

7. ECONOMIC CONTROL AND TOTALITARISANISM

The control of the production of wealth is the control of human life itself.

Hilaire Belloc

Most planners who have seriously considered the practical aspects of their task have little doubt that a directed economy must be run on more or less dictatorial lines. That the complex system of interrelated activities, if it is to be consciously directed at all, must be directed by a single staff of experts, and that ultimate responsibility and power must rest in the hands of a commander-in-chief, whose actions must not be fettered by democratic procedure, is too obvious a consequence of underlying ideas of central planning not to command fairly general assent. The consolation our planners offer us is that this authoritarian direction will apply "only" to economic matters. One of the most prominent American planners, Mr. Stuart Chase, assures us, for instance, that in a planned society "political democracy can remain if it confines itself to all but economic matter". Such assurances are usually accompanied by the suggestion that by giving up freedom in what are, or ought to be, the less important aspects of our lives, we shall obtain greater freedom in the pursuit of higher values. On this ground people who abhor the idea of a political dictatorship often clamour for a dictator in the economic field.

The arguments used appeal to our best instincts and often attract the finest minds. If planning really did free us from the less important cares and so made it easier to render our existence one of plain living and high thinking, who would wish to belittle such an ideal? If our economic activities really concerned only the inferior or even more sordid sides of life, of course we ought to endeavour by all means to find a way to relieve ourselves from the excessive care for material ends, and, leaving them to be cared for by some piece of utilitarian machinery, set our minds free for the higher things of life.

Unfortunately the assurance people derive from this belief that the power which is exercised over economic life is a power over matters of secondary importance only, and which makes them take lightly the threat to the freedom of our economic pursuits, is altogether unwarranted. It is largely a consequence of the erroneous belief that there are purely economic ends separate from the other ends of life. Yet, apart from the pathological case of the miser, there is no such thing. The ultimate ends of the activities of reasonable beings are never economic. Strictly speaking there is no "economic motive" but only economic factors conditioning our striving for other ends. What in ordinary language is misleadingly called the "economic motive" means merely the desire for general opportunity, the desire for power to achieve unspecified ends. If we strive for money it is because it offers us the widest choice in enjoying the fruits of our efforts. Because in modern society it is through the limitation of our money incomes that we are made to feel the restrictions which our relative poverty still imposes upon us, many have come to hate money as the symbol of these restrictions. But this is to mistake for the cause the medium through which a force makes itself felt. It would be much truer to say that money is one of the greatest instruments of freedom ever invented by man. It is money which in existing society opens an astounding range of choice to the poor man, a range greater than that which not many generations ago was open to the wealthy. We shall better understand the significance of this service of money if we consider what it would really mean if, as so many socialists characteristically propose, the "pecuniary motive" were largely displaced by "non-economic incentives". If all rewards, instead of being offered in money, were offered in the form of public distinctions or privileges, positions of power over other men, or better housing or better food, opportunities for travel or education, this would merely mean that the recipient would no -

7. 经济上的控制与极权主义

对财富创造的控制就是对人类生活本身的控制。

希莱尔·贝洛克

大多数认真考虑过计划实践方面的计划者对计划经济必须多多少少走独裁路线没什么怀疑。各种经济活动组成错综复杂的系统，如果要完全自觉的指挥，那必须由一批专家来进行，并且最终的责任和权力必须掌握在一个总指挥的手中，他的行动不受民主程序的束缚，这个说法源于中央计划的基本思想，太显然，不会不得到相当普遍的赞同。计划部门给我们的一个安慰是，独裁的指挥将“仅仅”运用于经济事务。譬如，最知名的美国计划主义人士之一，斯图尔特·蔡司，就向我们保证，在计划的社会“如果政治上的民主局限在经济事务之外，那是可以保留的”。那样的保证往往伴随的就是建议我们通过放弃生活中不重要或者应该不重要方面的自由，从而在更高价值的追求中获得更大的自由。基于此，那些厌恶政治上独裁想法的人往往嚷着要个经济领域的独裁者。

直觉而言，这些论点有吸引力，并常常吸引最聪明的头脑。如果计划真地把我们从次要的计较中解脱出来，并且更容易地给我们的存在带来朴素的生活、高尚的精神，谁会愿意贬低这一理想呢？如果我们的经济活动真地只关心生活中低级甚至邈邈的一面，我们当然应该竭尽全力地寻找一个途径，从对物质目标的过度计较中解脱出来，把它们留给某些事务性机构去处理，让我们的思想自由地追求更高层次的生活。

大家有把握相信指挥经济生活的权力仅仅是处理次要事务的权力，并因此轻视它对我们经济追求的自由的威胁，不幸的是，全无根据。这很大程度上源于错误地相信有独立于生活其它目标的纯粹的经济目标。然而，除了一些病态财迷的个案，没有那样的东西。理性人类活动的最终目标从来不是经济的。严格的讲，没有“经济动机”，只有作为我们追求其它目标条件的经济因素。日常用语中误导性称为“经济动机”的东西，只不过是想要获得一般性机会的愿望、想取得可以达成各种目的的权力的愿望。如果我们为钱而奋斗，其实是因为钱能为我们享受成功果实提供广泛的选择。在现代社会，因为货币收入的有限使我们感觉到相对贫困带来的束缚，很多人因此憎恨象征这种束缚的货币。但，这是错把传递力量的中介当成了原因。更正确地说来，钱是人类历史上发明的最伟大的自由的工具之一。在现有社会里，正是钱为穷人提供了惊人的可选范围，这个范围超过过几代前富人的可选范围。如果就像很多社会主义者颇为典型地提出的那样，很大程度上以“非经济激励”取代“金钱的动机”，如果我们真正理解其中的含义，我们应该能更好地理解金钱所起的作用。如果所有报酬不再以货币的形式，而以荣誉、特权、凌驾于他人的职位、更好的住房、更好的食品、旅行和教育机会等形式支付，这仅仅意味着接受者不再有选择。决定报酬的人，不仅仅决定了报酬的大小，而且决定了报酬应该被享用的具体形式。

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longer be allowed to choose, and that, whoever fixed the reward, determined not only its size but also the particular form in which it should be enjoyed.

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Once we realise that there is no separate economic motive and that an economic gain or economic loss is merely a gain or a loss where it is still in our power to decide which of our needs or desires shall be affected, it is also easier to see the important kernel of truth in the general belief that economic matters affect only the less important ends of life, and to understand the contempt in which "merely" economic considerations are often held. In a sense this is quite justified in a market economy—but only in such a free economy. So long as we can freely dispose over our income and all our possessions, economic loss will always deprive us only of what we regard as the least important of the desires we were able to satisfy. A "merely" economic loss is thus one whose effect we can still make fall on our less important needs, while when we say that the value of something we have lost is much greater than its economic value, or that it cannot even be estimated in economic terms, this means that we must bear the loss where it falls. And similarly with an economic gain. Economic changes, in other words, usually affect only the fringe, the "margin", of our needs. There are many things which are more important than anything which economic gains or losses are likely to affect, which for us stand high above the amenities and even above many of the necessities of life which are affected by the economic ups and downs. Compared with them, the "filthy lucre", the question whether we are economically somewhat worse or better off, seems of little importance. This makes many people believe that anything which, like economic planning, affects only our economic interests, cannot seriously interfere with the more basic values of life.

This, however, is an erroneous conclusion. Economic values are less important to us than many things precisely because in economic matters we are free to decide what to us is more, and what less, important. Or, as we might say, because in the present society it is we who have to solve the economic problems of our lives. To be controlled in our economic pursuits means to be always controlled unless we declare our specific purpose. Or, since when we declare our specific purpose we shall also have to get it approved, we should really be controlled in everything.

The question raised by economic planning is, therefore, not merely whether we shall be able to satisfy what we regard as our more or less important needs in the way we prefer. It is whether it shall be we who decide what is more, and what is less, important for us, or whether this is to be decided by the planner. Economic planning would not affect merely those of our marginal needs that we have in mind when we speak contemptuously about the merely economic. It would, in effect, mean that we as individuals should no longer be allowed to decide what we regard as marginal.

The authority directing all economic activity would control not merely the part of our lives which is concerned with inferior things; it would control the allocation of the limited means for all our ends. And whoever controls all economic activity controls the means for all our ends, and must therefore decide which are to be satisfied and which not. This is really the crux of the matter. Economic control is not merely control of a sector of human life which can be separated from the rest; it is the control of the means for all our ends. And whoever has sole control of the means must also determine which ends are to be served, which values are to be rated higher and which lower, in short, what men should believe and strive for. Central planning means that the economic problem is to be solved by the community instead of by the individual; but this involves that it must also be the community, or rather its representatives, who must decide the relative importance of the different needs.

一旦我们意识到没有一个另外的经济动机，经济上的得与失就是得与失，其中我们有权决定哪些需要与愿望应该受到影响，也就更容易看到总地相信经济事务只影响生活次要目标的真相，也就更容易理解“单纯”考虑经济往往带来对问题的轻视。在某种意义上，在市场经济下，这很有根据——但也仅仅在那样的自由经济下。只要我们可以随意支配我们的收入、全部财产，经济损失总是只能剥夺我们能得以满足的那些愿望中我们自认为最次要的部分。“单纯的”经济损失是那样的一种损失，我们仍可以使其影响转移到次要的需求上；当我们说损失的价值远大于其经济价值或者不能以经济数据来估算的时候，它意味着这个损失发生在哪里发生我们就必须在哪里如实承担。对经济所得而言，类似。换句话说，经济变化通常只影响我们需求的边缘或者“边际”部分。很多事情都比能被经济得失影响的事情更重要，这些事情对我们来说超过经济起伏所影响的生活便利甚至日常所需。和它们相比，“肮脏的金钱”，我们经济上好点歹点的问题，看起来并不重要。这使得很多人相信，像经济计划这类仅影响经济利益的东西，不会严重地干扰到生活中一些更基本的价值。

然而，这是一个错误的结论。对我们来说，经济价值不如其它很多事情重要正是因为经济事务中我们能自由地决定那些重要，那些次要。或者，我们可以说，因为现在社会，必须解决生活中经济问题的正是我们自己。在经济追求上受到控制，意味着，除非我们声明追求的具体目标，否则总是受到控制。如公布具体目标，我们又必须求得认同，所以我们真的会在所有事情上被控制。

因此，经济计划引出的问题不单纯是，我们认为重要、次要的需求是否能以我们希望的方式得以满足的问题；而是，对我们而言什么是重要的、什么是次要的问题是否应该由我们自己来决定，或者是否应该由计划者来决定的问题。经济计划影响的不仅仅是我们轻蔑的说只是经济问题时脑海中出现的那些无关痛痒的需求。它实际上意味着，我们作为独立个体不再有权决定什么无关痛痒。

政府指挥所有经济活动不仅仅会控制我们生活中次要部分，它会控制有限的资源在我们所有目标之间的分配。并且，无论谁控制了所有经济活动那就控制了我们的实现目标的资源，因此必然会决定哪些需求要满足、哪些不要。这正是问题的症结所在。经济控制不是单纯控制人生活中能和其余部分割裂开来的某一部分；它控制了我们的追求所有目标的资源。并且无论是谁单独控制了资源，就必然决定它服务哪些目标，哪些目标优先哪些靠后，简而言之，就是该信什么，该干什么都由他控制。中央计划就意味着经济问题由集体而不是个人来解决；但这就涉及也必须由集体或者其代表来决定不同需求的相对重要性。

The so-called economic freedom which the planners promise us means precisely that we are to be relieved of the necessity of solving our own economic problems and that the bitter choices which this often involves are to be made for us. Since under modern conditions we are for almost everything dependent on means which our fellow men provide, economic planning would involve direction of almost the whole of our life. There is hardly an aspect of it, from our primary needs to our relations with our family and friends, from the nature of our work to the use of our leisure, over which the planner would not exercise his "conscious control".¹

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The power of the planner over our private lives would be no less complete if he chose not to exercise it by direct control of our consumption. Although a planned society would probably to some extent employ rationing and similar devices, the power of the planner over our private lives does not depend on this, and would be hardly less effective if the consumer were nominally free to spend his income as he pleased. The source of this power over all consumption which in a planned society the authority would possess would be their control over production.

Our freedom of choice in a competitive society rests on the fact that, if one person refuses to satisfy our wishes we can turn to another. But if we face a monopolist we are at his mercy. And an authority directing the whole economic system would be the most powerful monopolist conceivable. While we need probably not be afraid that such an authority would exploit this power in the manner in which a private monopolist would do so, while its purpose would presumably not be the extortion of maximum financial gain, it would have complete power to decide what we are to be given and on what terms. It would not only decide what commodities and services were to be available, and in what quantities; it would be able to direct their distribution between districts and groups and could, if it wished, discriminate between persons to any degree it liked. If we remember why planning is advocated by most people, can there be much doubt that this power would be used for the ends of which the authority approves and to prevent the pursuits of ends which it disapproves?

The power conferred by the control of production and prices is almost unlimited. In a competitive society the prices we have to pay for a thing, the rate at which we can get one thing for another, depend on the quantities of other things of which, by taking one, we deprive the other members of society. This price is not determined by the conscious will of anybody. And if one way of achieving our ends proves too expensive for us, we are free to try other ways. The obstacles in our path are not due to somebody disapproving of our ends, but to the fact that the same means are also wanted elsewhere. In a directed economy, where the authority watches over the ends pursued, it is certain that it would use its powers to assist some ends and to prevent the realisation of others. Not our own view, but somebody else's, of what we ought to like or dislike would determine what we should get. And since the authority would have the power to thwart any efforts to elude its guidance, it would control what we consume almost as effectively as if it directly told us how to spend our income.

计划者向我们承诺的所谓经济自由确切的意思就是我们无需再解决自己的经济问题，常涉及的痛苦抉择别人会给我们做。因为在现代条件下，几乎所有事情，我们都依赖于同胞提供的资源，经济计划将涉及指挥我们几乎全部的生活。从我们基本的需求到和家人朋友的关系，从我们工作的性质到我们闲暇的利用，很少有哪个方面不受到计划者的“自觉控制”。

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计划者选择不直接控制消费，他们控制我们私人生活的权力也一样什么都不少。尽管计划的社会极有可能在某种程度上采取配额或者类似的措施，但计划者对我们私人生活的控制权力并不靠这个，即使消费者名义上可以按个人喜好支配其收入，一样可以控制。在计划社会里，政府拥有的控制消费的权力来源于对生产的控制。

在竞争社会里，选择的自由基于这样一个事实，如果某人拒绝满足我们的愿望，我们可以换另外一个人。但如果我们面对一个寡头，我们就得看他的脸色了。一个指挥整个经济系统的政府部门，可以想像他们是最有权有势的寡头。我们很可能不必害怕这个寡头会以私人寡头同样的方式利用权力剥削；其目的想必不是榨取最大经济利益，但他有绝对的权力决定给我们什么，要什么条件。他不仅仅决定有什么商品、有什么服务，有多少，他还能决定这些在不同区域、不同人群之间的分配，如果他愿意还可以对不同的人随心所欲地歧视对待。如果我们记得大多数人拥护计划的原因，还会怀疑这个权力会被政府用来服务它所认同的目标，将其所反对的目标排除在外吗？

通过控制生产、价格所获得的权力几乎是无限的。在竞争社会里，我们为某一物品所必须支付的价格，也就是物与物交换的比例，取决于我们获得一件物品，就剥夺了社会上其他人其它一些物品的数量。这个价格不能为任何人的意志所决定。如果为达到目标，某条路对我们来说过于昂贵，我们可以自由地尝试其它路。路上有障碍不是因为有人不赞同我们的目标，而是因为其它地方也需要同样的资源。在计划经济中，政府时刻关注着所追求的目标，可以肯定会利用权力厚此薄彼帮助某些阻止某些。对于我们理应喜欢或者不喜欢的东西，不是我们自己的看法，而是别人的看法，来决定是否应该得到。并且，如果试图逃避政府控制，政府有权力阻止，因此政府对我们消费的控制跟直接告诉我们应该怎么花钱差不多。

¹The extent of the control over all life that economic control confers is nowhere better illustrated than in the field of foreign exchanges. Nothing would at first seem to affect private life less than a state control of the dealings in foreign exchange, and most people will regard its introduction with complete indifference. Yet the experience of most continental countries has taught thoughtful people to regard this step as the decisive advance on the path to totalitarianism and the suppression of individual liberty. It is in fact the complete delivery of the individual to the tyranny of the state, the final suppression of all means of escape-not merely

for the rich, but for everybody. Once the individual is no longer free to travel, no longer free to buy foreign books or journals, once all the means of foreign contact can be restricted to those of whom official opinion approves or for whom it is regarded as necessary, the effective control of opinion is much greater than that ever exercised by any of the absolutist governments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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Not only in our capacity as consumers, however, and not even mainly in that capacity, would the will of the authority shape and "guide" our daily lives. It would do so even more in our position as producers. These two aspects of our lives cannot be separated; and as for most of us the time we spend at our work is a large part of our whole lives, and as our job usually also determines the place where and the people among whom we live, some freedom in choosing our work is, probably, even more important for our happiness than freedom to spend our income during the hours of leisure.

No doubt it is true that even in the best of worlds this freedom will be very limited. Few people have ever an abundance of choice of occupation. But what matters is that we have some choice, that we are not absolutely tied to a particular job which has been chosen for us, or which we may have chosen in the past, and that if one position becomes quite intolerable, or if we set our heart on another, there is almost always a way for the able, some sacrifice at the price of which he may achieve his goal. Nothing makes conditions more unbearable than the knowledge that no effort of ours can change them; and even if we should never have the strength of mind to make the necessary sacrifice, the knowledge that we could escape if we only strove hard enough makes many otherwise intolerable positions bearable.

This is not to say that in this respect all is for the best in our present world, or has been so in the most liberal past, and that there is not much that could be done to improve the opportunities of choice open to the people. Here as elsewhere the state can do a great deal to help the spreading of knowledge and information and to assist mobility. But the point is that the kind of state action which really would increase opportunity is almost precisely the opposite of the "planning" which is now generally advocated and practised. Most planners, it is true, promise that in the new planned world free choice of occupation will be scrupulously preserved or even increased. But there they promise more than they can possibly fulfil. If they want to plan they must control the entry into the different trades and occupations, or the terms of remuneration, or both. In almost all known instances of planning the establishment of such controls and restrictions was among the first measures taken. If such control were universally practised and exercised by a single planning authority, one needs little imagination to see what would become of the "free choice of occupation" promised. The "freedom of choice" would be purely fictitious, a mere promise to practise no discrimination where in the nature of the case discrimination must be practised, and where all one could hope would be that the selection would be made on what the authority believed to be objective grounds.

There would be little difference if the planning authority confined itself to fixing the terms of employment and tried to regulate numbers by adjusting these terms. By prescribing the remuneration it would no less effectively bar groups of people from entering many trades than by specifically excluding them. A rather plain girl who badly wants to become a saleswoman, a weakly boy who has set his heart on a job where his weakness handicaps him, as well as in general the apparently less able or less suitable are not necessarily excluded in a competitive society; if they value the position sufficiently, they will frequently be able to get a start by a financial sacrifice and will later make good through qualities which at first are not so obvious. But when the authority fixes the remuneration for a whole category and the selection among the candidates is made by an objective test, the strength of their desire for the job will count for very little. The person whose qualifications are not of the standard type, or whose temperament is not of the ordinary kind, will no longer be able to come to special arrangements with an employer whose dispositions will fit in with his special needs:

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政府的意志不仅仅在我们作为消费者的方面,甚至主要不是在这方面,塑造和“指引”我们的日常生活,它更多地作用在我们作为生产者的方面。我们生活的这两个方面不能分开;对我们中的大多数而言,在工作中所有花费的时间是生命的大部分,并且我们的工作通常决定了我们的住所、邻里,对于我们的幸福而言,择业的一些自由很可能甚至比业余时间花钱的自由更重要。

毫无疑问即使在最好的社会这种自由也是非常有限的。很少人曾有充分的职业选项。但重要的是,我们有选择,我们不是绝对地被绑定在一个别人为我们选择的、或者我们过去曾选择的特定工作上,如果一个岗位变得无法忍受,或者我们喜欢上了另外一个,有能力的人几乎总有办法,在牺牲某些为代价的条件下,能够达到目的。最不堪忍受是我们知道无论做什么也无法改变现状;纵使使我们永远没有决心做出必要的牺牲,如果我们知道只要足够努力就能摆脱,也能让很多糟糕的处境好过些。

这并不是说,在这个方面,我们现在的世界一切都在朝最好方向发展,也不是说我们过去最自由的时代已经有那么好了,更不是说为群众提供更多工作机会的问题上,国家没多少可做的了。在这方面,跟其它方面一样,国家在帮助传播知识、信息、提供人员流动性方面可以做的很多。但我们要指出的是,确实可以增加择业机会的那类国家行为与现在普遍提倡和实施的“计划”几乎正好相反。的确,大多数的计划者都承诺在新的计划的社会里,会严格保护甚至增加择业自由。但是他们的承诺超出了他们能够履行的能力范围。如果要计划,他们必须要么控制各种行业、职业的门槛,要么控制薪酬支付的条款,要么两者一起控制。计划实施的已知例子中,几乎都把建立这种控制和限制列在首要措施之列。如果这种控制由单一的计划部门推广实施,无须多少想象力,大家就可以看到承诺的“职业选择自由”会是什么样子。“选择自由”纯粹会是虚的、仅仅是一句不歧视的承诺,实质上歧视不可避免,大家能寄予希望的就只是政府能基于他所认定的客观事实做遴选。

如果计划部门把自己的权力局限在设定招工的条款,通过调整条款调控招工人数,结果不会有什么不同。规定薪酬跟明确排除一样能阻止很多人进入各个行业。一个相貌平平却很想成为销售的女孩、一个体弱而又一心向往羸弱体质无法胜任的工作的男孩,以及普遍来说那些显然能力不够或者不适合的人,在竞争社会里都未必被拒之门外;如果他们足够看重这个职位,他们常常能通过经济上的牺牲获得从头做起的机会,日后通过当初并不显而易见的长处获得抵偿。但,如果政府规定了整个门类的薪酬,遴选通过客观考试,候选人对某份工作的渴望程度就没什么作用了。一个人他的资格证书不是标准的、或者他的性格不是普通那种,即使雇主的意向会契合其特别的需求,也不再能达成特殊的安排:

the person who prefers irregular hours or even a happy-go-lucky existence with a small and perhaps uncertain income to a regular routine will no longer have the choice. Conditions will be without exception what in some measure they inevitably are in a large organisation—or rather worse, because there will be no possibility of escape. We shall no longer be free to be rational or efficient only when and where we think it worthwhile, we shall all have to conform to the standards which the planning authority must fix in order to simplify its task. To make this immense task manageable it will have to reduce the diversity of human capacities and inclinations to a few categories of readily interchangeable units and deliberately to disregard minor personal differences. Although the professed aim of planning would be that man should cease to be a mere means, in fact—since it would be impossible to take account in the plan of individual likes and dislikes—the individual would more than ever become a mere means, to be used by the authority in the service of such abstractions as the "social welfare" or the "good of the community".

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That in a competitive society most things can be had at a price—though it is often a cruelly high price we have to pay, is a fact the importance of which can hardly be overrated. The alternative is not, however, complete freedom of choice, but orders and prohibitions which must be obeyed and, in the last resort, the favour of the mighty.

It is significant of the confusion prevailing on all these subjects that it should have become a cause for reproach that in a competitive society almost everything can be had at a price. If the people who protest against having the higher values of life being brought into the "cash nexus" really mean that we should not be allowed to sacrifice our lesser needs in order to preserve the higher values, and that the choice should be made for us, this demand must be regarded as rather peculiar and scarcely testifies to great respect for the dignity of the individual. That life and health, beauty and virtue, honour and peace of mind, can often be preserved only at considerable material cost, and that somebody must make the choice, is as undeniable as that we all are sometimes not prepared to make the material sacrifices necessary to protect those higher values against all injury. To take only one example: we could, of course, reduce casualties by motor accidents to zero if we were willing to bear the cost—if in no other way—by abolishing motor cars. And the same is true of thousands of other instances in which we are constantly risking life and health and all the fine values of the spirit, of ourselves and of our fellow men, to further what we at the same time contemptuously describe as our material comfort. Nor can it be otherwise since all our ends compete for the same means; and we could not strive for anything but these absolute values if they were on no account to be endangered.

That people should wish to be relieved of the bitter choice which hard facts often impose upon them is not surprising. But few want to be relieved through the choice being made for them by others. People just wish that the choice should not be necessary at all. And they are only too ready to believe that the choice is not really necessary, that it is imposed upon them merely by the particular economic system under which we live. What they resent is in truth that there is an economic problem.

那些不愿意按部就班, 喜欢工作时间不固定、甚至自由随性、宁可拿较少并且可能不稳定收入的人就不再有什么机会了。情况会是, 毫无例外, 某种程度上跟身在一个大单位一样——甚至更糟, 因为他们无法脱身。我们本来可以自由地选择最恰当的时机、场合合理高效地工作, 现在不行了, 我们必须与计划部门为了简化工作制定的统一标准保持一致。为了使庞大的任务可管理, 政府不得不把丰富多样的人的才能、志趣分门别类, 简化成容易互换的单元, 有意忽略人与人之间的细小差别。尽管公开宣称计划的目标是人不再作为纯粹的工具, 事实上——因为在计划中不可能考虑个人的喜恶——一个人将变成前所未有的纯粹的工具, 被政府用来为那些抽象的“社会福利”或者“共同利益”目标服务。

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在竞争的社会, 大多数东西都有价有市——尽管不得不付的价格常常高得残忍, 这是一个重要性很难被高估的事实。然而, 如不如此, 不会有完全的选择自由, 只有必须遵守的命令、禁令, 最后求助于权势人物的恩赐。

在竞争社会中几乎所有东西都可以用钱买到, 这成为一种应该被指责的理由, 对于这类问题的普遍误解耐人寻味。如果那些反对将生活中较高尚价值卷入“金钱关系”的人真地认为, 我们不应该牺牲次要需求以满足较高尚价值, 并且应当由别人来为我们做选择, 我们只能说这样的要求相当奇特、看不出对个人尊严的尊重。生命与健康、美与善、尊严与内心平静只有以相当的物质代价为基础才能呵护得完美如初, 不能否认有人必须面对选择, 也不能否认我们有时并未准备好做物质上的牺牲来保全这些较高尚价值。只举一个例子: 假如没有别的办法, 如果我们愿意承担放弃使用机动车的成本, 当然能够把机动车事故导致的伤亡降到零。同样的还有成千上万的其他例子, 我们时刻冒着我们自己、同伴的生命、健康及其它很多美好精神价值的风险, 来提高我们同时轻蔑地指为物质享受的东西。反过来, 事情也不能是, 因为目标众多而资源有限, 这些绝对价值决不能受到威胁, 所以我们不做其他事只为它们而奋斗。

残酷的实际情况常常要求人们做出痛苦的选择, 人们希望避免这样的选择, 不奇怪。但没什么人想通过让别人来帮他们选, 来避免自己选。人们只是希望完全不必要做这个选择。他们只是太愿意相信这个选择不一定是必要的, 困难是所处的具体经济制度带来的。他们所厌恶的其实还是有经济上的问题。

In their wishful belief that there is really no longer an economic problem people have been confirmed by irresponsible talk about "potential plenty"—which, if it were a fact, would indeed mean that there is no economic problem which makes the choice inevitable. But although this snare has served socialist propaganda under various names as long as socialism has existed, it is still as palpably untrue as it was when it was first used over a hundred years ago. In all this time not one of the many people who have used it has produced a workable plan of how production could be increased so as to abolish even in Western Europe what we regard as poverty—not to speak of the world as a whole. The reader may take it that whoever talks about potential plenty is either dishonest or does not know what he is talking about². Yet it is this false hope as much as anything which drives us along the road to planning.

While the popular movement still profits by this false belief, the claim that a planned economy would produce a substantially larger output than the competitive system is being progressively abandoned by most students of the problem. Even a good many economists with socialist views who have seriously studied the problems of central planning are now content to hope that a planned society will equal the efficiency of a competitive system; they advocate planning no longer because of its superior productivity but because it will enable us to secure a more just and equitable distribution of wealth. This is, indeed, the only argument for planning which can be seriously pressed. It is indisputable that if we want to secure a distribution of wealth which conforms to some predetermined standard, if we want consciously to decide who is to have what, we must plan the whole economic system. But the question remains whether the price we should have to pay for the realisation of somebody's ideal of justice is not bound to be more discontent and more oppression than was ever caused by the much abused free play of economic forces.

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We should be seriously deceiving ourselves if for these apprehensions we sought comfort in the consideration that the adoption of central planning would merely mean a return, after a brief spell of a free economy, to the ties and regulations which have governed economic activity through most ages, and that, therefore, the infringements of personal liberty need not be greater than they were before the age of *laissez-faire*. This is a dangerous illusion. Even during the periods of European history when the regimentation of economic life went furthest, it amounted to little more than the creation of a general and semipermanent framework of rules within which the individual preserved a wide free sphere. The apparatus of control then available would not have been adequate to impose more than very general directions. And even where the control was most complete it extended only to those activities of a person through which he took part in the social division of labour. In the much wider sphere in which he then still lived on his own products he was free to act as he chose.

带着一定不再会有经济问题的一厢情愿，大家从一些不负责任的谈话中得到了“潜在丰富”的保证——如果这是事实，确实不会再有经济问题，不要再面对选择困难。但是，只要社会主义还在，这个把戏就以各种名义充斥于社会主义宣传，它仍然如一百年前首次出现时一样，明显错误。历史上从来没有一个宣传它的人制订出一个可行的方案，如何增加生产，以消除我们认为的贫穷，甚至在西欧，更不要谈全世界了。读者们可以这样认为，无论谁说潜在丰富，要么不诚实，要么不知道他自己在说什么。然而正是这个虚妄的希望和其它一切虚妄的东西一样驱使我们朝计划的方向前进。

当这个虚妄的信仰仍然在群众运动中起作用时，宣称计划经济比竞争制度能够产出多得多的产品的说法已经被研究该问题的大多数学者逐步抛弃。甚至很多认真研究过中央计划问题的持社会主义观点的经济学家现在也只满足于希望计划型社会和竞争型社会效率相当；他们不再鼓吹计划生产效率高，转而鼓吹计划可以确保我们更合理、更平均的财富分配。这的确是计划唯一能认真坚持的论点。如果我们想确保财富分配符合预先确定的标准，如果我们有意去决定谁应该得到什么，无可争辩，我们必须计划整个经济系统。但问题是，为实现某些人公平的理想我们所必须付出的代价，与饱受攻击的由经济力量自由决定的结果相比，是不是一定不会带来更多的不满和更多的压迫。

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人类大部分历史时期经济活动都是约束和管控的，采用中央计划不过是在短暂的自由经济后回到过去而已，对个人自由的侵犯并不见得超过自由放任时代以前那些时期，如果这样想来寻求自我安慰，那是严重的自欺欺人。这是危险的幻想。在欧洲历史上，即使经济生活管辖程度最高的时候，它也只不过建立了一个一般性的半永久性的规则框架，在其中个人保留了宽敞的自由空间。当时可利用的管控手段也足够以推行很一般性指挥。甚至管控最全面的地方也不过涉及到参与社会劳动分工的那些人的活动而已。在更大的范围，人们自力更生，选择自由，行动自由。

² To justify these strong words the following conclusions may be quoted at which Mr. Colin Clark, one of the best known among the younger economic statisticians, and a man of undoubted progressive views and a strictly scientific outlook, has arrived in his *Conditions of Economic Progress* (1940, pp. 3-4): The "oft-repeated phrases about poverty in the midst of plenty, and the problems of production having already been solved if only we understood the problem of distribution, turn out to be the most untruthful of all modern clichés... The under-utilisation of productive capacity is a question of considerable importance only in the U.S.A., though in certain years also it has been of some importance in Great Britain, Germany and France, but for most of the world it is entirely subsidiary to the more important fact that, with productive resources

fully employed, they can produce so little. The age of plenty will still be a long while in coming... If preventable unemployment were eliminated throughout the trade cycle, this would mean a distinct improvement in the standard of living of the population of the U.S.A., but from the standpoint of the world as a whole it would only make a small contribution towards the much greater problem of raising the real income of the bulk of the world population to anything like a civilised standard."

The situation is now entirely different. During the liberal era the progressive division of labour has created a situation where almost every one of our activities is part of a social process. This is a development which we cannot reverse since it is only because of it that we can maintain the vastly increased population at anything like present standards. But, in consequence, the substitution of central planning for competition would require central direction of a much greater part of our lives than was ever attempted before. It could not stop at what we regard as our economic activities, because we are now for almost every part of our lives dependent on somebody else's economic activities³. The passion for the "collective satisfaction of our needs", with which our socialists have so well prepared the way for totalitarianism, and which wants us to take our pleasures as well as our necessities at the appointed time and in the prescribed form, is, of course, partly intended as a means of political education. But it is also the result of the exigencies of planning, which consists essentially in depriving us of choice, in order to give us whatever fits best into the plan and that at a time determined by the plan.

It is often said that political freedom is meaningless without economic freedom. This is true enough, but in a sense almost opposite from that in which the phrase is used by our planners. The economic freedom which is the prerequisite of any other freedom cannot be the freedom from economic care which the socialists promise us and which can be obtained only by relieving the individual at the same time of the necessity and of the power of choice; it must be the freedom of our economic activity which, with the right of choice, inevitably also carries the risk and the responsibility of that right.

现在的情形完全不同。在自由经济时代，劳动力的进一步分工产生了这样一种情形，我们几乎所有的活动都是社会过程的一部分。这是一个不可逆转的进步，因为只有这样，我们才能按现有水准支撑已是极大增加的人口。但，后果是，用中央计划替代竞争的话，需要对我们生活进行集中指挥的内容会大大增加，史无前例。它不可能只限于我们认为属于经济活动的内容，因为现在我们生活的方方面面都依赖于他人的经济活动。

“集体满足我们的需求”希望我们在规定的时间以规定的形式获得生活所需、生活所乐，带着对它的热情，社会主义者为极权主义铺好了路，当然，部分革命热情被有意用作政治教育手段。但是，计划的基本内容就是要剥夺我们选择的权利，为了在计划确定好的时间，给我们计划好的东西，把革命热情作为教育手段也是计划迫切要求的结果。

常说，没有经济自由，政治自由是空话。这很对，但跟我们的计划者使用这句话的意义几乎完全相反。经济自由是其它所有自由的前提，它不能是社会主义者许诺的、个人放弃选择的权利和必要、免于经济考虑的自由；它必须是我们经济活动的自由，有自由选择的权利，也必将承担权利带来的风险和责任。

³ It is no accident that in the totalitarian countries, be it Russia or Germany or Italy, the question of how to organise the people's leisure should have become a problem of planning. The Germans have even invented for this problem the horrible and self-contradictory name of Freizeitgestaltung (literally: the shaping of the

use made of the people's free time) as if it were still, "free time" when it has to be spent in the way ordained by authority.