their enforcement should be left to the men of the world.

This difference in the laws of the two polities also creates many practical obstacles to participation. One of these is found in the established judicial practice of taking oaths. Many Christians will decline to take oath because Jesus said, "Swear not at all" (Matt. 5: 34). Some object to this application of the words, saying, that the reference to the law was to the practice of making vows (Num. 30: 2), that the abuse of the times is indicated in the context, and that both Jesus (Matt. 26: 63) and Paul (2 Cor. 1: 23) used or spoke under oaths. Those who accept the application maintain that Jesus banned both the previously authorized practice and the existing abuses. They declare that James, the Lord's brother, is very emphatic on this point in that he says: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath" (James 5: 12). And it will be added that the early Christians so understood and practised Jesus' command. This is a thorny question; but, we repeat, most Christians will find an obstacle in the existing court practice.

Other obstacles are to be found in the nature of the laws and in the methods used to enforce them. With the legislative functions in the hands of the natural man, it is

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inevitable that laws of which the saint cannot approve will be placed on the statute books. If we place ourselves in the position of law enforcers, whether as judges or police officers, we undertake and will be called on to enforce these laws; we will be in the position of forcing on others laws of which we ourselves disapprove. Next, from common observation we know that violence and, less frequently, lethal weapons are used, and are considered necessary in coping with lawbreakers. Can such practices be harmonized with the instructions Paul gave to the saints in the following words: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. . . . If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves," etc. (Rom. 12: 17-19)? How is it possible to obey these and similar commandments and yet be engaged weekly, perhaps daily, in using forcible methods to bring men to real or supposed justice?

From this survey of facts we learn that God has placed the judging of the temporal affairs of the world\* in the hands of the powers that be. We learn that we are not of the world, and therefore should not become a part of these powers and engage in the regulation of their affairs. We learn that even if we were at liberty to do so we are confronted by obstacles in the form of practices which are contrary to Scripture precepts. We conclude, therefore, that law enforcement activities should be left to the state entirely. Here, again, we and the early Christians agree.

### **Civil Services.**

We have considered our relation, as Christians, to the law-making and law-enforcing activities of the state. We shall now group all other government civil activities under the general heading, "Civil Services," and consider our relation to them. It is most obvious that the majority of these services have to do with common-place business activities. Apart from several branches of legal activity which would naturally fall in the previous category, the work,

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\* Here we are referring to the internal affairs of each state. God's judging of states as such, and the methods He uses in the process, will be dealt with when we come to military service.

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being supervisory, experimental, clerical, etc., is very similar to that of the larger commercial organizations ; and as such we would have no objection to doing it. Consequently any objections we shall have will not centre around the nature of the work.

Is there, then, any objection to the employer? Shall we regard the government in any different manner than we do other employers of labour? As a rule it is necessary that we do so. In the Dominion of Canada, and presumably in all other countries, all permanent employees in the Civil Service must, according to the law, take the Oath of Allegiance. Subscription to this oath is required of most if not all of the officials engaged in law-making and law-enforcing services also : so that this objection applies with equal force to activities included in the two preceding groups. We said previously : " We have given our allegiance to the Lord Jesus, and through him to the Lord God, . . . and we can give it to no one else." Consequently this legal requirement is, to the Christian, an effective barrier to most government employments. In the past some have subscribed to the Oath without realizing all it implies; others have done so relying on the provisions of the Militia Act giving them exemption from military service. We believe both classes have erred in their judgment : it is our considered and settled opinion that the proper course of action is to refrain from subscribing to it in the first place. And therefore we affirm that this legal requirement is an effective barrier not to employment in civil services only, but to our participation in law-making and law-enforcing activities also.

Two other questions arise under this heading. The first is : " If a person is employed in the Civil Service at the time he joins the church, will it be necessary for him to seek other employment?" Such a course of action might be correct theoretically, but as a practical matter we do not consider it necessary. Men, postmen for example, have been engaged in state work all their lives without being called on to perform duties to which we would take exception. So we believe one so engaged is at liberty to continue in his calling ; and only when his duties become incompatible with his faith need he assert his heavenly allegiance and seek other employment. Persons who have been in government employ inform us that they were never

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required to take the Oath of Allegiance. So the second question is: "If the Oath is not insisted on, are we at liberty to accept such positions?" The oath is implied in law, and knowing this we would be said to have given tacit consent to it in accepting such positions; so undoubtedly the best practice is to avoid them. On the other hand, we presume that in civil matters allegiance is chiefly to ensure fidelity; and such fidelity is the expectation of every employer. Therefore we could adopt a very practical view of the matter and ignore the technicality.

### **The Biblical View on Wars.**

When we come to the consideration of Military Service the gap between the Christian and the man of the world widens enormously. In time of war the state's demands on its subjects reach their maximum; men's services are required in a multitude of forms; and with many the form is that of soldiering, which entails the sacrifice of one's life as his "reasonable service" to the state. At such times modern nationalism reaches the apex of its psychological development, and its point of view is often manifested in a virulent form, making it advisable for those of contrary thought to speak and act with much discretion. And it is this intense, often insensible submerging of the individual in the state that reveals the extreme contrast between heavenly and earthly citizens and citizenships.

"Whence come wars, and whence come fightings?" From the biblical point of view they are manifestations of "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2: 2); they are part of the "enmities, strife, jealousies," etc. (Gal. 5: 20) resulting from "the lust of the flesh." And from the point of view of the natural man, history reveals that the caprice of kings, the desire for territories, and the conflicts of trade interests have been among past causes. In an order of affairs where the general rule is, "All seek their own," and where might is the rule and right the exception, conflicts of interests, with their accompanying resort to violence, are inevitable. When the hostilities commence often one nation will be the aggressor and in the wrong; and the other will simply be defending itself, preferring to fight rather than submit; and the cause of justice and the sympathies of the multitude will be with the defender, but on each side the furies of

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war will be let loose. At such times the "vener" of civilization is brushed aside, the passions of men are unleashed, and we witness "this present evil world" (Gal. 1 : 4) in its ugliest condition.

Such is the situation as viewed through finite eyes : the Bible reveals a second point of view, namely that of the Infinite. God has declared the "end from the beginning" (Isa. 46 : 10) ; consequently His purpose continues to unfold in the earth. In past ages He used various nations as His instruments, and wars as His scourge. Two examples from biblical history will suffice for illustrations. First you have God using Babylon (as foretold in Jer. 25 : 7-11) to punish the children of Israel for their disobedience ; and their country is overrun and they are taken to Babylon as captives. Then Babylon in turn, having served the purpose of God and having exalted itself to the heavens comes into judgment ; the Medes are stirred up against it (as foretold in Isa. 13 : 17-20), and the city is overthrown and made a perpetual desolation. The Almighty is still ruling in the kingdoms of men, and giving the kingdoms to whomsoever He will (Dan. 4 : 17). And therefore wars are still to be regarded as His scourge, and the nations as unwitting instruments carrying out His purpose.

### **Combatant Military Service.**

The preceding facts relating to war having been made clear, it is in order to ask : "Shall we, as Christians, participate in it by bearing arms and engaging in the slaughter of fellow-mortals?" In determining the answer consider first the contrast of viewpoints that is involved. Of the man of the world we said, the state's interests were his interests, its enemies were his enemies, its wars were his wars. These things are not true of the Christian. With him the dividing line is not between national and national, but between children of light and those of darkness. So the state's enemies are not his enemies any more than the state's subjects are ; and neither is the war his war : it is a conflict between men of the world, over worldly interests. Consequently there is no reason why the Christian should participate in it.

As between Christians, observe what kind of situation there would be if we did participate. Assume that two countries wage war against each other, and that some of us



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live in one land and some in the other. If, then, we took up arms in support of our respective lands of sojourn, we would have the spectacle of Christians on the one side trying to slay those on the other side; and doing so, let it be observed, over a worldly issue! This is analogous to what was witnessed during the Great War, when members of the larger, professedly Christian denominations, living on different sides of national boundaries, were capturing, maiming, and slaughtering one another. They were all members of the same "church," yet they did it because their respective "countries" were at war! May true Christians do such things? May one son of the Almighty, to whom Jesus has said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another" (John 15: 12), slaughter another son of the Almighty? The answer is obvious.

Thirdly, if we were to participate in these conflicts we would be obligated to "judge righteous judgment" (John 7: 24) concerning them. This few persons are able to do, because skilled propagandists are employed to flood the land with reports favourable to the state's interests. Thus we all know of a bullet having been fired at Serajevo on June 28, 1914, but how many know the true causes of the colossal conflict that followed? Then, even if we were able to determine the facts and judge accordingly, it is not our place to do so. Paul says we are to judge the church, "but them that are without God judgeth" (1 Cor. 5: 13). The Most High has delegated the judging of most of the nations' internal affairs to agents of the nations' own appointment; but He has reserved to Himself, as His exclusive prerogative, the judging of the nations themselves; and, as we said previously, He uses them as His instruments, and wars as His scourge. He gives the kingdoms of men to whomsoever He will; and He alone knows His purpose with combatants. Therefore His children lack both the knowledge and the permission that are necessary to participation in these conflicts.

Fourthly, the requirements of Combatant Military Service are not compatible with some of the specific commands Jesus and his apostles gave the members of the church for the regulation of their relations with their fellow-men. Two precepts will serve to illustrate this fact; some others will be considered separately. The first was stated in emphatic language by the apostle Paul when he

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wrote : " See that none render evil for evil unto any man " (1 Thess. 5 : 15). The second was uttered by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount, and with its context reads as follows : " Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies " (Matt. 5 : 43, 44). Suppose for a moment that you adopt the state's point of view and regard its enemies as your enemies. Can you then fulfil these laws and yet indulge in war? Can you maim or slaughter your enemies and yet not render evil for evil? Can you have even a minimum of love for him and yet slay him? Once more, " The answer is obvious."

At this juncture we shall consider the well-known command, " Thou shalt not kill " (Exod. 20 : 13 ; Matt. 19 : 18), in its relation to our question. This command was given to the Israelites ; and they, while observing it, indulged in many a bloody conflict. What is the explanation of this paradox? First, we observe that Israel was the chosen nation of God, and that it waged war at the direction of the Almighty and His prophets. Secondly, the Mosaic Law which had been given to the people provided for those forms of manslaying that were judicial in nature. Therefore this third form of slaying had to do with man's individual relation with his fellow-man, and did not include either of the preceding forms. From our point of view the situation has changed radically. At present our citizenship is in heaven, and we, like Paul, " do not war after the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal " (2 Cor. 10 : 3, 4). The nations of the earth, on the other hand, DO war after the flesh, and without the direction of the Almighty. In judicial matters the authority to put to death is at present in the hands of the powers that be, who have been ordained of God for the punishment of evildoers (1 Peter 2 : 13-14 ; Rom. 13 : 1-4). So far as the Christian is concerned, the counterpart of Israel's first and second categories of killing are in the hands of others, and the law can be applicable to him in the third sense only.

Before summing up our findings we shall consider a sixth point. Jesus said to Pilate : " If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews " (John 18 : 36). Peter **did** use the sword in a feeble attempt to prevent the Jews from seizing Jesus, and he was reproved by our Lord, who said

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(among other things): "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26: 52). These remarks should not be confined to the incident which gave rise to them\*; they were intended to be a guide to Peter in his later years of life. By them he (and we who follow after him) was taught that the sword was not one of his weapons of warfare, and that if he persisted in using it he would perish along with all others whose warfare was conducted with carnal weapons.

We shall now revert to our earlier question relating to war; it reads: "Shall we, as Christians, participate in it by bearing arms and engaging in the slaughter of fellow-mortals?" What conclusions have we reached that have a bearing on this query? They are:

(1) That these wars are not our wars; and that we are brethren, and therefore must not slay one another.

(2) That wars are one of God's scourges, and that the nations are the tools He uses in judging the world.

(3) That we are enjoined to love our enemies, and not to slay them either by the sword or by any other means.

With these facts marshalled before us we can give one answer only to the question, and it is, "We shall not." Therefore we conclude that Christians should take no part whatever in Combatant Military Service.

### **Non-Combatant Military Service.**

We may now ask: "What shall be our attitude toward Non-Combatant Military Service?" At the outset we should observe the nature of the work that is included in this category; much of it is not only free from objection, but is in itself meritorious. What, for example, is more commendable than bringing in a wounded man for treatment? We recall that Jesus was asked, "Who is my neighbour" (Luke 10: 29), and that he answered the query by telling his auditors the story of the good Samaritan.

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\* It has been suggested that Jesus' thought was that because of the number of the adversaries resistance was futile, and that if the sword was resorted to, not only he, but his disciples also would perish. This interpretation is tenable only on the assumption that God would withdraw His Spirit from His Son, and thus leave the little group helpless. Who shall justify such an assumption?

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We need not detail the story, which is familiar to all. It is sufficient to note that there is no essential difference between the services performed in the two hypothetical cases. The Good Samaritan was practising the second greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self" (Matt. 19: 19), in helping the man who fell among robbers as he journeyed from Jerusalem to Jericho. We would be doing the very same thing in bringing in an injured man for treatment, whether he be a soldier from some battlefield or a civilian from the street. We conclude, therefore, that much of the work in this category is unobjectionable.

A prominent member of another religious denomination, whose leadership was followed by many "conscientious objectors" during the Great War, viewed the matter differently. He wrote: "Under no circumstances can I undertake any service that has for its purpose the prosecution of war. Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor, was a non-combatant when he held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen. But he was verily as guilty." Here we have confusion of thought: for at the stoning of Stephen "Saul was consenting unto his death" (Acts 8: 1). The fact is that Saul was an active participant in Stephen's martyrdom: his actions were different from those of his fellows, but he shared their sentiment and approved of their conduct. Our position is a radically different one, in that we would not share the sentiment of the combatants. If we undertook their service it would not be with the intention of helping in the prosecution of the war; it would be with the intention of doing good and being of service to our fellow-men. So the objection is illfounded, and our previous conclusion is unshaken.

However, when we examine the circumstances under which the work is to be performed we find serious obstacles in our way. The first of these is that those who join any division of the Militia are required to subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance. Having given our allegiance to the Lord Jesus, who has said, "No man can serve two masters," we cannot do this. In time of war, when compulsory service is introduced, this requirement is frequently dispensed with, and so ceases to be an obstacle. A second barrier is found in the fact that all who voluntarily don the state's uniform are held to have entered its service, and

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thereby to have become subject to its military law. Those who are so subject have no freedom of conscience, but are required to obey their superior officers. This we will undertake to do only when such commands do not conflict with the laws of our Maker. Thirdly, all who enter the Non-Combatant service of the Militia are liable to be transferred, at a moment's notice, to the Combatant service, and there be called on to undertake duties which may be, and in our case are, contrary to their religious principles. For these reasons we conclude that we cannot undertake these otherwise unobjectionable services.

In opposition to this conclusion it has been urged: "You can perform the unobjectionable services and refuse the others, taking whatever consequences that ensue." Yes, you can, as Christadelphian and other "conscientious objectors" found during the Great War, when they were executed because they refused to bear arms in an emergency! Surely no one will suggest that this is the way to put into practice Jesus' injunction, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10: 16)! We assert that the proper course is to refuse the service in the first place; and this course is not dictated by pusillanimous motives; it is dictated by sound common-sense. If there is the possibility of our sealing our faith with our blood, we may just as well suffer at home; there is no need to court such a fate by placing ourselves in a position that turns a possibility into a probability or a certainty. Such action would be tantamount to inviting martyrdom, and many thoughtful persons will consider it stained with moral culpability. Therefore we conclude that the proper and prudent course is not to enter military service in the first place; and we give effect to this conclusion by refusing to don the state's uniform\*.

### **Civil Employments in Times of National Emergency.**

The final phase of our subject is that relating to civil employments in times of National Emergency. It has been said, and perhaps with good reason, that when the next

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\* Note that throughout we have been speaking of the Militia. It is to be considered as representative. Our conclusions apply to all the Fighting Forces of the state, whether they be classified as Military, Naval, Air Force, or something else.

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major conflict comes everyone, whether young or old, male or female, will be required to do some work of "national importance." The situation will be similar to the one that confronted Christadelphians in the British Isles during the Great War: those called to "the colours" were granted exemption from Combatant Service, and from Non-Combatant Service provided they engaged in work "useful for the prosecution of the war." These facts are set forth in the decision of the Central Appeal Tribunal of Great Britain, which we quote from page 16 of F. G. Jannaway's booklet, "Christadelphians during the Great War," and which reads as follows:

"The Tribunal having satisfied themselves that the Appellant is a bona-fide Christadelphian who joined that body before the outbreak of war, and that the 'Basis of Faith' common to Christadelphians forbids them to take service under Military Authority, grant the Appellant exemption from Combatant Service only, subject to the proviso that if within 21 days he undertakes work which, not being under Military Control, is nevertheless useful for the prosecution of the War, under conditions approved by the Tribunal, he shall be exempt from Non-Combatant Service so long as he continues to carry out such work under such conditions. The work proposed to be reported to the Tribunal for approval. Power is reserved to the Tribunal to extend or vary this order, if the Appellant establishes to their satisfaction that he has done his best, but has failed to comply with the conditions."

What shall be our attitude toward work of "National Importance," or work "useful for the prosecution of the war," as the above decision termed it? As previously stated, we do not accept the state's nationalistic point of view; and we will not engage in this or any other kind of work with the intention of helping on the war: we are not prompted by such motives. But may we, as being prompted by other motives, engage in such work at the behest of the powers that be? In the past some have said that to do so would be "helping on the war"; and they have elected to go to prison rather than do such work. We do not believe this attitude is defensible. If we engage in the production of foodstuffs, and thereby release other men, enabling them to perform other, perhaps military duties, we are "helping on the war." Similarly, when we "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Matt. 22: 21), by paying war taxes levied on us, we are doing the very same thing. These two examples illustrate that it is next to impossible to live a useful life in a highly organized state

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in time of war, and yet not be said, by reasoning in this circumlocutory way, to be "helping on the war." This being so, where shall the line be drawn? and on what principle? and by whose authority? We think it obvious that the work's relative proximity to or remoteness from war cannot be considered a sound criterion to use. Consequently we must seek some other yardstick.

While searching for one we must remember that we are dealing with a very practical problem; one on which we have little or no direct Scripture instruction; one in the solution of which we must be guided by our general knowledge of biblical teaching, our perception of ethical principles, and our own judgment.

If we return for a moment to our conclusions regarding military service, we note that our objections were to, firstly the kind of service that is involved, and secondly the circumstances under which it is to be performed. From these facts we deduce two definite principles for use in deciding what work we shall, and what work we shall not engage in. We test all occupations with two questions: they are:

(1) Is the type of work itself unobjectionable?

(2) Are the circumstances under which it is to be performed acceptable?

In classifying the types of work we include in the unobjectionable category such services as contributed, directly and indirectly, to the necessities, comforts, and lawful pleasures of life; while in the opposite category we place such activities as those that contribute to the destruction of life and property. The circumstances are not susceptible of such ready classification; and in civil employments they, usually, are unimportant. But if they should become a major consideration the military examples and the principles that have been outlined should suffice as guides.

A detailed classification of the two types of work is not necessary for our present purpose; and therefore we shall not attempt to make one. But included in the first category are most of the commercial and industrial activities common to times of peace, examples of which are: the production of foodstuffs by farming and processing, the manufacture of clothing of all kinds, the performance of services such as those of transportation. And we indicate the extent to which the formulated principles may be applied when we say: The food may be for the express

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purpose of feeding the Army, and the clothing may be uniforms or blankets to be used by it ; but this makes no essential difference, because soldiers as well as civilians require food and clothing. Some persons have said they would feel that the making of Army or Navy clothing would not be a proper occupation for themselves to be engaged in ; in which case they should follow the dictates of their conscience and avoid the work : but, as we stated previously, we do not consider proximity to war a sound standard to use. We have used food and clothing for our illustrations : the reasoning applies equally well to any other kind of work falling in the classification.

As examples of most objectionable types of work, of work that we as Christians should not be engaged in, the making of artillery, firearms, ammunition, and poison gas are cited. It was not without good reason that, during the Great War, public speakers called the munition workers, often much to the latter's satisfaction, a "battalion of death." Without their work the war could not have been continued : and, morally speaking, such work is in the same category as soldiering. There is no essential difference between firing a shell yourself and preparing it for someone else to fire. This appears to be the only sound and defensible ethical position ; and this, let it be observed, is also the viewpoint of the powers that be : they have said if you make the shell you should have no objection to firing it ; and they have shown their unwillingness to recognize as "conscientious objectors" persons who are or have been engaged in the manufacture of implements of war. Thus, they expect to find ethical distinctions and consistent practice among those who make claims on them on ethical and religious grounds. And here, again, our reasoning applies to all work that properly belongs in the category.

In conclusion, there are two points we must consider briefly. The first is : Between those occupations that obviously belong in one or the other of these categories, is a twilight zone composed of types of work that are close to the line of separation. Some of these employments will belong in one class, and some in the other ; and there may be considerable difference of opinion as to their proper classification. In such cases the knowledge, judgment, and good conscience of the individual must be the deciding factors. The second point is : There are some employments



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which it may be deemed prudent to avoid, so as not to give hostile contemporaries occasion for evil speaking. Through engaging in certain pursuits we may be charged with inconsistency, not because the work is inherently incompatible with our professions, but because those around us do not make (and when their passions are aroused, as they are in times of war, do not choose to make) distinctions between things that differ. In these circumstances perhaps the wisest course is to choose some other available type of work.