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# Primary Social Attitudes as Related to Social Class and Political Party<sup>1</sup>

H. J. EYSENCK

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## I. INTRODUCTION

IN A previous paper [4], the writer has reported an attempt to study the organization of attitudes in a middle-class urban British sample. Age, education and sex were carefully controlled, and the sample was selected in such a way that the three major political parties were equally represented. A forty-item attitude questionnaire was answered by 250 conservatives, 250 liberals and 250 socialists, equated for age, sex and education; these 40 items were intercorrelated for the total sample of 750, and the resulting matrix factor-analysed. Two major factors emerged confirming essentially a former study analysing responses of 1,500 subjects [3]. One of the factors was easily identifiable in terms of the radical-conservative dichotomy. Proof of the correct identification of this factor was supplied in terms of an early application of the writer's technique of "criterion analysis" [5], by correlating the column of factor saturations with a Criterion Column which was constructed by taking, for each item, the difference in endorsement of that item between the conservative and socialist groups. This correlation was highly significant ( $r = 0.98$ ), thus supporting the tentative identification of this factor.

The second factor was less clearly identifiable with any existing sociological or psychological concept, and provisionally the terms "tender-mindedness" and "tough-mindedness" were adopted from W. James's writings to characterize the extremes of this bi-polar factor. Relatively high values for the index of reliability were shown to characterize two fourteen-item scales derived from the original set of items to measure the two factors R and T respectively; these values show that both scales are measuring with a certain amount of consistency some hypothetical underlying variables in terms of which the observed intercorrelations can be interpreted [2, 4]. The fact that the correlation between R and T is effectively equal to zero ( $r = -0.12$ ) is further proof of the independence of these two factors. The three political parties studied were shown to be differentiated very significantly with respect to the

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Miss J. Gilfillan, Mr. N. O'Connor, Mr. A. Clarke, and others for help in collecting the data, and Mr. R. M. Barker for help with the analysis.

R factor, but to show little, if any, difference with respect to the T factor. The position of a number of attitudes with respect to the co-ordinate system generated by R and T can be seen in Fig. 1, which will be helpful in clarifying the nature of these two factors.

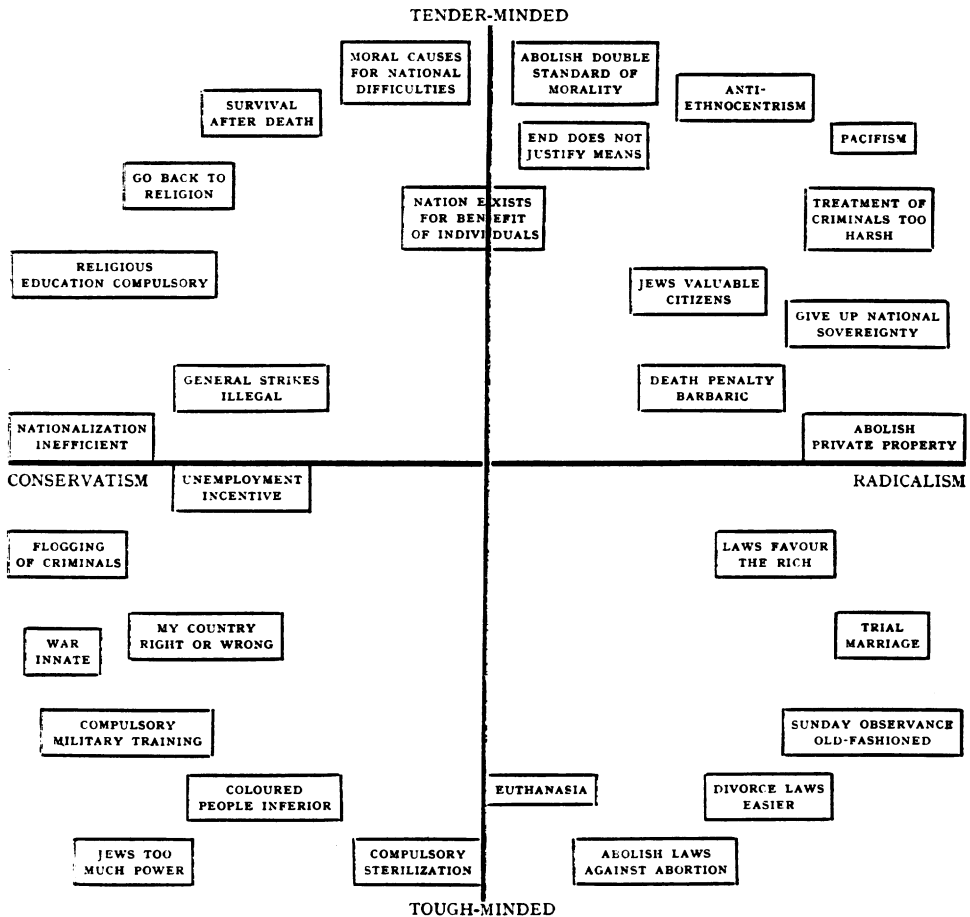


FIG. 1.

## II. HYPOTHESES TESTED

The present paper seeks to extend these findings in two directions. In the first instance, it was hypothesized that while one dimension (radicalism-conservatism) was sufficient to account for the total amount of variation between the major political parties, at least one other dimension would be required to account for the additional variance contributed by communists. It was hypothesized further that the required dimension would be identical with that measured by the T-factor, and that communists would be found

towards the "tough-minded" end as opposed to the other three parties who would be found closer to the "tender-minded" end. These differences on the T-axis were hypothesized to be additional to differences along the R-axis, in the sense that communists would score even more radical than socialists.

In the second instance, it appeared worth-while to test an hypothesis implicit in much modern writing, and made explicit by Centers [1] in a book reviewed and criticized at some length by the writer [6], implying that working-class subjects are more radical than middle-class subjects—presumably because of "the status and role of the individual in relation to the means of production and exchange of goods and services." Centers, like Kornhauser [8] and many others, attempts to prove his hypothesis by comparing scores of unselected middle-class and working-class subjects. This method side-steps an important problem which is dealt with in this paper: When political party allegiance is held constant, would similar differences appear between middle-class and working-class groups? The answer to this question is important because it might tell us a great deal about the hypothetical radicalism-conservatism factor. If it were found, for instance, that with political party held constant, working-class subjects tended to be more conservative than middle-class subjects, then it might be necessary to postulate that social classes are characterized by different patterns of social attitudes. For instance, "radicalism" in the middle classes might be largely ideational, in the working classes largely economic.

### III. SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

In the selection of subjects we dropped controls on age, education and sex, because in our first study these variables were found only slightly correlated with either R or T. Our only principle of selection, therefore, in addition to the requirement that the respondent should fall into the "urban" classification, was avowed partisanship for one of the four political groups studied. The method of selection adopted has been explained in some detail in the first paper of this series [4]; as regards communists, certain alterations had to be made in the procedure.

Contact was made with Party Branches through a member of the Communist Party who undertook to collect the questionnaire replies. He used two different branches, one primarily working-class, the other primarily middle-class. Relatively few refusals were encountered among those approached, in spite of a feeling that this type of work was "futile".

The total number of subjects used is given in Table I, from which it will be seen that our middle-class sample is larger than our working-class sample. Some sub-groups, such as the working-class Liberals, are so small that they have been included in the analysis primarily because they show precisely the same trends as do the other, larger groups. Altogether, this study should be regarded as preliminary rather than as final, in view of the great complexity of the issues involved, and the almost complete lack of knowledge which characterizes this field.

Judgments of "Social Class" of respondents were made on the basis of written information supplied by the respondents to the writer, who used as an aid in dichotomizing the P.I.C. code. In any case, as Hall and Jones have shown, "while there may be minor differences in judgment . . . between men and women, young and old, drawn from different social levels, in their ranking of certain occupations or grades of occupation, these differences on

TABLE I

|                         | <i>Middle Class</i> | <i>Working Class</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Conservatives . . . . . | 250*                | 65                   |
| Liberals . . . . .      | 250*                | 27                   |
| Socialists . . . . .    | 250*                | 45                   |
| Communists . . . . .    | 50                  | 96                   |
|                         | 800                 | 233                  |

\* These subjects are the same as took part in the first experiment [4].

the average do not appear to be highly significant. . . . By and large, the consensus of opinion is certainly much greater than we had thought it would be" [7, p. 49]. It seems likely, therefore, that the reliability of classification in our present research would be sufficient to make group differences stand out in relief. Conversely, the fact that marked differences were observed which formed a consistent pattern seems to establish that our social classification system must have had at least partial reliability and validity.

#### IV. TEST USED

Some of the subjects were tested with a 35-item questionnaire, which however contained all the questions included in the two scales for the measurement of R and T. The Appendix gives the 40-item questionnaire in full; the numbers of items not included in the 35-item questionnaire are put in brackets. In the column headed "Your Opinion" the letters R and T are printed after items included in the two scales respectively; a + sign after the R indicates that a "Yes" answer to the item is indicative of radicalism, while a - sign is indicative of conservatism. Similarly, a + sign after a T indicates that a "Yes" answer is "tender-minded", while a - sign indicates that it is "tough-minded". Items which show appreciable correlation with either the R or the T factor without forming part of either scale are followed by an R or a T with the appropriate sign, but are put in brackets.

#### V. RESULTS

Table II gives the means and S.D.s for R and T scores of all the groups used. Fig. 2 represents these results in convenient diagrammatic form, with

TABLE II  
R SCORES

|                         | <i>Middle Class</i> | <i>Working Class</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Conservatives . . . . . | 4.6 ± 2.37          | 2.8 ± 2.03           |
| Liberals . . . . .      | 6.3 ± 2.80          | 3.7 ± 2.34           |
| Socialists . . . . .    | 9.4 ± 3.04          | 6.4 ± 2.90           |
| Communists . . . . .    | 12.4 ± 2.02         | 10.7 ± 2.45          |

T SCORES

|                         | <i>Middle Class</i> | <i>Working Class</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Conservatives . . . . . | 7.6 ± 2.60          | 6.3 ± 2.24           |
| Liberals . . . . .      | 7.9 ± 2.50          | 7.4 ± 2.51           |
| Socialists . . . . .    | 8.0 ± 2.32          | 6.2 ± 2.50           |
| Communists . . . . .    | 6.8 ± 1.50          | 6.0 ± 1.99           |

the abscissa representing the R factor, and the ordinate the T factor. Certain conclusions are immediately obvious: All working-class groups are less radical

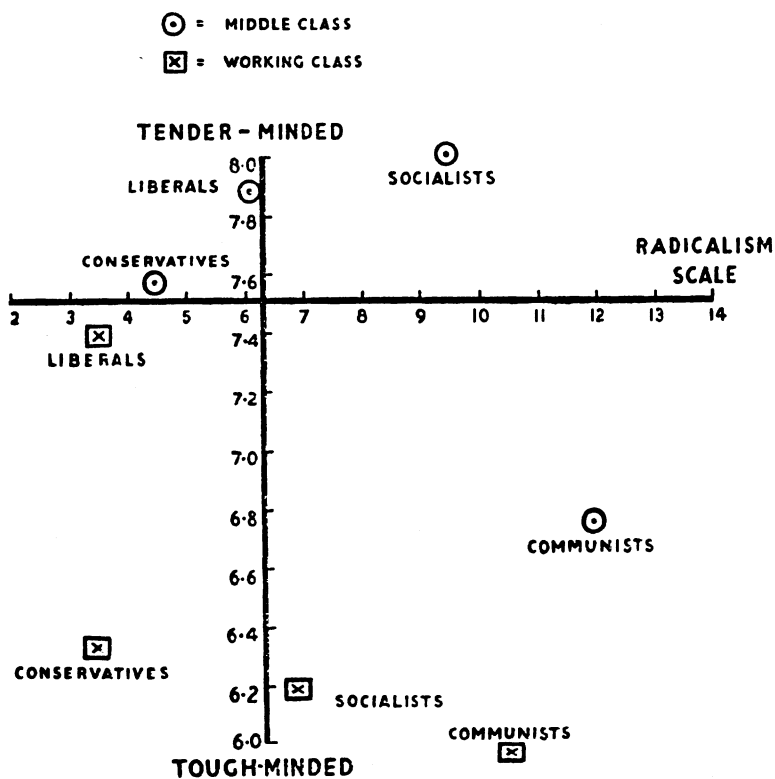


FIG. 2.

than the corresponding middle-class groups, and all working-class groups are more tough-minded than the corresponding middle-class groups. These differences are astonishingly large, and nearly all highly significant statistically. It will be seen that the Liberal working-class group is more conservative than

TABLE III  
PROPORTION OF "YES" ANSWERS

| Item   | Conservatives |               | Liberals     |               | Socialists   |               | Communists   |               |
|--------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
|        | Middle Class  | Working Class | Middle Class | Working Class | Middle Class | Working Class | Middle Class | Working Class |
| 1 . .  | 42            | 30            | 27           | 33            | 19           | 16            | 00           | 06            |
| 2 . .  | 27            | 74            | 37           | 50            | 65           | 64            | 92           | 93            |
| 3 . .  | 67            | 70            | 57           | 67            | 34           | 60            | 02           | 02            |
| 4 . .  | 76            | 81            | 86           | 78            | 91           | 87            | 98           | 94            |
| 5 . .  | 69            | 96            | 59           | 83            | 63           | 89            | 46           | 71            |
| 6 . .  | 39            | 26            | 58           | 22            | 72           | 33            | 100          | 91            |
| 8 . .  | 32            | 37            | 60           | 38            | 76           | 50            | 74           | 65            |
| 9 . .  | 36            | 59            | 44           | 33            | 68           | 69            | 92           | 95            |
| 10 . . | 66            | 74            | 71           | 78            | 80           | 76            | 93           | 91            |
| 11 . . | 75            | 89            | 79           | 89            | 79           | 87            | 82           | 89            |
| 12 . . | 03            | 00            | 15           | 00            | 56           | 27            | 93           | 95            |
| 13 . . | 28            | 67            | 16           | 22            | 09           | 27            | 02           | 06            |
| 14 . . | 92            | 93            | 96           | 78            | 99           | 91            | 96           | 100           |
| 15 . . | 28            | 33            | 40           | 11            | 53           | 51            | 90           | 65            |
| 16 . . | 65            | 74            | 56           | 61            | 36           | 27            | 00           | 05            |
| 17 . . | 77            | 81            | 66           | 67            | 49           | 73            | 06           | 22            |
| 18 . . | 40            | 37            | 58           | 56            | 67           | 42            | 98           | 98            |
| 20 . . | 67            | 67            | 71           | 78            | 84           | 69            | 98           | 98            |
| 21 . . | 42            | 37            | 42           | 33            | 54           | 40            | 76           | 61            |
| 22 . . | 12            | 22            | 10           | 17            | 14           | 33            | 22           | 51            |
| 23 . . | 33            | 37            | 42           | 22            | 61           | 53            | 96           | 91            |
| 24 . . | 34            | 44            | 49           | 56            | 60           | 38            | 48           | 65            |
| 25 . . | 72            | 81            | 65           | 89            | 62           | 96            | 44           | 74            |
| 26 . . | 65            | 93            | 49           | 89            | 28           | 87            | 02           | 21            |
| 27 . . | 86            | 100           | 58           | 44            | 16           | 18            | 04           | 03            |
| 28 . . | 66            | 70            | 55           | 78            | 32           | 13            | 00           | 05            |
| 29 . . | 35            | 37            | 40           | 22            | 62           | 36            | 98           | 77            |
| 30 . . | 56            | 63            | 49           | 67            | 38           | 60            | 12           | 19            |
| 31 . . | 40            | 44            | 30           | 22            | 28           | 40            | 04           | 13            |
| 32 . . | 19            | 19            | 28           | 28            | 27           | 40            | 02           | 20            |
| 33 . . | 68            | 81            | 52           | 61            | 39           | 73            | 04           | 08            |
| 34 . . | 68            | 59            | 77           | 56            | 83           | 76            | 98           | 98            |
| 35 . . | 22            | 22            | 22           | 17            | 08           | 13            | 02           | 03            |
| 36 . . | 30            | 19            | 42           | 11            | 64           | 20            | 96           | 83            |
| 39 . . | 58            | 74            | 37           | 44            | 19           | 27            | 00           | 06            |

the Conservative middle-class group. Similarly, the Socialist working-class group has a score for R almost identical with that of the middle-class Liberal group.

These general impressions suggest that the attitude pattern of working-class people contrasts with that of middle-class people, even when political

party allegiance is held constant. This proposition is analysed in some more detail in Table III, which gives the percentage endorsements of the various propositions in Table I by middle-class and working-class voters for the four parties respectively. Our hypothesis would demand that any differences appearing between the two classes within any one party for any one item should similarly be found in comparing the responses of the two classes within any of the other parties. In other words, if for each party we write a difference column, showing the algebraic difference between endorsements made by middle-class and working-class adherents, then the four difference columns should intercorrelate to a significant extent. These correlations are all positive and significant ; they are given in Table IV, together with a factor analysis showing the extent to which these differences are determined by one general

TABLE IV

|            | 1 | 2  | 3  | 4  | 1st Factor |
|------------|---|----|----|----|------------|
| 1          | — | 56 | 58 | 44 | .65        |
| 2          |   | —  | 61 | 70 | .81        |
| 3          |   |    | —  | 65 | .80        |
| 4          |   |    |    | —  | .77        |
| % Variance |   |    |    |    | .58        |

factor extending right through all the parties from Conservative to Communist. This table gives strong support to our hypothesis, the general factor accounting for 58 per cent of the variance.

A survey of the actual items on which these class differences occur may be of interest. There are thirteen items on which all four parties show relatively large differences in the same direction. It would appear that the working-class person, as opposed to the middle-class person, and irrespective of political party, shows the following beliefs : In favour of compulsory sterilization ; in favour of harsh treatment of criminals ; in favour of unrestricted freedom of discussion ; opposed to conscientious objectors ; against miscegenation ; opposed to changes in the licensing laws ; agreeing that human beings are all born with the same potentialities ; and that modern life is too much concentrated in cities ; flogging good in cases of violence ; " spare the rod and spoil the child " ; Jews are too powerful ; death penalty should not be abolished ; Japanese are by nature a cruel people. Another eight differences show agreement between three parties, with the fourth showing a very small difference in the opposite direction, or no difference at all. These differences suggest that working-class people believe : war is inherent in human nature ; we must not give up our national sovereignty ; we should not give up private property ; we should not



abolish laws against abortion ; Jews aren't valuable citizens ; divorce should not be made easier ; against companionate marriage ; against abolition of wage differences between sexes.

These differences are of particular interest in the light they throw on the Marxian hypothesis of what Centers has called "the interest group theory of social classes". The working-class person is shown to be more conservative than the middle-class person voting for the same party, in spite of his obvious class interests which according to the theory should pull him in the opposite direction. Nor can one maintain the superficially plausible hypothesis that there are two kinds of conservatism involved, one dealing with economic matters, the other with ideational causes, in such a way that working-class people are economically radical and ideationally conservative, while middle-class people are economically conservative and ideationally radical. The falsity of this hypothesis is shown by the fact that the item calling for the abolition of private property is actually endorsed much more frequently by middle-class people. It is perhaps surprising that these general tendencies are shared by members of the communist party to an extent equal to that shown by the other parties ; this result greatly strengthens the case for generalizing our findings.

The general proposition that the R factor is much the same in the working-class as it is in the middle-class can be submitted to another test. It is possible to calculate a difference column for the items in Table III, showing the percentage differences in endorsement between middle-class conservatives and middle-class socialists. In a similar fashion, it is possible to calculate such a difference column for working-class conservatives and working-class socialists. These two difference columns should show a very significant, positive correlation if our hypothesis regarding the essential identity of the R factor for the two classes were correct. In actual fact, this correlation turns out to be  $+0.72$ , which is highly significant, in spite of the attenuation introduced through the fact that percentages are employed throughout, which results in a scale not having proper metric attributes.

A similar proof that the differences between middle-class and working-class people is in part at least identifiable with the R factor can be given in the following way. Let us take our difference column, giving differences in endorsements between middle-class conservatives and middle-class socialists, and correlate it with the difference column calculated from the percentage endorsement difference between the middle-class communists and the working-class communists. This correlation, in order to support the hypothesis, should be positive and significant ; in actual fact it is equal to  $+ = .44$ , which is of course highly significant. Thus middle-class communists are much more radical than working-class communists, an interesting commentary on the view that the working-class is the true breeding ground of radicalism.

The finding that working-class people are "tough-minded" in terms of our T factor is perhaps less surprising. This discovery may be of importance more in the light which it throws on the T factor, which is still imperfectly

understood, than in the light which it throws on social attitudes of different classes.

We must now turn from a discussion of our hypothesis relating to differences in attitudes due to social class to our second hypothesis, stating that communists differ from the main three political parties, not only with respect to the R factor, but also along some different dimension, tentatively identifiable as the T factor. The truth of this hypothesis is demonstrated most clearly in our middle-class sample where the position of the communists is quite clearly, and at a highly significant level, incompatible with the view that communists differ from other parties only by being more radical; they quite clearly are also much more tough-minded. In the working-class sample, the communists are again the most tough-minded group but they are not differentiated from the socialists and conservatives at a high level of confidence, and while their difference from the liberals is relatively large, it must be remembered that our working-class liberal group was very small indeed.

While our hypothesis is, therefore, supported in general, it is much more applicable, apparently, to middle-class than to working-class groups, and a further study of larger groups of working-class people would be required before it could confidently be extended to them also. In any case, it is clear that the simple hypothesis of some writers who discuss socialism and communism as lying along one dimension cannot be maintained. At least two such dimensions must be hypothesized.

There is one further interesting difference between communists and the three democratic parties. Table II shows that the communist groups tend to have much smaller S.D.s for their R and T scores than do the other groups, either working-class or middle-class. This greater cohesion of communist groups, again, is hardly unexpected. It appears to go together with a greater tendency to believe *strongly* in the correctness of the attitude held. If we average the + + and the — — scores, indicating strong approval or disapproval, we find that only 35 per cent of the socialist, liberal and conservative responses have been marked in this fashion, but 54 per cent and 51 per cent respectively of the middle-class and working-class communist responses. This finding, too, might have been anticipated. There was no appreciable difference in S.D. between the middle-class and the working-class group, although such differences had been expected, on the hypothesis that middle-class groups might be thought to have a more consistent, thought-out philosophy of political and social behaviour. The facts do not support this view.

A last finding may be of interest, although the number of subjects concerned was much too small to lend it more than suggestive importance. On the same basis on which the position of the communist party on the R-T factor space was predicted can the prediction be made that a fascist group would lie in the conservative, tough-minded quadrant. Only seven middle-class persons could be found who were followers of Mosley and may properly be called "fascists". The average R score of this group was 5.2, which puts them fundamentally on the conservative side. Their average T score was 4.7, which

marks them as the most tough-minded group of all we have examined. Our hypothesis, therefore, is borne out. It is of interest to note that these subjects were the most emphatic of all, their proportion of + + and — — scores being 67 per cent. It is to be hoped that future work with various groups will put these findings on a more secure foundation.

### CONCLUSIONS

A number of hypotheses relating to differences in social attitudes between social classes and between political parties have been submitted to an experimental test. The first hypothesis, which posited that while the differences between the main three parties could be described in terms of one factor, differences between these parties and the communist party would require an additional dimension, was borne out by the results, as was the second hypothesis identifying this additional dimension with the T factor. Communists are thus found to be radical and tough-minded. A small group of fascists, on the other hand, was found to be conservative and tough-minded, thus showing that while communists and fascists are on opposite poles with respect to the radicalism factor, they are very similar with respect to the T factor.

The third hypothesis, which posited that there would be consistent differences between middle-class and working-class adherents of these four political parties, when the influence of party adherence was held constant, was also borne out; working-class subjects were more conservative and more tough-minded when compared with middle-class subjects having the same party allegiance. This was true of communists just as much as of conservatives. No evidence was found for a fourth hypothesis according to which middle-class and working-class radicalism were thought to exhibit different patterns of attitudes, the middle-class pattern being largely "culturally progressive", and the working-class pattern largely "economically progressive". Instead, evidence was adduced to show the essential identity of radicalism irrespective of social class.

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## APPENDIX

## INVENTORY OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES

Below are given 40 statements which represent widely-held opinions on various social questions, selected from speeches, books, newspapers, etc. They were chosen in such a way that most people are likely to agree with some, and to disagree with others. After each statement, you are requested to record your personal opinion regarding it. If you strongly approve, put two crosses after it—like this: ++. If you approve on the whole, put one cross after the statement. If you can't decide for or against, or if you think the question is worded in such a way that you can't give an answer, put a zero—like this: o. If you disapprove on the whole, put a minus sign. And if you strongly disapprove, put two minus signs, like this: --. Be sure not to omit any questions.

| <i>Attitude Statements.</i>  | <i>Your Opinion.</i> |       |
|--|----------------------|-------|
| 1. Coloured people are innately inferior to white people   | R —                  | T —   |
| 2. Present laws favour the rich as against the poor  | (R +)                |       |
| 3. War is inherent in human nature   | R —                  | T —   |
| 4. The marriage bar on female teachers should be removed   | (R +)                |       |
| 5. Persons with serious hereditary defects and diseases should be compulsorily sterilized                          |                      | T —   |
| 6. Our treatment of criminals is too harsh; we should try to cure, not to punish them                              | (R +)                |       |
| 7. Our present difficulties are due rather to moral than to economic causes  |                      | (T +) |
| 8. In the interests of peace, we must give up part of our national sovereignty                                     | R +                  | T +   |
| 9. Sunday observance is old fashioned, and should cease to govern our behaviour                                    | R +                  | T —   |
| 10. It is wrong that men should be permitted greater sexual freedom than women by society                          |                      | T +   |
| 11. Unrestricted freedom of discussion on every topic is desirable in the press, in literature, on the stage, etc. | —                    |       |
| 12. Ultimately, private property should be abolished, and complete socialism introduced                            | R +                  |       |
| 13. Conscientious objectors are traitors to their country, and should be treated accordingly                       | (R —)                | T —   |
| 14. A certain amount of sex education should be given at school to all boys and girls                              | —                    |       |
| 15. The laws against abortion should be abolished  | R +                  | T —   |
| 16. Only by going back to religion can civilization hope to survive  | R —                  | T +   |
| 17. Marriages between white and coloured people should be strongly discouraged                                     | (R —)                |       |
| 18. Jews are as valuable, honest, and public-spirited citizens as any other group                                  | (R +)                |       |
| 19. Major questions of national policy should be decided by reference to majority opinion (e.g. by referendum)     | —                    |       |
| 20. There should be far more controversial and political discussion over the radio                                 | (R +)                |       |

| <i>Attitude Statements.</i>   | <i>Your Opinion.</i> |       |
|---|----------------------|-------|
| 21. The present licensing laws should be altered, so as to remove restrictions on hours of opening                                  | (T -)                |       |
| 22. All human beings are born with the same potentialities  | —                    |       |
| 23. Divorce laws should be altered to make divorce easier   | R +                  | T -   |
| 24. Patriotism in the modern world is a force which works against peace   | (R +)                |       |
| 25. Modern life is too much concentrated in cities ; the government should take steps to encourage a "return to the country "       | (R -)                |       |
| 26. Crimes of violence should be punished by flogging   | R -                  | (T -) |
| 27. The nationalization of the great industries is likely to lead to inefficiency, bureaucracy, and stagnation                      | R -                  |       |
| 28. It is right and proper that religious education in schools should be compulsory   | R -                  | T +   |
| 29. Men and women have the right to find out whether they are sexually suited before marriage (e.g. by companionate marriage)       | R +                  | T -   |
| 30. The principle " Spare the rod and spoil the child " has much truth in it, and should govern our methods of bringing up children | (R -)                |       |
| 31. Women are not the equals of men in intelligence, organizing ability, etc.   | —                    |       |
| 32. Experiments on living animals should be forbidden   | —                    |       |
| 33. The Jews have too much power and influence in this country  | (R -)                | (T -) |
| 34. Differences in pay between men and women doing the same work should be abolished  | (R +)                |       |
| 35. Birth control, except when medically indicated, should be made illegal  | (R -)                | (T +) |
| 36. The death penalty is barbaric, and should be abolished  | R +                  | T +   |
| 37. There will be another war in 25 years   | —                    |       |
| 38. Scientists should take no part in politics  | (R -)                |       |
| 39. The Japanese are by nature a cruel people   | R -                  | T -   |
| 40. Only people with a definite minimum of intelligence and education should be allowed to vote                                     | —                    |       |

*Personal Details*

It would be appreciated if you would fill in the following details.

41. Age..... 42. Sex..... 43. Weekly income (self or husband).....  
 44. Type of work .....