“The spiritual opportunity of the present World crisis, and the power of the free human spirit.”

The present world crisis leaves no field of human activity untouched. Everywhere people are reacting to the inflow of Spiritual energy, and the emerging possibilities of the New Age are widely sensed. If we are to play our part in bringing in the New Age, we must develop an intelligent and loving understanding of humanity’s problems. This article, a survey of the present industrial situation in Great Britain, is intended as a contribution to the development of this understanding.

Let us first consider the changes that have taken place during the last 200 years. Before the industrial revolution industry was predominantly local in character. Goods were made by small groups of craftsmen, or in the cottage or home, and served in
the main the needs of the immediate neighbourhood. And although living conditions were poor by present day standards, life was simple, and most people gained a certain satisfaction from their work and in their social relationships.

With the advent of new manufacturing techniques and with the expansion of world markets, there was a period of rapid and widespread change. Production units increased in size and became concentrated around sources of power or raw material supply; manufacturing processes were subdivided and simplified and this development culminated in the mass production techniques that we know so well today; and management in large firms became so complex that specialists are now needed to deal with many different functions.

By 1939 these developments were reaching a climax. Whilst the field of experience for millions had been widened and the expansion of human consciousness greatly stimulated, many fundamental relationships were being ignored or distorted. The effective control of this vast industrial system had become vested in the hands of a comparatively small group of financiers, business men and executives, a group which frequently used their power for purely selfish ends. The opposing group of Labour and the Trade Unions, whose initial impulse was the protection of working men and women and the improvement of their way of life, had also come in many cases to have a vested interest in power. The basic relationship between this Capitalist group and management on the one hand, and Labour on the other, was normally characterised by tension and suspicion, and in certain instances open hostility. Furthermore, the existence of heavy unemployment (there were never less than one million unemployed persons in Great Britain between 1919 and 1939), and the violent fluctuations of the Trade cycle, made it easy for unenlightened management to develop authoritarian or paternalistic tendencies. In this situation it is not surprising that very few wage rates were based on the principle of “Fair Shares”, and that more often than not the minimum payment was made.

In spite of all this, goodwill did exist and there were firms particularly some of the smaller ones, with good management-labour relations. But much of this goodwill was disorganised, or backed up by muddled thinking. Too much attention was paid to improving the purely physical environment at work, and the basic factor of wrong relationship was little appreciated.

The second world war, and the troubled period that has followed,
have forced many people to review their approach to industrial problems. As a result there is a growing recognition that wrong relationships are the basic cause of most industrial disharmony, and the principles of right human relationships are increasingly understood. In addition there is much evidence to show that these changed attitudes are working into expression in industrial life.

An example of this is the changing conception of an industrial company. This "new" conception lays emphasis on the essentially human nature of industrial association, as opposed to concentrating on the technical nature of manufacturing processes. Thus the firm is described as a social organism, made up of a number of working groups, linked and co-ordinated through their leaders and co-operating on a common task or tasks. The well being of the company as a whole is known to be primarily dependent on the "quality of relationships" within and between these working groups. At the same time people are aware of the dynamic inter-relationship between industrial life and the life pattern of the community as a whole, and are more fully conscious of their responsibility for ensuring that this total life pattern is as balanced and creative as possible.

Where right human relationships exist production is rarely a problem, and everyday more people are realising that the productivity needs of this country will only be solved when human relationships are soundly based. Many firms for example could achieve an increase in output of up to 50% without difficulty provided the willing co-operation of everyone concerned could be ensured.

This revolution in thinking is slowly altering industry's approach to the actual work that is done. Much industrial work is repetitive and monotonous, and there is growing concern at the lack of satisfaction and opportunities for development that it provides. Although industrialists are uncertain as to how they can improve matters at this time, many are aware that changes must be made. Another aspect of this man-work relationship arises from the study of individual differences, and the problem of selecting the right man or woman for the job. Selection methods have been developed which are suitable for use in industry, and considerable progress has been made both in providing a vocational advisory service for school leavers, and in training employment and personnel officers in the use of these methods.
Another subtle, yet significant change of attitude, is apparent in industry's approach to the problem of sharing. Before the war, if this question was considered at all, there was a tendency to concentrate on mechanisms by which fairer sharing could be achieved. This often obscured the real issue of relationships and led to trouble. Unscrupulous managements could, and did, manipulate such schemes for their own purposes, and it was equally common for ignorant or misguided workers to accuse well-meaning managements of attempting to do this. Today representatives of both Capital and Labour are less rigid in their approach, and are more content to state two fundamental principles: first, "That there must be fair shares for all"; and second, "That all concerned must agree willingly both on what a fair share is, and how it should be apportioned". It is realised that this agreement based on mutual goodwill is the key to success; and that without goodwill the soundest plans will come to nothing.

As a result of these changes in attitude, management has recognised the need for training industrial leaders in human relationships. Many courses for this type of training have been run by different groups in various parts of the country, and tens of thousands of managers and supervisors have been through them in the last five years. No doubt some of these courses are sketchy and inadequate, but the fact that they have taken place on such a wide scale holds out great hope for the future.

At the same time industrialists have become aware of the need for a new philosophy of management. This awareness takes the form of a question — what should be the nature and function of industrial leadership? Although no immediate or simple answer is forthcoming, certain important ideas are in process of being formulated. It is realised for example, that a major function of the leader is to help his working group achieve its purpose — thus the leader should be thought of as the servant of his group. Furthermore, although it is the "employer" who gives him his responsibility, the group itself gives him the authority to do his work. This is leadership without imposition, by someone who can effect a work focus and integration at the highest possible level, and in this sense the leader must be identified with the highest conscious centre of group life. These ideas will do much to re-orient industrial life and heal the cleavage in relationship between management and labour. And it is perhaps significant to note that the term supervisor, which reflects these changing ideas and
attitudes, is being increasingly used instead of that of manager or leader.

No survey of British Industry today would be complete without some remarks on the role of Joint Consultation and the part that the Trade Unions have to play.

Joint Consultation is yet one more example of the widespread effort to establish better relationships between managements of firms and their work people. Its practice has been known in one form or another in Great Britain for a number of years, but the second world war both stimulated its development and gave greater prominence to its use. The term Joint Consultation, however, is frequently a misnomer. In many firms it achieves no greater usefulness than providing a mechanism for airing grievances and distributing information. In other and more advanced cases the consultative committee will act in an advisory capacity on questions of welfare and employee services, and sometimes production and other problems will be included within its scope. Occasionally Joint Consultation takes the form of an experiment in democratic leadership, where all concerned consult together on their problems in an effort to reach an agreed solution.

Success in Joint Consultation depends first and foremost on the existence of goodwill. It is important too that the scheme be designed to fit the particular needs of the firm, and that it should be integrated into the already existing relationships within the company. When this is the case much of value can be achieved, particularly in educating all concerned in the acceptance of responsibility.

The problem of Labour and the Trade Unions in Great Britain today is exactly expressed by the following two statements from "The Problems of Humanity"*:- "The Labour Movement is itself now Capitalistic", and "The norm of humanity lies at the heart of the Labour Movement".

The problem is in a sense unique for millions of people are involved in conflict within this one great group. The totalitarian forces within the Labour movement in Great Britain can and do hold the whole country to ransom. The fomentation of discontent by unscrupulous leaders, the deliberate restriction of output, and wasteful and irresponsible unofficial strikes are all evidence of this fact. On the other hand those groups within the Trade Unions who stand for goodwill, for right human relationships,

* By Alice A. Bailey—Lucis Press and Lucis Publishing Co.
and the brotherhood of man are evidencing a willingness and capacity to make group sacrifice for the good of the whole. It is this fact, and the improved relationships between the Labour movement and men of goodwill in other groups, that makes future progress certain.

Perhaps the major achievement of British Industry in recent years has been to recognise the fundamental importance of human relationships. But something more is needed, for although the idea of a human relationship is well established in the consciousness of industry, people are very much less clear as to the nature of a right human relationship. It is this need for clarifying the nature of a right human relationship that provides us with our opportunity in the present world crisis; it is a heavy responsibility but a joyous one, for the hearts of men everywhere cry out for this understanding.

Finally there is the need for men to realise the essentially spiritual nature of the present world crisis. British Industry, in common with all other fields of human activity, forms a major area of conflict between the totalitarian forces and the forces of freedom. It would experience an immense release through the raising of its perception from psychological to spiritual levels of awareness. A recognition of the spiritual nature of the world crisis would in fact negate the power of the totalitarian forces. *It is for this recognition that we must work.*