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Symposium on  
Christianity and Business

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## The Journal of Christian Reconstruction

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*Symposium on Christianity and Business*  
R.J. Rushdoony & Otto J. Scott, Editors

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A CHALCEDON MINISTRY

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# THE JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN RECONSTRUCTION

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This Journal is dedicated to the fulfillment of the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:28 and 9:1—to subdue the earth to the glory of God. It is published by the Chalcedon Foundation, an independent Christian educational organization (see inside back cover). The perspective of the Journal is that of orthodox Christianity. It affirms the verbal, plenary inspiration of the original manuscripts (autographs) of the Bible and the full divinity and full humanity of Jesus Christ—two natures in union (but without intermixture) in one person.

The editors are convinced that the Christian world is in need of a serious publication that bridges the gap between the newsletter-magazine and the scholarly academic journal. The editors are committed to Christian scholarship, but the Journal is aimed at intelligent laymen, working pastors, and others who are interested in the reconstruction of all spheres of human existence in terms of the standards of the Old and New Testaments. It is not intended to be another outlet for professors to professors, but rather a forum for serious discussion within Christian circles.

The Marxists have been absolutely correct in their claim that theory must be united with practice, and for this reason they have been successful in their attempt to erode the foundations of the noncommunist world. The editors agree with the Marxists on this point, but instead of seeing in revolution the means of fusing theory and practice, we see the fusion in personal regeneration through God's grace in Jesus Christ and in the extension of God's kingdom. Good principles should be followed by good practice; eliminate either, and the movement falters. In the long run, it is the kingdom of God, not Marx's "kingdom of freedom," which shall reign triumphant. Christianity will emerge victorious, for only in Christ and His revelation can men find both the principles of conduct and the means of subduing the earth: the principles of biblical law.

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**The Ministry of Chalcedon**

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# INTRODUCTION: SYMPOSIUM ON CHRISTIANITY AND BUSINESS

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## *Introduction by R. J. Rushdoony*

This issue of the *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* has had a great deal of work go into it. The initial work was done by Dr. Douglas F. Kelly, together with Daniel Maxwell. John W. Saunders III contributed his assistance also. My work has been to put together their labors.

In the course of preparation, Dan Maxwell talked with some churchmen in business, asking for insights. On some occasions, these men answered, “What the hell does my Christianity have to do with my business?” Unhappily, pietism has too often led people to isolate their faith into the personal and ecclesiastical realms, which is tantamount to surrendering it. Happily, this is less and less the case, as Don Scott, Robert D. Love, and Paul Doepke tell us.

The world of business and commerce has in our time a very bad press; it is seen as evil, and one judge recently compared a corporation to Hitler, to Hitler’s advantage! That some corporations, like some churches, politicians, working men, and institutions, are bad is a fact of life, but that many and most do an important work and are major social forces for good goes unrecognized.

Let us consider one example. Aramco, primarily an American corporation in ownership, is the world’s richest oil company. Its work in public health in Saudi Arabia is of major importance. Malaria, tuberculosis, and parasitic diseases were early tackled; malaria is now practically nonexistent, and tuberculosis has been practically eliminated from the {2} Eastern Province. Dysentery and other parasitic diseases once infected almost half the population; these have been cut back dramatically; once more than 70 percent of the population had some form of trachoma; this too has been curtailed. Dr. Seymour Gray, M.D., in *Beyond the Veil: The Adventures of an American Doctor in Saudi Arabia* (1983), quotes an Aramco official:

We decided that the crux of our policy in Saudi Arabia was to make the welfare of the Saudis our primary goal rather than to make as much money as possible. We knew we were going to make an awful lot of money in any event, but we didn't want to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. Our objective was to do as much as possible to benefit the host country so that the Saudis would want us to stay.

Unusual? Not at all. At our staff breakfasts, Otto Scott has told us of like activities the world over by American corporations.

The friendliness of Saudi Arabia to the United States is due to Aramco. Its occasional anger is caused by the activities of our State Department, but the press, here and in other cases abroad, berates the American corporation, not the federal government's foreign policy.

Do evils exist in the world of the corporations? They do, as in every other realm, especially civil government, because it is a monopoly. Do we condemn all churches because some are apostate? Men today are very prone to isolate evil into a class or sphere because they have a non-biblical doctrine of sin. They see sin as environmental, and they single out some aspect of the environment as the evil force. Such thinking is childish, but all too prevalent.

It is especially important today to have a sound perspective on business, because we are in the midst of a major industrial revolution. *First*, the world of computers, microelectronics generally, and related fields, is revolutionizing the world. We can call it the Third Industrial Revolution. (The first occurred during the so-called Dark Ages; the second in the early 1800s; and the third is today underway.) The calamity howlers are not in touch with reality. True, we face the world's greatest monetary debacle today, but there is more to the world than bankrupt statist planners.

*Second*, as Don Gevirtz has shown, in *Business Plan for American: An Entrepreneur's Manifesto* (Putnam, 1984), we are in the twilight of the giant corporations. Between 1965 and 1980, the number of Americans working in firms with 500 or more employees dropped greatly, while firms with fewer than 250 had 70 percent of the total work force. The {3} Fortune 500 firms have lost heavily. Between 1969 and 1976, small firms with less than twenty employees created about two-thirds of all the nation's new jobs, according to David Birch of M.I.T. A very different kind of country is in process of coming into existence.



Christians had better wake up to what is happening and become active in applying their faith to the world of business. As a matter of fact, many are doing so. The number of new inventions coming from Christian men is an exciting story. At a later date, we hope to describe it.

### *Introduction by Otto J. Scott*

After a long career in the private sector, I joined Chalcedon and learned many new concepts. Among these discoveries can be counted the anti-Christian tilt adopted by American business, and especially the large American corporations.

I discovered this bias when I asked some of my corporate executive friends to have their firms make a donation to Chalcedon. Their response was both cautious and negative. Their reasoning was the same as their decision not to send out Christmas cards, but to send out cards saying, "Holiday Greetings." *They did not want to offend Americans by calling attention to the existence of Christianity.*

In terms of corporate donations (permitted by our tax laws as representing nontaxable income up to 5 percent of overall corporate revenues), my corporate friends protested that any donation to a *Christian* organization would evoke protests from their shareholders. Therefore what is permitted as in the public interest by the American government is avoided by American business.

In effect, Christianity has, in a *de facto* manner, been ruled out of the public and general sectors of our national life. This is especially amazing when it is considered that the overwhelming majority of American citizens today are heirs of, and members of, Christian homes. Notwithstanding this, Christianity in modern America is treated as a subject of interest only to a minority, while minority, non-Christian attitudes and supporters occupy the status and influence of a majority in our national culture.

This is a very curious development, in view of Western history. It is now generally accepted that the West rose from continental to global status through the expansion and application of Christian principles.

{4} This growth took a quantum leap during the Reformation, which is of particular relevance to the business sector.

It was, after all, the Reformation that, in the words of Dr. Owen Chadwick, “made all secular life into a vocation of God. It refused any longer to regard the specially religious calling of priest or monk as higher in the moral scale than the calling of cobbler or prince. Christian energy was turned away from the still and contemplative towards action. The man who would leave the world turned into the man who would change the world.”

And we know that it was this expansion of vocation, which elevated all forms of labor, of applied effort, of commerce, of corporate long-range efforts (as against short-range, selfish efforts) that transformed the mercantile world into the capitalist world. Now we watch the heirs of that great expansion adopting the attitude that anyone concerned with religious principles should keep them in “the still and contemplative life.”

This retrogression has not only led to the pietism that has gutted mainline churches, but has also led Christians into the world’s largest ghetto in the United States. This ghetto is a cultural one, of course: it consists of keeping Christianity out of the general stream of American life, out of the national dialogue, out of the worlds of communication and corporations, and even out of the arts and sciences.

Of course, the ghetto was never completed. Its denizens can be said to have been persuaded into silence, rather than forced. And now, as they begin to emerge from this unnatural spiritual seclusion, they are met with indignation from those who assumed that the United States had entered what one social scientist called “a Post-Christian Era.”

Fortunately, however, Christianity is far from moribund in these United States. In fact, a great Christian revival is now underway. Probably the greatest in our history. Starting with a silent exodus of first dozens, then hundreds, then thousands from the mainline churches, it is reforming in new churches, new groupings, new and younger Christian professionals, artists, technicians—and even new business organizations.

For this revival is not restricted to churches. It is penetrating all levels of our national life, including corporate life. This issue of the *Journal* takes a look at the business part of this great renewal. This is

especially important, because Christian influence on business today can be as catalytic and fruitful as was the Christian “baptism” of the secular world in the time of the first Reformation.

**1.**  
**SYMPOSIUM ON**  
**CHRISTIANITY AND**  
**BUSINESS**

# THE LESSON OF OPEC

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*Otto J. Scott*

Address to the A.P.I., Williston, ND, July 6, 1982

I don't know who said it, but the man was right who said, "It isn't what we know that gets us into trouble, but the things we know that aren't so."

In discussing the petroleum industry, therefore, we should be wary of what we know, for whether or not it is right, it is definitely not enough. We need to know more than we do today, to overcome our troubles.

The shape of these difficulties cannot be determined by simply looking at the facts of the marketplace. The marketplace, if free and unimpeded, would certainly balance our national need for oil products with our abilities to pay, and would set prices that would amount to a rough equivalence of what is proper. But our marketplace is subject to interference from our various governments—local, state, and federal—as are the markets of the world.

And it is when we take a look at this world that we begin to realize that it is twisted out of all reasonable shape. Its marketplaces are surrounded by governments who have erected fun-mirrors, so that economic facts are elongated in one place and truncated in another, and turned squat and strange in another.

Some idea of how far the modern world has wandered away from reality and into fantasies can be gathered by mentioning only one or two {6} elementary facts. We have, for instance, been told for at least two generations that one of the greatest of modern problems is overpopulation. We are told that there is a limit to crowding, and that population density may be responsible for the current decline in behavior and morals in the United States, at least in some of our inner cities.

Yet Holland has the greatest population density in the world, with 1,000 people per square mile. It has twice the density of India, which has 400 people to the square mile. Holland has, furthermore, a more

severe climate than India, with fierce winters and a short agricultural period. India has a far better climate for agriculture. Yet the Dutch are prosperous and the Indians are poor.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that density of population and climate are not the determining factors in the prosperity of the Dutch and the poverty of the Indians. What is at work are two different systems of thought: two different systems of action, two different systems of religion, philosophy, and attitude.

Furthermore, if population growth is a problem, what can we say when we hear that Dr. David J. Rotabaugh, a professor of mathematics at the University of Missouri, has studied population studies based upon fish and insects, and has discovered that all species stop increasing their numbers when they reach a certain equilibrium. Projecting this to the human species, Dr. Rotabaugh estimates that our world population growth is now slowing, and is today about halfway toward its peak.

Dr. Colin G. Clark, speaking to a college audience in Santa Clara on the same subject, estimates that the world—as we know it today—could easily support a population ten times what it presently holds, and can feed everyone an American diet, using only the knowledge we have at this time.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, these experts tell us that the dire predictions of famine and other horrors attendant upon overpopulation are exaggerated and improbable, and that the world can and probably will hold twice as many people in the future as it does today—and will be able to well afford them.

If these opinions conflict with everyday arguments as they appear in the newspapers, it is no surprise, for much of what we know is not so, and this is as true for people in business as it is of people everywhere.

If, for instance, we know that the petroleum industry is not really in the control of its managers or engineers, but of governments, then we know that it is the shape and attitudes of governments that are most {7} important to understand, rather than just the facts of geology, engineering, transportation, finance, and sales.

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1. Cf. a tape by R. J. Rushdoony of the Chalcedon Foundation, June 8, 1982.

2. *Ibid.*

In understanding governments, moreover, it is more important to understand the attitudes they hold, than it is to understand their systems of control. England, for instance, is a democracy, but it has a monarch and an aristocracy. The People's Republic of China, on the other hand, has no aristocracy, and even the clothes its citizens wear look much the same. But it is a tyranny, and those on the top have rights denied to all others. It is not a democracy, and sweet reason will not make it one.

The United States began as a republic with certain ambitions toward enlarging the aristocracy, but settled, fairly soon, for a businessman's government. That system enabled this nation to grow rich very rapidly, though not without help. Most of that help came in the form of British investments, which made our cattle industry possible, as well as our transcontinental railroad system, among others. But the largest help the young United States received from Great Britain in the nineteenth century was the protection of the British Navy, which maintained free trade, open to all nations, on the high seas.

This aspect of Great Britain's days of glory is seldom, if ever, included in the education of the average American. Instead, we are taught the evils of colonialism, and encouraged to adopt a sentimental attitude not toward the British or the Europeans, but toward Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and the inhabitants of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

When I mention free trade and the sanctity of contracts as the twin foundations of British global rule, it is not in order to discuss ancient history, but to prepare for observations about our own situation today.

By sanctity of contracts the British meant, quite simply, that any foreign prince or power who signed a contract with a British firm was expected to keep to its terms. Otherwise the British were apt to send in a gunboat or two, and some soldiers, to teach the violators a lesson. In that system international trade flourished under conditions clear to all parties, from one end of the globe to the other.

It was during that period that the Americans invented and perfected the petroleum industry. It was during that period that the United States, for many decades, was the largest oil-producing nation in the world. And it was under that system that the government of the United States, like the governments of other Western powers, promoted trade as a logical extension of national strength in the world. It was under

that {8} system that the Seven Sisters came to dominate the international oil markets. The Seven, consisting of five American companies, one British and Dutch, and one British, seemed to own the international oil market.

I say *seemed to own* because it is clear that behind these firms stood the immense resources and power of the British and American governments. Without the support of these governments, the private citizens who owned, managed, and operated the petroleum companies could not have successfully dealt with sovereign powers in the Middle East, or anywhere else.

It should also be clear that of all the Seven Sisters, only the American five were really privately-owned. Both British Petroleum and Royal Dutch Shell are owned in part by the government of Great Britain. But the United States government does not own our oil companies.

Nevertheless, the need for oil in the modern world is so great that in the postwar world oil reserves were (and probably are still) one of the reasons why nations might go to war. When the Soviet Union sent troops at the end of World War II into Iran, the United States under Harry Truman told the Soviets to get out—and they moved. In 1951, the Iranians had a revolution of sorts, and a prime minister appeared on the scene named Mossadegh, who chased the shah off the throne and threatened to expropriate the oil fields.

At that point the Seven Sisters launched a worldwide boycott of Iranian oil. They also appealed to their governments for help. London wanted to send in troops to restore the shah to his throne, to put down Mossadegh, and to restore the previous contracts and terms agreed upon. Washington, dominated by Eisenhower, didn't like the idea of using troops. But the American government promised to provide covert help through the CIA, and to cooperate with the British to restore the shah and to unseat Mossadegh—providing American firms were allowed to share in the concessions the British had previously received in Iran. The British agreed, the shah was brought back, and Mossadegh kicked out of office. A new petroleum consortium was created, consisting of American, British, and French firms, in 1954.

On the surface this seemed evidence of close collaboration between Britain and the United States along the pattern of previous years, but behind the scenes there were significant changes. In retrospect it seems



likely that these changes took place largely as a result of attitudes formed inside the United States on the basis of American {9} education. In general, Americans were taught that colonialism was evil and that the people of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa were exploited by the British, French, and Dutch. This belief was extended, during World War II, to include all the industrial nations as exploiters. And a war that started as an effort to dam Germany's expansion gradually altered into a flood of promises to change and improve the world along socialistic lines.

During this process, which followed the Great Depression, the faith of a new American generation in classic capitalism was greatly weakened by a combination of a socialist education and the influence of wartime propaganda. Therefore, it seems logical that many officials in our State, Commerce, Defense, and Interior Departments, as well as in the Executive, did not believe that international business should be conducted along the old, British lines. These persons felt that it would improve the world of the future if the Iranians received concessions never before considered.

These concessions consisted first of a new State Department theory that Iran remained the "proprietor" of its oil fields. That was an idea that the Iranian revolutionaries had been spreading, and sounded plausible. But on closer examination that plausibility seems a bit thin. The old assumption was that oil was a commodity that could be bought and sold, and that those who bought and paid for oil were its owners. The new idea was that oil could be sold, but that the fields from which it was extracted remained the property of the nation where they were located. In other words, a firm could pay for oil and still not own what it bought. A novel idea, to say the least, and one that only an intellectual can consider reasonable.

The other innovation was a decision by the American government to force the Seven Sisters to allow independents to enter and share in the Iranian market. This also seemed very reasonable on the surface, and had the effect of enlarging competition. The independents, in fact, did so well in Iran that they began to enter other world markets, and engaged in an exploration rush of considerable dimension. This rush was successful in many places, but it altered the international market to

such an extent that it soon became clear that never would the Seven Sisters be able to boycott a large single market, like Iran, again.

Both these new ideas, in other words, pleased political and economic liberals, and added up to a definite slippage in the control of the international petroleum marketplace by the Seven Sisters. That was {10} considered a great virtue by many, but as we know—or should know—pure virtue is as rare as a unicorn.

For there was a dark side to the new theories introduced by our State Department and by the liberals who dominated our government, though it took a while for these shadows to appear. During the Iranian crisis, for instance, a rebellion against the French was launched in Algeria. The United States sided with the rebels, and pressed France to abandon its enormous investments in North Africa.

In 1955, therefore, after the Iranian crisis was settled and the United States was at a peak of its power in the world of oil, with our five majors producing two-thirds of the oil for world markets, the two British majors only one-third and the French a mere 2 percent,<sup>3</sup> the opinion of most Americans was that we should have more, and not less influence everywhere. Unfortunately, few Americans had any clear ideas regarding what this nation should do with such influence, or where it should go—if anywhere.

In 1956 this confusion appeared in a startling manner when the British, French, and Israelis invaded Egypt. The British reasoning was clear. The Egyptians had taken the Suez Canal in violation of clear treaty understandings. The British had traditionally not allowed any power to destroy a contract and get away with it. But the United States insisted that this could not be allowed. We forced the British, French, and Israelis out of Egypt, and by that move became, for a time at least, a popular Western power in the Middle East.

Our newspapers rejoiced, and to this day, no doubt, American schoolchildren are told that this was one of our finest hours. Unfortunately, we also allowed the USSR to enter Czechoslovakia without lifting a finger, so while we were severe with our wartime allies in the Middle East, we were weak to the point of surrender to the other war-

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3. Robert Stobaugh, "The Oil Companies in the Crisis," *Dacdalus* (Fall 1975). The description of the companies in the Middle East is taken from this article.

time ally, the USSR. In fact, it would not be too exaggerated to say that in the long view of history, we sided with the USSR against its own colonies, and sided with their colonies against the West.

At any rate, chickens began to come, though very slowly, home to roost in the late 1950s. The majors dominated the oil market and competed to sell to U.S. refiners at rock-bottom prices. The American motorist and industrialist had the greatest bargain in the world, but there were few signs that any of them realized it, or would have been grateful if they had. Oil companies were never popular, because they were held to make too much money. People who make money are {11} never popular, excepting with those who hope to get some of that money.

In any event, the majors began to cut prices in 1959, and again in 1960. They were fairly arrogant about it: they simply posted the new, lower prices. The exporting nations of Venezuela, Iran, Saudi Arabia, et al., were outraged, because it meant cuts in revenue for them. The Venezuelan oil minister blamed pressure from industrial powers, especially Great Britain. He may have been right, but the point is long since unimportant. At the time, wrote Robert Stobaugh later, the price cut of world oil was considered so unimportant in the United States that the *New York Times*, that center of brilliance, gave it only seven sentences.

A more important, long-range consequence was the creation of OPEC, at a conference in Iraq in September 1960. It took three weeks for the *New York Times* to report that, in a very brief account.

Meanwhile, the new State Department theories about sovereign ownership of oil resources began to take effect in Libya. In 1956, Libya had granted fifty-one concessions to seventeen companies, and in the early 60s these independents began to export large quantities of oil to Europe. This undercut the control of the European market by the Seven Sisters, and European prices began to decline, reaching from \$1 to \$1.20 a barrel by the end of 1969.

By 1970 a number of the newer oil-producing states were at the limit of their production, with only Saudi Arabia and Iran able to increase, when a bulldozer broke a pipeline carrying oil from the Persian Gulf to a tanker at a Mediterranean port. This was important because the 1967 Israeli-Arab war had closed the Suez Canal. The accident, plus the shift in Middle Eastern power, put Libya in a key position. Kaddhafi began

to squeeze Occidental for a higher price. Occidental, having no other source of crude, caved in, and other firms soon began to follow suit.

The overall capitulation took place, says Stobaugh, in Teheran in February 1971. Led by the shah, OPEC obtained an increase of fifty cents a barrel—a sum then considered large. The American government, acting behind the scene, had pressed the oil companies to agree, on the theory that the oil really belonged to the sellers anyway, in keeping with the wonderful new intellectual theory floated by the State Department and our numerous resident liberals. By coincidence this capitulation occurred at the same time that our dominance of oil world production began to decline—and we began to import more crude than ever before. {12}

By the summer of 1973, President Sadat of Egypt warned the king of Saudi Arabia that Egypt would attempt to retake Arab lands occupied by Israel. The king told four American oil executives about that plan at a meeting in Geneva. He warned them that Saudi Arabia wanted the United States to give more support to the Arab cause, otherwise, he said, American oil interest in the area “will be lost.” The warning was passed on to Washington by a number of oil executives, and was ignored. The Nixon administration was caught in the toils of Watergate; South Vietnam was crumbling, and it had no time for oil.

Egypt attacked Israel on October 6, 1973, and despite all the warnings held aloft by so many persons, the Israelis were taken by surprise. On October 12, John J. McCloy sent a note to the White House from the heads of the four Aramco parents, saying that the Arabs would cut back production if the U.S. increased its support of Israel, and that such a cutback would seriously injure Europe and Japan. The note was ignored.

On October 17, OPEC met and agreed to cut exports by 5 percent, and recommended an embargo against unfriendly nations. On October 19, after learning of Nixon’s decision to send Israel \$2.5 billion worth of arms, King Faisal ordered a 25 percent reduction in Saudi oil production and an embargo against the U.S. and several other nations. Most other Arab states followed suit.

Of course, you all know what happened after that. Panic set in, at even the highest levels of government. The British prime minister demanded that British Petroleum forget its customers and deliver extra

amounts of oil to the government of Britain. When the firm refused, Mr. Heath lost his temper. Refiners who lacked secure sources of supply began to bid in competition for what remained of world oil, and prices soared. They reached levels never before considered likely, and in December, OPEC representatives met in Teheran, and the shah announced a producer's hike of \$7 a barrel. By the time the embargo ended, in March 1974, it was clear that control of world oil had shifted from the oil companies and the West, to the oil-producing countries.

From then on, prices have climbed until earlier this year. The world watched in amazement as mini-states, powers who can barely be said to have the military strength to keep their own citizens in line, have successfully created immense damage to the Third World, and to every leading industrial power on the globe. In the process the Arab members of OPEC have amassed immense wealth, and the inability of the American {13} government to take a firm stand on this and other issues has seriously weakened our pretensions to world leadership and the credibility of our government at home and abroad.

Our policy throughout the seventies was to pay whatever was asked by whoever asked it. The shah of Iran, who kept ratcheting oil prices upward season after season, was counted as a friend of the American people, and a bulwark against the Communists in the Middle East. It goes without saying that any nation which wants some other nation to be its bulwark is headed for disappointment; the case of Iran makes that eminently clear.

Iran not only began slapping surcharges upon its oil under the shah, but virtually every oil-producing land began to violate its contracts with oil companies whenever the opportunity presented itself. If spot prices rose, the oil-producing nation would set the new, high spot price as the latest general price. The oil companies swallowed this, for Washington seemed indifferent, and the prevailing liberal opinion was that oil companies were no good anyway, and had better shut up.

In the midst of this crisis, which gathered force from 1973 onward, the American public was buffeted by the dire predictions of environmentalists, who charged that the atmosphere was being poisoned to an extent that would destroy human life unless drastic measures were taken. This campaign was effectively pressed to stop the creation of new refineries, the laying of pipelines, the building of deep water ports

large enough to accept supertankers, and to create a host of regulations regarding refinery operations. These ranged from taking the lead out of gasoline to other issues, all of which added to petroleum expense for the operators and consumers.

What is most remarkable about the campaign, ranging from the embargo to the environmentalists and back, is that the animus of the public was directed toward the oil companies, and not the federal government. Our federal government had provided assent to the arguments of revolutionaries around the world, who claimed that the West has defrauded other nations by entering their borders, signing contracts, drilling and discovering oil, building transportation facilities, taking the oil away, and paying huge sums for the privilege. If this is exploitation, then every aspect of business is, as socialists and communists say, exploitation. The other argument that was accepted by the American government is that every national government enjoys sovereign rights inside its own borders. According to this theory, there are no limits to those {14} sovereign rights. If the USSR, for instance, uses people as slaves, that is the right of its government, and no other government has the right to interfere.

I think we should recognize that this theory of unlimited sovereign rights has allowed worse tyrannies to rise in this century than in any century since the Christian era started, and the reason for this is that the theory of unlimited sovereign rights is a departure from traditional Christian reasoning. Christians believe that only God is sovereign, and that all men have God-given, inalienable rights.

For century after century the Christian world believed that there must be limits to power; limits to what a king or a prince, a president or a prime minister can do, and limits to what any government can do. If any government exceeded those limits in the Christian world, it was expected that it would be overthrown by force if necessary.

It was that belief which buttressed the British argument that a contract should not be violated with impunity. That is not to say that either Britain or France or Holland or any other nation did not, when it seemed practical, accept injustices inflicted by other governments. Oil fields were expropriated in Mexico, for instance, and nothing was done in retaliation, excepting that Mexican oil was boycotted by the Seven Sisters on the world market for many years. There have been numerous

other incidents where great powers have chosen not to take action in the face of provocation. What marked the attitude of the West in former times, however, was that certain principles were held in common and these often led to action.

Those principles faded in the wake of World War II. That was a war in which we fought one totalitarian power with the assistance of another. And that made our claims to be defending higher values somewhat hollow. We fought, largely because we had been attacked by Japan and had war declared upon us by Germany. Had these events not occurred, we would very likely not have fought, no matter what happened in Europe, and in Britain.

In the postwar world great attention was focused upon the issue of nuclear power, once the USSR obtained it. It was the expectation of the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s that nuclear power would replace oil. The government had its “Atoms for Peace” program.

But by the 1960s the American drive toward nuclear power was effectively subverted by the environmental movement, which succeeded in deflecting one of the greatest industrial advances ever {15} conceived—and ever aborted. The deflection of nuclear power is still underway, and has its adherents on the highest levels of government, and not simply in the street, the lecture hall, the academy, and the newsrooms.

Buffeted by racial disturbances, by protests against our efforts in Vietnam, by threats of a nuclear holocaust, and by Watergate, the Nixon administration was in no very good position to be effective about the oil embargo and the increase of oil prices in the seventies. The media managed to keep the issue of Israel fairly well out of the discussion of the energy crisis, which was really a price crisis, and even managed to blame the oil companies for the greatest losses in their history.

These losses were in power and influence, and overseas effectiveness, and not simply in bookkeeping. It may be forgotten by some that the campaign against the American oil companies was launched long before OPEC, and sought to make clear, in every possible way, that those who did business with Arabs were working against the best interests of Israel and the United States. It would be no great exaggeration to say that oil companies were considered by some to be unpatriotic orga-

nizations, operating outside moral limits. A very noisy campaign was conducted against a depletion allowance for oil companies, although no such campaign was conducted against any other mineral properties, all of which enjoy depletion allowances.

Therefore, when the crisis came in the early seventies, there was a large in-place body of anti-oil company opinion. The politicians, who had helped bring the crisis about through their inertia and stupidity—no other terms seem adequate—were very lucky. For the press diverted attention from the White House and the State Department to the executive suites of the petroleum industry.

I well recall the hate mail we received. Persons were offended by the existence of refineries, and seemed to think that the price of oil was set by gnomes sitting in a basement at our headquarters. That the oil came from overseas, and that other governments helped set the world price, seemed beyond the powers of the press to explain in simple language.

If the press could not seem to grasp the overall situation, however, it cannot be said that the politicians failed to understand what happened. They are in business, after all, to exercise authority and control. When the oil embargo landed, Washington moved in with price and transportation controls, and created an unholy mess out of a market that had {16} functioned smoothly for over a century. Furthermore, it managed to place the blame on those it harassed.

Nevertheless, as in all emergencies, the crisis of the early 1970s forced the international petroleum industry to make changes it might well have made earlier. The Alaskan Pipeline, delayed by environmental suits and arguments for several years, was finally allowed into existence by a still somewhat reluctant Congress, and construction began. By 1977, it began to carry oil, and from then until today the dire predictions of alarmists regarding oil spills and damage to the caribou and the environment have been proven exaggerated. Nevertheless, exploration in Alaska, despite the immense sums it promised the citizens of that state, was severely restricted by actions taken in the Carter administration, steps which may keep us from achieving more independence from OPEC.

American and British oil companies have also poured billions especially into the North Sea. These efforts made it necessary to develop new technology and to drill in waters below 10,000 feet. These efforts



were delayed while various governments, British, Norwegian, Dutch, and others, haggled over sovereign boundaries and terms, but by today the Seven Sisters hold 60 percent of the stakes in the North Sea. This year, 1982, Britain will overtake Saudi Arabia in supplying oil to western Europe, and will become the fifth largest crude-oil-producing nation in the world, producing more than Nigeria, Kuwait, Libya, and Algeria.

Unfortunately the British government has taken much the same attitude toward oil companies as has OPEC. It allowed the oil companies to develop, at enormous expense and great risk, the North Sea oil fields at a 65 percent tax rate, but has since raised the rate to an average 85 percent. These increases in taxes, paralleled by those levied by Norway, Holland, and other countries, have been applied at a time when inflation has increased exploration and drilling costs. One result, according to Peter Odell of the Erasmus University in Rotterdam, is that “a false theory of scarcity has bred nationalistic policies which have served only to restrict oil output, exploration and development.”<sup>4</sup>

Another way of putting it is that the governments of the world have been too busy squeezing the oil goose to get its golden eggs to pay much attention to making the goose larger or more productive. In the United States, the Carter program to remove oil pricing—a program which Reagan followed—was accompanied by an excess profits tax that is so onerous in terms of future development that the *Wall Street Journal* hailed its passage in an editorial bordered in black. {17}

That funeral note is well deserved, for what we have witnessed since the early 1970s has been an abandonment of government belief in a free capital market, a free petroleum industry, or a free anything else industry, from the Middle East through western Europe to the United States and back again. Not a single government in the world today is willing to accept the idea that cheap energy made the entire United States prosperous, and that the profits of the oil companies in that period were deserved. Instead, these governments want oil profits to go into their national treasuries, to furnish the money for social programs, all of which can come with strings attached to the recipients, and all of which enhances the authority, power, and perks of politicians.

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4. *Economist*, June 12, 1982.

One result is that western Europe, which can now provide about 24 percent of its oil needs, is being held back—say the oil companies—from developing further, because its governments have settled for rates of taxation that make exploration and development uneconomic for private industry. Odell says that there have been enough oilfields found in the North Sea to meet about half of all Europe's requirements and that further development could take care of the rest from now until well into the next century. Other experts have said that our own Alaskan Slope, and other American lands, if developed, could similarly supply all the needs of the United States. Still others point out that Mexico and Central America have barely been drilled, and that vast regions of the world lie relatively untouched. All these observations, of course, make hash of the dire prediction of shortages of a few years ago, but in the meantime other lessons appear to have emerged from the example of OPEC.

Overall, this lesson is one that politicians seem to have learned best. The lesson is that those governments which control the resources of a nation can become masters of all its citizens. They may, of course, exercise that mastery in ways they consider beneficial to the greatest number. The sheikhs of Araby are, after all, pouring billions of dollars into the pockets of the Arab citizens. I learned recently that oil-rich Iraq, while engaged in war with Iran, gave a free automobile to each of its veterans of that conflict, and, to the family of a soldier killed in action, a free automobile and \$12,000.

The government of Mexico, however, is more typical. Finding itself in possession of vast oilfields at a time when OPEC had driven the price up, the Mexican government first attempted to squeeze even higher prices, and on receiving vast sums, engaged in a profligate series of costly social-welfare programs accompanied by a spectacular increase in {18} general corruption. Although not corrupt, the governments of Norway, Holland, and Britain have not been far behind in terms of social programs and general profligacy. The central motive of politicians around the world appears to be a desire to exercise largesse with the people's money, rather than allow the people to earn, keep, and spend their own money in ways of their own choosing.

Our own government, with its excess profits tax and other levies, is not at all behind in this gruesome race for control. Where the federal

government finally called a halt to its oil levies—although at a very high percentage—the various states of these United States have been jostling one another in their eagerness to get into the trough. There is hardly a non-oil-producing state in the union that is not toying with the idea of taxing the marketing and distribution of petroleum products as heavily as possible. There is not an oil-producing state that is not toying with the idea of taxing the lifting and drilling of oil at the highest possible rate. And overall, there does not seem to be any considerable body of politicians, either Democratic or Republican, who are not anxious to avoid paying taxes themselves and who are overly anxious that the rest of us should pay all that the traffic can bear, and then some.

When we add up these various factors, therefore, we are confronted with a nearly global problem different than the one generally posed by editorial writers and television commentators. The great modern problem, in the United States, in Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, in western Europe, and in Central and Latin America, is a political problem. We are living at a time when persons in government have lost sight of reality. They are intent upon controls beyond anything we have seen in the West, and no matter what promises are made by whom, this trend appears to move steadily forward year after year.

It is by now clear that there is enough oil in the earth to provide for all the industry and automobiles in the world for now and for the next several generations. The problem that we confront is whether or not the various governments will allow the citizenry to recover these resources. We have the technology. We have the experts, and we have the need and the desire. What is needed is an equitable civilization, in which people are allowed to determine their own destinies without those in official positions attempting to superimpose their own wishes and desires upon everyone else.

There is little question in my mind that the media has helped the government of the United States to enlarge its controls upon every {19} sector *except the media itself*. In return for the support of politicians, the media leads a charmed life—for the time being. In due course we can expect it to be shut up by the politicians here, as politicians elsewhere have closed the papers and silenced the broadcasters when it served governmental purposes. But until then, the people of the United

States will probably continue to be confused by the misleading coverage in which our media specializes.

That should not, however, deter us from confronting the largest of all modern challenges: the challenge of the politician out of control. Civil government, said George Washington, is a fearful power. He compared it to fire. A useful servant, he said, that could become a fearful master.

In the period since World War II we have seen the growth of governments around the world. The USSR was joined by China in totalitarianism, Cuba fell into the Soviet orbit, Nicaragua and other countries have followed suit. In comparison to these dreadful tyrannies we live in a garden, but it's possible to exaggerate our safety and also to exaggerate the pleasures of our situation.

The fact is that the so-called energy crisis was first created and then compounded by our own government and by other Western governments, acting in new and nontraditional manners. The continued shortfall between petroleum supplies and the needs of the nation is still very serious. There are householders in many parts of the United States who are now discovering that their winter heating bills equal their mortgage payments. There are utilities across the land whose expenses have gone up and whose fuel bills have soared, and yet who are barred, by environmentalists and politicians and judges and volunteer busybodies, from expanding into coal, or into nuclear energy. The petroleum industry is still the target of mindless charges by the media: only a few days before I composed this speech, the networks carried a "documentary" again charging oil companies with defrauding the public and the government.

The situation vis-a-vis private oil firms and other sovereign governments remains exactly the same as it was in 1973. Contracts are still written on water, and subject to the winds of change. Our government is still floundering in the Middle East; it is still without a clear direction, and has no clear goals. Where the United States should stand and what it should stand for are still unanswered questions.

To describe the state of the petroleum industry on an international scale, therefore, is to describe the cutting edge where the private sector comes up against the governmental. In the North Sea, the oil {20} companies have told the British government, whom they earlier called "blue-eyed Arabs," that no further development can be undertaken

unless the terms of taxation are relaxed. The British government finds that hard to believe: its experience, like that of all governments in recent years, is that there will always be someone willing to do the job a little bit cheaper and willing to take a little less money.

There is, however, an end to that trend, as there is to all things. There comes a time when the facts of life become too large, too obvious, and too important for further deceit. That time is close, for we in the United States are beginning to realize that governments are not equipped to mastermind businesses, nor to manage national economies, nor to run everyone's life. We have all known the United States when there were less rules, and we had more liberty, and our growth rate was the marvel of the world. It is now clear that a return to former times is not impossible. It has been said that we cannot turn the clock back, but we can—*if we own the clock*. It is now more than clear that economists, poll-takers, editorial writers, and socialists of all descriptions have led us into a governmental swamp of incompetence and expense. It is time, and more than time, that not only the petroleum industry, but all of us, determine to struggle free.

# LABOR, MANAGEMENT, AND THE STATE

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*Otto J. Scott*

In 1932, Ross R. Ormsby worked for the City of Akron, Ohio. His salary, half in city scrip, was \$168 a month. The scrip, issued because of the low state of the city treasury and the tax arrears of the citizens, could be used to pay Ormsby's gas bill, buy gasoline, and could be used at the local grocery store, but was not, like real money, spendable everywhere.

Ormsby left his city job on December 1, 1933, the day his daughter was born. Two years out of Western Reserve Law School, his new post put him in charge of the liquidation of a bank. While he worked at this task, for which he had no special training, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal reorganized the United States. Labor and management relations was one of the sectors most deeply affected by this reorganization as the Wagner Act and other special laws upgraded the powers of unions and diminished the power of managements.

One consequence of these changes was that Akron's huge rubber firms had to alter their attitudes, and needed new types of men to deal with the unions. A quiet search was instituted, and a fellow-member of Ormsby's on the Akron Health Commission suggested the young lawyer's name.

Ormsby received a telephone call, and was invited to visit a small office in a downtown building. He opened the door, entered, and found a small austere office and a single man seated behind a desk. Ormsby {22} didn't know the man's name, and never found it out. But he listened with close attention and some surprise as the stranger outlined an interesting new job: head of the Akron's Employer's Association.

"I know very little about the rubber industry," he said at one point, and the interviewer smiled. "We know quite a bit about it," he said. "We'll teach you."<sup>5</sup>

That was how Ross Ormsby became an “association man.” He went from that interview in Akron to become a divisional manager for the Rubber Manufacturer’s Association (RMA), and from there to head the RMA in its New York headquarters for a number of years. In the process, Ormsby studied under both George Romney, an expert in Detroit labor-relations who later became governor of Michigan (and a failed presidential candidate), and A. L. Viles, legendary founder of the RMA.

Through the years Ormsby became well acquainted with the chief executive officers of the five huge firms that dominate Akron and the rubber industry in the United States, and with a long stream of union leaders and negotiators. He worked behind the scenes not only to agree upon wages and conditions in conjunction with union leaders, but also to avert strikes, walkouts, and violence. Like his counterparts in foreign affairs, Ormsby’s activities were conducted beyond the purview of the public; journalists (except for trade journals) seemed unaware of both his role and his significance through the years.

As a trade journal editor, it was my duty to interview and keep in touch with Ormsby, and I found him always pleasant, candid, and intelligent. One day we had lunch at New York City’s Union League Club, and Ormsby began to discuss his daughter and her fiancée.

“He was a graduate engineer,” he said, “a fine, clean-cut young man. But he told me he didn’t want to go into engineering, that he had changed his mind.”

“Why?” I asked.

Ormsby looked down. “He said he didn’t want to work for a large corporation; that he wanted to be of service to mankind. He said”—and Ormsby paused, and swallowed, “what service have you ever been to mankind?”

“But you’ve been of great service to mankind,” I said. “Think of all the strikes you’ve averted; all the jobs you’ve saved.”

Ormsby smiled faintly. “Well, that’s nice of you to say. But I couldn’t think that quickly; I didn’t think of myself in that light.”

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5. Otto J. Scott, “The Industry Defender: Ross Ormsby,” *Rubber World* 150, no. 6 (1964): 77–78.

There was a silence, and I prompted him. “Well, what happened?” {23} “Oh, he went on to divinity school. And now he’s the pastor of a church.”

I had trouble catching up. “D’you mean they got married?”

“Oh, yes. Very happily. And they have two children.” Ormsby resumed eating, and after a pause, we spoke of other, different matters. It was, finally, clear to me that the conversation with his prospective son-in-law that so disturbed Ormsby had taken place years before, but had continued to hurt. To be told that one’s lifework is despicable is, after all, a wound that doesn’t heal quickly, though it is unlikely that the young near-engineer turned clergyman ever realized what a terrible spear he had thrown.

I returned to my office after that lunch determined that I would change the way the magazine reported businessmen, men like Ormsby. I had not realized how far the tide had carried us from former traditions and attitudes, but I determined that it was a tide against which I would struggle. That was in 1964, eighteen years ago.

When I began to summarize that tide, its origins seemed to fission under examination. There was the Crash, which was described by the media almost as though businessmen had deliberately wrecked their own careers, lost their own fortunes, demolished their own enterprises, as part of a general wave of criminality against the nation at large. This myth, in which bankers and brokers were blamed for failing, reflected a human anger at those associated with a debacle, but it did not constitute a rational explanation.

In recent years a number of economic historians and analysts have determined that it was not the errors of the private sector that were responsible for global economic decline in the early 1930s so much as the excesses of the governmental sector. Politicians had interfered with the operations of world markets by introducing nationalistic tariffs and other measures which shook the foundations of commerce. That is not to say that the private sector did not commit errors. But the encroachments of governments by the late 1920s not only led to catastrophe, but also ushered into power a more virulent breed of politicians who climbed atop the wreckage created by their predecessors to demand even greater control over the economies of all nations.



An extraordinary amount of literature in praise of the New Deal and its social theories appeared all through the thirties and forties, as well as a spate of articles, photographs, and commentaries about the suffering of the American people during the Depression. {24}

As a survivor, I can say that this suffering was exaggerated. The United States of a hundred years earlier would have switched place with the 1930s and believed it had fallen into Paradise. Despite very high unemployment, the fact remains that the majority of persons of working age were employed and lived fairly comfortably. The nation did not enjoy all its later comforts, but it remained the richest in the world. It had more schools, colleges, churches, hospitals, orphanages, and charities than any other land; and its citizens could be sure that any American community made aware of intense suffering would rally to assist the sufferers.

That is not to say that the Depression was not a difficult period. Many hundreds of thousands lost their homes, millions lost jobs, and many more millions had to cancel, alter, or reduce their life expectations. But it should not be forgotten that there are seasons in human life as in climates; every human being experiences periods wintry to the soul, and that this is part of God's testing and purpose.

Robert Black, a youthful salesman in his elder brother's firm, Black & Decker, recalled both the twenties and the early thirties in an interview. "The twenties were a hard and selfish time," he said. "Everyone seemed to be out only for himself, and didn't care about the other man. But when the Depression came along, people seemed to change."<sup>6</sup>

"In what way?"

"Everyone began to pitch in; everyone helped. I look back at that time as one of the best in my life."

That summary is all the more remarkable when it is recalled that the firm almost went under. It had to cut back production of its power tools, reduce its workforce, let salesmen go, and scrimp in all sorts of ways, both major and minor. Bob Black himself worked in the Towson factory putting tools together from old parts; he shared in the sandwiches and hot coffee that were served as a small recompense for pitiful

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6. *The Powered Hand: History of Black & Decker*, unpublished manuscript by Otto J. Scott.

small wages, but his eyes lit up when he recalled those who struggled with him, and with him helped save the enterprise. Many enduring friendships were forged in those times of difficulty.

What made the period especially difficult, however, was not only its financial stress, but the doubts it created about the nation, its leaders, and its future. Socialists hailed, no other word seems accurate, the Depression as proof that capitalism had failed. A free society, according to this clique, was no longer practical. Marxist and liberal economists agreed that the United States had reached “the limits of growth,” with {25} the closing of the western frontier and free land. All that remained, said these savants, who emerged from academic enclaves across the landscape, was to redistribute the wealth and the resources of the nation.

The Marxists especially exacerbated the nation by their claims that a “paradise” existed in the USSR, where, they said, artists were honored and had no difficulty in achieving high standards of living, where there was no unemployment, no rent or doctor bills to pay, no class problems, and no insecurity. “Russia, I am convinced,” wrote Stuart Chase in the *New Republic* on July 6, 1932, “will solve for all practical purposes the economic problem. The real test of her creed and her method will come *after* its solution—say, following the sixth Five Year Plan. Will these provide an acceptable way of life; will people be happy in Russia; will art and culture provide outlets for creative ability; will the groundwork be laid for a progressive attack on those human problems which, in the long run, transcend the economic problems—biological improvements, the uses of leisure, the control of the physical environment?”

As we know today, those silly words were written at a time when Stalin had ordered, and his minions conducted, a merciless purge of both the peasantry and the entire intellectual strata of the USSR. There was famine on a level unprecedented in modern times, created and maintained by the Kremlin. There were forced marches to Siberia, work-to-destruction camps, and torture amid profligate corruption and unlimited despotism. It was one of the cruelest and as yet unnoted aspects of the thirties Depression in the United States that the difficulties of the American people were made more vexatious by the persistent lie that millions in the Soviet Union were enjoying heavenly bliss and perfect

prosperity. That most of the liars responsible for these myths were able to conduct long and successful careers (some, in fact, are still among us and still prospering) remains a disgrace to truth and justice.

At the time, however, most American workers did not really credit the Socialist myths; perhaps the nation was simply too insular to pay much attention to reports attached to remote regions.

Persons in service jobs and in factories were, in fact, very much aware of being workers, in the classic sense. Caps were not as widespread among the men as during the twenties, but were still widely used. There was a visible difference in the street between the white and the blue-collar population, and these differences in language, attitude, manners, and image are reflected even in the movies of the period. {26} Many younger persons, seeing the comedies of the thirties on film, are surprised at their joyousness. Pundits heavily explain that this was deliberate on the part of Hollywood producers, who were presumably intent upon taking people's minds off their problems. That is to credit Hollywood producers with consciences: a manifest absurdity. The fact was that comedies were cheap and relatively easy to produce, and nearly always popular. That was commercial reason enough.

Beyond that, there was the fact that during the thirties almost everyone believed that a steady job was a passport to happiness. It meant stability, solvency, and opportunity. Competition for jobs was steady and heavy, and high educational status did not always mean preferment. Some employers discovered that a university graduate was apt to feel superior to an ordinary job, and would leave as soon as the slightest hint appeared of improvement elsewhere. Consequently, education ceased to be an open sesame against which doors automatically parted. With education downgraded in a pragmatic sense (although of course still essential in specialized posts), competition was more intense than at any other period in this century. The keenest, most diligent and adaptable workers forged ahead. Civil service jobs were considered the most desirable, since they were thought to be secure for life. Applicants for jobs on the police forces were probably at an all-time high in terms of general intelligence. It was during the thirties that the New York City police were famed for their perceptions and tact; much the same was true of journalists, entertainers, and other practitioners of skills which demanded high personal techniques.

The media during the thirties was a fairly accurate mirror of the nation. Press conferences and press releases were then unknown; reporters had to apply the street skills of detectives to obtain their facts; the attitudes of the press were largely shared by the majority of Americans. Most reporters, like Jim Bishop and an army of others, worked their way into journalism through the ranks, as did most Americans in most industries.

Behind the scenes, however, at least two significant changes were set into motion during the thirties. The first of these was the swing of the media, academia, and American letters toward socialism; the second was the impact of a small but influential stream of refugees from Europe. Unlike many of their predecessors to these shores, they were not especially religious but were notably talented. They came from Germany, the Balkans, and Italy, in the main. And they achieved a national {27} status and recognition in academia, the arts, letters and government with a speed unprecedented in even our welcoming national history.<sup>7</sup>

Their arrival was largely unnoticed by the average citizen until the end of the decade. Popular culture seemed largely unchanged, although the “proletarian” literature of the early thirties fell of its own dull weight. Written mostly by professionals with soft hands, it did not appeal to mass audiences, who found themselves unrealistically portrayed.

Academics, of course, value education above all other accomplishments. That Nero was taught by Seneca does not shake their opinion that education is synonymous with character. Unfortunately, education in this century, in both Europe and the United States, is marked by a strong anti-Christian bias. One result is that experts appeared on the American landscape whose attitudes and opinions were at sharp variance with those of traditional America.

The changes introduced by these new grey eminences might have taken longer to appear and been less distinct had it not been for World War II. The war, as always, was a catalyst to innovation and

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7. Bernard Bailyn and Donald Fleming, eds., *The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930–1960* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), *passim*.

governmental controls. Many of the émigrés played important roles in both developments.

Their contributions ranged from spreading psychoanalytic theories to linguistic and psychological tests and “profiles” in the selection of men and women for placement and promotion in the armed forces and the ranks of government. In later years the impact of the émigrés upon the development of nuclear energy served to place many of their lesser innovations in the shade of public attention, but certainly not in the shade of custom and acceptance.

Overall, the great domestic effect of World War II was to educate a generation in what can best be termed group-life: life amid numbers, directed by specialists. The institutionalization of American life introduced by the war was extended by the GI Bill, which sent tens of thousands to colleges they would otherwise never have attended, and into professional ranks. To expect people so signally elevated by governmental programs to regard governmental authority as invidious would be unrealistic. The opposite occurred: Americans came to see the government not as a beneficent source, but as *the* beneficent source.

An observer transported to Mars at the start of the war and returned in the late forties would have been impressed by changes that were barely discernible to those who experienced them. Media notice {28} and quotation of American clergymen, for instance, virtually vanished after World War II, excepting in cases of scandal or dispute. That silent dismissal marked a very serious change in American direction, for until World War II the newspapers had reported the substance of Sunday sermons and the opinions of the clergy on issues of the day as a matter of course. The trend had, it is true, slackened through the thirties. But it was the war that moved the Christian clergy nearly entirely off the stage of public attention.

There were efforts to retain a Christian presence in the labor scene, maintained through the late forties via Catholic Action and other groups, but in general the nation swung toward a new attitude in business and industry.

This new attitude had education as its springboard for managers. Business schools proliferated, and courses in business became numerous. Many corporations began to send promising young men to

university business schools for special training (a practice now deeply established). One result of this was to bring to a painful, though silent, end to the older American tradition of promotions from the ground floor.

The new system was summarized in the career of Russell de Young, who became chief executive officer and chairman of huge Goodyear, in Akron; de Young started as a teenager in the tire factory. In time he learned that diligence and intelligence were not enough: he would have to go to night school. He did so, and on graduation was elevated to the status of a “management trainee.” After moving successfully through several layers of responsibility, he took postgraduate courses. Had he not done so, further promotion would have been unlikely.

Some glimpse of how far America had moved from its older tradition of human warmth and the links between the generations by de Young’s day is provided by an anecdote he told about his promotion to vice president, at the age of thirty-three. An older officer of the company paused in de Young’s office door and said, “Russell, I hope you will not take this amiss. But *the higher a monkey climbs, the more it shows its ass.*”<sup>8</sup>

Despite its bitter kernel of accurate observation, the anecdote does much to illustrate the barracks-atmosphere that, by the late forties, pervaded the executive suites of many large corporations. The cold manner in which the older man warned the younger that he would, henceforth, be more closely watched and harshly judged, carries its own message. {29}

Overall, de Young epitomized the difference between traditional American businessmen and the new, postwar breed. During his tenure in Akron the rubber firms were the targets, time and again, of “wildcat” strikes. These halted production and were difficult to quell, since they were in violation of the contracts the companies had signed with the unions. Investigating their causes, I was told that many of the younger managers, in contrast to their predecessors, had no factory experience and never spoke to blue-collar workers.

The men in the factory, aware that their chances for advancement had been virtually ended by a combination of union rules and lack of

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8. Personal interview, Akron, Ohio, 1964.

education, bitterly resented the aloof nature of the new managers. America had, in effect, imported many of the aspects of Europe's class struggles: to be a worker was no longer held, by general consent, to be a successfully functioning citizen: status divided the blue collar from the white.

Some may argue that classes had always existed in the United States, as in the West in general. There is much force to this argument. But the fact remains that the United States was once known throughout the world for its upward mobility, and by inserting an educational ladder as another obstacle, America changed.

Commerce, of course, requires knowledge *but not necessarily formal education*. The ranks of business entrepreneur continue to provide opportunity for the clever, and no diploma is necessary to go into business. For that reason the ranks of small business are, even in the eighties, filled with more enterprising and less-formally educated persons than are the ranks of large corporations or, for that matter, the higher levels of unions.

In any discussion of labor and management, however, it would be an error to overlook the elements of criminality and black marketing that developed from the turn of this century onward. The labor unions of the early 1900s were confronted by the use of violence and hired thugs by management. In response, many unions made a pact with criminals and used strong-arm men of their own. Most of the unions dropped these associations in the thirties, when the government became a union ally. But not all the unions made the switch.

The East Coast and Gulf longshore unions, including the Paperhandlers and others, continued to maintain strong links with racketeers. The Teamsters Union maintained strong links with racketeers and never shifted to the Democratic Party. One result was that Bobby {30} Kennedy, using somewhat dubious methods, sent Jimmy Hoffa to the penitentiary; another result was Hoffa's disappearance upon his release.

Overall, however, the New Deal co-option of trade unionism was one of its greatest political accomplishments. The Wagner Act and other measures created a governmentally-sanctioned union monopoly. The fusion of unions with the Democratic Party established a network of mutual aid that persists to this day. Politicians came to rely upon

unions for precinct workers, special propaganda, and large campaign contributions.

One of the more remarkable aspects of the Watergate investigation remains the striking distance between the harsh punishments visited upon corporations for making political contributions and the silence regarding the equally illegal and equally large contributions to politicians made by unions in both cash, and “voluntary” efforts.

This development was not, of course, unimpeded. The Taft-Hartley Act restored some constitutional rights to the average worker by outlawing the closed shop. A subsection allowed individual states to pass right-to-work laws, which outlawed compulsory union membership. Today, some twenty states have such laws. Most of these are in the South and Southwest: the Sun Belt.<sup>9</sup>

The heavy-handed tactics of trade unions in the Northeast and North Central states, which combined with politicians in antibusiness legislation and practices, is at least in part responsible for the spectacular flight of industry from the Frost Belt to the Sun Belt. But, on a more personal, human level, the increasing distance between managers and blue-collar workers has continued to exacerbate and chill labor-management relations inside the enterprises of the private sector.

The contemporary disdain of the educated American classes for the relatively uneducated is something new to the United States but old to the West. It surfaced in unmistakable fashion during the Vietnam War, when college students were exempt from the draft, and the high school or lower students were inducted, and called “grunts.” One result has been an increasing disenchantment on the part of blue-collar Americans with large corporations from which they often find themselves barred from upwardly mobile employment. These barriers are in contrast to the “affirmative action” programs instituted by the Fortune 500 companies, in compliance with governmental, media, academic, and liberal pressure. Many of the older craft unions, which resisted affirmative action, found themselves either the target of governmental pressure, or pressure {31} from employer groups, or held to scorn by the

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9. This and following comments on unions in the private and public sector are taken from John Burton, “The Political Future of American Trade Unions” (Heritage Foundation, Heritage Lecture no. 12, 1982).



media. Yet few of those promoting affirmative action seemed concerned about those workers that such programs might displace. Assaults upon seniority, for instance, have not been accompanied by any noticeable media concern for those disrupted. And, in the same manner, the fates of those who belong to majority groups in the United States seem of little or no concern to those promoting the fortunes of minorities. One result of this one-sided concern has been to deepen the ill-will between majority workers and minorities. This ill-will is largely covert, and seldom surfaces; it cannot be determined by asking questions via polls, or by other official methods. But the silence of the majority on the blue-collar level—a silence all the more remarkable in face of continued criticism from minority spokesmen, despite all the steps so far taken—should not be taken as proof that no reaction exists. Silence is, in fact, a very significant reaction and one that psychologically should be taken as serious. Until now the passive reaction of the majority of blue-collar workers to tremendously slanted efforts on the part of minorities has been an impressive testimony to the fairness of the average American and to his belief that minorities today should receive more than in the past. But there are limits to altruism in fallible human beings, and the affirmative action and quota programs (continued by the Reagan administration) have served to undermine unions in the private sector.

Other facts that have effectively weakened unions in the private sector are cited by John Burton, in an essay for the Heritage Foundation. Burton believes that the success of unions in obtaining a cartel-like position has inevitably led to their loss of overall position in the private sector. All cartels, Burton points out, provoke entrepreneurs and consumers into special efforts to change the situation. As unions sent costs up, the most densely unionized industries have begun to lose their markets: automotives, steel, textiles, et al. That means that consumers turned to foreign goods. As taxes and unions increased their levies on businesses, these businesses moved from the Frost Belt to the Sun Belt. And workers in the Sun Belt, grateful for new job opportunities, have largely refrained from unionism. Burton also points out that many firms shifted their personnel and hired more women, since women are less eager to unionize than men. Finally, the large and even many small companies turned to specialists in labor relations, propaganda, and

psychology to serve as their intermediaries with union officials and members. And these sophisticated negotiators have lured unions into a mounting {32} number of situations and elections in which the unions are losing, and the management winning even before the NLRB.

All these factors have combined to diminish the percentage of workers in the private sector unions from 24 percent of the work force in 1956 to 16.4 percent in 1978: a trend that is continuing. On the other hand, public unions have been growing.

The reasons for the growth of public unions, like the labor-industry situation in general, are rooted in past precedents now coming to fruition in the present. There was a great outcry when Heywood Broun and others began to organize journalists into a trade union. It was held, with reason, that to reduce news coverage to craft levels would create an unsubtle organizational means of controlling the news. Certainly that was what occurred in Britain, where journalists who report unpleasant racial matters have been known to lose their cards and their jobs. One editor of *Crossbow* told me that, "The cause of equality takes precedence in England over freedom of speech."

The outcry over the unionization of journalists was as nothing, however, compared to the heartburnings over the unionization of school-teachers. Teaching had always considered itself the noblest, or one of the noblest of the professions. To turn it into a craft was an effort of some years, and a successful one. The National Educational Association (NEA), which became a bona fide trade union only in the 1970s, now has a membership of something around 1,800,000 and may soon overtake the Teamsters as the largest American trade union.

One result of the emergence of the NEA has been its drive to control religious schools. This drive has been part of a governmental effort to control religious schools, to dictate their curriculum, and to oversee their personnel. The NEA, now a powerful force in state legislatures as well as on the federal level, is one of the organizers of the antireligious school campaign.

The reasons for the sixfold growth in public unions and their great power in political circles can be directly traced to the political alliance between the trade unions and liberal politicians in the thirties. The alliance promoted a series of propositions through the media, academia, and even the arts that have had a profound impact upon the thinking

of the average American. Security is the great lure of socialism, and eventually of totalitarianism. Hitler's Germans traded their freedom for security and, like the Romans cited by Gibbon, lost everything in the end. Job security is one of the great promises of trade unions and, for {33} that matter, of larger corporations. Managers as well as workers want to feel safe. Even though most of the managers I know toss uneasily at night over the possible loss of their jobs and perks, the facts are that "in private enterprise, enormous sectors offer lifetime employment—utilities, banks, insurance, law firms, etc. ... in most large companies, except at the rarified corporate heights where the greater rewards cost greater insecurity, any employee with a few years of service who keeps his nose clean and obeys orders is set for life. Those who reach the limits of their competence are cared for—all large corporations have nooks and crannies to stack human dead wood until retirement."<sup>10</sup>

Tens of millions of Americans, in other words, have already opted for security, and docility. "Sixteen million American governmental workers are protected by civil service regulation. Academia has formal tenure, and most large non-profit have de facto tenure."<sup>11</sup>

In such a climate, proposals to lop off "unnecessary" workers are met with outrage. A silent compact is being denied; resistance mounts. At the same time, certain other phenomena, comparable to the rule of eunuchs at court in the Middle East and Asia, have appeared throughout the public sector in these United States. Work, as such, is no longer respectable in itself. Status is paramount, special privileges sought and retained with pride. Our "intellectual" class regards the lesser educated with disdain: schools have replaced family, but the effect is no less invidious. In response, there is an increasingly ugly tone in blue-collar ranks, which watches as upper levels discard morality in a scramble for special place.

There is a historical theory to the effect that any society in which the average person no longer believes he can see the working of justice in the rewards or failures that surround him, is in trouble. For a society

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10. B. Bruce-Briggs, "Lifetime Employment: A Non-Lesson from Japan," *Wall Street Journal*, August 2, 1982.

11. *Ibid.*

that cannot be rationally defended cannot be maintained; and what cannot be maintained will not endure.

We look at the relations that exist today between employer and employee in the private sector, and see that it is in a state of flux; that unions are diminishing, but that great efforts are underway to halt this trend. Legislatures in various states are toying with the idea of forbidding a firm to close a plant or factory without permission from the State (as in France, Italy, and Latin America). There are moves underway to charge producing states' products heavily for the right to distribute within consuming states, and this trend is explained as measures to adjust the "injustice" inherent in the uneven distribution of God's resources, in which some states have more oil, others more coal, others {34} more sunshine than the Northeast. This presumed inequity, which resembles God's diverse distribution of talents among men, will be adjusted by men.

In the interim, union rules and wages retard innovation in distressed industries. The bureaucracy retards innovation everywhere. The NEA combines with the government to build a cartel that will own all America's children, and dominate their education to the exclusion of forbidden ideas, principles, and religion.

In the process, the line between the public and the private sector is being progressively blurred. The unions, like the media and academia, consider themselves partners of the State. But their advances add to the power of the State, and the State waxes at the expense of the rights of all the people, and every religion and ethic.

In effect, this adds up to a pagan world: a world of power, coercion, and cunning. It is as remote from the world of Ross Ormsby and Bob Black and Christianity as are the stars. Paganism is a system in which the State, as R. J. Rushdoony is fond of saying, "walks like God on earth."

We know how the great pagan world of the past ended: not in a whimper, but in a scream. Only the restoration of a Christian world will prevent its repetition.

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FREE MARKET

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*R. J. Rushdoony*

In discussing the philosophy of the free market, it is necessary *first* of all to distinguish it from capitalism. All too often, both capital and labor want subsidies, not freedom. They seek statist intervention into the free market on their behalf, as does the farmer, the artist, scientist, beauticians, and many, many others. Lieberman has given us an excellent report on how many occupations are now controlled by state licensing because the practitioners demand a closed shop for their work.<sup>12</sup> Very few capitalists in the twentieth century favor the free market; they work, in fact, to hinder its freedom and gain statist protection.

*Second*, most of the capitalism of our time represents simply a concern for profits, whereas the free market represents a faith in the value of economic freedom. The free-market thinkers are no less concerned with profits, but they insist that the good life is a unity. To isolate profits from the worldview of the free market means, in the long run, to destroy profits as well. Profits are but one aspect of a general advantage which accrues from economic freedom, and there is thus a substantial difference between the free market and the capitalism of an interventionist society.

Our concern here, however, is not the advantages of the free market, real as they are, but its undergirding faith and philosophy. The roots of the free market, too seldom appreciated, rest in the doctrine of God. That the church and Christendom have too seldom appreciated this {36} foundation is due to the continuing alien influence of Greek philosophy on Christian theology.

The most commonly used term for God in the Old Testament Hebrew is *Adon*, *Adonai*, Lord. In the New Testament, the most com-

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12. Jethro K. Lieberman, *The Tyranny of the Experts: How Professionals are Closing the Open Society* (New York, NY: Walker & Co., 1970).

mon term for Christ is in the Greek *Kyrios*, Lord. In both instances, *Lord* means sovereign, absolute property owner of man and the earth, and ruler. This word has a clearly economic as well as political and religious reference. We are plainly told that “the earth is the LORD’S [Yahweh’s], and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1). As the Lord, God is the governor of all things, including the economic scene, and for another to control it is a transgression of God’s sovereign prerogative.

The necessity of *government* in some form is a presupposition common to every school of thought. The definitions of that government can and do vary in terms of the religious premises involved. The equation of government with the state is a false one, however popular in pagan antiquity and today. The state is merely one agency of government among many, and, in the biblical perspective, it is emphatically and totally under God.

The economic sphere, like all others, is never lawless. The question is, whose law governs the economic sphere? The biblical faith sees God as Lord over all things including economics. God’s law covers the economic sphere, and God’s created order furthers certain activities and penalizes others. This order brings inflation to its sure day of reckoning; it makes transgressions of economic order catastrophic in the end. The government of the economic order is thus placed in God’s hands. God’s law requires certain things of men: false weights and measures are banned; there must be a rest and reward even for working animals; God’s moral order must be maintained. God’s law does not control activities other than to punish crimes of fraud, theft, and the like.

In this sense, the market is free from the state but bound by the law of God. Economic controls and government rest basically in God’s laws for the economic sphere. Supply and demand are not legislated by the state but constitute a form of given order in the nature of a God-created reality.

The Greek faith saw the ideas or forms for the structure and government of life as a part of man’s being. Hence, essential and ultimate government was seen as inherent and potential in man, and incarnated in the philosopher-kings. The impact of this Hellenic premise has long prevented {37} Christians from realizing their theological and governmental potential, because they have trusted in their own Greek-con-

ceived rationality and ideal rule rather than in freedom in God's order and government.

In secularized version, this was realized to a degree in Deism and the Enlightenment. The thinkers of that era presupposed God's order with God abstracted from it as an absentee landlord. Because of their mechanistic views of reality, they could assume that a God-created universe could continue working with God removed from it even as a watch, once wound up, goes on ticking for a long time after the watchmaker leaves. It was held that God had transferred His governmental powers to Nature, so that Nature was now the source of continual and omnipresent law rather than God.

The Enlightenment had two countertendencies. On the one hand, the philosopher-king faith of Plato had a profound influence, from the Renaissance on, and led to the divine right of kings and a mercantilist economy. On the other hand, the use of Nature to replace the God of Scripture meant an inherent law and order in the very nature of things. Hence, society's need was seen as, not statist controls over the economy, but a free market for Nature to enforce her infallible laws on the economy.

The economic consequences of this faith were enormous. While it is true that no fully free market has ever existed, it is also true that this doctrine of the free market led to dramatic economic progress and development.

However, even as this free-market development was under way, the rise of Darwinism undermined it. Nature was no longer the source of infallible law. Christians had said that Nature is fallen; Deism found it infallible ("Whatever is, is right"), but Darwin found it to be a product of chance, mindless, and having no law save survival. This view of the struggle for survival and the survival of the fittest, for a time influenced capitalism, but spelled death for the free market.

Two things had occurred with the triumph of Darwinism. *First*, with God and Nature both dismissed as viable sources of government, the economic sphere was now seen as lawless and very much in need of government. *Second*, because the universe was no longer the creation of God, nor the manifestation of a perfect Nature, the harmony of interests was replaced with the doctrine of the conflict of interests. Because there was no governing, inherent, or imminent law in the eco-

conomic {38} sphere, or any other, the economy was a realm of brutal survivalism and lawlessness. It was thus in desperate need of government.

A telling example of the shift from a belief in the free market to state intervention was John Stuart Mill. Under the influence of Darwinism, he moved from a faith in natural liberty to an affirmation of statist intervention.

Because the older governments by God, and then by Nature, were seen as gone, men, feeling the necessity and inevitability of government, began, step by step, to introduce state intervention into the economic sphere. The state became the new God, and the new State of Nature. The omnicompetence of the state to govern was assumed as the state took over the functions of God and Nature, and socialism, embodying this faith, became an international force and a crusading missionary endeavor. In 1984, George Orwell depicted the end result of this new faith.

As the Christian faces this new idolatry of the state, he must do so only with a totally biblical faith in God as Lord over all. No false idols, including the state, are tolerable. Freedom is neither a natural nor a state grant or right, but a possibility only under God's government. The weight of omnicompetent and omnipresent government must be removed from the state and restored to God.

It is not an accident that statist intervention into the economic sphere has been followed by intervention into the life of the church. Church and state conflict is dramatically on the increase in the United States. It is logical that this should be so. If the state is sovereign, then it is lord over all things within its realm. It is necessary, then, for it to exercise its supposedly benign oversight over the life of the church.

The framers of the Constitution of the United States refused to use the terms "sovereign" or "sovereignty" in that document. The words were seen as theological, not political. Now we have a sovereign federal government, affirmed to be sovereign by the federal Supreme Court, insisting on the universal jurisdiction of the state.

The battle for the free market is but one facet of a battle against idolatry, against the claims of a false god over us. There can be no compromise in this battle. Elijah's challenge against this new Baal, the state,



must be heard: “How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him” (1 Kings 18:21).

# HOW THE CHRISTIAN WILL RECONQUER THROUGH ECONOMICS

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## The Problem and the Very Great Hope

### 1. CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

*R. J. Rushdoony*

According to Alford, in his commentary on Luke 16:1–13, the Parable of the Unjust Steward, “No parable in the Gospels has been the subject of so much controversy as this.”<sup>13</sup> Arndt declared, “It is doubtful whether there is another parable of Jesus which has received so many different interpretations as the one of the Unjust Steward.”<sup>14</sup>

There is a reason for this misunderstanding. The parable deals with money. As a result of the influence of Hellenic thought, economics, money, and material things are seen as emphatically lower and unspiritual concerns. For all too many, our Lord’s emphasis on money seems somehow “unspiritual,” and the interpretation of the parable has suffered accordingly.

In understanding the parable, we must first discard the term “unjust steward.” The charge against the man was not injustice, nor the misappropriation of funds, but a poor administration of assets and wastefulness. There is a difference. The steward’s master ordered a final accounting preparatory to a severance of his services. The steward, to prepare for employment after his discharge, went over the accounts receivable and discounted all notes by 40 and 50 percent. As a result, he gained many friends and assured himself of a better future.

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13. Henry Alford, *The New Testament for English Readers* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, reprint, n.d.), 397.

14. William F. Arndt, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1956), 354.

The steward's lord commended him for his practical wisdom or prudence (*phronimos* in the Greek). This practical wisdom can be godly or ungodly. In Genesis 3:1 of the Septuagint, we have the same word {40} used to describe the serpent as "subtil." Our Lord says plainly, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser [or more practical or prudent] than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). In other words, our Lord commends practicality. As Plummer noted, "men of the world in their dealings with men like themselves are more prudent than the children of light are in their intercourse with one another. Worldly people are very farsighted and ready in their transactions with one another for temporal objects."<sup>15</sup> Our Lord makes it clear that practical wisdom is necessary for Christians with respect to things temporal and eternal.

10. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12. And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13. No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Luke 16:10–13)

"Unrighteous mammon" was a common term in that day for *money*; and we have the same derogatory term in our expression *dirty money*. Our Lord requires a faithful stewardship of money in terms of God's justice and law. He says (v. 11), that if we cannot be responsible in the use of money, a form of wealth highly prized by the world, how will God ever trust to us "the true riches," the things of His eternal Kingdom? In other words, our Lord regards our use of money as a test of our faith and character. Money is an obvious form of wealth; if we cannot be trusted to use it with prudence and practical wisdom, why should He trust us with more important things? The disposition of our heart is indicated by our use of money. It is God, not money, we are called to serve; we must, however, use money wisely and in terms of

15. Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1910), 384.

God's law. We miss the point of this parable if we say, with Plummer, that "earthly wealth is ... only trivial and unreal."<sup>16</sup> Our Lord is stressing the importance of its prudent use in its proper place.

This parable is important because it makes clear what the church has often chosen to forget, the importance of money and economics. The fact that there will apparently be no money in heaven no more makes money unimportant than sex and marriage are made matters of no Christian concern because neither exists in heaven (Mark 12:25). {41} Because the triune God is Lord and creator, all things are under His law and to be seen as areas of godly responsibility.

There are essentially two approaches to economics, a theistic and a humanistic approach. For biblical theism, the universe, as the creation and handiwork of the triune God, is a law order. It is, moreover, a God-ordained law order, so that all things move in terms of God's law and purpose. Throughout the Bible, we are told of God's blessings on faithfulness, on faith and obedience, and His curse on disobedience. Both blessings and curses are clearly spiritual and material, so that we see repeatedly, as in Deuteronomy 28, economics as a sphere of blessings and curses.

Furthermore, there is another aspect to this. Academic studies isolate various disciplines one from another, so that biology is studied as a separate area from chemistry and physics, whereas in life they are inseparable. Similarly, economics cannot be seen in isolation from ethics, theology, and much, much more. God's creation is a unity and a universe, not a multiverse. The modern academic scene reflects a faith in a multiverse, and hence subjects are studied in an artificial separation from the unity of creation. The consequences of this are deadly. Economics does not exist in a vacuum, nor is it separate from morality, the family, and vocation.

Humanistic economics, however, views the cosmos as an accident, and hence lawless. There may be probability in such a multiverse, but *not* law. Law is essentially a man-made, or state-made, process, and hence economics is a like discipline. Man determines what his economics shall be and then proceeds to create it, to strive to bring his imagined order into being. Humanistic economic thought, where con-

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16. *Ibid.*, 386.

sistent to its premises, is thus a man-made product. If the humanist speaks of a free-market of ideas, he means a freedom only for those doctrines which are humanistic.

The present world economic crisis is thus *a crisis for humanism*. All statist efforts to resolve the growing economic crisis begin and end with the premise that some man-made solution is possible. The weakness of the economic sphere is seen as insufficient planning and control rather than an abandonment of God's order. Hence, the solutions are sought in terms of humanistic premises.

The economic bad news is very much with us. The U.S. federal debt has passed a trillion dollars and is increasing more rapidly than ever. In 1982, the federal deficit will perhaps be \$100 billion, and, with budget {42} and off-budget debts considered, more than twice that. The federal government is also taking about 80 percent of the national saving's pool. As a result, the money is not available in the banks for private enterprise. The interest rates are high, both because of inflation, but also because not enough money remains for the "private" sector. Interest rates reflect inflation; if inflation is at a 15 percent rate, interest rates cannot be 12.5 percent! Money cannot be loaned out at a loss. Individual and corporate bankruptcies for 1981 hit 522,000, and they may be much greater in 1982. The *Wall Street Journal* estimated that 18.5 million Americans filed returns in 1981 who could not pay their taxes because they lacked the money to do so. At the same time, the tax revolt is growing. Delinquency on farm loans is approaching 60 percent, the highest on record. The cost of new homes has risen to the point where most home-owners could not afford to buy their own homes at today's prices, and young couples are unable to buy in such a market. New cars are also beyond the financial reach of most Americans. By April 1982, fifty U.S. oil refineries had shut down, and the remaining were operating at 63 percent of capacity.<sup>17</sup>

Thirty and more years of debt living have led to a vast burden of debt. According to Weiss, the total debt is \$4.4 trillion in bonds, mortgages, and loans. As of March 31, 1980, the nation's corporations had a debt total of \$1.5 trillion; the federal debt was then \$949 billion; and

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17. The statistics cited are from R. E. McMaster Jr., *Reaper* 6, no. 15 (April 16, 1982).

the building mortgages added up to the highest total in history, \$1,362 billion.<sup>18</sup> To this we must add the debts of cities, counties, and states.

The U.S. corporate scene is very critical. The largest industrial corporation is General Motors. In 1973, of every dollar in new profit, thirty-six cents went for interest on loans; in 1979, the interest costs had reached ninety-three cents of every dollar of net profits.<sup>19</sup> Of the 500 major corporations, 499 had a like or comparable situation of liquidity, and the other had a poor earning report.

We thus see two major trends as a result of these converging economic facts. *First*, because of the mountain of debt in every area of life, virtually all areas of life, statist, private individuals, and business and industry, are in essence bankrupt. They do not have the economic resources for successful operation. Debt has dried up the resources and the productive potential. As a consequence, the stage is clearly set for a gigantic economic collapse. The 1980s can well be called the decade of bankruptcy. *Second*, however, the federal government, for all its talk of economy and budget cutting, is determined to run up the greatest deficits {43} in history. President Reagan has been ready to regard a deficit as a good thing for the time being. Federal deficits must be seen as on the whole inflationary. We must remember, too, that, with increasing unemployment and decreasing earnings in 1981 and into 1982, the federal tax receipts declined considerably. This decline will further increase the deficits, because the projected federal income will be less than anticipated. Most Americans expect some kind of “positive” action with respect to the economy, which means *interventionism* and more economic ills. We are told that interest rates should be lowered, more aid given to various groups, subsidies continued, and so on and on. All such “positive” action is inflationary. The remedies proposed for a collapsing economy are in the main inflationary. It is an ominous fact that Ronald Reagan is a great admirer of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In this crisis, the *fact of debt* is central. We have a world in debt and effectually bankrupt. Men and nations have borrowed against their

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18. Martin D. Weiss, *The Great Money Panic* (Westport, CT: Arlington House, 1981), 61.

19. *Ibid.*, 23–24.

future and have now run out of future. How shall they cope with the problem of debt?

*First*, socialist countries resort to “monetary reform.” On a given day, all currency is exchanged for a new currency at a given ratio, one hundred old rubles, dollars, pesos, or pounds exchanged for ten new ones. Old debts are repudiated, or scaled down, or in one way or another rescheduled. A debt moratorium may ensue, and some states will simply repudiate their outstanding bonds and loans. In a variety of ways, debt is reappraised or repudiated. After World War II, the USSR instituted a currency exchange. No problem was solved; in 1982, the USSR is more bankrupt than ever. Whenever debtors have the power to reschedule or revalue their own debts, society as a whole is decapitalized. With the increase of a debt-ridden voting population, both the civil governments and the peoples, in many countries, have a vested interest in inflation and debt-repudiation.

*Second*, the free-market society provides for debt repudiation through bankruptcies, an avenue open to people in interventionist societies as well. This does not eliminate the debt problem; it merely penalizes society as a whole. The bankruptcy of an industry, located in a small city, which employed about 450 people, was a disaster for the whole community and adversely affected small suppliers, local stores generally, and the housing market. *All debt has social implications and effects*. Simple interest adds up dramatically with time; compound interest is much worse. “At 5 percent compounded annually, money doubles in a little {44} less than 15 years, or about seven times in a century.” Debt grows as a result; most debt payments are interest payments, not principal payments.<sup>20</sup>

The disastrous fact is that debt, the problem, is seen by the modern state, and by modern man all too often, as the *solution* to economic crisis. As a result, the problem is greatly aggravated.

The Bible is clear-cut on the fact that debt is an evil, and a dangerous thing. The point is clearly made that debt leads to bondage: “The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant [or, slave] to the lender” (Prov. 22:7). The two halves of this proverb are synonymous.

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20. See Howard E. Kershner, “Why the Socialist State Will Inevitably Bankrupt Itself,” *Through to Victory* 10, no. 3 (March 1970): 1, 3–5.

The rich are those who are not in debt. Deuteronomy 15:6 declares, “For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.” Solomon in Proverbs 22:7 summarized Deuteronomy 15:1–6. As a normal thing, debt should be avoided, Paul reminds us: “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another” (Rom. 13:8). Debts are to be cancelled at the end of every seven years, i.e., from the previous sabbatical year, so that a debt is to be incurred for a six-year term only by believers (Deut. 15:1–6). Unbelievers, being slaves to sin, will be debt-slaves also, so that the six-year limit does not apply to them (Deut. 15:3).

Debt is basic to inflation. Inflation is a product of debt-living, and of the manipulation of money to conceal the fact of debt. An inflating currency is a witness to debts in the form of deficit financing or borrowing, and the expansion of credit, i.e., the possibility of increasing debt.

Debt is a product in most cases of improvident living; this is clearly true of long-term debt. We refuse to save, work, and wait for our wants to be filled, and we go into debt today to gain what we sometimes cannot afford even tomorrow. As a result, a debtor society will be hostile to the provident, thrifty, and industrious man. Inflation reorders the economic scene to penalize such a man, and all creditors, in favor of debtors. A debtor society reevaluates morality to favor itself, and the result is social decay and moral debauchery.

As the Christian faces such a world, he must recognize, *first*, that in God’s universe justice and judgment are inherent in all things, “for the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23) always, and it shall always be so. We have the assured knowledge that the present world order, politically, economically, and in every other way, is doomed. Clearly, because we are a part of the present world and its disorder, its judgment and collapse {45} will affect us also. We dare not understate the extent of that disaster, the judgment. On the other hand, because it comes from God the Lord, it is a salvation-judgment. Sin is judged and confounded, so that the ground is cleared for the triumph of God’s order and people.

*Second*, reconstruction in such a time of collapse requires recapitalization. This recapitalization must be economic and, above all, theological. The Christian must prepare for that recapitalization by



strengthening himself by a knowledge of and obedience to God's law-word. He must rely, not on his natural powers but on the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of power. He must assert the "Crown Rights of Christ the King" over every area of life and thought. Reconstruction must begin now. The church, school, state, economics, the arts, sciences, and everything must be captured for our King and brought under His law-word.

Reconstruction in the economic sphere requires monetary wealth which will not erode in a time of inflation, i.e., gold and silver, productive land, the tools of our trade, homes, and other forms of debt-free tangible wealth. Recapitalization will be slow and unlikely without an element in society with a capacity for theological and economic rehabilitation. The creation of such a people has been over the years and is now more than ever our concern.

# MONEY, INFLATION, AND MORALITY

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## 2. CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

*R. J. Rushdoony*

Money in the modern world is a state issue of paper which is stamped with a denomination. It is *fiat* money, state-created money with a state-ordained value. Fiat money is by its very nature inflationary, because it has an artificial and arbitrary value. True wealth in the form of land, buildings, tools, and the like has behind it the accumulation of work, thrift, inventiveness, and character. Thus, a well-cared for orchard or vineyard has a continuing value as a producer of food; the paper value of that farm will vary in terms of taxes, inflation, and the market for its produce. The “higher” price for such a farm in our day is essentially simply a cheaper price on money. Thus, in ca. 1930, with \$600 in gold, a man could buy a car, a Chevrolet or Ford, and have some change from the transaction. In 1982, with the same amount in gold, a man could do somewhat better than a cheaper automobile; paper money had depreciated markedly, gold had appreciated somewhat, and the price of a vehicle had remained approximately the same, with the addition of many new features such as heating, air conditioning, and a radio. We have seen a steady depreciation of paper money since the beginning of the Federal Reserve System, and especially since World War II and the Vietnam War.

To protect their assets, people have moved from paper money, and now from bonds increasingly, into short-term notes, stocks, buildings, land, and gold and silver. With an increasingly interventionist economy, {47} assets in stocks are not keeping pace with inflation, and now buildings and land are also feeling the effects of an overtaxed, overindebted economy.

The result is now a growing decapitalization. Capitalization has a number of ingredients. Basic to capitalization is productive work, thrift, and character. A good education is also a form of capital. Now,

however, taxes and inflation are consuming capital. The rate of inflation exceeds the rate of savings by the average man. Moreover, the savings extensively are used by the federal government in financing deficits and hence do not go into loans to industries and peoples who want to create new jobs.

In the early 1970s, it took ca. \$100,000 to create a new job. This capital went into land, buildings, tools, and materials. In 1982, with a decade of inflation, the amount required to capitalize a new job had increased dramatically. All kinds of environmental and safety regulations had been added, increasing the costs of both a new job and new products. Over the years, pollution had been decreasing because it is usually economical to do so, although not always so. Clearly, too, some industries were not very responsible nor responsive. Equally clear is the fact that much of the worst pollution has come from civil agencies of cities, counties, states, and the federal government. The imposition of stringent regulations increased the cost of a new job precisely when the economy's problems were beginning to multiply. As a result, the capital required to create a new job increased dramatically and is about \$250,000 now. The capital for this kind of funding is now not available; the federal government is competing for the funds, and the interest rates are high.

Thus, jobs are being priced out of the market; there is insufficient capital to create them. At the same time, inflation is pricing various items out of the market also. For example, new cars and houses are beyond the reach of most people. In one city, it was shown that well over 90 percent of all homeowners could not afford to buy their own homes today at current prices. In the winter of 1981–1982, the cost of electricity rose dramatically in many areas, and this form of energy began to price itself out of the market as many people used wood, wore warmer underwear and sweaters, and turned off the heat much of the time.

Federal policies have decapitalized the United States and are limiting the ability of the free market to capitalize new jobs. The end of federal deficits would begin the alleviation of this crisis, but Robert D. {48} Behn calls this hope “the receding mirage of the balanced budget.” We no longer have specific allocations for a specific agency.

It does not work that way any longer. Rather than giving an agency a specific amount of money for a specific program, Congress decides what types of peoples are eligible for what levels of benefits under that program. How much money is actually spent depends upon how many people apply and how much the benefits for each one costs. How much is spent on such programs each year also depends upon economic conditions such as inflation and unemployment, and how much we should budget for these programs next year depends upon what we think will happen to these economic factors. What we end up paying is not at all constrained by what number was used in the budget.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, as Behn states, “Uncontrollable spending is not only uncontrollable, it also increases uncontrollably.”<sup>22</sup>

The debauchery of the budget, and the funding of the left, has been demonstrated by Donald Lambro in *Fat City*,<sup>23</sup> and by Howard Phillips and the Conservative Caucus, as well as by *Conservative Digest*, which devoted its April 1982 issue to the subject. Among the liberal and leftist groups which have been and are federally funded are those listed in table 1 below. {49}

In March 1982, Howard Phillips stated:

President Reagan’s top economic advisers yesterday abandoned (i.e., Dec. 9, 1981) the traditional Republican stance that government deficits are the main cause of inflation, warning that it would be “disaster” if any basic changes were made in the President’s economic policy .... Calling for “a new perspective on the budget,” the Council of Economic Advisers, “suggested that instead of a goal of a balanced budget, the nation ‘should be prepared to accept a deficit of \$60 billion-plus.’” Having asked for too little in the way of spending cuts, the Reagan Administration has now decided to change its economic philosophy rather than its strategy for implementing that philosophy on which candidate Reagan campaigned.<sup>24</sup>

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21. Robert D. Behn, “The Receding Mirage of the Balanced Budget,” *Public Interest*, no. 67 (Spring 1982): 118.

22. *Ibid.*, 120.

23. Donald Lambro, *Fat City: How Washington Wastes Your Taxes* (South Bend, IN: Regnery/Gateway, 1980).

24. *Conservative Manifesto*, no. 15 (March 1982): 1.

The women's liberation movement, the homosexual movement, and much, much more have been possible because of federal funding, and this situation continues.

*Table 1*<sup>25</sup>

Organization	Funding in the past few years
Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers	\$ 2,979,799
AFL-CIO (Appalachian Council)	20,275,347
American Friends Service Committee	1,354,052
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)	231,370
Council on Foreign Relations	500,000
Feminist Press	446,299
Gray Panthers	121,483
International Union of United Auto Workers	6,475,579
League of Women Voters of the United States	1,396,842
National Association of Farmworkers Organization	1,852,406
National Council of Senior Citizens	154,062,880
National Retired Teachers Association	229,768,783
Pacifica Foundation	408,968
Sierra Club	\$ 757,946

Planned Parenthood, and its abortion stand, its educational program for sexual “freedom,” its lobbying for tax-paid abortions, and social change, has extensive federal financing. “In 1980, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) took \$12.8 million in tax dollars—more than half its budget. Its 189 local affiliates received \$58 million total—their combined budget was \$122 million.”<sup>26</sup> Planned Parent-

25. See *Conservative Digest*, 8, no. 4 (April 1982): 16–17.

26. *Ibid.*, 11.

hood has not been hurt by the Reagan administration. Planned Parenthood of Washington, DC, had February 14–21, 1982, declared National Condom Week by Mayor Marion Barry; previously, there had been no official proclamation. In a mailing which reproduced data from Planned Parenthood publicity materials, the Conservative Caucus cited the following:

Yes, it is the 4th annual RUBBER DISCO. Admission is free with a condom and an invitation which can be picked up at the men's Center of Planned Parenthood (located at 1108 16th Street, N.W.—that is, 16th and L). This fabulous dance will be held at The Beret disco tech, decorated with a rainbow of different colored, blown up condoms. The height of festivities will culminate with a condom blowing contest, the winner of which is to receive a prize of \$5.00.

At the same time that the federal government funds such groups, it uses tax money also to persecute Christian churches and schools. With such moral insanity and anti-Christian stands as this, we can hardly expect an honest money, economy, or budget from the federal government. Neither can we expect honest banking. {50}

As E. L. Hebden Taylor has pointed out in his excellent study on banking, the financial revolution of the modern age has meant the abandonment of the gold standard and, even more, the monetization of debt. Money has come to represent debt, federal or statist debt, not wealth. Debt was presented as an advantage. As assets shifted from hard money and hard property to paper money and paper shares in property, the transition from capitalism to socialism was made easy.<sup>27</sup>

Banking, at the same time, has ceased to be the warehousing of money. Originally, the banker or goldsmith was paid to store gold and silver. Fractional reserve banking means that banking now stores or retains a very limited amount of the funds committed to it. Money is in effect loaned to the bank for a limited interest from the greater interest received by the bank as a lending agency. Over the years, more and more of the actual deposits have been replaced by accounting entries. Now, with paper money deposits, the accounting entries and check-book money represent a growing inflation of the money in circulation.

27. E. L. Hebden Taylor, *Economics, Money, and Banking* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1978).

Banks, meanwhile, have been heavily involved in foreign loans, especially to foreign states. The current loans to the Marxist empire, to “Third World” countries, and to unstable Latin American countries are more than enough to destroy the American banks, and many foreign ones as well. The old saying is true: make a small loan, and you have a debtor; make a large loan, and you have a partner. In 1980, Celso Ming, a Brazilian economist, stated the same idea in these words: “If I owe a million dollars, then I am lost. But if I owe fifty billions, the bankers are lost.”<sup>28</sup> In 1982, the U.S. federal government paid to the U.S. banks \$71 million for the Polish state’s interest payment on its debt to U.S. banks. At the same time, we were urging loans to Poland by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, again largely at the expense of American taxpayers. U.S. federal and private loans, credit, and various other helps to the Soviet Union and its satellite are keeping these bankrupt states alive and enabling them to arm against us. At the same time, industries are relocating in these nations to use their “slave” labor.<sup>29</sup>

The morality of these loans is basic to the world of humanism. Humanistic money is fiat money, money given a value by a decree of the state and created by the state. In the humanistic world of our time, the state plays god; it “makes” law and decrees what shall be good or evil. We cannot understand the economics of humanism apart from this premise. The state as god creates values, productivity, and prosperity. This humanistic premise undergirds modern banking. From a Christian {51} perspective, the many bank loans to foreign states represent insanity. Civil governments have never been trustworthy borrowers; their great powers enable them to repudiate their debts with little opportunity for redress. The State of Mississippi, for example, not only repudiated its debts, but, in 1875, passed a constitutional amendment disclaiming its obligations. In London, a Council of Foreign Bondholders is still trying to collect money due from Mississippi and many another civil government.<sup>30</sup> It is of interest to note that in World War II

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28. Anthony Sampson, *The Money Lenders: Bankers and a World in Turmoil* (New York, NY: Viking Press, 1982), 253.

29. See Charles Levinson, *Vodka Cola* (Tiptree, Essex, England, and London; New York: Gordon and Crimonesi, n.d.).

30. Sampson, *Money Lenders*, 50.

Nazi Germany made some broadcasts ridiculing the gold standard and outlining a new economic order. Keynes expressed strong agreement with those plans and termed them excellent.<sup>31</sup> The differences between the Marxist states, National Socialist Germany, and the democracies are of degree, not of kind.

All are essentially agreed on a fundamentally false (*and immoral*) premise, namely, that money and loans can create productivity. Hence, to bring the whole world up to one standard in productivity and technology, foreign loans are made. Some progress has been made in spite of this, because American, Japanese, and other private entrepreneurs have gone into various countries to produce their goods, training the nationals and governing them. The bank and federal loans have largely gone to politicians, to armament, and to the maintenance of the regimes, not to economic development. Such economic development as has taken place has been a minor outcome.

Money can aid a productive man or firm, but it cannot be effective where work, thrift, and character are lacking. Because of a shift in the American (as well as the British) character, we are seeing unhappy consequences in the economy.

We can add something more. A large influx of unearned money can decapitalize a weak man or a weak economy. Inflation in the U.S. and elsewhere is decapitalizing the United States and every nation affected by it. Inflation rests in the modern age on humanistic premises; it cannot work where people take Scripture seriously, and live by the practical wisdom of Proverbs. Inflation, like narcotics, seizes a weak character and makes him worse.

Our primary decapitalization began with weak or bad religion and bad education. The result has been theological antinomianism and everyday immoralism. It has also meant a lack of common sense, because man is a unity. This lack of common sense led David Rockefeller to say, not too long ago, "In terms of straight credit risk, the presumption is {52} that there is greater continuity of government in certain socialist states than in non-socialist states."<sup>32</sup> An ancient prov-

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31. *Ibid.*, 65–66.

32. *Ibid.*, 263.



erb speaks of the unreason which possesses the ungodly. John Dryden, in *The Hind and the Panther III*, wrote,

For those whom God to ruin has design'd, He fits for fate, and first destroys their mind.

Longfellow's version, in *The Masque of Pandora*, has Prometheus say, "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad" (1.352). Paul makes it clear that both sight and blindness come from the Lord. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25). We see today the politics and economics of blindness; we are in a day of judgment.

If there is a future, it must be capitalized. Such capitalization must be first of all theological and educational. Chalcedon is dedicated to this purpose. It must be a recapitalization also in terms of work and inventiveness, thrift, and character. The Christian school movement is an important and central fact in this recapitalization. The godly family is the great religious, psychological, economic, and social fact in capitalization, and we are seeing a revival of family life.

The religious and moral capital of our society is essential to a hopeful future. We are now witnessing a polarization in American life. The evil are becoming more self-consciously anti-Christian and militant. The godly are becoming more consistently Christian as they recognize the total claims of Christ on every area of life and thought. The coming years will tell us whether the humanists or the Christians are most dedicated and ready to live, sacrifice, or die for their faith. Whether or not this generation stands in the power of God will not alter the fundamental fact that "the earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). He shall prevail; He shall conquer, and the proclamation shall go forth, "The Kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). The only question is whether or not we shall be a part of that victory. {53}

# BIBLICAL LAW AND OUR FAITH

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## 3. CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

*R. J. Rushdoony*

An “Advice” section of *Moody Monthly*, conducted by Chuck and Winnie Christensen, recently carried the following letter:

Dear Chuck and Winnie,

Does God forgive endlessly? I am disturbed by the rationalizing coming from Christian young people and lay leaders in “full-time Christian work.” My wife and I, active in our church, have children who acquaint us with many young people and their parents.

One young man, working for a Christian organization, admitted he lives with a woman who is not his wife. He sees no conflict between his Christian ministry and personal lifestyle. Another Christian, a woman, said she spent her vacation with a male friend and shared a hotel room to cut expenses. When challenged with the propriety and morality of the situation, she retorted, “God will forgive!”

We also know a pastor who fools around with several women in his congregation, but preaches week after week with no apparent remorse. Whenever we confront these loose moral standards, the usual reply is: “We can always confess and God will forgive.” But no one seems ready to confess and change his lifestyle.

God’s grace and forgiveness is precious, but isn’t there a limit to what He puts up with? What do you say to someone using the Lord’s forgiveness as a safety net for immorality?<sup>33</sup>

By way of answer, the Christensens quote some Bible verses, but never the law. A new way of life is necessary, they say, and rightly so; a tree is {55} known by its fruits, they add, but these antinomians reckon by a merit system and point to fruits they feel outweigh their “lapses.” The Christensens’ counsel, “Restore, but don’t judge. Surround your

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33. Chuck and Winnie Christensen, “What’s Wrong With Fooling Around?” *Moody Monthly* 82, no. 9 (May 1982): 52–53.

conversations with prayer and weeping. Don't rebuke without compassion. Speak the truth in love." They add that only the Holy Spirit can awaken the conscience. But they do not speak of the law of God. In confronting sin, my tears, anger, compassion, or love, as well as hate, are of minor significance; to stress them is humanism. What is important is that God's law has been broken, and the wrath of God aroused. How I feel, and how the other person feels, is secondary. The central fact is that all sin is a revolt against God, an insult to Him, and a violation of His law.

Antinomianism, however, has replaced God's law with pious gush. All is well if one can generate tears and emotions as a substitute for faithfulness, for obedience to God's law. What remains then? Let us turn now to the comment of a homosexual author running for the U.S. Senate. When asked about the political and social significance of his candidacy, he replied:

Let that appear in the eyes of others. There are lots of other issues that are important and that I think a lot more about than sexual orientation. My general instinct has always been, in sexual matters or any other, rather more toward ecumenical than toward ghettoizing. I mean, if you really wanted to get me seriously and profoundly on the subject, I'd have to say that I really don't think either heterosexual or homosexual exists and that only an insane society could ever have made a division like this, and those who think of themselves proudly on one side or the other are equally demented.<sup>34</sup>

Homosexuality and "heterosexuality" are thus reduced from a moral dimension to a question of *lifestyle*, precisely the word used in the letter to the Christensens. There is an inexorable logic to this. When we deny the continuing and religious validity of God's law, we also deny morality, because law and morality are different facets of one fact, *holiness*. Holiness requires a separation from sin to righteousness or justice, to God's law. If we negate law or morality, we negate holiness. On God's level, there is no difference between law and morality: both alike are one: they manifest the righteousness of God. On the level of human society, there can be differences between enacted law and morality; thus, before slavery was *legally* abolished, social morality had condemned it to a considerable degree. {56} Harrison has called attention

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34. Armistead Maupin, "Tales of God," *California Magazine* 7, no. 5 (May 1982): 149.

to the primacy of obedience in both Old and New Testaments. “This, rather than love, is God’s prime demand of His followers. We are required to bring all our lives and our every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5); obedience is the mark of sanctification (1 Pet. 1:2).”<sup>35</sup> God’s law, when we obey it, provides us with an environment of freedom and blessings. Those blessings, however, continue only if we obey God’s law. “Obedience to the divine will is the key to blessing.”<sup>36</sup>

The letter to the Christensens is the tip of an iceberg, or perhaps, better, a hint of the presence of hell. The practicing antinomianism manifested therein is very prevalent across the country, and it masquerades under the name of Bible-believing faith. This should not surprise us. Theological antinomianism will lead logically to moral antinomianism. All too often, those who oppose the immoralism of such people do it only in the name of a Christian lifestyle, not the law of God. However, the Bible presents the law as the way and *condition* of life. No less than oxygen, the law is basic to life. Our Lord says of the law, “this do, and thou shalt live” (Luke 10:28). He alone can give us the power to do His will, because He is the life-giver and Redeemer; He gives life, and the law of life.

John Wyclif contributed much to our understanding of biblical law. For Wyclif, *truth and law* were interchangeable. God’s every law-word is truth, and binding upon us. He declared, “Sacred Scripture which is the law of Christ contains in itself all truth; since all law is truth, it therefore contains in itself all law.”<sup>37</sup> All Christian life is to be measured by the Bible in its entirety. No empire, community, realm, or organization can live without law; even so, Christ’s empire, the world and all things therein, and certainly the Christian man and the church, must have its law, the law-word of God. Government necessitates law, and every area of life is *under God*, and therefore under His law.

At this point, Wyclif introduced reference to the *writ of cessavit* (“he hath ceased”), introduced into law by Edward I. According to the writ of cessavit, if a tenant failed to perform the duties or services owed to

35. R. K. Harrison, *Leviticus* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), 103.

36. *Ibid.*, 203.

37. William Farr, *John Wyclif as Legal Reformer* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1974), 42.

his lord, and in terms of which he received the use and tenure of the land, he could, after two years or more of faithlessness, be removed from the land. This writ dealt with a very real problem. We too often assume that the power of an overlord in the medieval era was unrestricted and arbitrary. There was, however, a pressing problem, in that recipients of land quickly treated it as their own and forgot their {57} responsibilities. The same was also true at times of religious endowments. We can understand the problem by analogy. In our time, wealthy men often establish foundations for a given purpose, only to find very soon that the foundation quickly serves a contrary one. In the 1970s, a widow, cofounder of one such foundation, found to her amazement that she could not legally recall the foundation to its original purpose. The purpose of the writ of cessavit, revoked by modern Britain, prevented such alienations.

The writ of cessavit was applied often to monastic institutions which failed to perform their endowed functions. The patron could thus supervise, reform, and protect the integrity of an endowment, or his heirs could do so. This fact points up the evil of Henry VII's confiscations of religious endowments; his goal was not reform nor restoration, but confiscation. The properties seized were amenable to the writ of cessavit, but Henry's concern was very different.

Basic to the writ of cessavit was the premise that all property was held conditionally. Wyclif made limited use of this premise, applying it basically to the church, although stipulating that all power comes from God, and all authority is conditional upon a prior obedience to God. Wyclif's concern was intervention with the reform of religious establishments in mind. However, his basic premise that all property and power are given conditionally had repercussions. A ground for the confiscation of church properties from an ungodly to a godly use was established. Other writers, Catholic and Protestant, including Calvin, stressed the termination of civil powers, and their claims to allegiance, upon their desertion of God's law for evil. Wyclif himself cited Jeremiah 48:10, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully."

The writ of cessavit was a logical development from biblical premises, however limited its application. From the very beginning, God makes clear man's conditional use of the earth. In Genesis 2:15-20, God makes clear to Adam the terms of Adam's tenure in Eden. Upon

disobedience, we can say that a writ of cessavit was served on Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8–19). After the Fall, God’s law spells out the terms, and Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 summarize it. God endows and dispossesses man, blesses and curses him, in terms of His law. In terms of this, Proverbs 13:22 tells us, “the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.” If we do not view history in terms of God’s law, and God’s writ of cessavit, we will view it in terms of human potentialities and possibilities rather than *the moral dimension* of God’s law. However, as Lawson long {58} ago noted, “But we are not to trust to human probabilities. God is the author and the preserver of our lives.”<sup>38</sup> Antinomianism leads to a nationalistic outlook, in that it rules out the overriding government of God and His law. God’s law places boundaries on all creation; it sets forth blessings and curses that pursue obedience and disobedience. As Althusius said,

All power is limited by definite boundaries and laws. No power is absolute, infinite, unbridled, arbitrary, and lawless. Every power is bound to laws, right, and equity. Likewise, every civil power that is constituted by legitimate means can be terminated and abolished.<sup>39</sup>

Man is under God’s law as His creature, but man is doubly under the law because of the covenant. A covenant is a law treaty, and also, when established by a greater with a lesser party, an act of grace. The Puritan, Peter Bulkeley, made it clear, in his *Gospel Covenant*, that to be under the government of God’s law, to be in the covenant, and to be a Christian are one and the same thing.<sup>40</sup>

The modern world, however, has worked to separate the state and law from Christianity, and education as well. Oliver Wendell Holmes made it basic to his legal philosophy to maintain a sharp distinction between law and morals.<sup>41</sup> Fuller’s attempt to supplant Holmes’s posi-

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38. George Lawson, *Expositions of Ruth and Esther* (Evansville, IN: Sovereign Grace Publishers, reprint, 1960), 229.

39. Frederick S. Carney, trans. and ed., *The Politics of Johannes Althusius* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1964), 110.

40. William K. Be Stoever: “A Faire and Easie Way to Heaven,” *Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978.), 75.

41. Lon L. Fuller, *The Morality of Law* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, [1964] 1977), 152.

tion with another humanistic morality and law was a failure; however, Fuller distinguished between the morality of duty and the morality of aspiration. The morality of duty is law; Fuller calls the Old Testament law a morality of duty. It is simply a set of basic rules whereby society is governed. The morality of aspiration has its expression in Greek philosophy and aesthetics; it is the morality of the good life, of self-realization, and of the actualization of human potentialities. For Fuller, there was thus an uncertain law above the law.<sup>42</sup> The sexual revolution, the lesbian and homosexual movements, and other like efforts give us moralities of aspiration. All such moralities of aspiration undercut and negate the morality of duty. The moral confusion of the modern world is a product of this clash.

The Bible, however, does not permit such a double standard in morality. God's law and morality are one and the same; man must be governed by God's undivided and unchanging word. If the state or man chooses another law, God's law stands over them in judgment.

However, where men deny God's law, either through unbelief or antinomianism, God's law is replaced by the tyranny of *reasons of state*. {59} Its origin is in the Roman doctrine, "Necessity knows no law." Other names for this doctrine are "public welfare," "common utility," and the like. In every form, the state represents the higher or highest good, and its necessities are thus by definition both valid and good. *Reason* was early equated with the state, and the state's necessities became *reasons of state*. Antinomianism contributed substantially to the development of the modern immoral doctrine of reasons of state. Since World War II, one American official publicly defended the "right" of the state to lie to its people. The separation of Christianity from the state has greatly expedited the growth of a secular state divorced from accountability. The state has been freed from any limitation by God upon its powers. Very early, thus, "The State became self-sufficient, a moral end in itself, no longer subject to a fundamental law of nature having its origin in God."<sup>43</sup> Aristotelianism was important to this development. As a result, very early the state became "a supreme

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42. *Ibid.*, 5–32.

43. Gaines Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 498.

moral entity on earth, and it could demand the sacrifice of human lives for its safety.”<sup>44</sup> The modern state sees itself as the highest moral value and hence the valid judge over all things. In the church and state conflicts of recent years, the state’s belief in its omnicompetence is most clear and taken for granted.

According to Post, “Henry II of England may at one moment have reached the logical conclusion: what nature permitted him to do was not unlawful.”<sup>45</sup> This conclusion is basic to the modern operations of reasons of state. It has deep roots in Aristotle and certain aspects of medieval history. Post noted:

Hence, the highest “reason” of the safety of the State was itself a moral end. In the later thirteenth century a philosopher actually argued that adultery committed by a private citizen in order to save the *civitas* from a tyrant was a lesser evil and might even be licit. The commands of God for private morality could thus be compromised for the sake of a higher moral end, that of the State.<sup>46</sup>

Now, the equation of the *natural* with the *lawful* has gone beyond the boundaries of state power and become an aspect of public morality and science. The Kinsey reports on sexuality make this equation. Homosexuality, child molestation, and animal contacts or bestiality are all natural in that they occur in nature, and hence they are moral. We have here the morality of the Marquis de Sade!

All this has occurred with the compliance of segments of the church, medieval and Protestant, men whose rejection of biblical law {60} has laid the foundations for the triumph of statist law. The issue thus with respect to biblical law is the reclamation and repossession of the world in the name of the Lord. The redeemed people of God will live by the Redeemer’s law-word.

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44. *Ibid.*, 549.

45. *Ibid.*, 557.

46. *Ibid.*, 305.



# OUR BUSINESS WORLD

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## 4. CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

*R. J. Rushdoony*

One of the most important aspects of biblical faith is the emphasis on work. Work is seen as a vocation, a calling under God. Man was created by God to exercise dominion and to subdue the earth (Gen. 1:26–28), and work under God is a privilege and a blessing, not a curse. God’s curse is on man in his sin (Gen. 3:16–19), so that every aspect of the sinner’s life feels the curse, including work, but it is the privilege of the redeemed to know that our “labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

The monastic orders of the medieval era often stressed the importance of work, and their economic *and* religious impact was considerable. The Reformed or Calvinistic churches in particular made the doctrine more central, and the results were highly productive. The Netherlands, Britain, and the United States became examples of what is called the Protestant or the Puritan work ethic.

Two factors have been important in the worldwide propagation of this doctrine.

*First*, British imperialism, in which the Scottish military and commercial agents were often prominent, carried the Puritan work ethic into every continent. Together with missionary endeavors, great numbers in all the world were “Puritanized.” A powerful leaven was thus introduced into very alien cultures.

*Second*, great numbers of foreign students began to attend British and American colleges and universities. It can be argued that this was a {62} mistake, in that the students returned, in many cases, to their native countries radicalized and also alienated both from their own people and Westerners as well. Others, however, were profoundly influenced for good. One factor in the “cultural shock” experienced by foreign students, especially in the United States, has been to see the

respect accorded to work of all kinds, including manual labor. To illustrate, girls from abroad were amazed to find college girls here washing their own clothes, cooking, cleaning their own rooms, and the like. The foreign girls, coming from less affluent homes, saw such things as servants' work. These peoples are learning to work in terms of the Puritan model.

Since World War II, a *third* influence has been growing in importance, American industry abroad. Many countries require the use and training of native workers. In Saudi Arabia, for example, under the rigid facade of Islam, these American trained workers are now a growing social force for change, all the more powerful because they know how to work.

The origins of this Puritan work ethic are biblical, and its spread represents an infiltration of Christianity into other cultures. However, without the roots of faith, the work ethic in time gives way to a political ethic, the desire to gain ends legitimate to work and productivity through political action, expropriation, and legislation. The whole world, including the West, is currently governed by the political ethic.

As a result, the work ethic is declining in what was once its center, the United States. A University of Michigan study has shown that, between 1965 and 1975, while on the job the same number of hours, the time actually spent in working declined by more than 10 percent. Meanwhile, our long-growing productivity has ceased, and may be declining. As Yankelovich points out, "Most working Americans have it in their power to decide whether they will satisfy only the minimum requirements of their job or exert the extra effort that makes the difference between ordinariness and high quality, between adequacy and excellence."<sup>47</sup>

However, Yankelovich found that most workers still subscribe to the work ethic. The problem in poor performance is a lack of confidence in and rapport with management. The worker does not feel that he is a part of a team. "Psychologist Raymond Katzell has reviewed 103 experiments designed to test whether an improved incentive system—including both money and greater control over one's work—would lead

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47. Daniel Yankelovich, "The Work Ethic is Underemployed," *Psychology Today*, May 1982, 6.

to higher individual productivity. It did in 85 of the experiments.”<sup>48</sup> Japan {63} has demonstrated the validity of a closer tie between management and workers.

In this country, Otto J. Scott has pointed out that our university schools of business administration turn out executives with no roots in, or even knowledge of, a company’s products and production, and the gap between management and workers is widening.

Another problem is the failure of the church to develop a theological concern for work. The earlier Puritan work ethic has been eroded by Pietism with its purely devotional concerns. In England, for example, manufacturers and churches drifted apart; the church in the nineteenth century had no theology to cover a commercial-industrial era. With regard to the Sabbath, for example, churchmen recognized the place of works of necessity, such as milking cows on the Sabbath, but the church refused to see urban works of necessity, such as the continuous operation of the trains, the continuous operation of power plants, and so on. As a result, the church made itself irrelevant to the modern world.

In recent years, however, men in the business world have begun to relate biblical faith to commercial-industrial activities. Some earlier efforts were pietistic and disastrous. To cite one example, a small manufacturing plant, owned by a church officer, was the locale of labor unrest. The man, a thorough Pharisee and given to unfair dealings with his employees, tried noonday prayer-meetings, which were only resented, in the lunch room. Workers were *required* to attend, in the same room, noonday showings of evangelical films, aimed at converting them. The result was a fiasco.

A dramatically different approach prevails, for example, at the Love Box Company factory in Wichita, Kansas. Working conditions and pay are superior, and a pride of workmanship prevails. An industrial chaplain is on the premises, a superior pastor, and Christian counsel is given most effectively. The owner, Robert Love, has established a very superior Christian school, one which has all the earmarks and facilities of a private school for the elite; it is open to all, and children of working families gain the best education in the city. This is clearly Christianity in action.

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48. *Ibid.*, 8.

At this point, let us examine *the worker*, economically and religiously. Economically, ca. 1970 the average job in the United States required ca. \$100,000 in capitalization. This capital was in the form of the land used, buildings, training on the job, tools, and the like. The capitalization of a job is a prerequisite to the existence of a job. In 1982, the cost is dramatically greater, not only because of inflation, but because of {64} regulations. It is not uncommon now for a corporation to spend millions trying to build a new plant or factory, only to be turned down. Great sums are expended before a single new job is created. It is very safe to say that ca. \$250,000 is now required to capitalize a job. At the same time, our debt-ridden economy is less and less able to capitalize new jobs. Artificial attempts at capitalization are failures. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have tried to create productivity and prosperity with huge loans to “under-developed countries,” with little success. For one thing, loans to civil governments are bad risks. British investors are still trying to collect on loans made to the State of Mississippi more than a century ago! Productivity comes from capital plus good management and good labor. It is bad economics to capitalize a job adequately in every respect save labor. Every job now requires considerable capital, and able management. It is simply economically stupid to neglect the man who is the focal point of all that expenditure, the worker.

Religiously, we must recognize that the worker represents the best capital of all, a man made in the image of God. To neglect him, or to treat him as a mere cog in the machine, is, economically, to waste capital, and, religiously, to sin. Because man is a religious creature, he moves religiously, whatever his faith. *Meaning* and *purpose* are basic to his life; cynicism, skepticism, and ennui mark the death of a culture, and the disintegration of man. Ennui in English has come to mean boredom, but its original and basic meaning in French goes deeper. It is, according to Mitchener, “a sick emptiness which drives people to drink or drugs or travel or fornication in a desperate and unsuccessful search for distraction.”<sup>49</sup> Ennui leads to a distaste for life because it is seen as meaningless. As Julie de Lespinasse (1732–1776) wrote to Con-

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49. Margaret Mitchener, *A Muse in Love: Julie de Lespinasse* (London: Bodley Head, 1962), 21.

dorcet, “I feel that books neither instruct nor amuse me. And as for what I can write, I am quite sure that nothing is worth saying. *What is the good of writing letters even to one’s friends?*”<sup>50</sup> As she observed of Madame de Chatillou, “Her head is empty, and her soul is a real desert.”<sup>51</sup> Today, all too often, the souls of management and labor are a desert also.

The Christian in both management and labor has a duty to recognize the existence of this desert. It is all around us. The Psalmist tells us of the grace and strength of the blest of God. “Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools” (Ps. 84:6). Such people turn a desert place into a fertile land. This is not simply by pietistic verbalizations but by the totality of their lives. Paul, in {65} 1 Thessalonians 4:9–12, declares:

But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

The focus here is on godly living, and a witness thereby to the ungodly with our honesty, quiet living, and good workmanship. This is the witness of brotherly love. We must not confuse this with sentimentality. In the world of business today, we face a twin evil. *First*, management is increasingly unwilling to fire incompetent workers. The results are very serious for both management and workers, for investors and profits. The inability to fire stems from a moral incompetence and an unwillingness to deal with problems. *Second*, and related to this, there is an unwillingness to get involved in the lives of others, because involvement means problems. The result is that neither helpfulness nor judgment in the form of firing exist in management and labor relations. In a sound relationship, there is a flow of ideas and suggestions both ways. Labor has demonstrated that it can sometimes offer sugges-

50. *Ibid.*, 86.

51. *Ibid.*, 154.

tions which improve the operation; such help needs to be encouraged and rewarded. *Management* has become an impersonal and academic discipline and no longer a personal relationship, and the results are deadly. Life, after all, is persons; managers and workers are alike persons, and to lose sight of this fact is dangerous.

Labor unions have at times attempted to remedy this situation, and management also. Credit Unions are one such step. Nothing, however, is done at the same time to educate the worker in the meaning and cost of inflation to both capital and labor.

Paul summons us to deal *honestly* with all, especially those outside the faith. In any business venture, shareholders and partners are given an annual financial report, or a periodic one, to acquaint them with the operation. Such reports are framed by accountants and usually readable only by other accountants. We need financial reports geared to the non-accountant mind *and* made available to the workers also. On several {66} occasions in recent years, newspapers and businesses have been forced out of business by union demands. The results have been a shock to the now unemployed workers, who had no comprehension of the seriousness of the situation. The lines of communication between management and workers have been so very poor that the unions could not believe management's statements that a crisis existed. In other words, self-interest on the part of the workers could not function because of a radical ignorance. For this, both sides are to blame.

History, however, gives us some dramatic examples of Christian management in action. In tsarist Russia, until suppressed by the regime, the Old Believers embarked on a remarkable experiment in Christian manufacturing. The center of these activities was Moscow, but it was prevalent elsewhere. Their work became a major force in Old Russia. Private, or, better, family ownership prevailed, but the elders of the communities, of which owners were members, controlled life in the factories. Old Believer industrialists saw their factories as no less a religious institution than their homes and their churches. The result was better pay and better production. Loans were made to the rich and to the poor, in many cases without interest. Serfs were freed; orphans and impoverished women were brought into the community, cared for, and given work. Free housing was provided for many peoples. Pregnant girls were housed, educated into the faith, and their children cared for.

Every establishment was both a business and a charitable organization. Shelters were built for the poor and the aged, hospitals, mad-houses, and more. Some of these Old Believer centers became a combination of convent, seminary, chamber of commerce, a consistory, an exchange, a religious center, and a business center.<sup>52</sup> All this was destroyed by Tsar Nicholas I, and perhaps Russia with it.

What we have described with respect to the Old Believers still exists, in modified form, in the American corporation. In some instances, the corporations establish separate foundations to dispense funds; in most cases, it is allocated from the main office by a separate committee of executives. The contributions of American corporations to tax-exempt charitable and religious enterprises is very great, *and also very humanistic*. The recipients are universities, colleges, modernist churches, leftist agencies, and so on. All too commonly, the gifts are used for revolutionary or humanistic causes. The corporations continue their giving (1) out of cowardice, (2) for public relations purposes, and (3) because they too are usually humanists. {67}

It is the Christian sector today that fails to fund, or gives inadequately, to Christian reconstruction, within its own entity or without. Such a concern for the Christianization of our businesses and factories is an urgent necessity, and also for the Christianization of all of life.

It is very true that federal and state regulations make such innovations difficult, but they are not impossible. The Old Believers faced even more formidable obstacles, and they accomplished great things until suppressed. The initiative today is too often on the side of the humanists. It is time for us to carry our faith into all the world.

To do so, we must rid ourselves of the humanism which surrounds us and which has infiltrated our thinking. Like the humanists, we view the world impersonally, and materialistically. We disbelieve de la Mettrie consciously and follow him in our practices. Julien Offray de la Mettrie (1709–1751), in *Man a Machine*, set forth a mechanistic view of man. Theoretically, Mettrie's mechanism has been discarded; practi-

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52. William L. Blackwell, "The Old Believers and the Rise of Private Industrial Enterprise in Early Nineteenth-Century Moscow," in William L. Blackwell, ed., *Russian Economic Development from Peter the Great to Stalin* (New York: New Viewpoints, Franklin Watts Inc., 1974), 138–58.

cally, it functions in and around us. We depersonalize the world; we find it easier to treat people impersonally. We speak of “labor” problems and “management” problems, when we should be talking about people created in God’s image, persons. To do so, i.e., to see them as people, gives a religious dimension to the situation, not a scientific one. It requires us to view economics from a biblical perspective, and to see all of life as God requires us to see it. We have devalued life and people, and we need again to see all things in terms of the Lord and His law-word.



# A PROFILE: INDUSTRIAL CHAPLAIN AT LOVE BOX COMPANY INC.

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*Don Scott*

The Love Box Company manufactures corrugated and wood shipping containers. There are five separate manufacturing facilities located in Wichita, Kansas; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Lewisburg, Ohio; Fayetteville, Arkansas, and Salina, Kansas. The Love Transport Company is headquartered in Wichita, Kansas, and there is a sales office and warehouse in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

An industrial chaplain's pulpit becomes the workbench, lunch area, loading dock, or any place the employee or a member of his family would like to talk about matters of concern.

The job priorities listed below will help define the areas of service a chaplain renders: {69}

Priority	Principal Job Emphasis	% Time Spent
1	Counseling employees and families	44 %
2	Visiting plants, office, hospital	20 %
3	Consulting with management, ministers, professionals	15 %
4	Crises intervention	8 %
5	Referrals	7 %
6	Training & education program, within and without plant	3 %
7	Employee/community/church relations and program	2 %
8	Plant devotions	1 %

Credibility-confidentiality is the biggest factor in the work of the chaplain. His influence must of necessity be indirect and personal. A

chaplain stands as a witness to the larger moral and spiritual obligations of all employees and their families.

Mr. Jim McKinney, vice president and general manager of the Lewisburg Container Company, Lewisburg, Ohio, spoke to a group of ministers in Dayton, Ohio. He began by defining the word, "What." "What is an industrial chaplain?" He pointed out that it is an ordained clergy person qualified by training, endorsed by his denomination, and employed to minister on an interdenominational basis through concern and counseling to persons and families in business or industry at the point of their spiritual, personal, and social needs.

### *The NEEDS are:*

1. Unmet personal needs of employees
2. To have someone to turn to in time of need or crisis
3. To have confidential counseling available to deal with employees or their families on and off the job
4. To be more attentive to people on the production line
5. To counteract the depersonalizing effect of the workaday employee
6. To reduce personal disturbances and crisis on the job
7. To manage human problems that continue to interfere with productivity and safety
8. To improve attitudes that affect work relationships and morale

### *Listed below are various responsibilities of a chaplain:*

1. Perform as a minister of God. The Bible is our rule of faith and practice. We encourage the distribution and reading of Scripture.
2. Establish communication with the churches in the community and seek to guide employees into an active relationship with the church of their choice, acting as an assistant to the employee's local pastor.
3. Develop and implement an active system of in-plant visiting to all company employees at each of their work locations.
4. Provide pastoral counseling to employees and their families when the need arises, especially at the time of personal crisis.
5. Maintain a relationship with professional leaders in order to make "referrals" when persons need help.

6. As time, distance, and awareness of the event permits, visit employees and their families who are ill, hospitalized, or at the time of death.
7. Conduct weddings and funerals when requested by employees.
8. Be available as a confidential consultant to local pastors and other professional counselors when they request consultation concerning their counseling activities and personal needs.
9. Provide educational seminars for employees and ministers as appropriate. {70}
10. Maintain a personal reading and study program in order to remain competent in pastoral care and counseling.
11. Participate in the activities of various professional organizations such as the National Business and Industrial Chaplains Association, local pastors conferences, etc.
12. Be available to speak for local group and civic club meetings, worship services, church organizations, etc.
13. Be concerned with community projects for the improvement and betterment of the community in general.

***The ten most important employee  
spiritual concerns for a chaplain are:***

1. Marriage and Family
2. Alcohol related
3. Pastoral care and conversation, including grief
4. Crisis situations
5. Other personal concerns including anxiety and depression
6. Church related
7. Job related
8. Financial related
9. Drug abuse
10. Court

This should relate to about 5 percent of the workforce. The 5 percent figure as a rate of penetration in dealing with employee problems compares very favorably with other types of employee counseling programs. In fact, it is an exceptionally high rate of penetration. About 75

percent of the people who come to the chaplain are self-referrals, and the other 25 percent are referred by supervisors or other employees.

It is impossible to develop enough formulas to meet the need of every individual and every situation, but a good starting rule would be to recognize people as human beings and respect them as such. It has been conservatively estimated that 10 percent of employees at any one point are troubled to the extent that it affects job performance. This costs the company money in terms of the following: absenteeism, lost time, production, turnover, quality, morale, safety, accidents, attitudes, medical expenses, hospital costs, and concern. Many of these problems may be personal, material, alcoholic, drugs, financial, or legal in nature. A troubled employee is an important concern to this company.

It requires effort and time to deal with these matters, but, if one can be helped, it could keep an employee from being terminated, and prevent the company from training a new person. When we compare the {71} cost of training to the little time it takes to offer help to the troubled employee, it is a good investment. The employee may not be at the point of termination, but his production may be dropping and a little help and support may bring that production back up. A happy employee is a productive employee.

The anxieties of the employee affect his or her work in terms of production, attitude, or safety. *We are all potential troubled employees.* Some discuss their problem and need for help openly, while others remain silent. Many times styles of behavior change, such as a talkative person becoming very quiet or vice-a-versa. The accident-prone employee is often a person who is preoccupied with some personal problem. Such an employee could seriously injure himself if someone does not get to him soon enough.

A drop in production does not always indicate a personal problem, but it could be a possibility. Therefore, the supervisor has the responsibility to sit down and talk with the employee. Involvement is important, but only to a degree. If the problem is of a personal nature, the supervisor should suggest consultation with the chaplain. The employee has to assume the major part of the responsibility for solving his problem. A good supervisor recognizes that the human being is complex, which means there will be times of crisis and tension. When these times arise, job performance could easily be affected. Ignoring

these persons and their problems will not make them disappear. Offering help is a great deal more logical and also good business.

Robert D. Love, president and Chairman of the Board of Love Box Company Inc., became aware of the need for an industrial chaplain after speaking on the subject of “Christian Economics,” March 22, 1959 (his speech is reprinted on pages 95–105 of this *Journal*). Mr. Love sent the following letter to a group of business leaders and industrial chaplains, inviting them to discuss this subject.

May 28, 1976

I’ve watched for some years as Industrial Chaplains have appeared around the country. There is evidence that a program of this type is needed and could be meaningful in Wichita. We have excellent labor relations in this community, which have come through enlightened employers who have worked with their employees. The economic side of life has a great influence on all of us and dictates our actions. {72} I believe the spiritual side is totally integrated with economics. The two cannot be separated. Therefore, there are problems in the working world for all of us who are economic and spiritual.

For several years, Mrs. Love has wanted to establish a small chapel in the north end of Wichita for those who might need a place to meditate, collect their thoughts, or have someone to talk with in an hour of need or time of crisis. This small chapel would become a headquarters for an Industrial Chaplain.

To this end, we have invited Mr. Lowell Sodeman to visit Wichita. Mr. Sodeman is with the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. He will share some ideas with us and relate some experiences in this field around the country, as well as serving as a resource person.

We shall meet at noon on July 23 at the Wichita Club, and I hope you will mark your calendar for at least two hours and join us. If there is any interest, we’ll follow it up with individual visits or additional input. Feel free to invite others who might have an interest in this subject, as they will certainly be welcome.

Please give this matter some thought and let me know if you will be able to join us on July 23; we would also like the names of any guests you have invited.

With best regards,  
Bob Love

The month of July 1976 was spent acquainting myself with the chaplains and industrial leaders around the country, and their program of work.

On July 14, 1976, Mr. Love wrote the following letter to the plant managers.

We have all been together for some twenty years now, and we know each other well. I wonder if we have taken the last step which puts us in true fellowship with each other and also with a spiritual feeling that can come only from our God.

For many years, I've been introduced as a Christian businessman. Since 1948, when I made my first speech on Christian Economics, I've had a nagging feeling of doing something more in this company to witness for our savior, Jesus Christ. My own beliefs are fairly simple and fundamental, and I believe in the Bible as the infallible word of God that was written by men with inspiration from Him. {73} The spiritual part of each of us is very important and private, but I want it to be known that we are a Christian company, as far as that can be extended without becoming a threat to anyone's personal freedom. This means, of course, that I want to extend the Christian witness to our employees as well, because many of them are in need of assistance and guidance, both on and off the job. The next years of this company and this country are going to demand a closer relationship with people than ever before. As our capital expenditures rise, we become more and more dependent on good employees in terms of their quality, dependability, and loyalty. For that reason, I feel we should make an effort with all of our employees, and also endeavor to give some thought to our own witness.

I've asked Reverend Don Scott, formerly the pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church, to come with us as Chaplain-Counselor for all of our companies. His function will be very low key, but all of you are aware of personal problems and other situations where counseling is definitely needed. He is a man who can be completely trusted and will keep all relationships strictly confidential. I also believe he will be able to carry the message of industry through the eyes of a minister into the community, and it is possible he can bring us some insights that will shed new and dynamic perspective on our relationships with each employee. I can't save the world, but I certainly believe it is my responsibility to be a witness and example for those around me.

This is not an experiment to see if it works, but is a commitment to improve the quality of our relations and the lives of all of us in our work places. The secular and the spiritual worlds cannot be separated,

and it seems to me we must continue to integrate the two to enrich those lives which each of us, as responsible managers, touch every day. Don will be in to see you in your plants and your organizations as time permits. There is to be no big splash or publicity, but rather a very low key commitment to the spiritual influences in this company. The obvious good records of the past will be continued in this new program, I'm sure, and your participation in this endeavor will be a key factor.

For your information, there is a very slow but strong movement in this direction, and there are now about 100 of these men in active service in the United States.

With best personal regards....

The following letter was written by Mr. Love and placed in the pay envelope of each company employee. {74}

August 4, 1976

For many years, I've had a deep seated feeling that our companies should add another dimension to make our work place even better than it is today.

I've talked with men whom I respect in industry, friends, and members of my own family, regarding the subject of an Industrial Chaplain. I've sought counsel with God, as well. It seems to me a man of God to help those in need of assistance and guidance, both on and off the job, is important. For that reason, I've asked Reverend Don Scott, formerly pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Wichita, to come with us as our Company Chaplain.

Don's job will be to offer himself to the people of this company and their families, as a man of God and a qualified counselor. He can be totally trusted, as any relationships he has will be held in strict confidence. He will be visiting with you in your workplace. I hope you will welcome him and introduce yourself, so that he can meet all of us.

The years ahead will offer many challenges to all of us, in terms of our ability to combine our secular and spiritual lives so we are whole persons. We cannot be separated from the spirit by our jobs; rather, it must be totally integrated into our complete being. I believe you will find this to be a real service to you and an important step forward in the lives of each of us.

In August 1976, my wife and I visited each of the plants, meeting employees and handing out a brochure explaining the availability, the background, and the responsibilities of a chaplain.

A secretary in each plant serves as a resource for absenteeism, turnover, accidents, morale, concern, safety, medical, and attitude for the industrial chaplain.

A printed card with Christian thoughts is enclosed in the pay envelopes, for example:

### **LORD, "TEACH US TO PRAY" (LUKE 11:1)**

The disciples, seeing the frailty of their own prayer life, said, "Lord, teach us to pray." They had seen, heard, and felt the power of prayer when Jesus prayed.

We need not be so occupied with the discussion of prayer, as the actual business of prayer itself. After all, how many ways can you describe a {75} child talking to his father? Is not prayer the conversation with our heavenly Father?

The position we must be in to pray is not a particular physical posture, but the condition of the heart.

Shakespeare in Hamlet said: "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: words without thoughts never to heaven go."

### **ADVICE IN PRAYING**

1. Let Prayer have the Right-of-Way in your Life. Set a time each day when you and your heavenly Father can be together uninterrupted. Prayer is a deep spiritual exercise and not a casual thing. To pray you must have an appreciation of the greatness of God: his character, his holiness and his readiness to provide.

2. Let Prayer Influence your Life. Prayer changes things, but how much more important that it can change people. Your prayers are not designed to attract the attention of men, but to reach the ear of God. "Casting all your care upon him: for he [God] careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

3. Let Prayer Work in your Life. God has never promised his children immunity from suffering, heartache and the realities of life, but he will give you grace, strength and comfort to endure any situation. Be definite in what you ask and be as specific with God, as you are with people. Martin Luther said, "only in fervent humble active devotion do our prayers hit the mark and pierce the wall of heaven."

A birthday greeting such as the following is sent to each employee:



## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JOHN!**

As your Industrial Chaplain, I want to wish you a very happy birthday with many more to come. We will remember you in prayer and trust your life will be filled with many blessings.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Col. 3:16

Sincerely,

Each new employee is greeted in the company by a letter and a personal visit. The letter is as follows: {76}

Dear John,

## **WELCOME TO THE TEAM!**

As a new employee of Love Box Co., we want to welcome you aboard. Whenever possible, I will count it a privilege to become acquainted with you. Enclosed is a brochure which will describe my function as your chaplain-counselor.

If at any time I can be of service to you or your family, please do not hesitate to call me collect.

Sincerely,  
Don Scott

DS/ec Enclosures

Rodney Brown, chaplain for the R. J. Reynolds Company, has researched and written a history of the industrial chaplain.

The first known industrial ministry in America was established at the Saugus Iron Works in Massachusetts during the period 1643 to 1674. In order for the Puritans to “build their Zion on a hill,” the country had to have its own sources of iron and cloth. The colonists could not remain dependent upon European exports which were in short supply. When a local source of ore was located, a company was formed with British investors. Skilled iron workers had to be brought in but many were non-Puritan and without formal education. One of the company’s original charter requirements included that “religious instruction be provided in places remote from churches or settled congregations.” Since education and worship were essential to the Puritans,

the ironworkers were to be brought up as part of the community, too. Furnaces had to be tended at all hours; thus, accommodations for the workers were needed. The company also paid dues to the church. (See *E.N. Hartley, Ironworks on the Saugus* [1957], 92–93; from *Massachusetts Records, vol. 2*, 81–82, 125–28; per Cynthia Pollack, supervisory park ranger).

Another early form of ministry was uncovered in the Southern Moravian community of Old Salem just six blocks south of the Reynolds Building in Winston-Salem. The Single Brothers Workshop was the forerunner of the textile industry and a variety of other crafts in western North Carolina immediately prior to and following the Revolution. {77} The workshop operated from 1771 for about fifty years before being sold as a private business. Records are unclear in reference to the specific ministry that took place at the workshop because the church was so active in the entire life of the community. Worship and Christian instruction were not limited to the sabbath or the church building. Afternoon vespers were a part of the daily routine at the Single Brothers House adjoining the workshop where the young men were learning their trade. But the church also had a strong influence on commercial ventures, prices, and wages, too.

“The work of a man’s hands should be dedicated to the Lord!” “‘Service’ was the keynote of their lives, ... and the man who made the shoes and the man who wore them to some distant mission field together served the cause of the Lord” (*Record of the Moravians in North Carolina*, vol. 1, 13, and vol. 3, 1258–9, furnished by Frances Griffin).

### *Industrial Chaplaincy in Twentieth-Century America*

Groundwork was laid for the modern-day industrial chaplaincy when industrialist R. G. LeTourneau invited the Reverend Marion Reynolds of Los Angeles to conduct “shop meetings” at his construction camp and work sites during the building of the highway between Boulder City, Nevada, and Hoover Dam in 1931. “A program of non-denominational Christian services” were set up in the LeTourneau construction camp. The chaplaincy of the ‘30s was a part-time ministry established “in the absence of the home church.” It was the church taken to the people. By 1941, LeTourneau established America’s first full-time industrial chaplaincy at his plants in Peoria, Illinois, and Toc-

coa, Georgia, and shortly thereafter in Vicksburg, Mississippi. See R. G. LeTourneau's book, *Mover of Men and Mountains* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972).

“Six or eight shop meetings were held one right after the other and because the work sites were so spread out—in Peoria and Toccoa—it was more than one person could handle. Two chaplains were hired almost simultaneously,” according to recollections by Richard H. LeTourneau, currently president of LeTourneau College, Longview, Texas.

Although divisions of the company have been sold over the years, following the death of the founder, Marathon-LeTourneau Corporation, a subsidiary of the Penn Central Corporation, continues to employ {78} chaplains for its workers in both Longview, Texas, and Vicksburg, Mississippi.

During World War II several industrial chaplaincies were established to minister to those uprooted from their homes and to help alleviate the effects of personal problems that were interfering with production demands. Expenses for some of these programs may have been covered by the “cost plus 10” contracts with the government. But most of those positions and companies were later disbanded.

After the war, with the return of veterans and military chaplains to civilian life, several industrial chaplaincies were created. In 1946, the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio and the Cleveland Church Federation, through the efforts of Francis B. Sayre Jr., experimented with the launching of an industrial chaplaincy that would be “sponsored and endorsed by as wide an interdenominational group as possible. According to the *Diocese of Ohio Convention Journal* (1947), “The effectiveness of an industrial chaplain is measured by the profundity of his basic Christian influence, not the success of any denominational proselytizing...” The work of the chaplains “should be a joint undertaking ... of both Management and Labor...” However, the chaplain would in no sense be an official arbitrator of disputes. Rather, “his function is preventative rather than curative, for, like that of the Church itself, his influence must of necessity be indirect and personal. He stands as a witness to the larger moral and religious obligations of all men and groups. In the measure that he makes that witness effective, disputes will be mitigated and even prevented, but no minister is expected to be

qualified for the highly technical job of an arbitrator as that term is understood today” (Francis B. Sayre Jr., “Report of the Industrial Chaplain,” *Diocese of Ohio Convention Journal* [1947], year ending December 31, 1946, 43–45).

Francis Sayre became rector of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Cleveland, in 1947 and dean of the Washington Cathedral in 1951. The project did not become financially independent and was not taken over by the industry it was designed to serve.

R. J. Reynolds Industries has concentrated its efforts on providing counseling to employees and their families and has the longest-in-existence “pastoral counseling program” in industry. Its full-time ministry began October 1, 1949. A former chief executive who rose through the ranks from the first Camel cigarette-making machine operator in 1913, years ago posed the need for counseling because of the many problems brought to the job by employees: “What is the foreman to do?—ignore {79} the employee and tend to the production line? Or ignore production? Who does the foreman turn to to get help?”

“We could stick our heads in the sand and pretend these problems don’t exist or we could tell employees, ‘Don’t bring your problems to the job. They don’t belong here!’ But that approach doesn’t work. We’d only be fooling ourselves,” according to the vice president of personnel.

Another executive explained his view why the program originated: “We were seeing people with all sorts of grievous problems that personnel was not equipped to deal with and the supervisor simply did not have the time. These were the kind of problems that people would bring to their minister if they had one and if they felt they could talk to him and confide in him.”

In many instances the employee did not have access to his own minister during the week. He would be on the job for forty hours a week for forty years of his life and might be commuting forty miles a day. Therefore, the company turned to the church to obtain the assistance of a minister to be available to counsel the people where they work. But he was not to duplicate that which the local pastor could do.

Interestingly, a much longer pastoral tradition exists at Reynolds than the professional counseling programs. Employee-led informal devotional services date back to the very early 1900s or late 1800s. Evangelist Billy Sunday and gospel songwriter Homer Rodeheaver paid

a visit to the company in the 1920s and participated in the services. Leaders of those devotions included employees who served as pastors on weekends. In 1943, 126 ministers were employed by the company as regular full-time workers. By 1980, the list of ordained ministers and certified lay pastors included 110 regular wage-earners at RJ Reynolds and another 44 retired employees. They represent over twenty denominations and cover pastorates from South Carolina to West Virginia.

In terms of seniority among full-time active industrial chaplains, Jack Cooke of Carolina Freight Carriers qualifies as the eldest statesman. With over twenty years of service, he is the granddaddy, having begun his chaplaincy with the trucking company in 1960.

The “uttermost parish” on earth—and sea—was served by chaplain Harry C. Hand when employed with Federal Electric—service division for ITT. Beginning in 1961, he was one of five chaplains assigned on a forty-point charge covering 5000 miles from the Aleutians to Iceland along the Distant Early Warning Line. When RCA took over the contract with the government in the early ‘70s, Harry was reassigned to New {80} Jersey as a consultant and administrator of counseling services for an ITT-Job Corps project. He later established the chaplaincy at McBess Industries in Bessemer City, North Carolina. Along with his experience as a military chaplain during World War II, Harry may qualify as the most strung-out chaplain in the world.

The largest number of employees served by full-time chaplains on the job were the 20,000 construction workers along the Alaska Pipeline. The Pipeline Ministry was the result of a cooperative effort between the Alyeska Pipeline Service and the Alaska Christian Conference—an ecumenical project of seven full-time and thirteen part-time chaplains (including two women) each endorsed by his/her particular ecclesiastical body: the Salvation Army, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Southern Baptist, and other kinds of Baptists, too; Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Mormon, Jewish, and other church denominations. “This project was too big for any one group alone,” according to Gordon L. Corbett, chairman of the Alaska Christian Conference. No proselytizing was allowed. Chaplains visited the construction sites for a twenty-four-hour period once a week where they conducted worship services and were available for pastoral care and

counseling. “The strain of being away from home” and the effects on marriage and family relationships were the primary burdens. But additional pastoral conversation was prompted by such comments as, “Hey! I’m making a lot of money! What for?” The project lasted from 1974–77.

Con Ed in New York is one of the largest companies whose employees are served by pastoral counselors. The Institutes of Religion and Health (IRH) have referral arrangements with the Consolidated Edison Mutual Aid Society Inc. for the treatment of any of their 24,000 employees. (IRH includes what was formerly the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry established by the Rev. Norman Vincent Peale and Dr. Smiley Blanton in 1935.)

The Counseling and Human Development Center in New York also counsels numerous employees from several corporate headquarters in the New York area.

# CHRISTIAN ECONOMICS

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*Robert D. Love*

[March 22, 1959]

I want to visit with you concerning Christian Economics. This might be a strange title to you, as I doubt that there are very many people who will associate Christianity and economics in the same breath. However, I must hasten to point out that the two are simply as one, and cannot be separated. We have moral laws and man-made laws. Many times the two are entirely different, but the man-made laws will have no wisdom or validity except to the extent they coincide with our moral laws as contained, for instance, in the Ten Commandments.

In my years as an American citizen, there has been a tremendous amount of talk concerning freedom. I think our generation has done a lot of talking about freedom, but it also seems to me that we have shown a great readiness to abandon it, even though we have done a lot of talking. This is especially true in the field of economics. Economic freedom is the nature of wealth and man's right to it. But, first things first. It is important to consider what Jesus thought about wealth, before we consider our economic freedom. Since Jesus was concerned with life, and since economics are involved in the whole of life, we should expect to find some economic guidelines in the teachings of Jesus. These expectations will not be disappointing.

First, we should talk about our motivations within this society of ours. I mean the motivations that cause you and me to want to serve our neighbors and other people voluntarily and regularly. The first reason {82} for motivation in our moral code is found in the teachings of our Judeo-Christian religion. We believe it to be a moral duty to help our fellowman in need, regardless of whether or not he can pay for it. The other motivation that causes us to serve our fellowman, is the desire to get something in return from him. Some people say service motivated by charity and love is good, but motivation that is materialistic is bad. I do not believe that motivation for materialistic ends is bad

in itself. The idea of serving others with no expectation of return is true charity, and a wonderful practice. I certainly wish there was more of it.

But, let's face the facts. Only a few can devote their lives to service to others with no possibility of material return. If all of us tried it, the production of material goods and services would completely cease. There would not be anything to share with others. Ponder for a moment, if you will, the question a little boy asked his Sunday school teacher. "If the reason for our being on earth is to help others, what reason do the others have for being here?" It is true, we are here to help others, but it is also true that others are here to help us. We are here, also, to understand and love our Creator. This is a two-sided coin.

If you will consider Matthew 20:1–16, you will find the story of the laborer in the vineyard. This is the story of an employer who hired a series of laborers at different hours of the day, and at the end of the day paid them all alike. When those who had worked the longest complained that they had not been paid more than those who worked for only an hour, the employer answered, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?" This parable has a meaning, but it clearly assumes that a man has a right to his property. It is not surprising for Jesus to have made this assumption, for it was the central idea in the Ten Commandments. Much of our so-called legislation today is in conflict with the teachings of Jesus on the question of property, for the simple reason that this kind of legislation is usually founded upon the assumption that a man's property belongs to the community, and that the community has a right to determine how it should be used. Jesus had a far different idea, namely that all property belongs to God.

Karl Marx, over a hundred years ago, laid down a principle, "from each according to his ability—to each according to his need." There is a principle of service in this idea; however, Karl Marx was an atheist, as you are all well aware. This idea runs contrary to human nature. It just will not persuade people voluntarily to provide many goods and services for each other. The high producers soon get tired of producing for {83} other people who offer them little or nothing in return for their services. The low producers are promised a standard of living based on their needs instead of their efforts, and they tend to produce even less than they did before. Then, of course, the police force must be called in to whip up production all along the line. This is a modern form of slav-



ery. Although it may produce an abundance for a few at the top, it does so at the expense of the great mass of people. Socialist and Communist critics say they do not condemn the profit motive as such, but merely the fact that the profit motive permits a few people to become wealthy. It is strange to me that these same people oppose discrimination on a basis of race and creed, but turn right around and consider it right and desirable to discriminate on a basis of economic wealth. This is a double standard. It is also true that wealthy people do not carry their assets around with them in the form of cash in a shoe box, nor do they hide it under a mattress. Instead, their wealth is in the form of factories, research laboratories, and machines and other equipment that provide jobs and are used to produce and distribute the goods and services we have in such abundance. It might readily be said that profits are the rent paid by the consumer for the use of the tools in producing what he wants. It has always been amusing to me to ask these advocates of sharing the wealth how they would divide up a blast furnace, for instance. Or, who will become the boss?

Jesus had a more constructive thought about the nature of wealth, than the simple and overworked phrases of Communists, Socialists, and others, such as, “share the wealth”—“tax the rich.” This kind of legislation assumes that there is a fixed amount of wealth which must be more evenly distributed throughout the economy, if we are to have a just social order. Marx, the atheist, operates upon this principle and also suggests, of course, the steeply graduated income tax, which is responsible for much of our lack of growth to provide new jobs in this country today. Jesus’s theory on the nature of wealth corresponds to classical economists. They are expounding about the nature of things, and therefore, things that are unchangeable. The classical economist taught that there are four ways to get property or wealth. 1. It may be created by the sweat of one’s brow—or use of one’s talent. 2. It may be traded for. 3. Received as a gift. 4. Taken by force. In the simple days, when people were so naive as to believe the Ten Commandments, taking property by force was called stealing. In more recent times, however, we have been led to think that what may be wrong for the individual is right for the {84} government. According to this philosophy, by majority rule the government can take property by force. The

fact that the majority voted for it makes it not an act of theft, but an expression of social consciousness.

Perhaps you have heard of the seventy-year-old farmer at Rose Hill, who lived on property homesteaded by his father. He had to sell his farm to pay a \$1700 penalty to the government—a penalty for growing wheat which he fed to his own livestock and chickens.

I am aware that some wealthy people have proven to be poor stewards of their resources. Even so, I imagine that laws against these people will not do a great deal of harm and absolutely no good. The old tried and true economic law as contained in the sentence, “a fool and his money are soon parted,” is true. If we attempt to hurry up the process of parting a fool from his money, we will just grease the slide for many of those in the general public who are on their way up. Contained in one of our great Commandments left to us by Moses, is a simple statement, “Thou shalt not steal.” Let’s examine this in the light of our Christian philosophy of government today. You and I think of stealing as being done by an unsavory character for an unmistakably selfish end. But if you will think with me for a minute, I believe we can eliminate the unsavory character and selfish end and still have stealing. Stealing means taking something of somebody else’s ownership. Therefore, if you will examine our tax picture as it is today in the roll of subsidies, tariffs, and other legalized government robbing, I think we can make quite a case against the legalized robbing of people by government. First, let me ask the question, do you own what you earn? Do you own the fruits of your own labor? This is a big question, but it can simply be summed up in the struggle between freedom and slavery, which has now engulfed the world. The Socialist, Communist, and Totalitarian says, “No man owns the fruits of his own labor; society owns them, and it is the business of government to distribute them.” In the middle of this problem is the modern collectivist, or the middle-of-the-road man. “A middle-of-the-roader is one who gets in the way of the traffic going in both directions.” This middle of the roader says a man should be allowed to keep part of what he earns, the rest belongs to society to be collected and distributed by government. This is merely an evasion of the point. All through our Christian philosophy and our Bible, which are inseparable, man under divine or natural laws owns his own labor. This ownership is hinged simply on the fact that man

has a God-given right to life, and the right to life is meaningless unless there is a right to sustain and protect {85} that life. If a man is denied the right to keep what he earns and to retain the fruits of his labor, he loses control of the only means whereby he can sustain life.

No one who is serious about the teachings of Jesus, can be happy with this kind of socialistic teaching. Jesus did not believe in stealing, of course. Also, He did not believe that wealth was static, or that it would always stay in the same place. If you study the parable of the ten pounds, you will see what I mean. Here, as you well know, Jesus told the story of a nobleman who gave his ten servants one pound each before he left for a far country. On his return, he called them to account, and all but one had invested and increased his pound. The servant who did not, had hoarded his in fear he might lose even that one pound, and his lack of enterprise was condemned. You will find this in Luke 19: 11–28.

Thus, from Jesus's point of view, if a man has less wealth than another, he may get more—not by robbing the man who has more, but by creating more for himself. Why is it that in this country we do not recognize that each of us fits into this division-of-labor society, and the overall picture as to our share does not change by gang pressure. Have you ever thought, instead of trying to get a bigger piece of the pie, why not help to make the whole pie bigger and, in turn, make your piece bigger? The principle under which some of the pressure groups within our country operate today, is simply to take a bigger slice of the existing pie. They do not propose to do anything constructive which will increase the size of the pie. Increased investments in plants, machinery, and equipment, because of profits, come back to create more jobs. This is the way we will increase the size of the pie. The only limitation on wealth in existence, is our ingenuity to create it. In the parable I mentioned before, concerning the nobleman and his servants, the more the servants made on their investments, the more they were applauded. There is no suggestion that there was anything immoral in their creation of wealth. Only fear, hoarding, and laziness were condemned.

It is strange to me how these so-called social thinkers and enemies of the individual profess to love people and be concerned for their welfare, and in the same breath, say that the common man is too dumb to look out for himself. Therefore, the government must take in his

money that he earns, and redistribute it however the government thinks, not the individual. We all wonder why, at times, our children seem to have strange ideas concerning economic matters. We teach them the golden rule, and also that two and two are four—and that C-A-T spells cat. But {86} why teach a child to earn a bicycle through service if he must live with adults who get their share by the ballot box appropriation of the property of others. Why teach a young man to be thrifty, if later he is to be taxed and punished for his savings. Also, if there are those who are swift and strong and can run ahead of some of us, why handicap them in adulthood by government regulation and graduated taxes—which are a penalty on their extra efforts.

These kids put two and two together without too much trouble. Do we really believe we can print money fast enough to spend ourselves rich? For the last thirty years, we have continued to rob Peter to pay Paul, and we are going to have to face up to it someday. We are now robbing Peter to pay Peter. Would you ever think of paying your child \$1 an hour for shoveling the snow off the sidewalk, and \$.50 an hour if it didn't snow? Do you think he could understand how shoveling no snow can be worth half as much as shoveling the snow? Nor can a child who is hungry understand that the way to get the most satisfaction out of two cookies is to toss one in the garbage can or in some other soil bank, and eat the other. Or maybe you have tried to explain to the youthful operator of a lemonade stand the profitability of dumping every second glass of lemonade down the drain instead of selling it, and then trying to collect the difference from those people who don't want lemonade anyhow.

The point of this entire dissertation is that “Thou shalt not steal” applies to the government as well as to you and me as individuals. The government is you and me. We are allowing our government, through man-made laws, to steal from some and give to others, regardless of the purpose.

Man, of course, is a steward over his wealth, and he is obligated to use it to the glory of God. Each of us will have an account to render unto God when our time comes. Do not forget, we must render our account unto God—man is not first responsible to society as suggested by some of our left-wing organizations, because society can become a despot. Our founding fathers were aware of the danger of a despotic

majority, and they constructed a government of checks and balances, which would restrain majorities by a concept of justice.

You will remember the story of a man who came to Jesus and said, “Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.” Jesus, you will remember, rebuked the man, and refused to be an equalizer of wealth. He continued by warning the man and others against {87} covetousness. Of course, Jesus had not heard about the social gospel as we are hearing it today, so His response to the challenge did not reveal an “enlightened social consciousness.” It certainly is odd that the covetousness that Jesus warned against so frequently has been turned into a virtue and is now called “enlightened social consciousness.” Jesus followed His warning against covetousness with the parable of the rich fool, who built ever larger barns—only to die suddenly unprepared for eternity (Luke 12:13–21). To Jesus, wealth was a threat to the soul of the possessor, not a problem to be solved by social engineering. His focal point all through His short life on this earth was upon the individual, not the group. Jesus always started with the individual in His discussions. What He said had wide social consequences, but the individual was the beginning in all cases. The use of wealth by the individual was a problem for him to solve with his sense of stewardship to God. Along with this, of course, we come upon the story of the rich young ruler who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. After affirming he had lived according to the Ten Commandments, Jesus asked the man, “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast and give it to the poor and follow me.” Note here, that the point of emphasis in this instance was not upon the welfare of the poor, but on the rich young ruler’s soul. He made a god of wealth, instead of worshipping God. Matthew 19:16–26.

I think we will all concede that Jesus was not for the rich—nor for the poor. He was for men as individuals. Most of all, He was for their spiritual development, and He commanded charity as a means to that development.

This is why He said, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33. He wanted us to have a warm personal faith in God. Seeking the fulfillment of our economic needs is not evil, but it must be secondary. When God is kept first, Jesus has promised that man’s economic needs

will be met. Historians have observed that the roots of our amazing economic development in Western civilization have been our deep-seated religious convictions about God and especially the conviction that we are morally responsible individually to God! We should be free to make choices and to suffer the consequences. Consider for a moment, if you will, the Constitution of this great country. Men have struggled through the ages to relate the individual to his deity. Ours is the first constitution in the world not with the word “democracy,” but referral is made to the Creator. We talk of the Creator in our Constitution. {88} Nowhere in our Constitution will you find the word “democracy.” We have based our Constitution on a belief in God. Contrast this, if you will, with any other constitution in the world, including the great Magna Carta, which said that all rights, including property rights, were derived from a divine King. Our freedoms and our rights are derived from a belief in God. Ours is the only truly Christian constitution in the history of the world. We have woven deep into our country, a religious conviction, and it is the reason for our amazing development and growth the last two-hundred years.

We are trying to transplant economic know-how in lands all over the world. But these lands have not accepted our Christian know-why. When these countries we are trying to help can master the know-why of our country, which is our deep-seated religious conviction, then these countries can have some order without chaos. But when these countries master our know-how without the religion and belief in God attached to it, they are invariably becoming a Frankenstein of political despotism. All forms of socialism, communism, and social engineering put economic considerations first and spiritual considerations last. This invites disaster.

Man is obligated, not by justice, but by compassion to give to those who are in need out of what is entirely his property. And those in need have no right, as such, to it.

The best known example of Jesus’s insistence upon charity and compassion is the parable of the good Samaritan. Luke 10:25–37. The emphasis on giving should be not to the recipient, but to the doer of the deed. Jesus emphasized that the motivation of those who gave was important. The spirit of compassion was more important to Jesus than the act of getting a wounded man taken care of on the Jericho Road.

We have made the mistake of thinking that Christian acts are concerned only with the objective deed. Jesus was concerned with motivation of those who did good deeds. If you have raised any money in the last several years, you have found people who laugh and sneer when you talk of big gifts made by wealthy men. They say simply to you, "Oh, it means nothing to them—it is tax deductible and they do not really care; it is to their advantage to give money away because of taxes." I know some of these people, and the joy of giving for them is a real inspiration to me. We raise entirely too much money on a basis that it is tax deductible, and therefore, it is good to give. Nor can the money be raised on a basis of a formula. In other words, my share is so much. It must be done on a basis of the problem to be solved and the compassion {89} involved. We have responsibilities to God. All that we have belongs to Him. We are only the stewards of it while on earth. The greatest treason in the world is to do the right thing for the wrong reasons. However, I am afraid that much of our social welfare legislation today provides us with examples of both the wrong thing and the wrong reasons.

Many people used to say that the Church ignored social implications in the teachings of Jesus. Then, for several years, they proceeded to demonstrate that Jesus was a Socialist. Now, I believe you will find many are taking a second look at these teachings. They are finding that they do not imply socialism, but that the message is one of individual responsibility, freedom, and the right to private properties. Socialism makes a man responsible to his government and not to his God. The teachings of Jesus are relevant to the problems of life. If they are not, then Christianity is bankrupt. Christianity is not bankrupt, but socialism, communism, and all other social engineering schemes are bankrupt for new ideas. The teachings of Jesus are relevant and contain the truth that makes men free. Man is responsible to God beyond all other authorities. Why is it that our social engineers, Socialists and Communists, are ready to tax and spend something that never belonged to them in the first place?

To assume that any of us know more than God, is a sin, and disobedience cannot be forgiven by God by bargaining with Him through the liberal sacrifice of someone else's goods. We operate entirely with the wrong kind of reasoning on some of these social engi-

neering schemes. We see how unjust life is to the child who must eat peanut butter sandwiches instead of a hot lunch; something must be done about that. Then we notice the terrible inequity of the man who has to drive a Plymouth while another rides in a Cadillac. Obviously, life is unjust to these poor creatures, and we have injustice—we long to share somebody else’s wealth with them. This is the covetousness that Jesus talked about. We have measured our society in such mixed-up terms, that today every farmer, laborer, businessman, and child who needs anything, is looked upon as a victim of injustice if he doesn’t get it. We used to say a dollar’s reward for a dollar’s work but, of course, that’s old fashioned now. We have adopted the Karl Marx communist-atheist manifesto, which says, “from each as he is able—to each as he has need.”

Share-the-wealth plans are so popular that benefits go up every year. And, of course, followed to its logical conclusion, this means we will all be wards of the state one day. You do not believe this; however it has been the history of the world. If we in America reverse this trend, we will be {90} the first nation ever to do so. We have been first with many other things, such as our Constitution and its design with God in the center. Why can we not be first, by accepting the rights of the individual and his responsibility to God. Communism will not come over us as communism, but it will fasten itself upon us in the name of justice, because we have stopped thinking. Freedom demands thinking and deciding, not compromising and adjusting. Justice cannot be determined by the desires of people or the political expedience of political parties. The majority vote of a group does not mean justice, because justice is something inherent in God’s universe as He has created it. You cannot repeal the Ten Commandments by majority vote, any more than you can repeal the law of gravity—and making a thing legal does not make it right. We can misname justice with all kinds of terms, but unless it corresponds with God’s will, it means nothing. For every sin, someone must pay a penalty. For every miscarriage of justice, the innocent suffer with the guilty. And for every dollar you and I receive without earning, someone must earn a dollar without receiving it. Justice, then, is obedience to God’s will. Do not forget that the force of God’s retribution will be exactly equal to man’s sin, and that we will not



escape this retribution by hiding behind the fact that it was a social offense instead of a personal one.

If liberty—which is religious and economic freedom—is to be saved, it will not be by doubters, men of science, or the materialists; it will be by religious convictions; by the faith of the individuals who believe that God wills men to be free.

# CHRISTIANITY AND BUSINESS: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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*Paul Doepke*

*Stronger Than Steel: The Wayne Alderson Story.*  
R. C. Sproul. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.  
208 pp. \$10.95 (hardback).

During the World War II years and the postwar years, we Americans were proud that the U.S. steel industry easily led the world. Steel meant productivity, prosperity, and strength; it was a symbol of America. In recent years, however, that role has been reversed. The steel industry that once led the world is now second- or third-rate, and according to many, is in shambles.

To those who believe in Christ's dominion over all things, here is another clear example of when God's Law-Word is thrown to the wind, disaster results in any aspect of life. Of course, the seeds of destruction were built into the American steel business from the beginning. But here is another reminder that concrete application of biblical law to all of life is not optional but necessary for long-term prosperity and joy in any labor well done.

It is commonly accepted that several factors share the blame in the downfall of the U.S. steel industry:

1. Neglect of advancing technology
2. Diverse investment of steel profits (instead of investment in steel technology and new equipment) {92}
3. Failure to integrate steel manufacturing facilities into coordinated units
4. Subsidized foreign imports

There remains, however, another (fifth) factor which is as significant as any of the above: *labor-management relations*. This is the thorn which has persistently plagued the industry since World War II. Strikes

and their aftermath, more than any other single factor, have broken the back of U.S. steel.

After reading *Stronger Than Steel*, there is little doubt that management-labor relations not only looms as the major fault with the U.S. steel industry, but the possible *key factor to progress* in each of the other areas of the steel industry's failures *if recast in the biblical mold*. Alderson's story is all the more relevant, as the U.S. steel industry steadily worsens each year since Sproul's writing of the book in 1980—the latest news being the U.S. Steel Corporation's announcement of several more plants being closed in 1984 with the simultaneous layoff of thousands and thousands more steel workers.

This book is the story of Wayne T. Alderson—the making of the man and the spread of his influence as a Christian in executive management at Pittron Inc., a large foundry in Glassport, Pennsylvania. The first part of the book is the dramatic story of Alderson's experiences as a pointman (scout), whose U.S. Third Infantry Division Regiment led the assault on the famed Siegfried Line in Germany in 1945. The assault was not without cost for Alderson, as he was blasted with a German hand-grenade at point blank range in the trench behind the line but amazingly lived to tell about it. The account is masterfully written (R.C. Sproul is an excellent writer). From the standpoint of story drama and fascination alone, the first two chapters are worth the price of the book.

The real value of the book for Christian dominion comes as Sproul describes how Alderson, coming back from the war, is converted to Christ, readjusts to civilian life, marries, graduates from night school, and comes to work at Pittron, working up to the position of controller and chief financial officer. It is there that he begins to see the pitiful state of finances at Pittron and the steel industry in general.

It was also there that Alderson began to realize that despite all the company's rhetoric (e.g., "Steel is people," or "Pittron is you," etc.), the management's only real concern, reflected across the entire steel industry, was the bottom line of the income statement. It became evident to {93} Alderson that the humanistic theories of business management being taught at the Ivy League business schools and on down had made a mess out of American industry, particularly at Pittron, secularizing and depersonalizing whatever they touched.

What could be done now? What could one man do? At the same time, becoming more mature in his convictions as a Christian, Alderson was determined that his beliefs must carry over into his workaday life. He began to think about his rough, tough, cursing, redneck steel workers as *persons made in the image of God*. At the same time, despite his fear and hatred of strikes, Alderson began to ponder *why* the rank and file made statements like, “If they [management] ain’t lookin’ out for you, who will?” or “If you ain’t got a union, you ain’t got nothin’.”

It happened in October of 1972; Pittron went on strike, but not for the usual twenty to thirty-five days. This one lasted for eighty-four days—eighty-four days of hatred, tension, blame-shifting, and exhaustion. The morale was at an all-time low. Management, fearing bankruptcy, was furious at the union’s demands. The laborers were willing to strike, even though it severely damaged their cause, just to get even, for bitterness’ sake alone. Knowing little and caring less about the bankruptcy of their actions, they shot from the hip and were willing to burn their bridges behind them. One thing they knew: management hadn’t been square with them. Pittron was already in a precarious financial position. Before the strike it was operating at a six-million-dollar loss. At this time, Alderson was asked by his company to attend a management course cosponsored by Harvard Business School and Textron, Pittron’s parent company. The seminar offered the same old Harvard strategy of abstraction and depersonalization. An outspoken critic, Alderson argued against any methodology which depersonalized and dehumanized labor relations. He argued that standard management-by-confrontation was nothing more than management-by-intimidation and served no better than the banditry of strikes.

Also at this time, there was an ironic shakeup in the management of Pittron. In this crucial hour, Alderson was promoted to vice president in charge of operations! Alderson took this as God’s leading for him to propose some radical changes. It is interesting that at the time, Alderson, attending a Christian men’s conference, was stung by the speaker’s application of Jesus’s words, confessing Him before men. The speaker’s bottom line was, in effect, to get away from pietistic escape and take God’s principles into the world. The words that had stung {94} Alderson were these: *Get off the reservation; confess Me before men*. This was the motivation behind Alderson’s brainchild which he called, Opera-

tion Turnaround, a bold plan designed to reflect changed attitudes at Pittron. The point was that change must begin somewhere, and it might as well begin with us. Why must we wait for the *other* side to change in a fight? If we don't do what we *must* do, who will do it for us? After a long discussion, management reluctantly agreed.

There seemed no other way out, and then Alderson literally took his life in his hands by taking these plans to a private meeting with half-crazed, half-drunken labor shop leaders in the foundry. After a long, sweaty session, not without danger, the labor leaders agreed to the plan.

The next week, posters and promos appeared everywhere, but it was more than a rah-rah start. Alderson's underlying philosophy was simple: the value of the person, the dignity of a man and his labor. Again, despite the evil of strikes and organized labor, Alderson resolved, "It is up to us." *Management must take the initiative to turn the downward stroll around.*

The *first* thing Alderson did was break a cardinal rule. He began to associate with the men in the foundry. This flabbergasted them; the big boss discussing their work with them, their worth, and their problems. At first it seemed to be an act, a management gimmick, but it soon registered as absolute sincerity. This disarmed the foundrymen.

*Secondly*, management gave the union president an office in which to meet with his men on the premises. Here, if nothing else, was the element of trust, and it further disarmed the union's suspicions.

*Third*, Alderson began personally thanking the men for each day's hard work, greeting them at the gate after the day's shift. Most men avoided him at first but gradually came to eagerly shake hands with their boss like parishioners shaking their hands with their pastor on Sunday mornings!

*Fourth*, and perhaps the boldest move of all, was Alderson's idea that Pittron share its gasoline reserves with its employees during the 1974 gas shortage. Most corporations hoarded gasoline for their executives and for other aspects of the business, but Alderson argued, why not invest it in the workers? After perhaps the hardest dispute of all, management decided to adopt the giving of gasoline to its employees on the honor system. An employee requested a number of gallons to drive home and back to work each day. To the amazement of Pittron management, it worked—with gasoline left over. A host of the men cal-

culated {95} their needs down to the half gallon, and many asked for no more than one or two gallons a day.

Sproul explains Alderson's "value of the person" concept:

Alderson realized that the key to worker morale and reconciliation focused on how people were being treated. If people were valued, prized more than machines or profits, perhaps the other logistical and mechanical problems of management would begin to take care of themselves. It dawned on him that Pittron's problems were not caused by problems of capital, supplies, or equipment. The problems of Pittron were *people problems*. (Sproul, 63, emphasis added)

Not only did the "value of the person" concept concern itself with the worker, it extended itself to the working man's family. "Respect a man's family, and you respect the man. Show interest in the things he cares about, and you show interest in him" (*Ibid.*, 71). Said Alderson to one worker, who had been seen racing from his car into the plant without kissing his wife goodbye, "Don't ever think your job is more important than your wife" (*ibid.*). In addition to this, the men at Pittron found Alderson to be true to his own prescriptions. He was the first visitor at the hospital when a foundryman was injured. He was first at the mortuary with a sympathetic word or a silent look and handshake when a foundryman's relative died. Alderson was not only boss, he was becoming a pastor of souls with a newfound responsibility for caring for his men.

Now what did all this really accomplish? What was the benefit of Operation Turnaround and the "value of the person" concept for an American steel corporation...where the rubber meets the road? Sproul summarizes the changes at Pittron in the twenty-first month of Operation Turnaround:

1. Productivity rose 64 percent
2. Sales rose 400 percent
3. Profits rose 30 percent
4. Employment rose 300 percent
5. Labor grievances declined from as many as twelve per week to one per year
6. Chronic absenteeism disappeared
7. Quality of the product became the best in the plant's history

In short, in the space of twenty-one months, Pittron had swung from a deficit {96} of six million dollars to a profit of six million dollars: a profit-loss swing of twelve million dollars in less than two years!! By the way, through Alderson's own lifestyle before the men at Pittron, a large number of the foundrymen, coming to realize Alderson's knowledge of the Bible, prevailed upon him to start a Bible class which met during the men's own lunch break—the start of many changed lives and different direction for many families. Soon wives were sending messages to the management office thanking Pittron for repairing marriages!

Alderson being more an activist than a writer, it is his biographer, Sproul, who summarizes the former's philosophy of labor. According to Sproul, Alderson's ideas on labor came from the biblical concept of responsibility, or *stewardship*. Private ownership is authorized by the law of God, but this authorization is conditioned by total accountability to God in every aspect of ownership. Private property and trade are to be governed by laws, laws which are according to righteousness. *God Himself* gives content to that righteousness: "The justice of Christian economics is determined by the standard of righteousness revealed in God's Word" (*Ibid.*, 196). Clearly, this is not libertarian license in terms of human autonomy, but stewardship accountable to God in the way goods are to be acquired and used.

Alderson thus sees the labor of a man as the employer's indebtedness to that man in terms of his value. He also sees much of the value of the man in and of himself as the image of God; to ignore any part of the man's value is theft. Free enterprise to Alderson is, therefore, not some kind of autonomous survival-of-the-fittest individualism under God's commandments.

Now Alderson (Sproul) has not applied the vocabulary of theonomy to these circumstances, nor has he argued against organized labor unions or the illegitimacy of strikes (strikes being a form of theft), as he might well have done. But he *has* demonstrated the workability of the value of the person, the practice of love, dignity, and respect for the image of God in man (all implied in the proper response to labor as ordered by God's law)—not only that it is God's will, but that it will bring God's blessings upon management which it never dreamed of.

### *Miscellanea*

The irony of Alderson's impact is that in 1975 Textron sold its Pittron facility to Bucyrus-Erie, which promptly released Alderson {97} because of his "Sunday school" approach (but more likely because Alderson as chief of operations could not be controlled the way many companies wanted). This, *despite* all the profits, *despite* the reconciliation between labor and management, and *despite* the unique way in which Pittron's work was having profoundly positive effects on steel workers' families! Blindness! Autonomous man will refuse God's richest blessings rather than submit to His law principles.

Alderson insists, of course, that something like Operation Turn-around cannot be one man's work. Now a labor representative consultant familiar to all segments of the industry in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky, Alderson says a company's management team must be agreed unanimously on such principles as the value of the person. Alderson's first and greatest achievement, it appears, was getting his point across to his colleagues.

### *Conclusion*

So, businessmen of the Lord, take heart; the possibilities are unlimited. Only remember: the more unanimously management engages in these principles, the more positive will be the results (i.e., unanimity on such principles as are asserted or implied in Gen. 1:27; Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:10–15; Mal. 3:5; James 5:4; and Eph. 6:9, etc.). Bonuses and incentives have always been catalytic toward increasing productivity and upholding the dignity of workers; so also are sincere words of appreciation. Words are important (Matt. 12:37). Management may also make Christian school tuition scholarships available for laborers' children. If so inclined, companies may sponsor or cosponsor a Christian school (as has been done), giving employees' children first crack at a first-rate education (here is management saying to its employees, *we are interested in you*). Alderson has shown that rebuilding *can* be done. Can we not improve by use of a full-orbed theonomic approach—some things which have been suggested above?

God's law can be the soul of a business. It *must* be for continued prosperity. What we need are God's men willing to be the salt of the



earth. Take a determined stand, not only to pay your deserving labor well, but to respect them as your most precious commodity. God will bless the labor of your hands (and get a copy of *Stronger Than Steel* to encourage you along the way).

# MANICHAEUUS GOES PUBLIC

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*James H. Griffith*

## *Historical (?) Prologue*

Manichaeus was enjoying his third lunchtime martini with his business partners, when the subject turned to that stubborn fellow who had recently set up shop next door.

“Tell me,” said Manichaeus meaningfully, “what shall we do about our brother, Christian? He seems to have the whole town in an uproar—with his materialism and his utopian ideas.”

Antinomius was not concerned. “You know what I always say—live and let live.”

“That’s easy for you to say,” said Afides, with a worried look. “Everybody knows how you blow with the wind.”

Manichaeus held up a calming hand. “Afides, you simply *must* learn to control this anxiety. You’re worrying yourself into an early grave.” Manichaeus pondered deeply for several moments. Then: “Gentlemen, please, let’s try to approach this rationally—”

“Right,” interjected Antinomius. “If he wants to use honest weights and measures, isn’t that his business?”

Afides struck the table. “He’ll *ruin* me. He’ll ruin all of us. How can anybody make a living without a little edge? Inflation, taxes, unions, bureaucrats.... If I had to use *honest* weights...well, there goes my profit margin, that’s all!” {99} “You’re both missing the point.” Manichaeus was also becoming heated now “The man’s a heretic and shouldn’t even be allowed to own a business. He’s so crassly...materialistic!”

Afides cut in again. “Who cares about his religious beliefs?! He’s too *scrupulous!*”

Manichaeus regained control of the situation with a stern glance at each of his friends. “By asserting his heretical religious beliefs so openly, the man is undercutting civil authority. He’s confusing the divine with the carnal. He’s teaching people to apply divine, spiritual principles to the decadent material reality we live in. And it’s troubling

the simple people who foolishly listen to him, causing them to question us, and our way of doing business.”

After that, the discussion bogged down, because Manichaeus’s flesh got very drunk, Antinomius left before the bill could be split up, and Afides was so undone by his financial worries that he forgot to eat in his hurry to return to the office.

### *The Thesis Stated: Creation*

The present essay is not intended to be an exhaustive treatment of the Christian’s relationship to the sphere of commerce. Nor is it claimed to be a work of original scholarship. Rather, this article is an attempt, more than anything else, (1) to categorize some of the shortcomings of the Christian business community, as personally observed in the author’s law practice and small business dealings, (2) to analyze how and to what degree these shortcomings are attributable to a faulty understanding of the orthodox doctrine of creation, and (3) to point the reader to the more substantial works of several leading Christian scholars who have dealt in great detail with the issues raised herein. (Thus the extensive use of direct quotation in what follows.)

Truly, theology is, like the law, a seamless web. Analysis of practical failures in one’s walk is useful. Doctrinal deficiencies that lead to practical failures should be diligently sought out and corrected. However, it would be reductionist in the extreme to assert that one can always precisely isolate the doctrinal failure(s) behind specific instances of disobedience or practical shortcoming. God’s world is a world of multiple, concurrent causation. One poorly grasped doctrine can result in numerous practical failures; a single practical failure may be explained by multiple doctrinal errors. The following thoughts are offered in the hope {100} that those of us who labor in the business world will apply the searchlight of God’s revealed truth to every aspect of our endeavors.

An inadequate grasp of the doctrine of creation is surely the source of many shortcomings by God’s people. This is no less true in the business world than in the rest of society. As the Rev. R. J. Rushdoony has said in a related context:

This doctrine [of creation] has far-reaching implications for history. *First*, the doctrine of creation asserts that the universe, time, history,

man, and all things are the handiwork of a sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, and triune God. Second, this means that the meaning of history is to be understood primarily and essentially in terms of that God.<sup>53</sup>

### *Manichaeism vs. Orthodoxy*

Thus we see that creation implies God's sovereignty over *all* of creation. Unfortunately, many Christians have such a narrow view of the kingdom of God that they see it as virtually exhausted by the four walls of their local church building. The historical Manichaeus, as well as modern practicing dualists of less celebrity, seem content thus to separate their religion from the rest of their life.

For Manichaeism, the world is divided into two different and alien substances, spirit and matter. Each is equally ultimate, and both are self-sufficient and separate realms. To be spiritual in the Manichaean sense means to be disdainful about and unconcerned with material things, because they are alien and constitute a drag and drain on the spirit. Spirit is held to be good, and matter, bad.<sup>54</sup>

For those Christians who evince Manichaean tendencies, Christianity becomes something one does on Sunday morning, and business something one does during the remainder of the week. The Bible is seen as providing, e.g., the form of corporate worship, but as devoid of guidance regarding the proper treatment of hired labor.

But this opens up a Pandora's box of doctrinal error. If the Bible applies only to what we do in church, who or what is then going to supply standards for our business activities? Various answers have been offered. It is now commonplace that godly business morality does *not* go hand in glove with public Christian profession. Indeed, one dedicated Christian attorney of the author's acquaintance has related his despair at {101} having to admit that his collection problems with Christian clients are greater than those with non-Christian clients. And in the author's own business dealings, the most blatant dishonesty has

53. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Biblical Philosophy of History* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1977), 3.

54. R. J. Rushdoony, "Manichaeism, Law, and Economics," *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 2, no. 1 (Summer 1975): 7.

come at the hands of so-called Christian filmmakers, not at the hands of “Hollywood” filmmakers.

In other words, many Christians have adopted the world’s standards. This even though the Word clearly teaches that such standards are enmity against God (Rom. 8:7). Thus, in point of fact, some believers are using *Satan’s* rulebook to govern their businesses.

Certain schools of dispensational theology also promote a subtle form of Manichaeism, in that the Mosaic Law is taught to be entirely set aside in this age of grace. However, lest any reader who considers himself a dispensational theologian feel encouraged in such setting aside of the Old Testament law, reference should be made to the words of Charles H. Welch, one of England’s leading dispensational expositors (often styled by others a *hyper*-dispensationalist):

We are now found under a new economy, that of grace. Under the dispensation of grace, however, the moral law will be kept as certainly as if our salvation depended on it. The dispensation of grace only sets the law aside as a means of salvation; when the law enunciates moral truth, this remains as true under grace as before.<sup>55</sup>

And in discussing Paul’s answer in Romans to the question, “Is the law sin?” Mr. Welch explains that:

While it is perfectly true that the believer must die to the law, even as he must die to sin if he is to possess life, and liberty, and sanctification, it must be most clearly understood that there is no other relation between sin and law, except that through the flesh both tend to death. The Apostle had insisted upon the necessity of deliverance from law, not because it was evil, but because it could not produce holiness in man. What it did produce was an intensified knowledge of sin, and of inward corruption.

The prohibitions of the law were for the protection and blessing of man, but he needed something more than prohibition and penalty. What the law actually did was to stir up the latent rebellion that lies dormant in every heart. But this, while it for ever sets aside the law as a possible means of life and holiness, in no sense reflects upon the holiness of the law itself:

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment [i.e., the one under discussion] holy, and just, and good” (Rom. vii. 12).<sup>56</sup> {102}

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55. Charles H. Welch, *Just, and the Justifier* (London: Berean Publishing Trust, [n.d.] 1972), 164.

### *God's Law*

The introduction into one's personal operating theology of the dualistic disjunction between "church duties" and "business duties" thus reflects the failure to grasp the relationship between God's act of creation and His determination of the rules by which that creation is to be governed. God is not only the creator per se, He is also the lawgiver. And since He created everything that is, His law governs all of creation. Stated more academically, we might say that the doctrine of God's total sovereignty is implicit in the orthodox doctrine of creation.

Much of the above discussion relative to dualistic tendencies is applicable here. But perhaps a more "commercial" application would help to reinforce the present writer's thesis.

God, as Creator, is owner of the universe....God places limitations on the exercise of the rights of property....

Ownership thus involves personal stewardship. The use of property is bounded by the laws of the various possessors: individuals, civil governments, private corporations, families, churches. Each has its own rules and regulations set by the Bible. None can ever be the exclusive owner, for no human or earthly sphere of life is exclusively divine. As Proverbs 10 through 29 indicate, men are to be charitable, industrious, honest, just; in short, they are to be faithful stewards of the goods God loans or leases to them.<sup>57</sup>

Sad to relate, many (some unwittingly) serve gods other than the God of Scripture. Consider the businessman who wouldn't think of missing the Sunday morning "worship services" broadcast from the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, or Dallas Stadium, or the Superdome. Or the man who worships the great god golf with much greater fervor than he worships the God of the Bible. Or the professor who worships his own material success with such dedication that God and family are nearly forgotten. What is this but idolatry?

Perhaps more easily remedied is the common failure to grasp the "case-law" nature of much of Scripture. Again, Rushdoony is apposite:

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56. *Ibid.*, 185–86.

57. Gary North, "Basic Implications of the Six-Day Creation" *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 1, no. 1 (Summer 1974): 18–19.

In order to understand biblical law, it is necessary to understand also certain basic characteristics of that law. *First*, certain broad premises or principles are declared. These are declarations of basic law. The Ten Commandments give us such declarations. The Ten Commandments are not therefore laws among laws, but are the basic laws, of which the various laws are specific examples....A *second* characteristic of biblical law is that {103} the major portion of the law is *case law*, i.e., the illustration of the basic principles in terms of specific cases. These specific cases are often illustrations of the extent of the application of the law; that is, by citing a minimal type of case, the necessary jurisdictions of the law are revealed....Without case law, God's law would soon be reduced to an extremely limited area of meaning.<sup>58</sup>

Additionally, ignorance of the Puritans' labors in the law of God leaves many believers with a foreshortened view of the scope of that law. According to chapter 19:4 of the Westminster Confession of Faith: "To [Israel] also, as a body politic, He gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the State of that people; not obliging any other now, further than the *general equity* thereof may require."<sup>59</sup> The concept of "equity" or "general equity," as it is sometimes styled, is largely unfamiliar to modern ears. James Jordan explains the concept in these words:

The civil aspects of the unchanging moral law of God were phrased in case law, dealing with cases common and sometimes peculiar to the ancient, agrarian Israelite economy. Some, perhaps many, of these cases no longer exist in the modern world. Nonetheless, the basic principles contained in the case laws can and must be applied to the modern civil order....[T]he English Puritans used the term "equity" to denote this phenomenon of basic principles and common cases still being binding in the New Testament era.<sup>60</sup>

Disobedience knows many guises. One might also point to those who fail to apply God's standards and values because they don't know what those standards are. The Holy Spirit, speaking through the apos-

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58. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1973), 10–12.

59. Emphasis supplied; quoted in James B. Jordan, "Calvinism and 'The Judicial Law of Moses': An Historical Survey," *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 5, no. 2 (Winter 1978–79): 32.

60. *Ibid.*, 28.

tle of the Gentiles, admonishes us to “study to shew thyself approved unto God” that we might be unashamed workmen in the day that our works are judged (2 Tim. 2:15). In an era that values doctrine so little in comparison to more showy emotional displays, it should not be surprising that many of the fundamentals of the faith are so largely unknown or ignored.

Other Christians, in their genuine and proper desire to avoid the errors of rabbinical Judaism, seek to set at naught all “law” lest they find themselves “fallen from grace.” This position has been dealt with above by Charles Welch, and has been shown to be without merit.

Others feel that they can willy-nilly disregard the law of God because God—who we know to be a God of love—will always bail them {104} out. Such knowing disobedience is deserving of much more than the wink it often receives. The Lord during His days on earth said, “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matt. 4:7). What else is such conduct as this but tempting the Lord God?

### *Knowledge*

Knowledge is a most valuable commodity to any businessman. Knowledge of markets, knowledge of one’s own products, knowledge of human behavior—these are some of the prime constituents of any successful business endeavor. Yet knowledge of these things, and of the vast variety of details involved in running a business, cannot be obtained in a theological vacuum. In the words of Professor Van Til, there are no “brute facts.” But many a Christian businessman behaves as if the knowledge obtained from his business school professors, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the television news is uncontaminated by the humanistic framework underlying its collection, organization, and presentation.

The instructed Christian, however, knows that true knowledge is only that knowledge that passes the criteria supplied by the Holy Scriptures. Not only is the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 1:7), but His Word is the only lens through which we can see reality accurately. God only, as the omniscient creator, knows perfectly and exhaustively. John Whitehead, the noted Christian litigator, puts it well: “Man should base his world view...upon the principles of the Bible. The



Bible is the grid through which man should view the world.”<sup>61</sup> In Gary North’s words:

The revelation of God to man is the source of all human wisdom. Apart from God the sovereign Creator no knowledge is possible. He has made all things, directed all events, and He comprehends all facts. We, as God’s images, are to think God’s thoughts after Him.<sup>62</sup>

Rushdoony has made a similar point in his *Biblical Philosophy of History*, referred to earlier:

Truth is a person, Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, and truth is His infallible and enscriptured word....Since “All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3), all things are only truly understandable in terms of Him and His creative purpose. The true interpretation of reality is only possible in terms of the triune God, of whom Jesus Christ is the declaration or exegesis (John 1:18: {105} he hath declared him or *exegesato*, has made known). Apart from Him, the universe quickly falls apart, in human thought, into a world of illusion or of brute factuality, with every fact unrelated to all others. The denial of the triune God is the denial ultimately of meaning, community, nature, family, life, culture, and of all things, and the collapse of man’s existence into hell, total unrelatedness and meaninglessness....Because the ontological Trinity is the Creator of all things, the Trinity has priority in all categories of thought, for there neither can be nor is there law, society, justice, structure, design or meaning apart from God. The denial of God is therefore the denial of truth, life, relationships, values, society, science, art, and all things else.<sup>63</sup>

### *Providence*

Yet another corollary of the doctrine of creation is that of God’s providence. The doctrine of providence

affirms the *sustaining hand* of God in time....Psalm 104 is a lengthy presentation of God’s creative, sustaining providence in history. This applies equally to matters spiritual and physical: “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen

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61. John W. Whitehead, *The Second American Revolution* (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1982), 162.

62. North, “Basic Implications,” 16.

63. Rushdoony, *The Biblical Philosophy of History*, 72–73.

thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness” (Isa. 41:10; cf. 42:5–6). The doctrine of providence reveals the total sovereignty of God.<sup>64</sup>

How many Christians needlessly fret themselves over financial problems, or adopt the idolatrous materialism of the infidel culture around them, simply because they have not fully acquainted themselves with God’s promises of sustaining love in their lives. The Rev. David Chilton, in his fine book on biblical economics, addresses this issue in detail, and is worthy of a rather lengthy quotation:

If you have needs, the Bible commands you to *pray* (Philippians 4:6–7), to be *content* (Philippians 4:4, 8, 12), and to *work* (1 Thessalonians 4:11); and God, who hears the cry of the poor, will supply all your needs (Philippians 4:19). We have a wealthy Father, and under His care we can be at peace, regardless of our financial standing. But this requires obedience to Him, seeking Him as the Source of wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18), and finding our happiness in obedience to His law....

It is easy to point a finger at the culture around you. But don’t forget: *you* are the culture: get the log out of your own eye, and don’t seek legislation {106} and the long arm of the state to rid your neighbor of the mote in his. Envy is a cheat. It will destroy you and your culture much more than any enemies—imagined or real—will do.<sup>65</sup>

Elsewhere in the same book, Chilton points out that:

The man who obeys God has the deep assurance that God is always building, always watching. He can really *sleep* and *relax* under God’s provision. The wicked businessmen of Amos’ day were unable to rest during the Sabbath, anxious as they were to make the bucks in any way they could. But God was not building with them, and when the Assyrians invaded, the watchmen of Israel were unable to prevent destruction. The Bible encourages godly labor, thrift, diligence and planning; but the workaholic is condemned as well as the sluggard. Both live in defiance of the law of God. The lazy man will not work, and the man who is enslaved to his work cannot rest. Jesus rejects both. Obedience to Him requires careful stewardship *and* trust in His care....<sup>66</sup>

64. North, “Basic Implications,” 6.

65. David Chilton, *Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1981), 124–25.

66. *Ibid.*, 11.

## Long-Range Outlook

We are to labor diligently in honest work, trusting to the Lord to provide for our needs. The lust for gain, the materialism, that one sees in the confessing church is simply a lack of obedience at this point. We are not to be like the “heathen” who know not God nor His revealed truth. Rather, we are to put aside earthly cares, because we know the tender love of our Father to those He has elected to eternal life. Thus we can labor in hope—hope for having our present, earthly needs met, as well as hope of being resurrected to spend eternity in the Presence.

And because we can rest in the Lord’s predestinating grace insofar as the everyday issues of life are concerned, we are free to focus substantial energy on *long-range* goals. The results are not due to the arm of flesh anyway—such availeth not—but rather to the Lord working in and through our faith-obedience.

Many brethren share the attitude of the Rev. J. Vernon McGee that “you don’t polish brass on a sinking ship.” But even if one takes a dispensational view of Scripture, one must admit that the battle is always the Lord’s. He raises kings up, and He puts kings down. He is working through *all* events of human history to bring His purposes to pass, notwithstanding the vain efforts of the ungodly and the sins of believers. Therefore the Christian should not limit his efforts to snatching a few brands from the fire. He should actively be seeking to bring his {107} business (as well as every other area of his life) under the dominion of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), knowing that such efforts surely will be rewarded.

## Conclusions

1. The fundamental doctrine of creation must be brought to bear upon the Christian’s involvement in the world of business. There is no room for dualism in any area of God’s universe. God alone is sovereign, and that sovereignty must be recognized in the office as well as in the pew.
2. God’s law is the standard by which we are to express our faith in the fact of God’s sovereignty over our lives and callings.
3. Obedience to God’s law, by putting one’s faith into action, will bring God’s blessing, according to His many promises in Scripture.

4. Let us not adopt the conversation of “Manichaeus,” “Antinomius,” or “Afides.” Rather, let us each strive, as Paul enjoined Timothy, to “make full proof” of his ministry (2 Tim. 4:5) in the world of business.

# WHAT ABOUT THE THIRTY-YEAR MORTGAGE?

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*The Committee for Godly  
and Profitable Living  
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Today, the majority of homeowners are buying homes and financing them by thirty-year mortgages. This has become so well accepted in our society that few have thought to question how feasible or biblical it is.

Some Christians have considered the biblical view toward debt. Many have not. Many Christians are not aware that the Bible gives advice concerning debt. Today, debt is most commonly used and accepted in the purchase of a home. Should the Christian consider what the Bible has to say about debt before he purchases a home? Does the Bible offer any real and usable advice concerning debt and the purchase of a home?

Prior to the Depression of the 1930s and prior to the creation of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934, very few home mortgages were more than seven to ten years. Due to the lack of tax incentives and to requirements for high down payments, few people were able to own homes. Most Americans were renters. Homes were considered to be a liability. As a result of the creation of federal agencies such as FHA, home mortgages today are for thirty years, there is a low down payment; and there are tax breaks on the interest paid. FHA produced the desired result by increasing the number of home owners. Christians should be alert to recognize another result of the debt that is encouraged by the government. Christian economist Gary North comments, “What we have constructed is the most massive debt burden in the history of mankind ... a pyramid of debt undreamed of by users throughout {109} history.... We have made every man a long-term debtor” (*Remnant Review* 4, no. 9 [May 6, 1977]: 53).

It is not the purpose of this brochure to say that all indebtedness is sin. The Bible never states that all indebtedness is sin. However, by observing the massive debt of our nation, one can readily recognize a widespread spiritual problem. The spiritual problem is one of faith and in whom that faith is placed. Proverbs 22:7 states that *the borrower is servant to the lender*. The lender today, even if only the local bank or savings and loan institution, is part of the extremely powerful banking system. According to the Bible, this system in the latter days will become the chief means through which the Antichrist gains control over the peoples of the world (Rev. 13:16–17). Great indebtedness—by transferring the right of choice from the borrower to the lender—concentrates all power into the hands of a few. Striving against indebtedness is thus the same battle as that for political freedom.

In the Bible, debts were limited to six years (Deut. 15). God's law took into consideration the fact that man was not omniscient. Man does not have the ability to predict his lifestyle for thirty years. This is why debt was limited, because man is limited. The Bible most clearly speaks to today's spiritual problem by contrasting debt to faith in Deuteronomy 28:8–13: "The Lord will command the blessing upon you in your house and in all that you put your hands to.... So all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord ... and the Lord will make you abound in prosperity.... The Lord will open for you His good storehouse ... and you shall lend to many nations, BUT YOU SHALL NOT BORROW. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail...." The blessings which come from God are not to be repaid. To be the head and not the tail, the Christian must avoid indebtedness.

Many agree that avoidance of indebtedness for cars, appliances, clothes, etc., is wise and biblical, but few will apply this philosophy to indebtedness for a home. It is the common opinion that today's economy will not allow a person to avoid or limit debt in the purchase of a home. If this is your opinion, then you have allowed the world system to infiltrate and redirect your faith. If you are in debt, or if you are considering debt, ask yourself these questions first:

Have I actively petitioned God to provide for the need before I commit myself to a debt? (Amplification of James 4:2 could possibly say, "You have a need, so you go into debt.... *You do not have because you do not ask.*") {110}

Have I been patient and allowed God sufficient time to provide for the need before I commit myself to a debt? (1 Tim. 6:6; Gal. 5:22) Is indebtedness equal to impatience?

Have I actively and diligently sought ways to provide for the need besides committing myself to debt?

Many have justified indebtedness for a home by conveniently calling it an investment. It is true that real estate in today's economy is one of the best hedges against inflation. However, your home should not be considered an investment but rather a place of security. Indebtedness does not provide security. A home should provide a place of freedom and a physical illustration of God's protection and provision. Indebtedness does not allow for this.

Markets change according to supply and demand and the state of the economy. Real estate cannot always be sold as readily as it is today. No matter what the conditions, the Christian is bound by his covenant to repay the debt. "*The wicked borroweth and payeth not again*" (Prov. 37:21).

How can the Christian purchase a home debt-free or with limited debt when the worldview deems it impossible and impractical? You as a Christian should:

- 1) Determine your motives for purchasing a home and justify the size and type home you are considering (James 4:1–3; Prov. 16:2).
- 2) Devise a plan by which the home can be purchased debt-free or with limited debt. It is up to you to devise your plans (Prov. 16:9) and to present them to God (Prov. 16:3). God cannot honor your plans until you have devised them and have seriously presented them to Him (James 4:8, 10; Prov. 16:3; Ps. 37:3–7, 23; 145:19)..
- 3) Actively and seriously pursue your plans. Pray for wisdom and prosperity in your job, wisdom in investments, ability to save, etc. (Prov. 24:3–4; James 1:5; Isa. 48:17–19; Jer. 10:23). Faith has a resting side and a doing side. Faith-doing is doing diligently with the assurance that God will honor your plans (Prov. 21:5; Heb. 11:1; Eph. 3:20). God enjoys your plans and efforts (Ps. 37:23).
- 4) Purchase a home no larger nor more expensive than that with which you have been provided (1 Thess. 4:10–11; Prov. 30:7–9).
- 5) Live as a free man (2 Tim. 2:4) and as a responsible parent (Eccl. 5:10).

- 6) Limit your debt if you cannot pay cash for a house. There are advantages to limited debt as opposed to the thirty-year mortgage. On a \$24,000 loan at 9 percent interest the comparison is:

Years	Monthly Principal & Interest	Monthly Income Needed	Total Interest Paid
7	\$386	\$1,500	\$ 8,435
10	304	1,300	12,482
20	216	1,000	27,824
30	193	900	45,519

For approximately \$100/month more you could pay your home off in ten years instead of thirty years. To be able to accumulate as savings the difference in total interest paid between a twenty- and thirty-year mortgage, you would have to save \$49/month for thirty years; between ten and thirty, \$92/month for thirty years; between seven and thirty, \$103/month for thirty years. This is only one of the many alternatives to limiting debt. Extra principal payments, sinking funds, and balloon mortgages are a few of these alternatives.

A house is built by wisdom. You can build your home upon sand, or you can build your home upon rock.

God's Law or Chaos?

The Choice Is Yours.



# THE IMPACT OF OLD BELIEVERS UPON RUSSIAN SOCIETY

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*Ellen C. Myers*

## *1. Introduction*

### **A. Who are the “Old Believers”?**

On May 18, 1656, a council of the Russian Orthodox Church, headed by Patriarch Nikon (1605–1681), convened in Moscow to excommunicate Archpriest Ivan Neronov because he had refused to obey certain innovations of church ritual introduced by Nikon. Neronov’s excommunication “was the first instance of the Church Council’s condemnation of the supporters of the old rites.”<sup>67</sup> It was followed by Neronov’s penal exile to the monastery of Simon, to Vologda, and finally to the fortress of Kola, in the extreme north of Russia.<sup>68</sup>

Neronov was the first to lead a group of fervent and generally persevering supporters of the old rites who came to be alternately known as “Old Ritualists” (*staroobriatsy*), “Old Believers” (*starovertsy*), or, with official hostility and contempt, merely as “Schismatics” (*raskol’niki*). They were especially numerous among simple Russian lay people, and also among the lower, or “white,” parish clergy of the established Orthodox church. Despite recurrent persecution, the movement continued to exist from the time of its beginning in the early spring of 1653 until the present. By the latter half of the nineteenth century it comprised a significant number of Russian citizens latently hostile to the tsarist government. {113}

This paper will attempt to substantiate the thesis that the Old Believers’ impact upon Russian society has been moderately beneficial in the

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67. Serge A. Zenkovsky, “The Russian Church Schism: Its Background and Repercussions,” *Russian Review* 16 (October 1957): 37.

68. Avvakum, “The Life of Archpriest Avvakum by Himself,” in Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles and Tales* (New York: E. Dutton, [1963] 1974), 408.

economic area, but fundamentally harmful historically and politically. The impact of the Old Believers upon Russian society was harmful regardless of whether or not they took part in overt resistance to the various Russian governments which persecuted them. Discussion of this point will include an assessment of the so-called “populist thesis” advanced in the nineteenth century, which asserted that the Old Believer schism did not occur for religious reasons, but was exclusively due to popular opposition to centralization of political power in the hands of the tsar, and also to the increasing Westernization of Russian culture.

It should be pointed out that the Old Believer schism is the only major religious schism in Russian history, and that the Old Believers were the largest body of religious dissenters. There were other sects (for example, the Molokane, the Dukhobortsy, the Khlysty, the Stundists, and groups of Lutherans, Calvinists, and other Protestant evangelical associations). They could not nearly approximate the Old Believers in numbers and influence, however.

It would be a mistake to compare the Old Believers to the Protestants of the Reformation; the most correct parallel is probably that of the Roman Catholic traditionalists of our own time who support French archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. In this parallel the regular Roman Catholic church may be compared to the Russian established church and the party of Patriarch Nikon; the modern, post-Vatican I Mass would correspond to the Nikonian new ritual, and the former Tridentine (Latin) Mass to the old ritual cherished by the Old Believers.<sup>69</sup>

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69. The following “letter to the editor” of *POPE Herald*, a publication of Parents for Orthodoxy in Parochial Education, Box 6161, San Raphael, CA 94903, is representative of Roman Catholic adherents to the traditional, pre-Vatican I, Tridentine Mass:

“Now that His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, has offered the option of hearing Mass in Latin again, if we so wish, please count me in as one who has longed for many years for its return.

“I am 83, widowed and living alone, and struggling to keep the Faith in its modern form including drums, cymbals, tambourines, etc. How I miss yesterday’s beautiful pomp and ceremonies due our King, and ritual, the reverence, silence of meditation, etc. and the realization that God is really within us.

T.M., California.”

This letter appeared on page 5 of *POPE Herald* 2, no. 3 (Spring 1981).

The immediate origin of the Old Believers' schism has commonly been placed during the religious revival following the Russian "Time of Trouble" (1605–1613). During this "Time of Trouble" and intermittently during the first half of the seventeenth century there were also protracted wars with Poland and Sweden, and the additional devastations of plague and famine. A revivalistic group calling itself the "Lovers of God" (*Bogoliubtsy*) arose among the Orthodox faithful in the 1630s and 1640s<sup>70</sup> to preach repentance and renewal in the church. At one time the chief spokesman for this group was Ivan Neronov. Beyond this immediate connection, Old Belief has been traced to the influential teachings of Iosif Volotsky (Joseph of Volokolamsk, 1439–1515). Iosif Volotsky and his followers emphasized their belief in the divine anointing {114} of the tsar as the protector and preserver of true Orthodoxy. They stressed, as did the Old Believers, the importance of correctly observing the traditional solemn and splendid Orthodox church ritual.<sup>71</sup>

After Neronov's excommunication and banishment, his friend and associate in the "Lovers of God" revival, Archpriest Avvakum (1621–1682), became the principal leader of the Old Believers. Prior to 1653, Patriarch Nikon himself also belonged to the "Lovers of God," who then still enjoyed the support of Tsar Alexis and his closest advisors.

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70. The group is also called the "Zealots of Piety." I have been unable to find the Russian origin of this name.

71. Viktoria Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum* (Munich: Otto Sagner, 1961), 30–31. Pleyer has the following interesting footnote (n9a, 31):

"Yet in another sense the 'Josephites' are considered precursors of the Old Believers. Joseph Volotsky and his disciples placed great value upon the ritual, the solemn and splendid ceremonial of church worship service. This quality of the 'Josephites' is called 'canonical piety' (*ustavnoe blagochestie*), and 'ritually faithful direction of Russian piety' (*obriadovoe napravlenie russkogo blagochestia*) by Fedotov.

"Miliukov goes yet further: he calls Joseph a 'typical "nachetchik"' (overseer) in whom the lack of creative ideas was replaced by the reading of many books and by an extraordinarily good memory, which was often very characteristic of the later nachetchiki among the Old Believers. 'The history of the religious feeling among Old Believers is the history of the religious feeling of the Josephites after the seventeenth century.' (Riabushinsky, *Staroobriadchestvo i russkoe religioznoe chuvstvo*, Joinville-le-Pont, 1936, 20)."

Nikon was then a personal friend of Avvakum, as was Archpriest Stephen Vonifatievich, the tsar's personal confessor.<sup>72</sup>

Nikon and Avvakum were alike in many ways. Both exhibited a lively faith, practiced in a rather ascetic manner. Both shared a passionate desire for the renewal of Orthodox church life. Both were xenophobic traditionalists opposing Westernizing influences.<sup>73</sup> They even shared a common regional origin (northeast Russia). Finally, like Avvakum, Nikon had been a married parish priest, becoming a monk and rising in the celibate “black” church hierarchy only after all his children died, and after persuading his wife to take the veil.<sup>74</sup>

Avvakum has become the more famous and respected of the two because he suffered continual fierce persecution beginning in 1653 with banishment, exile, imprisonment (the last two years of his life in a cave underground), and finally martyrdom by burning at the stake in 1682. The adversities befalling Nikon—voluntary retirement, official deposition in 1666, and (peaceful) death in exile—were far less harsh. In addition, Avvakum has left us his autobiography, written in “a simple but vigorous, clear, and laconic style ... dynamic, and [reflecting] the active, unbending nature of the author,”<sup>75</sup> while all our descriptions of Nikon come to us from others.<sup>76</sup> The comparison between these two extraordinary men, both in their similarities and their irreconcilable

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72. Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1953), 913. Also cf. James H. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe* (New York: Random House, 1st Vintage Books ed., 1970), 154, and Zenkovsky, “The Russian Church Schism,” 40.

73. Tamara Talbott Rice writes about Nikon's traditionalism: “The new Patriarch was a staunch Graecophile, and a passionate traditionalist. Every deviation from Byzantine precedent struck him as evil and the tent-shaped church roused his especial anger. By dint of perseverance he succeeded in obtaining an edict banning the steeple church and ordering a return to the domed one, five domes being recommended as the ideal number. Between 1656 and 1685 Nikon applied himself to building in the prescribed style the Church of the Twelve Apostles in the Kremlin at Moscow and another in the Monastery of the New Jerusalem at Istra, to serve as examples to architects. Nikon's dogmatism proved unpopular among the people whilst his desire to prohibit all change met with opposition from those members of the upper classes whose business had taken them to Western Europe.”—Tamara Talbott Rice, *A Concise History of Russian Art*, 4th printing (New York: Praeger, 1974), 134–35.

74. Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 911.

75. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics*, 400.

differences, was ominously representative of the similarities between Russian society at large and the implacable, indigestible Old Believer “lump” in its body.

Nikon and his supporters initiated and imposed various changes in the traditional Orthodox ritual, because they believed that corruptions of the original liturgical texts had accrued in the course of time. In addition, they felt changes in spelling were needed, because Old Slavonic, the language of the liturgy, had become so different from the Russian language of the seventeenth century that it could scarcely be understood, and also varied in different liturgical manuals. Nikon and the reformers {115} had no intention of altering fundamental Orthodox church doctrine, but merely the ritual. The ritual, however, was a point of major concern for the Old Believers, since the ritual was for them the visible embodiment of fundamental and right Orthodox church doctrine.

The major changes in church ritual which caused the Old Believers to separate from the established church were the following:

- 1) The Old Believers recognized as canonical only the liturgical books written or printed before the Nikonian reforms. The Nikonians recognized the liturgical books printed after the reform.
- 2) The Old Believers retained in their confession of faith the words “The Holy Spirit, the true and life-giving Lord.” The Nikonians omitted the words “true and” in the confession. This meant to the Old Believers that the Nikonians saw in the Holy Spirit a mere participant in truth, not truth itself.
- 3) The Old Believers read and sang the Hallelujah not three but two times, adding “Glory be to thee, God!” The Nikonians sang it three times, without additions.
- 4) The direction of the liturgical procession is from east to west, or “with the sun” (*posolon*) for the Old Believers. The Nikonian reform changed the direction of the procession from west to east.
- 5) The Old Believers made the sign of the cross and the benediction with two fingers, the index finger and the middle finger, while the thumb is joined together with the last fingers. The Nikonians made

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76. There is a fascinating and generally favorable “epitaph” to Nikon in Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 158 (first three paragraphs).

the sign of the cross with three fingers, and put together the thumb and the little finger.

- 6) The Old Believers revered only crosses with eight arms. The Nikonians also revered crosses with four arms.
- 7) The Old Believers continued to write and pronounce the name of Jesus as “Isus,” which the established church under Nikon altered to read “Iisus.”
- 8) The Old Believers revered only the old icons predating Nikon, or copies of such icons.<sup>77</sup>

Among the above changes, the most important and controversial one was the sign of the cross, which, of course, immediately involved every single Orthodox believer and forced him to take a stand one way or another.<sup>78</sup> On this matter, P. J. Chrysostomus comments, “It is hardly an exaggeration to assert that the real precipitating factor—the fundamental reason—of the Schism was the alteration of the sign of the cross.”<sup>79</sup> To the Old Believers, as to the entire Russian Orthodox {116} church before the Nikonian reforms, the traditional two-finger cross meant the divine and the human nature of Jesus Christ. Although the deeper meaning behind the three-finger cross was held to be the Trinity, which seems meaningful to Christians believers as deeply as the divine and the human nature of Christ, the precious remembrance of Christ’s being both God and man was crucial to the Old Believers. For them, the presence of God Himself in the liturgy was questioned by this change more than by any of the other changes in the ritual.

Viktorija Pleyer attributes the Old Believers’ rejection of the reformed ritual largely to the fear of Westernization and modernization, which was especially rife among Russians at the time.<sup>80</sup> Pleyer makes no

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77. Metropolitan Philaret of the established Russian Orthodox Church, quoted in Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 40–41. This is the longest, most detailed list of major reforms I found together in one reference. The same list could have been pieced together from several other sources.

78. *Ibid.*, 41.

79. *Ibid.*

80. While Westernization and modernization of Russia reached their peak under Peter the Great, it began already to a significant extent under Peter’s father, Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich. Cf. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 148–49.

attempt to evaluate the schism on the deeper grounds of traditional Eastern Orthodox concepts of Christianity, other than to state that both the reformers and the Old Believers have been shown to be both right and wrong on some points of traditional liturgical practices and received liturgical texts. In a similarly cursory manner, Boris Shragin writes:

... [T]he tragic schism that broke out in the middle of the [seventeenth] century originated in the worship of ceremonial and liturgical forms. They were revered not because of their true meaning but because they were familiar from childhood....

The Russian schism indicated that Christianity had, by and large, been adopted only superficially and not in its essence.<sup>81</sup>

Robert Crummey, on the other hand, helps us to see the deep religious concerns motivating both sides in the schism, because he lets both sides speak for themselves:

...Why [did] a dispute over seemingly trivial questions split the Russian church and divide society....

Nikon's opponents, the Old Believers, offered their own simple and consistent interpretation of the crisis. In their view, the Russian Church, before Nikon, was the sole guardian of true Christianity ... his reform of the liturgy destroyed the faith and led Russia into apostasy. For nearly two centuries, the only other explanation was that of their opponents, the spokesmen of the reformed State church.... The ritual practices of the Russian church, they argued, had been confused and corrupt until Nikon reformed them.<sup>82</sup>

James Billington completes our picture of why the Old Believers rejected the liturgy changes. To the early leaders of the Old Believers, {117} “changing the two-fingered sign of the cross ... meant ... destroying symbols of Christ's divine-human nature.”<sup>83</sup> They felt that to spell the name of Jesus “Inus” instead of the traditional “Isus” “implied a change in God Himself.”<sup>84</sup> To omit the word “true” in the

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81. Boris Shragin, *The Challenge of the Spirit* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 150–51.

82. Robert O. Crummey, *The Old Believers and the World of Antichrist* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 4–5.

83. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 137.

84. *Ibid.*

confession of faith in the “true and life-giving Holy Spirit” seemed to imply “that the Holy Spirit merely participates in truth (like any student of the worldly sciences).”<sup>85</sup>

To make the entire issue more comprehensible to us, let us consider yet another alteration introduced by Nikon: a change in the Lord’s Prayer. Consider that the faithful in the established church were now to address God as “Our God” rather than as “Our Father.”<sup>86</sup> This reform might well make “Old Believers” out of contemporary American Bible-believing Christians of all denominations who know that Christ Himself instituted the Lord’s Prayer, beginning with the words “Our *Father* which art in heaven” in the Sermon on the Mount!<sup>87</sup>

To both sides, the liturgy was immensely important (as it is to Orthodox believers to this day), because full and strict participation in the liturgy was a prerequisite for eternal salvation, and this participation is participation in the Kingdom of God on earth. In the liturgy, with its full splendor, beauty, solemnity, and supposed historical immutability, God is literally dwelling among men. According to hallowed tradition, this concept of God among His people, embodied in the liturgical splendor and beauty of Byzantium, had persuaded Prince Vladimir of Kiev and his people to choose Greek Orthodoxy rather than Islam, Roman Catholicism or Judaism as their established religion (superseding paganism) in AD 988.<sup>88</sup> When altering the traditional liturgy, Nikon and his fellow reformers laid hands upon the deepest root of the tree of Russian society.

Why did the established church, and Nikon, push through their liturgical reforms? We have already referred to the established church’s answer, namely, that the old liturgy had become confused and corrupt. Serge Zenkovsky plausibly contends that the reforms were undertaken in order to accommodate the people of the regions newly acquired in the recent wars by Muscovite Russia (the Ukraine, White Russia, parts of Poland and Lithuania) by readjusting the Russian Orthodox church ritual to the Greek pattern.<sup>89</sup> He also writes, however:

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85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*

87. Matt. 6:9–13.

88. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia’s Epics*, 67–68.



There was no real necessity for the Church's denial of Muscovite religious traditions. True, the requirements of printing demanded conformity of text in the Church books and the elimination of contradictions of errors; {118} but Nikon's peremptoriness in initiating these changes was extreme. He issued his first directives upon the advice of the Greek and Ukrainian monks and bishops, while, at the same time, his measures were not condoned by the Patriarch of Constantinople...<sup>90</sup>

One of the Greek monks participating in the reforms was Arsen, who "had managed to become a Catholic three times, once a Moslem, and then, finally, Orthodox. For these successful conversions he was deported to Solovki Monastery."<sup>91</sup> His participation in the reforms "was largely responsible for the disrepute into which Nikon's reforms fell."<sup>92</sup>

The established church and the majority of tsars attempted to root out Old Belief by intermittently fierce persecution. This persecution did not accomplish its goal. On the contrary, the Old Believers multiplied. Alexander Gerschenkron writes:

The numbers of Old Believers must be presumed to have grown very much faster than the rate of growth of the population.... Even in the sixties of the nineteenth century, there were whole provinces where about one-third of the members of the established Church continued to use the two-finger cross....

I have computed the numbers of Great Russians at Peter's time from V. M. Kabanov, *Narodselenie Rossii v XVIIi pervoy polovine XIX veka* (*Russia's Population in the 18th Century and the First Half of the 19th Century*) (Moscow, 1963, 159–61). This would mean that while the Great Russian population increased *six fold* between the Petrine Period and the twentieth century, the number of Old Believers was about *forty times* larger in our century than in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.<sup>93</sup>

The figures on Old Believer population have been grossly underestimated, and the following examination by various authors

89. Zenkovsky, "The Russian Church Schism," 40–46.

90. *Ibid.*, 43.

91. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics*, n59 447.

92. *Ibid.*

93. Alexander Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror: Four Lectures in Economic History* (Cambridge University Press, 1970), 136n15.

bears this out. Gerschenkron writes that “a recent Soviet author gives a figure of 20–25,000,000 Old Believers for the time preceding the October Revolution (cf. F. Fedorenko, *Sekty, ich [sic] vera i dela*) (Moscow, 1965, 102).”<sup>94</sup> If, as Gerschenkron also states, “by extrapolating from the 1897 census one obtains a number of Great Russian population at the time of about 60,000,000,”<sup>95</sup> then Old Believers at the turn of our century made up about one-third of the Great Russian population—and it was upon the Great Russian population that the tsarist government mainly relied for leadership in the Russian empire. These figures are substantially the same as those reported by Serge Bolshakoff,<sup>96</sup> who draws upon estimates by bishops of the established church, by a prelate of the Old Believers by the name of Ivan Yuzov, by the liberal Russian historian {119} Pavel Miliukov, and by another Old Believer prelate, Irenarch Parfenov. The number of Old Believers in 1917 was estimated to be about twenty million. Bolshakoff even writes that “with the normal increase of population the number of Nonconformists [including sects besides the Old Believers, such as the Molokane, the Dukhobortsy, the Skoptsy, the Khlysty, and small Protestant groups] should have reached 20,000,000 by 1900,”<sup>97</sup> a figure which tallies closely with Gerschenkron’s computation.

The official government figures were ridiculously out of agreement with these estimates. Frederick Conybeare, quoting Pavel I. Mel’nikov, Ivan Iuzov, and Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, cites the results of one particular finding by two government statistical expeditions for the study of the Old Believer schism:

In ... Nizhegorod according to the Governor’s figures, the number of sectaries that is, Old Believers of both sexes, 20,246. According to the statistical commissioners sent to examine the facts on the spot, 172,500.

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94. *Ibid.*

95. *Ibid.*

96. Serge Bolshakoff, *Russian Nonconformity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), 15–16.

97. *Ibid.*, 16.

In ... Kostroma, official figure 19,870. The commissioners Bruanchaninov and Arnoldi counted 105,572.

In ... Yaroslav the numbers were 7,454 and 278,417 respectively.

In these Governments then the real figures were five, eight and a half and thirty-seven times the official ones, and the official total for the three taken together one-eleventh of the true. It follows that the real total for the whole of Russia in 1852 should have been not 910,000, but nearly ten millions.<sup>98</sup>

Conybeare elaborates further:

The Commission, continues Uzov, reduced ... the figures: e.g. in the Yaroslav Government it reckoned 278,417, where one of its members J. Aksakov estimates the orthodox as being but a fourth of the population, with the result that, as there were in 1852 as many as 943,583 persons in this Government, the true proportion of dissidents must have been 672,687. Another member of the Commission, Count Stenbok, reckoned the orthodox to be only a third of the population, in which case the dissidents numbered 629,056, against an official record of not more than 12,000.

In the Nizhegorod Government the Commission only counted 172,000, where in the sequel the Bishop Jeremiah counted 233,323.<sup>99</sup>

Conybeare cites similar figures for several more pages, ending his report with the following conclusion: {120}

Allowing for growth of population alone, there must have been some twenty millions of Raskol [Old Believers] in 1900; if we allow for their active propaganda many more. In 1917 their numbers must have approached twenty-five millions at least. Yet at the end of the century Russian authorities after twenty years of Pobedonostsev's regime, reckoned them at only two million and a quarter, a figure fantastically small.<sup>100</sup>

The last estimate by Conybeare tallies closely with the figure of twenty-five millions quoted by Gerschenkron. We may therefore safely assume that the Old Believers were a substantial part of the Great Russian population before the October Revolution, perhaps roughly one-third. Put differently, nearly one in every three Great Russians were probably

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98. Frederick C. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1962; Harvard University Press, 1921), 243.

99. *Ibid.*, 242–43.

100. *Ibid.*, 249.

an Old Believer. A minority of this magnitude is necessarily of great importance in its society, and exercises decisive influence, whether deliberately or not.

John Curtiss has made the following computation about the proportion of Old Believers to the total population of the Russian empire:

In 1897 there were 117,120,132 people in the empire, without Poland and Finland. If in this somewhat larger area the proportion of Old Believers and sectarians to the rest of the population was the same as in 1851, their number in 1897 must have been about 17,500,000.<sup>101</sup>

Based upon the estimates of total numbers and percentages of Old Believers and other sectarians furnished by Conybeare,<sup>102</sup> the number of Old Believers contained in the total of 17,500,000 estimate by Curtiss comes to about 15,645,000. This in turn means that in 1897 about 13 percent, or one out of every seven or eight Russian citizens, was an Old Believer. This minority is similar in size to the Black minority in the United States today.

The size of the Old Believer minority is of importance both for the established church and for the tsarist government, Russia's most important political and social institutions before the October Revolution. Both these institutions were considered illegal and apostate by the Old Believers. Neither could expect the Old Believers' support, but rather was forced to distrust and even fear them. The Old Believers were a real and always latent threat to state and church.<sup>103</sup>

### **B. The Impact of the Old Believers upon Russian Society**

Let us now examine the impact of the Old Believer schism upon Russian society and history. Billington writes: {121}

The decisive moment of the century—what Russians call the *perelom* (divide in the stairs, breaking point of a fever)—was the formal, ecclesiastical pronouncement of the schism in 1667. It represented a kind of *coup d'eglise*, which in religious Muscovy was as far-reaching in its implications as the Bolshevik *coup d'état* exactly 250 years later in secularized St. Petersburg. The decisions of the Moscow Church Council of 1667, like those of the St. Petersburg Soviet in 1917, were a point of no return in Russian history.<sup>104</sup>

101. John Shelton Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of Empire, 1900–1917* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 139.

102. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 246.

There was among the Old Believers an apocalyptic mood. They saw in Nikon, and also in Tsar Alexis and in his successors, the Antichrist of the Bible, or at least the Antichrist's agents. However one might feel about this "doomsday" attitude, it is undeniable that the schism ended an era in Russian history which had been guided by three fundamental concepts. These concepts were (1) the "Third Rome" idea, (2) the "God

103. The difference between the "priestist" Old Believers (*popovtsy*), and the "priestless" Old Believers (*bezpopovtsy*) was in the administration of the church sacraments, and in the cohesion of the respective groups. The "priestists" used runaway priests of the state church when possible. After nearly two centuries of efforts, they finally (1847) found a canonically consecrated Greek Orthodox bishop, Ambrosius, who had been deposed from his bishopric by the Turks, and who then agreed to move to Belaja Krinica, just the other side of the Austrian-Russian border. From there he consecrated priests for the "priestists," who smuggled these priests into Russia with much difficulty caused by the repressive rule of Tsar Nicholas I. These priests were recognized by the government only in 1906. The "priestists" numbered 3 million out of a total of 11 million Old Believers between 1860–70 (Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*). They remained essentially one single, cohesive group from the original schism until the present.

The "priestless," on the other hand, were so influenced by their belief that the Antichrist ruled Russia, and that therefore no truly Orthodox hierarchy was left anywhere on earth, that they would not employ any priests, even if fugitives, consecrated by any established church anywhere. They therefore appointed laypersons from among themselves to administer the sacraments they considered indispensable (baptism, confession, communion). This issue caused great controversy and split the "priestless" Old Believers into many subsidiary sects.

The problem of marriage—also a sacrament in traditional Orthodox doctrine—therefore also loomed large among the "priestless." Could laypeople perform it validly? Was it right to bring children into a world ruled by the Antichrist? Some "priestless" sects allowed marriage; others forbade it; yet others even demanded that those already married should separate on penalty of exclusion from their own group.

"Priestless" Old Believer sects arose not only over questions of fundamental doctrinal importance, but also over quite minuscule differences, such as veneration of crosses made of ebony only (Pleyer, *Das russische Altglaubigentum*, 32n20). Sects also arose when some individual was disenchanted with his group for some personal reason, and simply founded a new group. There was a proverb, "Each peasant a faith, each woman a community or interpretation" (Pleyer, *ibid.*, 34n21).

One is painfully reminded of Protestant splinter groups, perhaps particularly numerous in the United States!

104. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 121.

dwelling among men” idea originally received from Byzantium, and (3) the ideal of a paternalistic relationship between the tsar as the God-anointed ruler of his truly Orthodox people. A corollary to these concepts is (4) the ideal of *sobornost* or community in religious communion, which was also profoundly affected by the schism.

The “Third Rome” idea originated with the monk Philotheus of Pskov, who probably first suggested it to Tsar Ivan III (1462–1505). Its earliest surviving statement is contained in a letter Philotheus wrote in 1511 to Tsar Vasily III (1505–1533):

The church of ancient Rome fell because of the Apollinarian heresy, as to the second Rome—the Church of Constantinople—it has been hewn by the axes of the Hagarenes [refers to the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453]. But in this third, new Rome, the Universal Apostolic Church under thy mighty rule radiates forth the Orthodox Christian faith to the ends of the earth more brightly than the sun.... Hear me, pious Tsar, all Christian kingdoms have converged in thine alone. Two Romes have fallen, a third stands, a fourth there shall not be....<sup>105</sup>

This solemn and inspiring concept of Russia’s special mission on earth greatly appealed to the messianic idealism which is seemingly an innate characteristic of man, and often of Russian man in particular. What higher and holier call can there be in life but to bring the pure gospel of divine, splendid, and beautiful truth to one’s fellow men all over the earth? Russia, fondly remembering her “mother,” Orthodox Christian Kiev, which was lost three hundred years before the “Third Rome” idea {122} arose, accepted this idea like a sacred trust. Its echoes persisted until the Slavophilism of the nineteenth century; they may be heard, I think, even in the unabashed and optimistic evangelism of idealistic Russian Communists of the October Revolution.

But after the Nikonian reform, could Russia truly be considered, or continue to be considered, the “Third Rome,” that is, the last earthly empire safeguarding the true and pure Christian faith? If the liturgy had become corrupted during the preceding centuries, as the Nikonians contended, then had the believers in the “Third Rome” idea been mistaken all along? Zenkovsky writes:

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105. *Ibid.*, 58.

When in 1656 and again in 1667 the adherents to the old Muscovite traditions were finally excommunicated they asked, not unjustifiably, “How can it be that the Muscovite saints, who crossed themselves with two fingers and sang ‘Alleluia’ in the old way, have erred and thus been anathematized?” In their view... the Muscovite Church was right and could never sin in word, customs or writings, for the Church was sacred and nothing in its practice and doctrine could be suppressed or altered.<sup>106</sup>

Once reform was even attempted, doubts were inevitable about the validity of the “Third Rome” idea.

The second concept, “God dwelling among men,” is closely related to the first. If the correct liturgy is in itself the manifestation—or more precisely, the actual incarnation—of God dwelling among men, then either God had in fact not dwelled among men all along (if the liturgy had been in process of corruption, as the reformers asserted), or the reforms themselves were the corruption (as the Old Believers asserted). Again, even the attempt at reform must raise doubts about the validity of the concept of “God dwelling among men” in the liturgy and again, such doubts must become virtual certainty by the victory of the reformers. It is no wonder that the Old Believers believed that the Anti-christ had come, who “as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God...”<sup>107</sup>

The third concept, the paternalistic relationship between the tsar and his truly Orthodox people, is inseparable from the other two. If Russia was, or would be, no longer truly Orthodox—then how could the tsar be the last and only Orthodox ruler in the world? Worse, if the tsar sided with the reformers, as did Alexis in 1667, and especially as did his son Peter the Great—then how could the truly Orthodox trust him as the divinely anointed leader of their state, and so in a sense as their {123} earthly father? Robert Crummey correctly points out that “the Council of 1667 decreed that opponents of Nikon’s reforms were in rebellion both against the authority of the church *and against the state*” (my emphasis).<sup>108</sup>

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106. Zenkovsky, “The Russian Church Schism,” 41–42.

107. 2 Thess. 2:4.

108. Crummey, *Old Believers*, 14.

Populist histories, beginning with A. Shchapov's *Russkii raskol starobriadstva*, published in 1859, viewed Old Belief as primarily motivated by sociological and political factors. V. V. Andreev, a member of the populist school, does not hesitate to call the Old Believers' defense of the old ritual "a mere pretense" ("*lish' predlog*"),<sup>109</sup> hiding their actual motivation, which was protest against centralization of political power in the hands of the tsar and its loss by the local assemblies (*zemstvos*). Pleyer, on the other hand, asserts that the populist thesis "is no longer considered today, having been decisively refuted [at the time of her writing, shortly before 1961 ]."<sup>110</sup> However, in view of the perennial hostility of the Old Believers to the tsarist government, and of their proven participation in the revolts by Sten'ka Razin, Conrad Bulavin, and Emel'yan Pugachev, the populist thesis cannot be dismissed so easily. This is also the opinion of Crummey, who brings up another valid point, namely, the Old Believers' loyalty to their historical roots:

The choice, then, was either Ivan IV or Nikon—to affirm or to deny the validity of Russia's past history....

The defense of the old ritual became the defense of Russia's history.<sup>111</sup> Zenkovsky's analysis of the background of the Old Believer schism fully supports this view.<sup>112</sup> The populist thesis is also correct in emphasizing the opposition of the Old Believers (shared by the vast majority of Russians) to the Westernization of Russia under Alexis and Peter the Great. Where the populist thesis errs is in making the opposite mistake from its critics: it rules out altogether the *religious* motivations of the Old Believers.

Lastly, let us consider the implacable refusal of the Old Believers to come to terms with the established church and the state in its consequences for the ideal of "community" in religious communion (*sobornost*). This ideal, which permeated many influential Russian writings of the nineteenth century,<sup>113</sup> appealed especially to neighborly love and showed many Christian overtones. However, as long as such a

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109. V. V. Andreev, *Raskol i ego znachenie v narodnoi russkoi istorii* (St. Petersburg, 1870; photocopy ed. by Otto Zeller Verlag, Osnabrück, 1965), v.

110. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 30.

111. Crummey, *Old Believers*, 13.

112. Zenkovsky, "The Russian Church Schism," *passim*.



large religious minority as the Old Believers did not become integrated in the body of society, the ideal of *sobornost* was doomed to failure. {124}

## *2. Treatment of the Old Believers by Government and Fellow Citizens*

Persecution of the Old Believer was most extended and cruel during the remainder of the seventeenth century. We remember that the martyrdom of Archpriest Avvakum began years before the Church Council of 1667 which sanctioned the Nikonian reforms and excommunicated all who would not accept them. After some intermittent hesitation—Avvakum mentions several occasions when he met with the tsar himself and his personal envoys, who even asked Avvakum to pray for them—Alexis did finally side with the 1667 Church Council. He also issued an ukaz (edict), countersigned by Nikon's successor, Patriarch Joseph, and by the entire holy synod, which condemned to death at the stake "any and all who should insult Jesus Christ, the Virgin or the Cross."<sup>114</sup> Already before this formal approval of persecution, of course, persecution had been carried on. Not even wealthy and influential aristocratic families were spared, notably Prince Ivan Khovanskii, and the boyar's wives Theodosia Morozova and her sister, Princess Eudoxia Urusova. Urusova was also "parted from her children and divorced ... from her husband."<sup>115</sup>

The very harshest persecution, however, occurred under Sophia, the daughter of Alexis and vice-regent of Russia from 1680 to 1689. Archpriest Avvakum and two of his close followers, Father Lazar and the monk Epiphany, were deported to Pustozersk. Avvakum described how the jailers cut out the tongues of Lazar and Epiphany,<sup>116</sup> and many

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113. The concept of *sobornost* was developed especially by the foremost Slavophile polemicist and Orthodox lay theologian, Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov (1804–1860). Cf. Marc Raeff, ed., *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology* (NJ: Humanities Press, 1978), 208–24.

114. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 226.

115. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics*, 437.

116. *Ibid.* 445.

other tortures. To Avvakum, these actions themselves showed that the reformers and their henchmen were not of Christ:

My Christ did not teach his Apostles that fire and knout and gallows tree should lead to the faith. But it was said to the Apostle by the Lord thus: “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” [Mark 14:15–16a]. See now, my reader, Christ calls *us* to come if we will. But he does not bid the Apostles to burn with fire and to hang on the gallows tree them that are disobedient... these teachers, it is plain, are themselves Anti-christs; they, who, leading men to the faith, destroy them.<sup>117</sup>

Eventually Avvakum, Lazar, and Epiphany were burnt at the stake in 1682. Many Old Believers shared their fate. An ukaz dated April 17, 1685, ordered corporal punishment and heavy fines, tortures, flogging {125} with the knout, and burning for those who belonged to, or won others to, or even ignorantly gave shelter to Old Believers.<sup>118</sup>

Pavel Miliukov estimates that as many as 20,000 Old Believers burned themselves alive during this time.<sup>119</sup> Conybeare emphatically insists that they did so only to escape worse torture by their persecutors, and not in obedience to some supposed preaching of religious fanaticism (he quotes a moving passage from Old Believer historian Ivan Filippov’s *History of the Vygovky Old Believer Hermitage* in support of his opinion).<sup>120</sup> Pleyer, on the other hand, is sure that the Old Believers were motivated by religious fanaticism. She illustrates her view by narrating scenes from Dmitri Merezhkovski’s trilogy of novels, *Christ and Antichrist*. These scenes include fearful pictures of preachers of imminent apocalyptic doom, who locked simple believers into huts nailed shut, and then set them afire, although escape from the government search parties might have been possible.<sup>121</sup> Pleyer does not rely solely upon substantiation of her view by fiction, however, but she also quotes the Russian historian, M. N. Nikolsky, in support of her position.<sup>122</sup> Undoubtedly, numerous Old Believers burned themselves

117. *Ibid.*, 446.

118. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 61.

119. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 88.

120. *Ibid.*

121. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 158–59.

122. *Ibid.*, 61.

alive. The debate among historians is about whether the Old Believers did so to escape worse torture, or upon “brainwashing” by fanatical apocalyptic preaching.<sup>123</sup> Perhaps both answers applied in different individual cases, as Gerschenkron seems to imply: “At times unthreatened, at times at the approach of government troops, whole communities of Old Believers would lock themselves in their wooden chapels or hermitage monasteries (skity) and set them on fire, preferring the self-inflicted death.”<sup>124</sup>

When Peter the Great assumed sole authority as tsar in 1689, these harsh laws continued in force, but they were not applied as rigorously as before. In fact, Peter was rather indebted to the Old Believer communities at Starodub and Byg, because they had supported him in the war with the invading Swedes and Poles. Peter later returned to the harsh policy of Sophia’s time, however. In 1714, Old Believer church services were forbidden, a double tax was imposed on them, and they were ordered to register as “schismatics” (*raskol’niki*) in special state registers. In order to make sure they obeyed this order, and as a special penalty, they were “to wear clothes of a special cut marked with the agreeable lettering E.R.L., i.e. Heretic, Raskolnik, Apostate.”<sup>125</sup> Special laws became necessary also against the members of the lower clergy, {126} who frequently sympathized with the Old Believers and joined their ranks in significant numbers.

Conybeare states that many among these clergymen, “as underpaid men with families to support, were open to bribes.”<sup>126</sup> The payment of bribes is mentioned by various scholars of the Old Belief schism. It appears to have been a major factor in the survival of the Old Believers among their Orthodox neighbors, and under almost continuous severe government pressure. By paying bribes they also managed to escape

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123. An example of fanatical apocalyptic preaching leading to mass suicide is the Reverend Jim Jones and his suicidal victims in Guyana poisoned by Koolaid mixed with strychnine, on November 18, 1978.

124. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 24.

125. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 227. Adolf Hitler similarly decreed that Jews in Germany, and later in the German-occupied areas of Europe, must wear big yellow Stars of David inscribed “Jew” on their outer clothing.

126. *Ibid.*, 228.

myriads of discriminatory laws (for instance, that their children must be baptized by Orthodox priests).

We should remember that the accelerated modernization and Westernization which Peter forced sometimes physically upon his reluctant subjects must have fallen upon the Old Believers with special harshness. Wearing long beards, for instance, was for them not merely a hoary custom, but part of their faith (representing God's image in man).<sup>127</sup>

The rule of Peter's successors, Catherine I (1725–1727), Peter II (1727–1730), Anna (1730–1740), and Elizabeth (1741–1762), was just as harsh. In 1734 some 40,000 Old Believers who had settled at Vetka, in Poland, outside the Russian borders, were even hunted down by Cossack raiders and forcibly "repatriated."<sup>128</sup>

The lot of the Old Believers became easier under the liberal monarch Catherine II (1762–1796). Pleyer reports that in ukazes issued in 1762, 1769, 1782, and 1785, Catherine restored the civil rights of the Old Believers:

Old Believers received the right to testify in court, to be elected to public office, to settle freely where they wished, including in major cities and the capitals. The Old Believer registry office and the double tax were abolished, Old Believers who had escaped abroad were invited by a manifesto to return to their homeland and promised special favors besides imperial amnesty. All Old Believers were officially permitted to have their own priests and to exercise their customs freely.<sup>129</sup>

Conybeare adds additional improvements in the Old Believers' status granted by Catherine II:

... [T]he right was conceded them of wearing their beards ... Catharine also engaged to spare them the indignity of wearing a distinctive dress

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127. The "beard policy" of Peter the Great—having his subjects (both the Orthodox and Old Believers) forcibly shaved to bring them up to modern Western European fashion—was notorious.

128. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 229. Again, a very modern parallel comes to mind: the forcible "repatriation," with the help of Allied troops, of Soviet citizens to Stalin's Russia after 1945 under the terms of the Yalta Agreement. This was the infamous "Operation Keelhaul!" Cf. Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, vol. 1. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*.

129. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 62.

not unlike that assigned by Latin Inquisitors to the victims of an auto-da-fe.<sup>130</sup> {127}

Eventually Catherine even “expunged the very name Raskol from all juridical and official documents.”<sup>131</sup> Her reforms lightening the burdens on the Old Believers also stayed in force during the reign of her son Paul I (1796–1801). However, even under Catherine II and Paul the laws punishing Orthodox clergy joining the Old Believers were maintained and enforced. Furthermore, Catherine, eager to acquire for Russia as many hardworking and useful citizens as she could, did not hesitate to use troops, during one of her wars against Poland, to seize and transport back to Russia another 20,000 Old Believers still left in Vetka. “This second enforced migration,” Conybeare writes, “gave the *coup de grace* to this once flourishing colony of Old Believers.”<sup>132</sup> Still, Catherine’s reign was the mildest and most liberal which the Old Believers had experienced since the original seventeenth-century schism.<sup>133</sup>

Moderation generally continued under Tsar Alexander I (1801–1825). Tsar Alexander was generally tolerant in his views, and he had also been influenced by Western Christian evangelical thought. During his reign there was even some government indulgence towards Orthodox clergy serving Old Believers. The established church hierarchy not unnaturally opposed this leniency, and from 1812 (the year Napoleon entered Moscow) until 1822 the tsar supported the hierarchy. In 1822, however, he returned to his earlier leniency towards the Old Believers, and sanctioned the use of runaway Orthodox clergy for Old Believer services under certain circumstances. Curtiss reports:

Many of the [Old Believers], especially those who had grown rich in the manufacture of cloth, in trade, and in moneylending, grew more moderate in their attitude toward the government. So harmonious did the relations become between the Old Believers and the government that in 1800 there was set up a Uniat Church called *Edinoverie*, which used all the forms and rituals which the Synod condemned when used

130. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 230.

131. *Ibid.*, 231.

132. *Ibid.*, 230.

133. *Ibid.*, 231–32.

by the Old Believers, but was under the control of the Orthodox bishops and of the Synod.<sup>134</sup>

Curtiss adds that “most of the Old Believers refused to join *Edinoverie*.”<sup>135</sup> This seems hardly surprising, since a liturgy conducted by priests consecrated by the established church, apostate and of Antichrist to Old Believers, was of necessity still polluted and invalid for them. The problem of the Old Believers’ excommunication, dating back to 1667, also was not resolved. The entire *Edinoverie* move on the part of the government, though initially conciliatory in nature, overlooked the deepest reasons underlying the schism, namely, the Old Believers’ {128} religious convictions, and was hence doomed to fail, even when it was later used not as a carrot but as a stick.

Under Nicholas I (1825–1855) the Old Believers’ situation became much worse. Even the term *raskol’nik* (schismatic), abrogated by Catherine II, was again applied to them and given a more derogatory meaning, somewhat like “deserter.”<sup>136</sup> In 1832 the edict of Alexander I sanctioning the use of runaway Orthodox priests by Old Believers was rescinded in hopes that once robbed of their own priests, the Old Believers would convert to *Edinoverie*. The Old Believers preferred to worship in secret. Many monasteries, settlements, and prayer houses of the Old Believers were closed, also to force them to adopt *Edinoverie*. In fact, the persecutions under Nicholas I were the harshest since the time of Sophia in the seventeenth century. Crummey writes:

The campaigns of the 1830s made it clear that the Vygovskaia Pustyn’ [the Vyg community] was marked for destruction. It did not suffer alone. In the same period, the government and the official church renewed their pressure on the remaining Irgiz communities when they realized that their members were unwilling to follow the lead of the lower monastery and accept *edinoverie*.... Nonviolent pressure proved fruitless.... Finally, on March 13, 1837, Stepanov [governor of the province of Saratov, in which Irgiz was located] used troops, including a detachment of Cossacks, to crush the resistance. The governor exiled virtually all of the monks and nuns to the districts in

134. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia*, 132.

135. *Ibid.*

136. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 63; also see Curtiss, *ibid.*

which they were officially registered and, by this means, destroyed the upper monastery.... As a center of Old Belief, Irgiz was no more.<sup>137</sup>

A crushing campaign was conducted by the government somewhat later, in the 1850s, against the flourishing Old Believer merchant centers in Moscow, the *Rogozhskoe Kladbishche* and the *Preobrazhenskoe Kladbishche* (the “cemeteries” of Rogozhsk and of Preobrazhensk), and also against the priestless communities of Old Believers in St. Petersburg. A government decree of October 1854 made membership in the merchant guilds—a prerequisite for conducting business on a large scale—open only to members of the established church or of *Edinoverie*. In the same year, the Preobrazhensk community was forcibly made a center of *Edinoverie*, as was one of the chapels of the Rogozhsk “Cemetery.” This policy, and these same decrees, remained in force even after the death of Nicholas in 1855. In June 1856, officials sealed the doors of the main church of the Rogozhsk “Cemetery”; they were not opened again until the government was forced to grant its {129} citizens more liberties by the upheaval of the 1905 Revolution.<sup>138</sup>

Yet the Old Believers survived and multiplied. We have already referred to bribery as a “natural” concomitant to the Old Believers’ “coexistence” with their persecutors. Pleyer writes, “For hefty bribes the local police and the priests of the official church were usually ready to protect the Old Believers from the grip of the government. They attested their participation in confession and thus their being Orthodox.”<sup>139</sup> The ridiculously false government vital statistics of the period must be largely due to this state of affairs. Here is yet another report on the role of bribery:

The police measures failed—in part because the officials of the day were notoriously venal.... In 1853 several officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs made studies of the Schism in different provinces ... all mentioned corrupt bargains between Orthodox parish priests and Old Believers. Arnoldi, in the province of Kostroma, wrote: “The priests for the most part protect the schismatics, as they get large sums from

137. Crummey, *Old Believers*, 214–15.

138. *Ibid.*, 215; also see Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 64–65; Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 233.

139. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 65; also Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 35.

them. They receive as much as 150 rubles merely for inscribing in the record books marriages of schismatics which they have not performed.... In the village of Penka the priest Aliakritskii ... is a rare exception....”<sup>140</sup>

Under Tsar Alexander II (1855–1881) persecution eased somewhat, and the tsar intended to make a thorough revision of all laws pertaining to the Old Believers as early as 1864.<sup>141</sup> This was the tsar who signed the edict liberating the Russian serfs in 1861, and under whom the populist historians were able to write comparatively freely. Historical research into the Old Believer schism began during the period; however, much of it was done merely to “gather materials of proof in order to be able to suppress these movements endangering the state,”<sup>142</sup> according to Pleyer. At any rate, no revision in the harsh laws pertaining to the Old Believers had been enacted when Alexander II was assassinated on March 1, 1881, and his son Alexander III (1861–1894) assumed the throne.

Alexander III was advised in religious matters by Konstantin Pobedonostsev, over-procurator of the Holy Synod of the established church. Pobedonostsev also advised the next and last tsar, Nicholas II (1894–1917), for the first eleven years of his rule. Upon Pobedonostsev’s advice a new law on the Old Believers and other sectarians was enacted in 1883, and continued in force until April 1905. It attempted to stop the missionary activities of the Old Believers and of other sectarians, {130} while giving every possible advantage to missionaries and other evangelistic activities of the Orthodox state church.<sup>143</sup> In civic matters the law seemed at first glance more liberal than the statutes it replaced; but in fact, when individual petitions of Old Believers (and other sectarians) came before government agencies, their requests were almost always ended under personal pressure from Pobedonostsev whenever any connection with their religion could be found to exist.<sup>144</sup> Court cases dealing with such other abuses as

140. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia*, 132–133.

141. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 234.

142. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 13. It would seem to me that V. V. Andreev’s populist *Raskol*, used in the present paper, does not fit this assessment, unless one believes that the entire populist thesis plays into the hands of tsarist officials suspecting Old Believers of political subversion.



the taking away of minor children from Orthodox parents who had joined the ranks of the Old Believers, the seizing of Old Believers' prayer books, ikons, church vessels, and so on ... the opening of the grave of an Old Believer priest, followed by the exhumation and burning of the corpse; the taking away of children from Old Believer parents; the arrest of priests of this denomination; the seizure of religious articles, and so forth...<sup>145</sup>

also usually were decided in favor of the state or of the established church.

The missionaries of the established church which were sent out during this period to counteract the falling-away of Orthodox people to the Old Believers, often stirred up more trouble for the Old Believers than the active hostility on the part of Orthodox laypeople towards the Old Believers. The descriptions of relations between Old Believers and the Orthodox neighbors in the novels of Gorky, Mamin-Sibiriak, Leskov, and Korolenko, reported in much detail by Pleyer,<sup>146</sup> show that at any rate the Old Believers kept very strictly to themselves. Certainly there was no traditional and sustained "anti-Old Believism" among the Russian people, as there was anti-Semitism.

One of the sorest harassments of Old Believers under the Pobedonostsev regime was the difficulty of registering their marriages, the births of their children, and their deaths. Here again is an example of underreporting by the government's vital statistics agencies. The Octobrist delegate Kamenskii in the Third Duma of 1909 read the following excerpt from the minutes of the Committee of Ministers for January 25, 1905:

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143. Although the Old Believers, and all other sects, were forbidden to proselytize for their faith, they did convert many among their neighbors to Old Belief. This was partially due to their sober, puritanical way of life which evoked the admiration of their neighbors. In particular, Old Believers were known never to be drunk, and also, to know the Bible and the particulars of their doctrines far better than the Orthodox. Another reason for their success in winning others to their faith was their commercial success as employers and capitalists, which they used as "leverage" in converting their employees or clients.

144. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia*, 136ff.

145. *Ibid.*, 144.

146. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, pt. 2, passim.

As a result of the approximate summary made by the Ministry of Internal Affairs for ten provinces and districts for the five-year period of 1899 to 1903, it was shown that out of 29,431 actual marriages, 1,840 were entered in the recordbooks; out of 131,730 births, 1,340; and out of 91,634 deaths, 552.<sup>147</sup> {131}

Perhaps the reason for such underreporting was that Old Believers were subject to the payment of church levies for the support of the official church, and that only Old Believers inscribed as such in the official government record-books were exempt from such taxes. Another explanation was that insisted upon by Pobedonostsev: persons not born into Schism, and who had fallen into schism twenty, thirty, or forty years before, might not be considered as completely alienated from the Orthodox Church.<sup>148</sup>

The Old Believers also were almost totally prevented from establishing schools for their children; indeed, the law of 1883 forbade this. The reason was that schooling was generally in the hands of the established church, and Pobedonostsev felt that through these schools the children of schismatics could be weaned away from their parents' religion. For his unwavering support of the established church, and his fanatical efforts to uproot schismatics and sectarians, Pobedonostsev has been dubbed "the Russian Richelieu."<sup>149</sup>

After the disastrous Russo-Japanese War and the Revolution of 1905, the legal situation of the Old Believers finally changed decidedly for the better. On April 17, 1905, a temporary enactment on religious liberty enabled anyone to leave the established church and to join another faith without any penalties or loss of civil rights. This law also provided, however, a year's imprisonment for anyone attempting to convert a member of the established church to another denomination.<sup>150</sup> Old Believer clergy were freed from military service and could use ecclesiastical titles. Old Believer congregations could legally own property. Most importantly, their own clergy could now register their marriages, births, and deaths in their own parish record books. Their

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147. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia*, 150.

148. *Ibid.*, 142–43ff.

149. Konstantin Pobedonostsev, *Reflections of a Russian Statesman* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1965), *passim*, especially the chapter on "Faith," 137–56.

150. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 239.

children in public schools were allowed to receive religious instruction in their own faith. The provincial governors were ordered to reopen “all houses of prayer which have been closed both by administrative order and as a result of the decisions of courts of law...”<sup>151</sup> Curtiss adds:

In the province of Minsk a group of schismatics even received permission to hang a bell upon their house of prayer, and to place a cross over the door—privileges unheard of a year earlier.<sup>152</sup>

Religious processions were permitted Old Believers for the first time since the seventeenth century. Officially the only remnant of the old restrictions upon them (and other sectarians) was in a law dated October 17, 1906, which reaffirmed that only the Orthodox Church could {132} proselytize among other religions.<sup>153</sup>

In April 1905 the altar of the Rogozhsk “Cemetery,” belonging to the “priestist” branch of the Old Believers in Moscow, was unsealed by order of Tsar Nicholas II who expressed the desire that the Old Believers there might unite with the Orthodox Church.

The Old Believers were delighted with the opening of their religious center, and during the solemn ceremony when the altar was unsealed many of them wept for joy, their choir sang “long life” to the emperor, and several noted members of the cult expressed heartfelt gratitude to him for this concession. It is significant, however, that no mention was then made of reuniting with the Orthodox Church.<sup>154</sup>

Not surprisingly, government and established church overtures to both the “priestist” and the “priestless” branches of the Old Believers to reunite with the established church proved totally fruitless.

There were also some delays and outright refusals on the part of local and provincial government agencies to comply with the provisions of the new liberal laws, chiefly at Pobedonostsev’s instigation. Not even after Pobedonostsev’s death in 1907 did such difficulties with lower government agencies stop. The major hindrances to the Old Believers, however, were in the area of education. On January 13, 1914,

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151. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia*, 229.

152. *Ibid.*, 230.

153. *Ibid.*, 231.

154. *Ibid.*, 233.

the minister of education issued a circular forbidding the hiring of Old Believers as teachers in the public schools.<sup>155</sup> There were also government-instigated pogroms against other faiths, the Roman Catholics, for instance. In 1909, Bulat, a Polish Trudovik (member of the Workers Party), and Karaulov, a Constitutional Democrat, complained openly in the Duma that the established church attempted to keep people within it “not by Orthodox preaching, but by the nagaikas [Cossack whips] of dragoons ... their Orthodox faith can be protected only by prisons, arrests, nagaikas, and bayonets.”<sup>156</sup> One Ministry of Internal Affairs decree on sectarians’ religious meetings dated October 4, 1910, specifically exempted the Old Believers, apparently leaving them at the discretion of the local government agencies.<sup>157</sup> Thus the situation remained—improved but by no means perfect—for the Old Believers until the fall of the tsarist government and the Communist October Revolution of 1917.

Conybeare expresses the hope that “the present Revolution [of 1917] may add an altogether new and happier” epoch to the past epochs of suffering and persecution endured by the Old Believers.<sup>158</sup> However, in view of the persecution of *all* professing Christians and believers of {133} other religions by the militantly atheist Communist government, especially during the reign of Stalin, but also in the very earliest years under Lenin,<sup>159</sup> it is certain that the Old Believers have been sharing the sufferings of all other believers. Little information on their exist-

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155. *Ibid.*, 322. This attitude was firmly rooted in government circles. Zenkovsky (“The Russian Church Schism,” 54) writes: “At the end of the nineteenth century, for instance, the Moslems in Russia, whose number was probably close to that of the Old Believers, had 25,000 parochial and private schools, while the Old Believers ... officially had none.”

156. *Ibid.*, 324.

157. *Ibid.*, 328. I have drawn heavily on Curtiss for substantiation of the information in this part of the paper, because Curtiss is himself also the principal source for the pertinent parts in the work of Pleyer (*Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 63–71), who was writing in Germany, with access to sources not readily available to me. In addition, Curtiss always substantiates his statements with page-by-page footnotes referring to official tsarist government documents, obviously excellent primary sources.

158. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 225. Conybeare’s book was first published in 1921, and thus presumably written in 1920 or even closer to the Revolution. This makes his hope seem less naive, or blind to the actual developments, than it does today.

ence and survival during the past sixty years is available; inquiry with refugees belonging to the Orthodox Church seems unlikely to produce answers. However, William Blackwell reported that the Moscow Old Believer communities managed to “endure the Revolution and the atheist regime which followed. Over 100,000 Old Believers of the two main sects still inhabit Moscow, and Rogozhsk, with its vast Pokrovsky cathedral and magnificent icons, still stands. The state superintendent of the Old Believers is the descendant of a wealthy Moscow manufacturing family.”<sup>160</sup> In addition, Alexander Solzhenitsyn reported on Old Believers in Siberia:

In 1950 a plane was flying over the vast basin of the Podkamennaya Tunguska. The training of airmen had improved greatly since the war, and the zealous aviator spotted something that no one before him had seen in twenty years: an unknown dwelling place in the taiga. He worked out its position. He reported it. It was far out in the wilds, but to the MVD all things are possible, and half a year later they had struggled through to it. What they had found were the Yaruyevy Old Believers. When the great and longed-for Plague began—I mean collectivization—they had fled from this blessing into the depths of the taiga, a whole village of them. And they lived there without ever poking their noses out, allowing only their headman to go to Yaruyevy for salt, metal fishing and hunting gear, and bits of iron for tools. Everything else they had made themselves, and in lieu of money the headman no doubt came provided with pelts. When he had completed his business he would slink away from the marketplace like a hunted criminal. In this way the Yaruyevy Old Believers had won themselves twenty years of life! Twenty years of life as free human beings among the wild beasts, instead of twenty years of kolkhoz misery. They were all wearing homespun garments and homemade knee boots, and they were all exceptionally sturdy.

Well, these despicable deserters from the kolkhoz front were now all arrested, and the charge pinned on them was ... guess what? Links with the international bourgeoisie? Sabotage? No, Articles 58–10, on Anti-Soviet Agitation (!?!), and 58–11, on hostile organizations.

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159. cf. Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, vol. 1 (New York: Harper & Row, [1973] 1974), 51.

160. William L. Blackwell, ed., *Russian Economic Development from Peter the Great to Stalin* (New York: New Viewpoints, a Division of Franklin Watts Inc., 1964), 154.

(Many of them landed later on in the Dzherzkazgan group of Steplag, which is how I know about them.) {134}

In 1946 some other Old Believers were stormed in a forgotten monastery somewhere in the backwoods by our valiant troops, dislodged (with the help of mortars, and the skills acquired, in the Fatherland War) and floated on rafts down the Yenisei. Prisoners still, and still indomitable—the same under Stalin as they had been under Peter!—they jumped from the rafts into the waters of the Yenisei, where our Tommy-gunners finished them off.<sup>161</sup>

Finally, at least one former Old Believer managed to rise in the ranks of the Soviet government to the very top—Mikhail Suslov, a close confidant of Stalin, and a top theoretician of the Communist Party.<sup>162</sup>

### *3. The Old Believers' Reaction to Persecution and Inferior Status*

#### **A. Withdrawal and Dispersion**

The Old Believers reacted to persecution, and also to the inferior civil status resulting from their excommunication, principally by withdrawal from society and by flight to remote and forbidding frontiers of the Russian empire. Because of this “underground” character of their survival, information about them during the initial hundred years or so after the original schism is episodic and sketchy. Most scholars of the Old Believers during this period have concentrated upon widely separated Old Believer settlements with special regional, religious, or economic significance, such as the Vyg community, or Old Believer participation in the development of mining in the Ural Mountains.<sup>163</sup> Billington correctly points out that “there is no comprehensive history of the schismatic or Old Believer tradition,”<sup>164</sup> and this is especially true of the period of withdrawal and dispersion.

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161. Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, vol. 3 (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 366–67.

162. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 542. I have not found any additional information about Mikhail Suslov's Old Believer background.

163. The best report on how the Old Believers accommodated themselves to their prolonged coexistence with Antichrist and his system is given in Robert O. Crummey's detailed account of the Old Believers' Vyg community (Crummey, *Old Believers*).

164. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 608.

First, the strength of persecution varied in different parts of the far-flung empire. Roger Portal writes that this fact

... should not surprise us in this immense country where often strict measures taken in the capitals and those taken in the country as a whole differed greatly in their severity and in the way they were carried out.<sup>165</sup>

Consequently, once the headlong escape for life from the heartland of Russia was no longer required, Old Believers could be more judicious about where they finally settled down. During the eighteenth century, in fact, it was even possible to establish thriving Old Believer communities right in Moscow. {135} Eventually the descendants of the Old Believers who had become wealthy and estranged from their ancestors' way of life totally abandoned it, along with the traditional Old Believer fear of pollution by their apostate neighbors. While Old Believers might deny their need of solid houses during the first generation of the schism, since they were momentarily expecting the second coming of Christ, the palatial homes of their rich merchant descendants at the turn of our century were solid indeed.

Although the Old Believers' physical flight and their unsettled attitude of apocalyptic expectation ceased, they always maintained their internal withdrawal from their apostate "Nikonian" neighbors. Old Believers carried their strict separation from infidels—and whoever was not an Old Believer was an infidel to them—to the utmost possible extremes of diet, clothing, and other outward customs. Pleyer, whose description of Old Believer daily life and habits is probably the most detailed and lively among those consulted in the preparation of this paper, writes in part:

In order to shut themselves away as far as possible from the outer world ... the Old Believers laid out their farms like fortresses: all buildings were under one roof and grouped around an inner yard which was also roofed over. The gate leading into this dark yard was always firmly latched; ferocious dogs kept watch over the house....

Women wore dark, usually blue "sarafany" (wide, bell-like garments) ... white linen blouses and dark head scarves which they tied in a special manner ... The men wore dark caftans, and a special haircut letting their hair fall down their forehead....

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165. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 184–85.

... To shave the beard was considered one of the greatest sins ... For an Old Believer... any companionship with a heretic, be it in eating, drinking, or bathing, was supposed to lead to eternal damnation....

Under no circumstances was a stranger permitted to dip into the water container and to drink; for this purpose they kept a special “wordly,” “unclean” drinking container, in which they gave water to a stranger.... They even took their own mugs with them into taverns....

Generally Old Believers drank no tea and no coffee because they considered these plants “devil’s growths,” just like tobacco and potatoes.... Even if tea and coffee were sometimes accepted, and also potatoes were not totally rejected, one thing remained firm: they would not give up their shunning of tobacco.... Unknowingly breaking the no-smoking rule in their houses made them extremely ill-disposed: “The pipe, the damned pipe, throw it away, you heathen! There are icons in the front corner, and you, {136} blasphemer, have puffed the whole house full of smoke!” Old Believer Fedor Iakimych shouts at his innocent visitor Nikon, stomping his feet (a scene from Mamin-Sibiriak’s novel *Brat’ya Gordeevy*)....<sup>166</sup>

The Old Believers’ withdrawal from the rest of society had one intriguing consequence, namely, the emergence of religious writings circulating only among their own people, and mostly ignored by Russian society at large. Zenkovsky writes:

For two centuries ... these traditionalists ... lived in a state of internal emigration and created their own cultural world in which life was neither Westernized nor secularized but patterned after the old Muscovite ways....

Avvakum was not the only outstanding writer among the Old Believers. Epiphany, Deacon Theodore, Avraamy, the Denisov brothers, Ivan Filipov, and many others were the representatives of Great Russian literature during the time of cultural upheaval from 1660 to 1735, while successive generations of Old Believers in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced others. Their works, however, were not ... known [in Russian society]...<sup>167</sup>

Conybeare reports on the Old Believer writings circulated by means of handwritten copies, and also printed abroad, during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>168</sup>

166. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 161–66.

167. Zenkovsky, “The Russian Church Schism,” 51.



Side by side with their withdrawal from outsiders went the Old Believers' extensive and enduring internal communication and cohesion. Writer after writer comments upon their network of communications, trade, and mutual aid, which extended all over the country. The Old Believers had fled at first to the dense forests of northern Russia; later they also migrated to the south, the west, the Volga and Trans-Volga regions, the Ural Mountains, to Siberia and Trans-Siberia, and even in a few instances to Turkey and China. We must remember that during the principal time of flight there were no major roads; they were pioneers in much the same sense as were the pioneers settling the United States. In maintaining communication with each other, they sometimes used ingenious code writings of their own devising.<sup>169</sup> Conybeare, drawing upon Old Believer historian Kels'iev, writes:

They usually send their letters by confidential messengers and not by post. On how considerable a scale this correspondence goes on, one can judge from the fact that in the inquisition of the year 1852, the dissenters of Moscow, Grusia [Georgia] and Siberia were found to be

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168. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 254–56. This is a most interesting section in Conybeare's book. He reports in part:

“... [W]hen I was in Tiflis twenty-five years ago I was surprised to hear how many works of Tolstoy and other religious authors were circulating in copies all written out by hand. The Raskol were able ... to print books in Austria ... there ... Uzov ... published his important work: ... ‘The Church of Christ temporarily without a bishop.’ In Prussia and Rumania the Raskolniks also had presses.... Kelsiev's monumental work was published in London by Trubner as early as 1870. In 1878 the *Staroobryadets* or “Old Ritualist” appeared in Austria and ran for eight years, the regular organ of the Raskol, circulating far and wide, but in secret, in Russia. A similar journal, the *Slovo Pravdy* [Word of Truth] began to be published in 1896 at Braila in Rumania.... In 1905 at Klimutz in Bukovina was begun the ... *Messenger of the Old Ritualists*, which boldly took the line that, if the Russian-Orthodox Church desired any reconciliation with the Dissidents, it must unsay and undo the last two hundred and fifty years of its history. ...

“... [T]he Old Believers journals ... [p]olitically ... stand for respect of all nationalities and all religions; they support the constitutionalist party, urge economic reforms, work hard to settle the quarrel between capital and labour and to improve the conditions of the proletariat.

“The Church, say the Dissenters, must undertake all these problems.... Freed from the support, political and material, of the State, the Church becomes once again the free society of the faithful, a Christian brotherhood, a body whose mission is always spiritual and whose influence is propagated in souls by means of persuasion and charity....”

communicating {137} with one another. They have their own post, and by means of it circulate necessary information all over the provinces in the course of a few days.<sup>170</sup>

Blackwell writes:

A kind of “underground railroad” operated in the cities of the Russian Empire, most of which contained Theodosian communities in close contact with Moscow centers. The predominance of Old Believers in the coach transport business on Russian roads and highways facilitated communication in this fugitive network.<sup>171</sup>

Gerschenkron refers to the Old Believers in the far north who traveled to other regions of Russia in search of labor once the short northern agricultural growing season ended, and reports:

At times, they came down as far as the Ukraine. In the 1840s the large stone bridge over the River Dnieper in Kiev, the so-called chain bridge, was built largely by a labor force composed of northern Old Believers.<sup>172</sup>

Similar bits and pieces constitute the available record of the Old Believers’ withdrawal and dispersion throughout the Russian Empire, and also of their internal cohesion and communication.

## B. Trading and Industry

The network of communications between the far-flung Old Believer communities facilitated, and in turn was reinforced by, the extensive trading between them, and of course also by the increasing trade

169. Andreev, *Raskol*, 142–44. The most frequently used code of the Old Believers consisted of an adaptation of the so-called “Tabarsk” grammar which had become obsolete in Russia in the fifteenth century. Andreev describes the code as follows:

“It consisted in replacing certain letters in words by others.... In the old manuscripts one can often see the ‘Tabarsk’ signature, ‘aren’ instead of ‘amen.’ Most frequently, the exchange of letters in the ‘Tabarsk’ grammar was done in the following manner:

b,	v,	g,	d,	zh,	z,	k,	l,	m,	n,
shch,	sh,	ch,	ts,	kh,	f,	t,	s,	r,	p,

“The upper and the lower letters in these columns were usually exchanged for each other. The vowels in the words remained entirely without alteration” (my translation, original in Andreev, *ibid.*, 142.)

170. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters*, 223.

171. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 148.

172. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 40–41.

between their communities and the outside world. Initially such commercial relations with the outsiders were built on the sympathy of outsiders toward the Old Believers. Crummey writes:

A network of contacts among Old Believers and sympathizers supported Vyg's grain trade by providing half of the capital for the venture, selling the grain to the community's agents, and marketing it in St. Petersburg. Without the link of a common religious commitment, so complex a chain could hardly have been forged....

Within the Old Believer confederation, merchants played a role of particular importance.<sup>173</sup>

The Vyg community, an agricultural cooperative of the priestless and monastic sect of "shore-dweller" (*pomortsy*) Old Believers on the river Vyg in northern Russia, has received the respect of all chroniclers {138} of Old Believer history. Crummey, whose study concentrates on this community, points out that is particularly instructive about Old Believer economic practices, "since its history virtually bridges the wide gulf between the first prophets of Old Belief and their capitalist disciples of a later age."<sup>174</sup> Gerschenkron writes:

As early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Old Believers' community on the River Vyg ... achieved considerable economic importance as a center of crafts and trade. In particular they were engaged in large-scale grain trade and became important in supplying grain to the young city of St. Petersburg.... In the far-flung regions along the Volga flour mills and saw mills, first driven by water and then by steam, were established, resulting in the "milling empires" in the hands of Old Believers. Along with that their strong participation in the Volga shipping and in the fisheries on the lower Volga as well as in fish trade must be mentioned.<sup>175</sup>

Contrary to other scholars (for instance, William L. Blackwell), Gerschenkron has an intriguing comment to the effect that "there is considerable evidence to suggest that at least some of the positive qualities of the old-believing entrepreneur underwent modification in dealing with the members of the outside group."<sup>176</sup> He asserts that this

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173. Crummey, *Old Believers*, 157.

174. *Ibid.*, 137.

175. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 19.

176. *Ibid.*, 36.

was particularly true where many manual laborers were involved, such as the river barge haulers (*burlaki*), whom the Old Believer employers supposedly ruthlessly exploited and deceived.<sup>177</sup> Gerschenkron also again refers to the “*faux frais*” of graft payments accompanying Old Believer commercial activities.<sup>178</sup> It must be pointed out here that traders and merchants were generally held in low esteem by the Russian gentry, and also by the common people. Bernard Pares, Ivan Belousov, and especially Pavel Buryshkin and Valentine Bill comment on this point. By the time described by Buryshkin (prerevolutionary, twentieth-century Russia) the image of a merchant as a “bloated moneybag” (“*tolstosum*”), or a “thousandaire” (“*tysyachnik*”), was well established.<sup>179</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, the priestist branch of the Old Believers had also developed far-flung communities throughout the empire, both in desolate frontier areas, but also through such centers as the monastery of Kerzhenets, near Nizhnii Novgorod, and wealthy communities such as Ekaterinburg, just west of the Ural Mountains. Here “Old Believers owned most of the private metallurgical industry and numbered, according to most estimates, some 150,000.” They also “came to control the east-west trade, the fairs, and the shipbuilding industry” in the Lower Volga area.<sup>180</sup> {139}

V. V. Andreev gives us much detailed information on the Theodosians, the strictest sect of the priestless Old Believers, who established rather austere, hardworking, puritanical communities

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177. Gerschenkron does not give any concrete examples of such alleged exploitation and deception. He merely quotes from the book of Jesus Sirach as supposedly guiding the Old Believers’ conduct toward laborers not of their own faith!

178. *Ibid.*

179. Bernard Pares, *Russia and Reform* (London: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd., 1907), 90; Ivan Belousov, *Ushedshaia Moskva* (Moscow: Moskovskoe Tovarishchestvo Pisatelei, 1927), 94ff.; Pavel A. Buryshkin, *Moskva kupecheskaia* (New York: Literary Foundation in Honor of Chekhov, 1954), intro. and passim; Valentine T. Bill, *The Forgotten Class* (New York: Praeger, 1959), passim; also see Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 109ff. The books by Buryshkin and Bill are essentially dedicated to the vindication of the much maligned class of the traders, merchants, and the commercial middle class of prerevolutionary Russia.

180. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 141.

throughout northern Russia. From their beginning they remained hostile to the state, to private property, to sex and marriage (though their initial harsh rules in this area were soon altered or evaded to enable them to survive beyond the first generation), to dealings with people of other beliefs, to church ritual and hierarchy—and to tobacco, alcohol, coffee, tea, potatoes, European-style clothing, and the shaving of beards.<sup>181</sup> Their concept of communal property led to almost a century of accumulation of vast capital in the hands of the merchants of their communities, who also served as their religious elders. This accumulation of capital in turn made possible the establishment of their strongest commercial centers in Moscow in 1771, discussed below.

Another strong Old Believer center was in Starodub, whose settlers

sold cables and hempseed oil in Kiev, Kremenchug, and the Crimea, and shipped soap, oil, and metal tools as far as Moscow, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Riga, and Königsberg. In some instances, they turned a profit by transporting goods from one market center to another in a pattern similar to the Vyg community's grain trade. Some of the Starodub traders bought cattle in the steppe areas and drove them to market in Warsaw and Vilna; others sold fish from the Kharkov market in Poland or Polish wax and honey in Kursk.<sup>182</sup>

As early as the 1740s, the flourishing community of Old Believers who had fled to Vetka, just beyond the Polish border, "brought goods from as far away as Danzig and sold them locally or transshipped them."<sup>183</sup> One must marvel at the resilience, perseverance, resourcefulness, and enterprising spirit of these hardy people, who managed to survive and prosper amidst persecution, harsh climate, and the not inconsiderable difficulties of travel and trade under the primitive conditions of their time.

The study of Old Believer traders and merchants made by Pleyer is either based on some of the same sources used by other writers on this subject, or upon descriptions of Old Believers in Russian fiction. One interesting feature in her account usually not dealt with in detail elsewhere is that "one characteristic was common to all [the Old Believer merchants]: they very much liked to assume the role of benefactors

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181. Andreev, *Raskol*, 157; Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 143.

182. Crummey, *Old Believers*, 154.

183. *Ibid.*, 154n59.

(*blagodeteli*) and sponsors of the Old Believer communities and mon-  
 {140} asteries, and to rival each other in that role.”<sup>184</sup> According to Pleyer, Old Believer merchants frequently practiced continuous sinning together with strict obedience to pious Old Believer rules, and also did physical penance, such as numerous bows while praying the rosary. They also could and did make payments to Old Believer monastic communities for the performance of such physical penances on their behalf by Old Believer monks and nuns.<sup>185</sup> Ivan Belousov reports on similar habits in Moscow in the latter half of the nineteenth century (we do not know whether the merchants he describes were Old Believers or not):

The merchant, living and sinning, felt that his luck and well-being were built upon those who were weak, helpless, and unhappy, and the merchants did not forget these hapless ones, and just as in the olden days the Muscovite Tsars at certain times themselves visited the prisons and gave the inmates gifts, so also among the merchants the custom was kept to send gifts to the inmates of prisons and jails at the high feast days—tea, sugar, loaves of bread, which were brought in whole wagonloads.<sup>186</sup>

All in all, Old Believer traders and merchants overcame great obstacles of persecution, inferior civil status, difficulties of distant traveling and remote marketplaces, and the “normal” risks of living upon venture enterprise. How much of their charitable works and contributions was due to a bad conscience or hypocrisy is probably impossible for any outsider to assess. At the least, such an assessment should be balanced with a reflection upon the frugality of the Old Believer merchants, which was the prerequisite for their commercial success. This frugality did not prevent their charitable deeds. The record shows their considerable entrepreneurial accomplishments, their cohesion with fellow Old Believers, and their charitable contributions. The scholars consulted in the present study report far less concrete evidence of Old Believer merchants’ personal sins, or exploitation of others.

184. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 116.

185. *Ibid.*

186. Belousov, *Ushedshaia Moskva*, 58. It must be kept in mind that Belousov’s memoirs were published under the Soviet government.

A disastrous outbreak of the plague, which had repeatedly ravaged Western Europe in the middle ages, and which had also preceded the religious revival leading to the Old Believer schism, took place in Moscow in 1771. The disease killed every single occupant in three thousand out of the twelve thousand houses then in Moscow.<sup>187</sup> In the midst of this catastrophe a devout Old Believer of the priestless, monastic Theodosian sect, Ilia Andreevich Kovylin, a brick dealer by trade, received permission from the hard-pressed city authorities to build a quarantine and a cemetery at the toll gate of Preobrazhensk, a suburb to {141} the east of Moscow. In this new center for tending the sick and burying the dead, Kovylin worked tirelessly and won new converts to his faith. “His carts, formerly used for the delivery of bricks, were dispatched to bring the possessions of deceased patients back to Preobrazhensk.”<sup>188</sup>

From this somber beginning developed the Old Believers’ religious and commercial center known throughout its existence as the “Preobrazhensk Cemetery” (*Preobrazhenskoe Kladbishche*). By the 1820s it had grown from five hundred to fifteen hundred monks and nuns, “while the yearly number of visitors and devout attendants of religious meetings, who never failed to bring offerings and gifts, passed the ten-thousand mark.”<sup>189</sup> For the larger community beyond the Theodosian monks’ and nuns’ quarters, Blackwell gives a figure of “perhaps 68,000.”<sup>190</sup>

The community’s property, real and financial, “was estimated at two million rubles.... When the palace of Peter I, the Antichrist, ... was torn down ... the cemetery purchased the ornate palace gates and added them triumphantly to its façade.”<sup>191</sup> We must remember that at that time Old Believer religious communities could not legally own real property. Therefore the legal rights to their properties were nominally vested in the persons of their religious overseers, who also usually organized their trading in and with the outside world.<sup>192</sup>

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187. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 102.

188. *Ibid.*

189. *Ibid.*, 103.

190. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 150.

191. *Ibid.*

During the same period, principally the late 1700s and the first two decades of the 1800s, the priestist Old Believers also established a similar religious and commercial center, the Rogozhsk Cemetery (*Rogozhskoe Kladbishche*), in Moscow's Rogozhsk suburb. Blackwell gives the following description of the Preobrazhensk Cemetery in the late 1840s:

... [T]here were "two enormous fortress-like quadrangles; high walls and towers, large arched gateways above which rose the numerous cupolas of several churches." Behind the massive gates ... were shelters for the poor and aged, hospitals, mad-houses, stores, kitchens, and stables, as at Rogozhsk. Unlike the family arrangements of the Priestist community, the Theodosian community segregated the sexes, with one quadrangle reserved for the women. Each quadrangle housed at least a thousand inmates.... No children were to be seen. The Preobrazhensk community had more than one hundred officers.... An iconographer was retained.... police reports refer to the richest industrialist of the Moscow Theodosians as ... "co-ruler."<sup>193</sup>

From emergency quarantine centers and cemeteries the Old Believer {142} centers had turned into comprehensive cities-within-a-city, capitals-within-the-capital.

The Moscow "cemeteries" played a significant part in the rise of Russian capitalism. Gerschenkron, together with Soviet historians,<sup>194</sup> says that "the hour of Russian capitalism did not strike until the last years of the nineteenth century."<sup>195</sup> But Gerschenkron himself agrees that "there was a large number of Old Believers who achieved very considerable success as entrepreneurs, accumulated fortunes measured in millions of rubles, and founded what has come to be called 'merchant dynasties.'"<sup>196</sup> Blackwell points out that while the role of the early industrial entrepreneurs' social background has been studied several times since Tugan-Baranovsky pioneered such research, "the role of

192. This is also the opinion of Crumme, Old Believers, 154n62. The articles on the Old Believers' participation in the development of Russian trade and industry in the respective chapters of Blackwell's books, *The Beginnings of Russian Industrialization, 1800–1860* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), and the book he edited, and to which he contributed his article, "The Old Believers and Free Enterprise," *Russian Economic Development from Peter the Great to Stalin*, largely coincide; often entire pages are the same. For simplicity's sake I have therefore made most of my own references to the latter book.

193. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 150.



religious sects in this process has been relatively neglected.”<sup>197</sup> While Jews and the sect of the Skoptsy (self-castrators) were also significantly represented among the early and later industrialists, the Old Believers seem to have been most active, and something that can only be called “industrialization” was observed in the early nineteenth century, and centered around the Preobrazhensk Cemetery.

By the mid-nineteenth century, this area “became the most heavily industrialized part of Moscow.”<sup>198</sup> Blackwell states that the Old Believers in Moscow increased from 20,000 in 1800 to 186,000 in 1848; Old Believers then made up about one-half the total number of Moscow’s inhabitants.<sup>199</sup> In 1838,

138 families of the Rogozhsk Cemetery were registered in the first and second merchant guilds, and many were “Hereditary Honorable Citizens as well as Commercial and Manufacturing Councillors,” dignities which designated only the most important and wealthiest mercantile and industrial entrepreneurs at that time in Russia.<sup>200</sup>

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194. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 18, refers to Peter Lyashchenko in this connection. I consulted the *History of Russia* by M. N. Pokrovsky (London: Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1931). Neither “Old Believers,” nor Avvakum, nor “Raskolniks” are listed in the index. The “Raskolniks” appear only in the glossary, page 368. There is no mention of the seventeenth-century events surrounding the original schism of the church. Patriarch Nikon is named, but only in connection with the construction of the second Russian paper mill at his command, page 280. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 151, refers to the recent Soviet student of the Moscow Theodosians, Ryndziunsky, who considers only thirty-two of more than two hundred industrial establishments in the Lefortovo suburb of Moscow as true factories, that is, employing more than twenty-five workers.

195. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 47.

196. *Ibid.*, 18.

197. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 140.

198. *Ibid.*, 151.

199. *Ibid.*, 141; also see Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, passim. Both Blackwell and Pleyer lean heavily on Pavel I. Mel’nikov as a reliable primary source. Michael T Florinsky, *Russia*, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 1061n3, writes: “Pavel Mel’nikov (1819–1883), an authority on religious dissenters, produced under the pseudonym Andrew Pechersky two voluminous novels, *In the Woods* and *On the Hills*, which have for their setting the communities of Old-believers in the wilderness of the middle Volga. [They are] packed with illuminating facts and apt characterizations.”

200. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 141.

Soon the cemeteries became the national centers for the Old Believers. Through gifts and legacies of the faithful for over a century they had accumulated the capital needed to launch capitalistic enterprises and to purchase the needed machinery, sometimes from abroad; this was especially true for textile spinning and weaving machines and their spare parts, which had to be brought from England, for years the world's technological leader in this area.<sup>201</sup> Much capital was also invested in hiring labor and redeeming peasant serfs on a large scale. Loans were made for industrial and religious purposes; for instance, in 1847 the Nosov brothers received a loan of 500,000 rubles, interest free for {143} three years, and at only 4 percent interest thereafter—upon their conversion to the Theodosian sect of the Preobrazhensk Cemetery.<sup>202</sup> 36 Many of Moscow's leading merchant families came from Old Believer stock: the Morozovs, the Guchkovs, the Riabushinskys, the Soldatenkovs, the Mamontovs, and others.

The Preobrazhensk Cemetery had the all-Russian monopoly on the manufacture of religious articles for Old Believers. The exclusive use of pre-Nikonian icons and church books was now a source of immense revenue for the Preobrazhensk manufacturers of such religious items as candles, copies of sacred books and of rare manuscripts, copies of true (pre-Nikonian) icons, crosses, and so on. Sometimes Old Believer manufacturers also had near-monopolies on the production of mundane items needed by members of the established church. Henri Troyat came across the example of wooden soup spoons while traveling in Russia on the eve of World War I:

Some small industries were monopolized and controlled by them [Old Believers] to such an extent that the workers and moujiks joined the schism in order to obtain work. This was especially so with the manufacture of wooden spoons. A good half of the Russian peasantry used wooden spoons for their soup, and these were made by enemies of the official church!<sup>203</sup>

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201. Pares, *Russia and Reform*, 473; also see Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 20, on Old Believer Rogozhin, who introduced the first Jacquard loom into Russia.

202. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 146.

203. Henri Troyat, *Daily Life in Russia Under the Last Tsar* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979), 78–79.

Their most important source of continuous income were the donations of the faithful and legacies by Old Believers moving into the cemeteries' homes for the aged under the condition that they willed their property to the cemeteries. In order to make sure of their inheritances, the Preobrazhensk Cemetery even maintained a special coachman for the purpose of hauling away into its compound the deceased benefactors' property!<sup>204</sup>

Large numbers of workers were recruited for the cemeteries' growing industrial enterprises. Preachers from the cemeteries acted as recruiters in surrounding villages, both for the factories and also for the Old Believer faith. The rich industrialists redeemed serfs from their owners, both from private landholders and from the government itself. Even a peasant's military obligations could be discharged for appropriate fees. Blackwell reports that "lists of rich Theodosian industrialists willing to put up a peasant's redemption were posted or circulated in Moscow."<sup>205</sup> The peasants could work out the payments made to redeem them by perhaps a lifetime of work at low wages in the Moscow Old {144} Believer factories, and by conversion to the Old Belief religion. Release from serfdom and from military service was worth this price to them.

Women, girls, and children were also recruited; they were even "hidden in workshops in Moscow or were smuggled to other cities until they could obtain urban passports.... Pregnant girls were taken in, their children to be cared for and educated in the teachings of the sect."<sup>206</sup>

The newcomers were given new apartments and sometimes work to be done right at home. When there was no more room in the Preobrazhensk community, Old Believer entrepreneurs even squatted on nearby state-owned land and built factories and houses there.

Tengoborskii, who studied the Moscow Old Believers' industrial establishments in the latter part of the nineteenth century, wrote, "The proprietors deserve the utmost credit for their constant care to introduce the newest improvements and for their attention to the health of the work people and the instruction of the children."<sup>207</sup> Pares favorably

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204. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 146.

205. *Ibid.*, 147.

206. *Ibid.*, 147–48.

describes the factory conditions he observed in a Moscow textile plant in 1905.<sup>208</sup> Belousov, however, gives a much less favorable picture of workshops and of masters' dealings with young apprentices during the 1880s. Work lasted fourteen to fifteen hours out of every twenty-four hours, and the workers were often so hungry that they quarreled in order not to think about food.<sup>209</sup>

One very interesting part of Old Believer culture, which cannot be described in more detail in this paper due to lack of space, is a seemingly innate and keen interest of Old Believers in literature and the arts, and a real sense of the beautiful. This interest manifested itself already in the assessment—and rejection—of Westernized art during the early schism, but especially later on, as early as in the 1840s, in the activities of the first great Moscow art collectors. It is not known whether P. A. Tretiakov, to whom we owe the world-famous Tretiakov Art Gallery in Moscow, was an Old Believer; but one of the earliest art collectors was Kozma Soldatenkov, who was an Old Believer.<sup>210</sup> The Preobrazhensk Cemetery contained a “rich library of rare books and manuscripts.”<sup>211</sup> In the 1870s Savva Mamontov, a Moscow merchant-prince descended from an Old Believer family, was a generous and imaginative patron of the arts. At Abramtsevo, his country house near Moscow, he established workshops in which pottery and applied arts were taught. He produced operas in his private theater, which he brought to Moscow in 1890, and through which he had transformed the role of the stage.<sup>212</sup> Another wealthy descendant of an Old Believer merchant family, Savva Morozov, {145} became the patron and chief supporter of the Moscow Art Theater at the turn of our century.

Perhaps this last paragraph is misleading in the sense that the descendants of Old Believers who patronized the arts no longer observed the strict religious rules of their forefathers. Along with their

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207. Blackwell, *The Beginnings of Russian Industrialization*, 49.

208. Pares, *Russia and Reform*, 470ff.

209. Belousov, *Ushedshaia Moskva*, 69ff.

210. Blackwell, *The Beginnings of Russian Industrialization*, 191.

211. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 149.

212. Rice, *A Concise History of Russian Art*, 243–48.

huge wealth came what Blackwell could call a “rapid disintegration.”<sup>213</sup> Bill writes:

Among the older generation a life of spartan discipline and simplicity was a habit. But the younger members of the Old Believer families prominent in trade and industry began to chafe under the strict rules ... Toward the end of the nineteenth century, when industrial expansion had gathered spectacular momentum in Russia, families still adhering to the strict disciplinarian ways of Old Belief were the exception rather than the rule.<sup>214</sup>

Pleyer comments upon the same phenomenon of the younger generation’s rejection of the ways of their fathers also in the provinces. There, however, the process seems to have been not nearly as widespread, since many of the poorer and simpler Old Believers continued to cling to the “*starina*” (old ways).<sup>215</sup>

The development of Old Believer trading and industry, and especially the role played in early Russian industrialization by the Old Believer “cemeteries,” is a remarkable chapter in Russian economic history. The decline of Old Believer traditions following the Old Believers’ economic and industrial emancipation is a remarkable chapter in religious history—remarkable, but not unique.<sup>216</sup> The conclusion is warranted that the Old Believers’ economic impact upon Russian society was beneficial.

### C. The Question of Political Dissent

The question of the Old Believers’ political dissent and its potential and actual harmfulness to the tsarist government was always at least latent in the minds of tsars and government officials themselves. They were politically uneasy about this large minority, which could not be easily assimilated, and could apparently not be rooted out by oppres-

213. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 151.

214. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 107.

215. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, chaps. 5–7, 109ff., passim.

216. Religious lukewarmness and apostasy have attended increasing ease and wealth from biblical times. The sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel speaks eloquently on this decline in Israel, and also in Sodom. Verse 49 summarizes the decline: “Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.” Christ’s warning to the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14–19 tells the same story.

sion and persecution. V. Kliuchevsky's comments about the impact of the Old Believer schism upon young Peter the Great is worth quoting as probably typical of the tsars' distrust towards Old Believers:

... [T]hrough the fact that, in 1682, when Peter had just been elected to the tsarship, the Old Believers repeated their movement of revolt in the name {146} of antiquity (i.e. of the Old Faith—I am referring to the quarrel in the Hall of Angles of the 5th of July), the movement, as an impression of Peter's childhood, remained bitten, all his life, into the Reformer's soul.... Ancient custom, Peter would conclude, means schism, and schism means revolt: wherefore ancient custom means revolt. It is not difficult to conjecture the attitude towards antiquity which such a chain of impressions was bound to leave in the Great Reformer's mind.<sup>217</sup>

While Peter the Great was principally motivated by his zeal of reform and Westernization, those among his successors who were most opposed to the Old Believers were very zealous adherents of the established Orthodox church.

The “populist thesis,” which might be considered the reverse of the “government thesis,” so to call it, was first formulated by A. Shchapov. It is represented among the sources used in the preparation of this paper by V. V. Andreev, and it is built upon the supposedly exclusive sociopolitical significance of the Old Believer schism. Thus it deliberately views the schism's religious aspects as a mere pretense or cover-up for the underlying political grievances of the Russian people in the seventeenth century. Andreev's first chapter, “The Schism as Protest,” describes the supposed real reason for the schism as being not religious in nature, but rather as the people's protest against the change in the rights of the local assemblies (*zemstvos*), and the increasing centralization of power in the hands of the tsar which originated and proceeded already before the Nikonian church reforms.<sup>218</sup> Andreev begins his table of “General Theses” preceding the body of his book with the following assertion:

The schism in its background appears to be a protest of the *zemstvo* against the devouring of its rights by the central power. In its historical

217. V. O. Kluchevsky (*sic*; should be “Kliuchevsky”), *A History of Russia*, trans. C. J. Hogarth (New York: Russell & Russell, 1960), 330.

218. Andreev, *Raskol*, chap. 1, 1–19.

development the schism does not fight for the old faith, but against the kind of introduction of new secular ways (poryadki) without consultation of the zemstvo. The old faith is for it [the schism] a mere pretense.<sup>219</sup>

Andreev also views the Old Believers opposition to Western influences exclusively from a secular political and cultural perspective. To him, support of the old faith was simply the protection of national Russian selfhood, combined with local opposition against the central authorities' meddling into their small local details.<sup>220</sup> Zenkovsky, on the other hand, describes this sociopolitical clash between the old, and specifically Great Russian, ways of life, and the new and rather Westernized ways of {147} the expanding empire as indeed happening, but not as the only reality of motives and events.<sup>221</sup> On the basis of the available information, Zenkovsky seems to be correct.

The Old Believers took part in the uprisings led by Konrad Bulavin under Peter the Great, and by Emel'yan Pugachev under Catherine II. There was also Old Believer contact with Napoleon when he entered Moscow in 1812. Pleyer discounts the participation of the Old Believers in the revolts of Bulavin and Pugachev (and also in the earlier revolts of the Strel'tsy and of the folk-hero Sten'ka Razin) as largely if not entirely coincidental. In support of her position she quotes from V. I. Iasevich Borodaevskaia's defense of the Old Believers (and other sects), *Borba za veru (The Struggle for the Faith)*, published in 1912:

The Old Believers were never enemies of Russia, and when we meet individuals from their midst in the revolts of the Strel'tsy, who defended their interests, in the revolts of Sten'ka Razin, who promised them various reliefs, in the revolt of Astrakhan, in the revolt of Bulavin, in the movement of Pugachev ... who gave them the privilege to make the sign of the cross in their manner and to wear a beard, and who promised them the abolition of all their burdens, they were yet

219. *Ibid.*, v.

220. *Ibid.*, chap. 6, 73–90. Andreev seems to see the Old Believer schism somewhat analogous to the “states rights versus Washington,” or “local government versus federal bureaucracy” thesis about modern America. We can see the simplistic reductionism of this analogy, seen as a total explanation of United States history, and this may help us to see the similar simplistic reductionism in the “populist thesis.”

221. Zenkovsky, “The Russian Church Schism,” 46ff.

not the initiators of these revolts. Their participation in them did not serve political ends, but purely religious ones....<sup>222</sup>

It seems that this statement directly contradicts Pleyer's position. One, the actual participation of the Old Believers in various political revolts against the government is admitted. Two, while their goals were at least in part religious, their chosen means to reach their goals was political revolt. Thus Old Believer participation in the revolts was decidedly more than mere coincidence, but deliberate political action.

According to N. V. Riasanovsky, the Bulavin rebellion, 1707–08, against Peter the Great was provoked by the government's determination to hunt down fugitives, "and [was] also influenced by the Old Belief."<sup>223</sup> At its height, the movement spread over a large area of southern Russia, commanding an army of perhaps as many as one hundred thousand men. Gerschenkron states that "some Old Believer monks are said to have participated [in Bulavin's rebellion] as leaders."<sup>224</sup>

Billington sees the Bulavin uprising as one of a series beginning with the campaign of the False Dimitry against Boris Godunov (1605), and including the Bolotnikov revolt (1606–07) against Prince Shuisky, the Sten'ka Razin revolt against Tsar Alexis (1667–71), and finally the {148} Pugachev revolt against Catherine II (1773–74). In all these movements Billington perceives a yearning by the common people for a "true tsar-deliverer" somehow to come to their rescue against a wrongful usurper on the throne.<sup>225</sup> Since the Old Believers could only

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222. Pleyer, *Das russische Altgläubigentum*, 47. Pleyer adds the following footnote (*ibid.*, n.25): "In his detailed and extensive work about the Schism in the area of Saratov, Sokolov (N. S. Sokolov, *Raskol y Satarovskom kraee Opyt issledovaniya po neizdannym materialam*. Saratov, 1888) refutes the thesis of Shchapov, who called the Sten'ka Razin revolt a revolt of the Old Believers, on the basis of unpublished materials. 'The basis of this movement was not at all the Schism; the impulse guiding the popular masses did not have a religious but rather an economic character' (pages 15–17). This is also true for the Pugachev revolt, and for the supposed support of Pugachev by the Irgiz monasteries (Sokolov, pages 43–53)."

223. Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 246. No further details on the role of Old Belief in the Bulavin uprising are provided here.

224. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 27.



have entered into this series with Sten'ka Razin, at the earliest, Billington apparently did not see in Old Belief itself the principal cause of the Bulavin and Pugachev revolts either. He rather perceives the common and principal element in all these revolts as deep unrest, boiling over as it were, among the peasants.

The revolts also share another common feature: they all flared up suddenly and violently, drew the support of huge masses—and yet quickly failed. Leon Trotsky remarks in a perceptive aside in his book *Literature and Revolution*:

The peasantry has never in history risen independantly to general political aims, and peasant movements have resulted ... in a Pugachev or a Stenka Razin, and were repressed throughout all history... a purely peasant revolution has never been anywhere.... In its struggle it built guerrilla bands, but it never created a centralized revolutionary army. That is why it suffered defeats.<sup>226</sup>

Trotsky also singled out yet another common denominator of the revolts: they consisted of “guerrilla bands.” We have a good example of this feature in the Pugachev uprising, which may with some justification be called the Russian Peasant War (analogous to the German Peasant Wars of Luther’s time).

Emel'yan Pugachev was a Don Cossack who had participated in the Russian wars against Prussia and Turkey under Catherine II, and then fallen into trouble with the authorities. While a fugitive, he went into hiding with Old Believer groups in different parts of the empire, eventually taking refuge at the Old Believers' Irgiz monastery. Gerschenkron elaborates further:

It was among the Old Believers that he heard about the great unrest among the Ural cossacks and apparently in conversations with Old Believers conceived the idea of impersonating the late Emperor, Peter III.... [I]n the course of the uprising ... Pugachev promised not only emancipation from serfdom ... not only abolition of conscription and of all taxes, as well as “full ownership of fields and forests, meadows and fisheries ... without payment of purchase or quitrent”: but also

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225. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 197–200.

226. Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, 5th printing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975), 108–9.

“the old cross, and prayer, and beard”—the social, economic, and religious protests thus again merging quite naturally...<sup>227</sup> {149}

Michael Florinsky confirms that Pugachev promised “freedom from ... the landowners, the restoration of the ‘old faith,’ ... equitable administration, and prosperity and happiness for all... The practical policies of Pugachev were those of a reign of terror.”<sup>228</sup> Florinsky also reports that Pugachev was not himself an Old Believer.<sup>229</sup>

It seems clear that the Old Believers did indeed participate in the Bulavin and Pugachev revolts. While their motivation was probably chiefly religious, the means to their goal were clearly political, and clearly subversive from the government’s point of view. The concrete extent of their participation in the revolts, which may have included instigation and leadership, is in need of further investigation.

There is also evidence of contact between the Old Believers and Napoleon at the time of his invasion of Moscow in 1812. Among the sources consulted in the preparation of this paper the most comprehensive report is found in Bill:

The fear of revolutionary conspiracies which gripped the government [of Tsar Nicholas] after the Decembrists’ uprising of 1825 led to the view among high officials that Old Believers were politically unreliable. There had been an incident in the past to support such an opinion: the reception accorded Napoleon during his occupation of Moscow in 1812 by the Preobrazhensk cemetery. A delegation had been dispatched to the Emperor explaining that the monastery was “a society of ancient Christians” persecuted by the government, but which had a large following throughout Russia. The delegation expressed its acceptance of Napoleon as sovereign and asked for his protection and benevolence.<sup>230</sup>

In view of the fact that Moscow was totally evacuated at the approach of Napoleon, and that only subversives, criminals, and would-be assassins would have remained behind, this report clearly justifies the government’s deep suspicions of Old Believers. Gerschenkron, always

227. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 28–29.

228. Michael T. Florinsky, *Russia*, vol. I (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 589.

229. *Ibid.*, 588.

230. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 106. See also a much briefer statement to the same effect in Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 153.

on the trail of possible Old Believer subversion, speculates what might have happened in Russian history “if Napoleon had ordered an Old Believers’ service to be held, after an appropriate reconsecration, in the Cathedral of the Assumption in the Kremlin.”<sup>231</sup> He quotes Baron von Haxthausen, who traveled in Russia in the nineteenth century, as saying that “... there was a tendency to view Napoleon as the ‘lion in the valley of Jehosaphat who was destined to overthrow the false emperor and restore the throne to the White Tsar.’”<sup>232</sup> Pares supplies the following hesitant comment:

... [W]hen Napoleon broke into Russia and Alexander went to Moscow to ask for patriotic offerings the traders, with clenched teeth and tears in their eyes, subscribed far more than they could afford, to repel the common enemy; but no champion of the old system could tell you with conviction that he hoped to find a powerful support in the merchant class.<sup>233</sup>

Again, as with Bulavin and Pugachev, one has the impression that the Old Believers were perennially and latently politically unreliable.

Finally, some attention should be given to the reaction of the Old Believers to the political reformers and revolutionaries in the second half of the nineteenth century, and in the last years before the Revolution of 1917. It appears that generally the two groups simply did not interact at all. This is not surprising in view of the entire history and way of life of the Old Believers. They generally responded to persecution and overtures from outside by withdrawal and individual economic enterprise, rather than by seeking political solidarity with outsiders. At most, they supported revolts offering promises of religious reforms in their favor. Such promises did not come forth from the reformers and revolutionaries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The “populist thesis,” whose lack of appreciation of the religious motives of the Old Believer schism we have already analyzed, was itself part of the nineteenth-century movement of political reform, especially in its pervading secularism, and also in its basically “Western”

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231. Gerschenkron, *Europe in the Russian Mirror*, 42–43.

232. *Ibid.*, 43.

233. Pares, *Russia and Reform*, 90.

orientation. While the Old Believers were hostile to the tsarist system, they took their stand for reasons diametrically opposed to those of the reformers. The Old Believers were fundamentally Russian peasants; the reformers were by and large fundamentally rootless members of the intelligentsia. It is intriguing to speculate what might have happened had the reformers shown greater understanding for the Old Believers' religious concerns; but, as with Gerschenkron's speculation about the Old Believers and Napoleon, concrete history gives no answers to such "what-if" questions.

The only appeal the reformers and revolutionaries might have had to Old Believers would have been to those descendants of Old Belief who had largely abandoned the faith of their fathers. There was such a group of "fallen-away" descendants of wealthy Old Believer merchant families in the Moscow cemeteries. Blackwell writes:

Like the "fathers" and "sons" Turgenev described among the nobility and intelligentsia during [the 1840s and 1850s], a new materialistic and {151} Westernizing second generation emerged from amidst the Old Believers.... Like the Nihilists, they repudiated their heritage.<sup>234</sup>

However, even among this group of apostate Old Believers, there seems to have been only one well-known instance of authenticated support of the twentieth-century revolutionaries. This instance is the unique life and death of Savva Morozov (see appendix).

#### *4. Summary and Conclusion*

The Old Believers were a large group of Russian citizens who seceded from the established Russian Orthodox Church, because they refused to accept the reforms of church ritual introduced under Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich in the 1650s. They were excommunicated by implication in the person of their original leader, Archpriest Ivan Neronov, in 1656, and officially by final approval of the Nikonian reforms in the Church Council of 1667. The principal changes of church ritual made under Nikon were in the sign of the cross, formerly made with two fingers, and afterwards by three fingers, and changes in the liturgy involving modernized spelling, and sometimes altered wording and direction of the processional. The Old

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234. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 152.

Believers continued to cling to the pre-Nikonian ritual. Their numbers among the population of the Russian Empire have been estimated as perhaps as much as one-third of the Great Russians, and as one out of every seven or eight people of the entire population of the Russian Empire before the 1917 Revolution.

From the time of the original Old Believer schism until today, the Old Believers have been subject generally to severe persecution. This persecution was fiercest during the seventeenth century, and least oppressive under the generally liberal rulers, Catherine II, Alexander I, and Alexander II. However, complete legal equality with citizens of the Russian Empire belonging to the established church was never totally achieved. Even after the sweeping reforms in the wake of the 1905 Revolution the Old Believers were subjected to inequalities in education, and could not legally attempt to convert members of the established church to their own religion.

The “populist thesis,” advanced first by Shchapov in the nineteenth century, and represented in this paper by Andreev, asserts that the Old Believer schism did not occur for religious reasons at all, but rather was {152} due to popular opposition to centralization of political power in the hands of the tsar. The “populist thesis” also asserts that the schism was the result of popular resistance to the increasing Westernization of Russia, which began in the seventeenth century, but which was chiefly promoted by Peter the Great. On the basis of the religious motivation expressed by Archpriest Avvakum, and also by the perseverance of the Old Believers in their adherence to the pre-Nikonian church ritual despite centuries of persecution, the “populist thesis” seems mistaken in its complete exclusion of religious motivation for the schism. On the other hand, the “populist thesis” seems correct in its emphasis upon the aversion of Old Believers to modernization or Westernization of the old pre-Nikonian, early seventeenth-century ways, and about the political hostility of the Old Believers towards the tsar.

On the basis of the sources used in this paper, the Old Believers evidently participated in the Bulavin and Pugachev revolts, and there was Old Believer contact with Napoleon when he invaded Moscow in 1812. The continuous uneasiness about the Old Believers’ political reliability on the part of the tsarist governments was certainly warranted by these factors. However, the prevalent reaction of the Old Believers against

persecution and inferior civil status was withdrawal, extreme religious separatism, and compensation through extensive trading and merchandising. This activity, looked down upon by the remainder of the population, was aided by, and in turn helped, the internal cohesion of the Old Believer communities throughout vast areas of the Russian Empire. It also made possible the accumulation of investment capital in the hands of Old Believer community leaders, which enabled the Old Believers to play a considerable part in the early industrialization of Russia during the first two or three decades of the nineteenth century. The vanguard of the Old Believers in this period were the Old Believers' merchant communities in Moscow, the priestless Preobrazhensk "Cemetery" and the priestist Rogozhsk "Cemetery."

The Old Believer schism shattered the political and religious conceptions upon which Russian society had originally been founded. These ideas were (1) the "Third Rome" idea, (2) the "God dwelling among men" ideal, (3) the paternalistic tsar-people relationship, and (4) the social relations between the Russian people conceived religiously and known as *sobornost*, or social-religious communion. After the Church Council of 1667, which officially excommunicated the Old Believers, Russian society became more and more secularized. {153} Reintegration of the Old Believers with the remainder of society was never achieved, even under the most liberal conditions.

The ominous implications of this continuing rift between Russian society as a whole and a minority as large as the Old Believers seem obvious, and have been the subject of comments by such scholars as Zenkovsky and Billington. However, the concrete consequences of the Old Believer schism (other than their participation in the Bulavin and Pugachev revolts, and their contact with Napoleon in 1812, for example) are difficult to define. Probably the only conclusion which can be asserted with confidence is that the Old Believer schism weakened the cohesiveness of Russian society, as well as the leadership ability of the tsarist government. Paradoxically, the tsarist governments least weakened by the schism were the ones most conciliatory towards the Old Believers. However, a plausible case might also be made for the thesis that the government could and did generally safely disregard the Old Believers, since they did not often rise up against the government in active revolt. Certainly the government showed more concern over

political activities than over the religious nonconformity of the largest religious minority, the Old Believers.

Ultimately, however, when the 1917 Revolution overthrew the monarchy, the withdrawal of the Old Believers from participation in the political life of the country may have been a decisive factor. Zenkovsky concluded his assessment of the Russian church schism in the following way:

For many years the last emperor, Nicholas II, believed that the bulk of the non-Westernized Russian people, the Great Russian peasantry and merchants, were supporters of the throne and were opposed to the radical Westernized intelligentsia. The centuries-long persecution of the Old Faith, however, could hardly have developed strong sympathies for the regime among these born traditionalists. The seventeenth-century schism ... split the possible supporters of the monarchy into Westernized conservatives and traditionalist opposition. This split was never overcome, and proved fatal for the monarchy.

Hence, in the decisive years of struggle ... the traditionalists were not on the side of the throne.... The Westernized empire fell without finding support among the most traditional section of the Great Russian people, and the Pomanov dynasty was denied even its Vendee.<sup>235</sup>

The thesis—and the conclusion—of this paper is in agreement with Zenkovsky's evaluation. The destruction of the original Russian church-state began with the Old Believer schism in the seventeenth century; 1917 was the last act in the drama of this destruction. {154}

#### **APPENDIX: THE STRANGE CASE OF SAVVA MOROZOV**

In 1820 Savva Vasilievich Morozov, a peasant serf, had earned enough money on the streets of Moscow by peddling homespun cloth, linen, silk ribbons, and the like to purchase his own and his family's freedom from his owner, Count Riumin. The count stipulated, however, that any children of Savva's born after this transaction would have to be redeemed separately. Thus it took another ten years or so until Savva's youngest son, Timofei, born in 1823, could also be redeemed. The sum paid for his freedom far surpassed the "fabulous sum of sev-

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235. Zenkovsky, "The Russian Church Schism," 57–58.

enteen thousand rubles” for which the rest of the family had been set free.<sup>236</sup>

Thereupon Savva Vasilievich devoted all his efforts to his business. He already owned a silk-ribbon factory in Nikolsk (near Moscow), to which he later added a large wool-cloth mill and a cotton mill, which was among the first in Russia to be operated with English power looms, spinning jennies, and water frames. By the early 1850s over one thousand workers were employed by the Morozov enterprises.<sup>237</sup> Savva also {162} served as chief curator of a small, priestless, Old Believer community near Moscow, and as custodian of its capital of over 80,000 rubles.<sup>238</sup>

Savva Vasilievich died in 1860 at the age of ninety. His son Timofei, whom he had made “the unofficial head of the family at an early age,”<sup>239</sup> became head of the main textile mill at Nikolsk and was entrusted with the stewardship of the Morozov enterprise’s principal financial funds. The holdings now also included textile mills at Bogorodsk and Tver. A portrait painted of Timofei in his later years shows “a plain peasant face framed with long snow-white hair and beard,”<sup>240</sup> a sign that Timofei had kept the Old Believer ways. He became the leading industrialist in Russia in the 1880s, having commercial interest not only in the textile industry, but also in profitable railroad ventures, in Moscow’s two leading banks, and as the founder of a factory producing domestic mechanical looms.<sup>241</sup>

Timofei was a ruthless, despotic master over both his office employees and his factory workers. He imposed heavy fines upon them for even the most trivial shortcomings, sometimes leaving his workers unable to pay for their necessary food. Eventually their sufferings and anger erupted in “the first organized opposition to capitalist oppression”<sup>242</sup> —the strike of the Morozov workers of January 7, 1885. It was

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236. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 18.

237. *Ibid.*, 20.

238. Blackwell, *Russian Economic Development*, 150.

239. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 21.

240. *Ibid.*, 22.

241. *Ibid.*, 22–23.

242. *Ibid.*, 25.



crushed by the arrival of government troops and high police officials. No blood was spilled; the strike leaders were arrested, six hundred workers were dismissed and sent back to their native villages, and all fines accumulated during the last three months before the strike were suspended. However, the exorbitant fine system imposed by Timofei remained in effect until he died in 1889.<sup>243</sup>

In his memoirs Pavel Buryshkin, a member of a Moscow merchant family, reports that Timofei also “spent considerable money upon various cultural enterprises, in particular upon a publishing house, which he founded with the help of his son-in-law, Professor G. F. Karpov.”<sup>244</sup> After Timofei’s death, his formidable wife, Maria Fedorovna, became the head of the Morozov firm and the matriarch of the large family. She was “a very powerful woman, with a clear mind, great worldly tact, and with independent views.”<sup>245</sup>

It is Timofei’s eldest son, Savva Timofeevich Morozov, whose unusual life concerns us here. His death was also most unusual, as we shall see. Savva married a former worker in the Morozov textile mill in Nikolsk, where she had been a “thread-tyer” at a spinning machine. She was the widow of another factory owner named Zimin when Savva {163} married her. Buryshkin personally knew her and writes, “Nobody who did not know her past would have said that she had once stood behind a factory work bench.”<sup>246</sup>

#### Savva himself

retained many of the attributes of the Russian peasant ... European clothes [he had left Old Believer ways behind] hung awkwardly on his large, powerful frame. His gait and movements were slow, his eyes dark, sharp, and quick. He was a man of tremendous strength, will power, energy, and independence. He believed ... that the class of entrepreneurs to which he belonged had arrived at the summit of Russia’s social structure, holding vast powers and responsibilities, and preempting the role and importance of the nobility.<sup>247</sup>

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243. *Ibid.*, 24–26, passim.

244. Buryshkin, *Moskva kupecheskaia*, 114.

245. *Ibid.*

246. *Ibid.* 115.

247. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 27.

Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, a theatrical producer who owed much to Savva Morozov's financial and practical help, later also commented on Savva's keen awareness of his power as an important entrepreneur.<sup>248</sup> On one occasion, when the grand duke Sergei Alexandrovich wished to see the neo-Gothic palace Savva had built for himself in the fashionable western section of Moscow, Savva agreed—but he was not at home when the duke called. He meant to show the duke that “he would not meet [him] with genuflections.”<sup>249</sup>

Valentine Bill states that Savva “harbored an indelible recollection of the violence and drama of the strike of 1885, called forth by his father's inhuman despotism.”<sup>250</sup> Bernard Pares, an English visitor to pre-revolutionary Russia, gives a glowing account of Savva and his charitable works:

The late head of one of the Morozoff [*sic*] firms was a man who far exceeded the demands of the Government in the sums which he expended on the schools, the hospitals, and the general comfort of his workmen. The arrangements of this kind at his factory are considered to be one of the best models in Russia, and in Moscow itself his influence was a great moral force.<sup>251</sup>

Pares adds that Morozov “recently died in his prime, disappointed both by ... Government ... and by a working class which took all the benefits showered upon it as a simple excuse for asking more.”<sup>252</sup>

Savva also totally abolished the fines imposed by his father. The firm continued to prosper under his management: yearly net profits were nearly three million rubles (\$2,250,000).<sup>253</sup> Buryshkin praises Savva's managerial skill. He states that Savva was “very much prized and loved” {164} as chairman of the finance committee of the Nizhnyi Novgorod Fair. “They still talked about him and remembered him fif-

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248. Buryshkin, *Moskva kupecheskaia*, 117; also see Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, *My Life in the Russian Theatre* (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1968), 133.

249. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 27; also see Nemirovich-Danchenko, *ibid.*, 131–32.

250. *Ibid.*

251. Pares, *Russia and Reform*, 470.

252. *Ibid.*

253. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 28.

teen years after he left,” Buryshkin recalls from his own experience as a later member of the same committee.<sup>254</sup>

Out of his huge income Savva Timofeevich financed the Moscow Art Theater. Producer Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, and the famous stage director and actor Konstantin Stanislavsky fondly remember him in their respective memoirs.<sup>255</sup> Morozov also influenced the selection of the plays to be performed at the theater. Chekhov’s *The Sea Gull* launched the theater; his *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard* were first performed there, as were the plays of Maxim Gorky, most notably *The Lower Depths*.<sup>256</sup> Nemirovich-Danchenko wrote that Savva was subject to passionate enchantments —

not by a woman—that did not play a big role with him—but by a personality, by ideas, by a common public concern (obshchestvennost)... [T]he most tremendous, all devouring enchantment of his was Maxim Gorky, and, beyond that, the revolutionary movement....<sup>257</sup>

Savva made substantial contributions to the revolutionary movement. In his historical novel set in this time, *Samoubiistvo (Suicide)*, the Russian emigre author Mikhail Aldanov has Savva Morozov say to a revolutionary fundraiser:

The situation is, uh, like this: my yearly income is sixty thousand silver rubles. A third is used up for, uh, little things, for, uh, charitable causes. A third I spend upon myself, but I am prepared to give twenty thousand per year to you. More, uh, I can’t give.<sup>258</sup>

Aldanov describes Morozov as an introvert who trusted no one; as an expert on business and on technical details in his factories, as well as about machinery; as a “democratic” master with his workers and subordinates (the impression given by Aldanov is that this is largely pretense); as devious with new acquaintances and officials, with a

254. Buryshkin, *Moskva kupecheskaia*, 116.

255. *Ibid.*, 116–17; also Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 28–29; cf. Konstantin Stanislavsky, *My Life in Art*, 5th ed. (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1948), 385–89.

256. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 29.

257. Buryshkin, *Moskva kupecheskaia*, 118; also see Nemirovich-Danchenko, *My Life in the Russian Theatre*, 133.

258. Mikhail Aldanov, *Samoubiistvo* (New York: Literary Foundation in the Name of Chekhov, 1958), 83.

feigned “old-time merchant peasant” accent which had become second nature to him; as a tall, angular man with a Mongol cast to his features; as a hypochondriac stranger in his own sumptuous city house on Moscow’s Spiridonovka Street, amidst his Victorian furniture imported from England; as a man with little true attachment to his family, his mistress, or indeed to anyone. Finally, Aldanov emphasizes Morozov’s preoccupation with fictional characters obsessed with the meaninglessness of life, such as those in Ibsen’s play *Rosmersholm*, Morozov’s favorite. Morozov, and his favorite {165} fictional characters, were also preoccupied with suicide.<sup>259</sup> Bill complements the picture:

Decades later, Savva was to appear in the pages of Gorky’s vast historical novel, *The Life of Klim Samgin*, which gives a broad panorama of the last forty years of Tsarist Russia. Here Gorky describes him as a solid, sturdy man “with a Tatar face,” so clumsy, angular, and dark that Gorky likens him to a flatiron....

A photograph of Savva taken at the beginning of the twentieth century shows a clever face clouded by an expression of sadness and frustration.<sup>260</sup>

When Gorky was arrested for revolutionary activities early in 1905, Savva Morozov paid ten thousand rubles to bail him out of prison. His contributions to the Social Democratic Party were rumored to be in the hundreds of thousands.<sup>261</sup>

Maria Fedorovna, his mother, frowned upon his endeavors to improve the living conditions of the Morozov workers, and she was furious about his contributions to revolutionary causes. When Savva approached her in early 1905 with the proposal that the workers share in the profits of the Morozov enterprise, it was the last straw; she removed him from the management of the firm in April 1905. Bill describes what followed:

A few days later Savva left Russia for the French Riviera. There, on May 14, 1905, he shot himself. His death set the rumors running. Some claimed to know that Savva had left Russia in order to avoid

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259. *Ibid.* 74–86, passim.

260. Bill, *The Forgotten Class*, 30.

261. *Ibid.*

arrest for his connection with the revolutionaries. Others stated that he had suffered a nervous breakdown caused by disappointment in his revolutionary friends. Still others said that Savva had not committed suicide but had been murdered by an agent of the socialist underground. And there were those who believed that Savva was not dead, that the sealed coffin which his widow brought back to Moscow contained someone else's body.

The burial took place at the Old Believers' cemetery of Preobrazhensk....<sup>262</sup>

Was there anything in any of these rumors? Buryshkin denies this possibility with the certainty of what he himself witnessed and was personally told. He gives us the following version of Savva's death:

When the first revolution failed in 1905, and sharp reaction followed—something happened in his psyche, and he shot himself. This happened in Nice. His widow brought back to Moscow, for burial, a closed coffin made {166} of metal. Moscow babblers circulated the rumor that the body in the casket was not Savva Morozov's. People eagerly seizing upon anything mysterious picked up this rumor, and for many, many years the legend went about Moscow that Morozov was alive and in hiding somewhere in Russia ... [dots in original].

Indeed the legend spread through Moscow, but there was no doubt that the body which was brought back to Moscow, and buried, was that of S. T. Morozov. His body was not brought back from Nice by his widow, but rather by his nephew Karpov, who was especially dispatched by his family. He himself told me how he carried out his mission, and he had no doubt whatever.<sup>263</sup>

And then there is yet another version of Savva Morozov's suicide in Aldanov's novel:

In Cannes Savva Timofeevich Morozov committed suicide, quite unexpected to everyone. Not long before this event it was said that his health had lately deteriorated, that his nerves had completely broken down, and that the physicians had sent him to Paris and to the Riviera to take a cure and to rest. In the inn he took advantage of a minute when his wife had gone out, lay down on a sofa and shot himself.<sup>264</sup>

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262. *Ibid.*, 32.

263. Buryshkin, *Moskva kupecheskaia*, 119.

264. Aldanov, *Samoubiistvo*, 208.

Aldanov also reports on the rumors circulating in Moscow, much in the manner of Bill.<sup>265</sup>

Fifteen years went by, and then apparently Savva Morozov rose from the dead. This amazing denouement is reported to us by none other than Alexandr Solzhenitsyn in the first volume of the *The Gulag Archipelago*. He bases his information upon an account by Soviet Prosecutor Nikolai Vasilievich Krylenko, *Za pyat let (For Five Years)* (1918–1922), published in one edition of 7,000 copies, and containing the prosecution speeches given in the most important trials held before the Moscow and the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunals during those years.<sup>266</sup> Solzhenitsyn describes the case of “the Tactical Center,” conducted before the Supreme Tribunal—the *Verkhtrib*—August 16–20, 1920.<sup>267</sup> This case involved twenty-eight defendants, plus other defendants tried *in absentia*. It was concerned, according to Krylenko, with “the judgment of history on the activity of the Russian intelligentsia” and “with the verdict of the Revolution on it.”<sup>268</sup>

One of the accusations against some of the defendants in this trial was that they “had raised money to help the Butyrki prisoners.”<sup>269</sup> Solzhenitsyn writes in his characteristic manner: {167}

As when a cinema projector starts slowing down, twenty-eight prerevolutionary male and female faces flicker past us in a film that’s fuzzy and askew...

We don’t have their answers! Their last words are missing—because of “technical considerations.” But, making up for this lack, the accuser croons to us: “From beginning to end, it was self-flagellation and repentance for the mistakes they committed...”

And who was that man over there? His face was familiar. It was Savva Morozov. But listen here: after all, he gave the Bolsheviks all that money! And now he has handed a little to these people? Three years in prison, but released on probation. Let that be a lesson to him!<sup>270</sup>

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265. *Ibid.*

266. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, vol. 1, 306n13.

267. *Ibid.* 327–33, *passim*.

268. *Ibid.*, 327.

269. *Ibid.*, 332.

270. *Ibid.*, 333.

Solzhenitsyn adds a final footnote to the last sentence: “He would soon cut his own throat.”<sup>271</sup>

It seems clear that Savva Morozov supported the Bolshevik revolutionaries out of idealistic concern for the industrial workers and others who suffered oppression in pre-1917 Russia. Both versions of his fate (flight and suicide in 1905, or trial and suicide in 1920) agree with this assessment of his political motivation. If proven correct, the Solzhenitsyn account would also add Savva Morozov to the large number of communist idealists who were utterly betrayed by Soviet communist reality.

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271. *Ibid.*, 333n66.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

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**Andreev, V. V. *Raskol i ego znachenie v narodnoi russkoi istorii*.  
St. Petersburg, 1870. Photocopy edition by Otto Zeller Verlag,  
Osnabruck, 1965.**

This is an excellent historical sketch of the Old Believer movement, written from the populist perspective of the second half of the nineteenth century. The book is clearly divided into chapters, with brief

chapter descriptions in the table of contents facilitating a researcher's concentration upon his own area of interest. The author has set forth his major theses in a special list (pp. v-viii), which usefully presents the "populist thesis" in outline form. There is a good list of personalities connected with the Old Believer schism, a listing of Russian primary and secondary sources, and an alphabetical reference list of names contained in the body of the book. The style is refreshing and commands the reader's interest throughout. Recommended to any student of the Old Believer issue, and ought to be translated into English.

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**Belousov, Ivan. *Ushedshaia Moskva.*  
Moscow: Moskovskoe Tovarishchestvo Pisatelei, 1927.**

This small volume of personal recollections of a lower middle-class Russian who spent his entire life in Moscow is a fine primary source for a researcher wishing to get the "feel" of daily life in prerevolutionary Moscow. The small private workshops, the life of a boy apprentice, the beginnings of mass transit, the life of workers in the large factories, theater performances, and similar subjects are treated in a simple, unpretentious manner. The book is valuable for background information, but of no direct importance to the present study on Old Believers.

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**Bill, Valentine T. *The Forgotten Class.* New York: Praeger, 1959.**

The author traces the development of the Russian merchant class from its beginnings through the merchant city of Novgorod, and especially its expansion in and after the seventeenth century, to the October Revolution (1917). Special attention is devoted to the part of the Old Believers in the flourishing of trade, and also in the beginning of factory capitalism. The story of Savva Morozov, scion of a famous Old Believer family active in the textile industry, is given at the very beginning of the book, in more detail than in any of the sources consulted in the preparation of the present study. {172}

The author draws often upon the memoirs of Pavel A. Buryshkin (see below), both in narrating details of the lives of the merchants he describes, and also in his almost passionate, inclusive, and plausible defense of the merchants of Russia as the "forgotten class" against accusations and defamations by such prerevolutionary writers as

Maxim Gorky or Saltykov-Shchedrin. The style is smooth, and the narrative is interesting and challenging from beginning to end.

This reviewer has reservations about Bill's sweeping defense of the merchant and manufacturer class in view of the very real poverty and the miserable working and living conditions of Russian factory workers, well attested by other reliable sources. Nevertheless, the book is recommended for students of the "forgotten class" in general, and it furnishes much-needed information for the present study of Old Believers.

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**Billington, James H. *The Icon and the Axe*.  
1st Vintage Books ed. New York: Random House, 1970.**

This reviewer would recommend Billington's one-volume history of Russian thought, culture, and religion wholeheartedly to anyone, whether beginning or advanced student of the subject. Over and over again, the reader already possessing some background information is struck by the profundity and originality of Billington's assessments. The scope of historical investigation, the identification of major currents of thought, the careful and balanced evaluation of the lives and the influence of individual personalities, are inspired throughout the book's nearly 600 pages of text, and almost 200 pages of detailed notes, by the author's palpable respect and love for Russia and her people. When I came to formulate my own thesis about the fatal harmfulness of the Old Believer schism for Russian society and history, I was much encouraged to find that Billington's overall assessment parallels mine.

There are profuse references to the Old Believers in many parts of Billington's book, all helpful to the present study. The excellent alphabetical index, and also the extensive bibliographical notes at the end of *The Icon and the Axe*, are added welcome benefits in learning to know Russia better under Billington's erudite and always fascinating guidance.

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**Blackwell, William L. *The Beginnings of Russian Industrialization, 1800–1860*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968.**

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**Blackwell, William L. ed., *Russian Economic Development from Peter the Great to Stalin*, New York: New Viewpoints, a Division of Franklin Watts Inc., 1974.**

There is much overlap in these two volumes with regard to the impact of the Old Believers upon the development of Russian trade and industry in the nineteenth century. Because of the contributions of French economist Roger Portal and American economic historian Theodore von Laue to the comprehensive economic history edited by Blackwell, both books together give a fairly complete picture of the involvement of the Old Believers in nineteenth century Russian trade, and especially in the expansion of the textile industry. {173}

Blackwell emphasizes the continuous historical narrative and also a sociological assessment of the Old Believers, and of comparable persecuted and isolated groups in Russia (the Skoptsy and the Jews). He also draws parallels between such groups and Calvinist and Jewish commercial activity in Western Europe. Portal and von Laue round out Blackwell's reports by an abundance of statistics, astonishing in their implications for Russia as perhaps not quite as primitive as one might think in view of her generally backward and authoritarian condition. The artistic involvement of such Old Believers as Savva Mamontov and Nikolai Riabushinsky is mentioned. For students wishing to delve more deeply into Russian economic history, there are abundant footnotes and bibliographical references throughout both books.

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**Bolshakoff, Serge. *Russian Nonconformity*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950.**

This book, written from the official Russian Orthodox perspective, is plodding and lackluster. It deals with all kinds of religious non-conformists, and perhaps overemphasizes comparatively smaller groups, such as the Molokane or the Khlysty, in relation to the largest dissenting group of all, namely, the Old Believers. A certain pithy dislike for them pervades the pertinent chapter. However, there is a fine select bibliography appended to the text.

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**Buryshkin, Pavel A. *Moskva kupecheskaia*.  
New York: Literary Foundation in the Name of Chekhov, 1954.**

Here is an interesting, well-written primary source—the personal memories of the author, who knew many leading Moscow merchant families, including the Morozovs, the Ryabushinskys, the Soldatenkovs, {174} the Guchkovs, and numerous others. Unlike the much simpler memories of Ivan Belousov (see above), Buryshkin holds decided personal opinions about the people and the events he refers to. The style is precise, and the individuals described come to life in a rather punctuated, sharp and clear manner—photographs rather than hazy paintings. Like Bill (see above), Buryshkin defends the merchant class against unwarranted attacks on the part of certain Russian writers. Must reading for students of “merchant Moscow” at the turn of our century.

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**Conybear, Frederick C. *Russian Dissenters*.  
New York: Russell & Russell, 1962.**

Billington, whose judgment is generally so reliable, writes that Conybear's book is “detailed, but somewhat unhistorical and out of date” (*The Icon and the Axe*, 608). Latourette, on the other hand, whose *History of Christianity* is invaluable to the student of this topic, calls it “a useful collection of material from Russian accounts” (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 922). They are both right. Conybear's book is most profitable for a student of the Old Believer schism, although it does have historical weaknesses. The most noticeable of these is Conybear's decided preference of the Old Believers in their conflict with the established church and the government. This preference probably makes him argue that the Old Believers did not ever choose to commit mass suicide by self-conflagration, contrary to most available sources. However, his preference for the Old Believers spurred him on to perusal and translation of the work of an Old Believer priest, Ivan Iuzov, to whom we owe excellent figures of the actual number of Old Believers in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In addition, Conybear's book is interesting, probably just because Conybear is himself engaged in the conflict he describes. The Iuzov

figures, as far as I can tell, have never been seriously challenged or superseded. Highly recommended.

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**Crummey, Robert O.**  
*The Old Believers and The World of Antichrist.*  
 Madison, Milwaukee, and London:  
 University of Wisconsin Press, 1970.

No doubt Crummey's extensive, scholarly, and well-reasoned doctoral thesis on the Old Believer Vyg community will stand as an indispensable study in this field for many years to come. Besides the detailed information on the establishment, sustenance, and outreach of {175} the Vyg community, Crummey's study has an important general relevance to the impact of an apocalyptic worldview upon a large body of otherwise undistinguished citizens.

Crummey's intriguing thesis—that the entire history of the Old Believer movement can be seen as a large community's adjustment to going on existing after the expected end of the world has not materialized, and under the rule of a literal Antichrist or his representative—is presented calmly, plausibly, and with extensive recourse to previously untapped Russian documentary materials. The book is a Russian scholar's joy; it was most helpful to my own study.

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**Curtiss, John Shelton.** *Church and State in Russia:  
 The Last Years of the Empire, 1900–1917.*  
 New York: Columbia University Press, 1940.

This book gives an excellent, concise but thorough presentation of the official treatment of dissenting religious minorities in prerevolutionary Russia. The important changes in the wake of the 1905 Revolution are outlined in detail. All information is painstakingly documented from official tsarist government records and similar primary sources. While Old Believers are given their proportionately important place, there is much interesting information about the “splinter” minorities, such as the Khlysty, and also about the greater freedom granted to the important Islamic minority within Imperial Russia after 1905. This book was indispensable for my own study, and would be such for any student of the topic which it discusses.

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**Gerschenkron, Alexander. *Europe in the Russian Mirror, Four Lectures in Economic History*. Cambridge University Press, 1970.**

Although this book deals with the Old Believers only marginally, it contains much valuable information about them. As a study of Russian economic history, it is a fine complement to the books by William Blackwell (see above). Gerschenkron discusses, and by and large opposes, the “Protestant ethic” thesis of Max Weber, since the Old Believers also succeeded in industry, trade, and finance although they were not Protestants by any means.

This reviewer thought there was a latent socialistic bias throughout Gerschenkron’s book. The book is interesting throughout, with a clear and sharp style. {176}

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**Pleyer, Viktoria. *Das russische Altgläubigentum*. Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1961.**

In the first part of her book, the author furnishes a concise description of the Old Believer movement, including an excellent overview of historical research into the schism in Russia and abroad. The bibliography is comprehensive, and of special value to other researchers, because it shows that much interesting work on the subject of the Old Believers has been done by German writers, or has been translated from Russian into German.

The entire second section of the book deals with the portrayal of the Old Believers in Russian literature of the nineteenth century. The Russian writers Pavel I. Mel’nikov (Andrei Pechersky), Dmitri N. Mamin-Sibiriak, Vladimir G. Korolenko, and Nikolai S. Leskov are singled out for detailed discussion, and there also are excerpts from additional writers, for instance, Dmitri Merezhkovskii. There are vivid descriptions of Old Believer customs, popular beliefs, and daily life.

While most writers cited by Pleyer appear to be in sympathy with the Old Believers, Pleyer’s own attitude towards them is rather unfavorable. She is evidently antagonized by what she considers the pharisaic and formalistic narrowness of Old Believers, and there is no attempt to evaluate the schism on the basis of the deeper meaning behind disputed details of church ritual.

Pleyer's work is valuable because she describes Old Believers who settled in the Ural Mountains and worked in mining, whereas most other researchers have concentrated upon Old Believers who settled in the northern, western, or the Volga regions of Russia.

Besides Pleyer's scarcely concealed antipathy towards the Old Believers, her treatment of the "populist thesis" seems to this reviewer to be faulty. Her assessment of the participation of the Old Believers in political revolts (such as Bulavin's and Pugachev's) does not seem to this reviewer to be borne out by the facts.

All in all, Pleyer's contribution to Old Believer research fills various voids, especially about source material not listed by other scholars. Again, a translation from German into English would be helpful to English-speaking students of the issue.

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**Zenkovsky, Serge A., ed. *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles and Tales*. New York: E. P. Dutton, [1963] 1974.**

Zenkovsky has rendered every student of Russian history and {177} thought a great service in compiling this fine collection of Russian epics, chronicles, and tales. Perhaps the most moving, and certainly the most "historical" among them, is the abridged autobiography of Archpriest Avvakum—obviously an indispensable primary source for my own paper. It "remained totally unknown to Westernized Russians until the 1850s" (Zenkovsky, "The Russian Church Schism," see below).

One must really read Avvakum's story for oneself in order to see the robust, invincible, austere faith motivating this indomitable man during the nearly thirty years of his extreme persecution by state and church. I understand that Avvakum's autobiography was one of Leon Trotsky's favorite books; among Protestant Reformers, Avvakum reminds us most of John Hus or Martin Luther. There is in him no trace of the gentleness and conciliatoriness of Erasmus, nor of the scholarly hesitancy and political expediency of Thomas Cranmer (who yet matched the heroism of Avvakum—or even overcame it, having been so unheroic and pliable by nature—at the stake in 1556). An Orthodox Savonarola?

And what can we say of "Dame Avvakum," his patient, long-suffering wife, who shared all his troubles to the end, and was bearing him



many children besides? Avvakum's autobiography is one of the unforgettable documents of human history, revealing him as one of mankind's foremost leaders and examples. Not inappropriately, the peasant poet Nikolai Kliuev compared Lenin to Avvakum in his poem "Lenin," written in the early 1920s (Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 506).

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**Zenkovsky, Serge A. "The Russian Church Schism: Its Background and Repercussions." *Russian Review* 16 (October 1957): 37–58.**

In the absence of a comprehensive history of the entire Old Believer schism, Zenkovsky has written a useful brief outline of the treatment of the Old Believers by the various tsars and their governments between 1653 and 1917. There is a good description of the reasons of state behind the Nikonian reforms of church ritual. Zenkovsky also deals well with the continual open or latent fear of the tsarist government faced with the large, unreconciled mass of "schismatics" in the Russian Empire. Part of Zenkovsky's thesis is that the tsars after Peter the Great preferred other nationalities of the Empire to the Great Russians. Combining this thesis with a discussion of the Old Believer schism results in the article's only fault, a rambling style.

Zenkovsky, too, anticipates my own thesis that the Old Believer schism "was never overcome, and proved fatal for the monarchy" (57). For a student of the Old Believer schism, this article is essential.

# TOWARD JUBILEE

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*Everett Ridley Taylor*

*The nation and kingdom that will not  
serve Thee [God] shall perish; yea,  
those nations shall be utterly wasted.*

*Fear thou not; for I am with thee:  
Be not dismayed; for I am thy God:  
I will strengthen thee;  
yea, I will uphold thee with  
the right hand of my righteousness.—Isaiah 41:10*

We of the United States certainly are due to be utterly wasted, if going contrary to God's Word is the way to qualify. Indeed, there is good reason to expect a great depression, a depression much more severe than that of the 1930s. Since all people use money and credit, with many of us being borrowers or lenders, a collapse of the money and credit system would cause us all to suffer great hardships.

However, by studying the 25th and 27th chapters of Leviticus, we may see how God gave the people of Israel a way to avoid wasting themselves in depressions. The method God set forth is neglected today; it is virtually unknown, not understood. I myself have read those chapters perhaps a dozen times since I was saved twenty-eight years ago, without really seeing their important principles; and I do not yet fully understand these chapters. But recently I wrote out the chapters longhand, and made notes about probable meanings; I believe that now I {179} understand them well enough to encourage you to go through the chapters in like manner with me. By doing so, I believe you will have a better chance to survive the economic problems of the future.

## *What Was the Jubilee?*

Let us start by clearly defining "jubilee," from Leviticus 25:8:

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

Please note a principle: *The Jubilee put a practical limit on the time a debt should be repaid in full.* This principle is extensively violated today, but for the present, simply bear two facts in mind: the time limit for debt repayment, and the fact that this principle is often neglected.

Please look to Leviticus 25:35–37:

And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

This says nothing about usury being excessive or extortionate; it simply prohibits usury, or “increase.”

Since God forbade the making of loans for increase, a major part of modern banking is disobedience to the principle. God provided a better way to use credit than the practices employed by today’s bankers, as you will see by continuing this study.

### *God Describes Usury*

How does God describe usury?

If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, ...If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the {180} like to any one of these things, and that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbor’s wife, hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination, hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.(Ezek. 18:10–13)

So the Lord considers usury (which many call “interest”) to be one among eight very evil abominations.

Of course the word “interest” has been substituted for usury both in many Bible versions and in the popular idiom, and saying “interest” seems to soften the offence of usury. But whether the practice of taking increase for loans is called interest or usury, the deed is the same: *it is the taking of increase for a loan*. My Bible calls it usury; and I do.

Is the interest-charging system we use today abominable? Those who buy now and pay later (with interest) like it while escaping bankruptcies, foreclosures, and/or unemployment. Those having bonds and/ or savings accounts still get their interest while seeing other bonds default, and other banks fail. And all of us know that *something* is wrong, not having known the depths of Satan.

But the poor know that they are oppressed.

For the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. (Ps. 12:5)

### *God Established a Credit System*

Now so far in our study we have been introduced to biblical meanings for “jubilee” and “usury.” An understanding of these meanings should give us some idea of a system very different from today’s. Perhaps the most we can understand about it now is that the jubilee economy *was* very different. You may come to see that the difference is just as plain as black and white. The jubilee non-usury economy observed three essential financial principles. The money and banking system we use today violates these three important principles. Once you see this difference and act prudently, you will lose less than others in the coming credit crisis. {181} So let us see how the jubilee system worked by understanding Leviticus 27:1ff.:

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation.

This estimation or evaluation gave a credit standing which qualified the one vowing to repay the advance granted, to go into debt up to the sum for which he qualified. This particular credit arrangement benefited poor people and was for the convenience of all. The

arrangement depended on the *singular vow*, which was a vow of honor made in the Lord's sanctuary.

Let us continue with Leviticus 27:3:

And thy estimation shall be for the male from 20 years old even unto 60 years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

I believe "the shekel of the sanctuary" was a credit shekel, equal in value to a silver shekel, but different; I doubt if shekels of the sanctuary were redeemable in silver.<sup>272</sup>

### *Credit for the Entire Family*

Before continuing, notice the plural word "persons" in Leviticus 27:1. Evidently the credit qualification was for an entire family, with the father, the family head, being the key one to vow, and then the others.

And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be 30 shekels. And if it be from 5 years old even unto 20 years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male 20 shekels, and for the female 10 shekels. And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male 5 shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be 3 shekels of silver. And if it be from 60 years old and above; if it be male, thy estimation shall be 15 shekels, and for the female 10 shekels. But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him. {182}

Now it is evident that each family as a unit was expected to be productive, and together earn the funds needed for family support, not depending upon general tax revenues. This biblical policy of family responsibility contrasts with modern "welfare state" policy, by which the elderly are made wards of the state, more or less financially alienated from their children.

With Leviticus 27:9, the account of jubilee-non-usury economy is interrupted by provision for sacrifice and worship, which kind of interruption is good for us also, as we try to understand the deep things of God.

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272. Before 1932 paper dollars were supposed to be redeemable in gold, but in 1932 and thereafter we found that it was not possible.

And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that any man giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy: he shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.

I believe that this refers to sacrificial animals given to the Lord, with no credit to the sacrificer.

### *Quick and Easy Credit*

Then continuing with Leviticus 27:11–13, we read:

And if it be any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD, then he shall present the beast before the priest; and the priest shall value it whether it be good or bad: as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be. But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.

This quotation causes me to think of a poor man with a donkey. He will vow to redeem the donkey and keep it for his own use. We can suppose that a Levite priest would grant him credit based on a table of relative values available for things expected to be offered for credit advances. And it would seem that the tabulated values should be a bit lower than current sales prices, so clients would vow to redeem, rather than forfeit.

For this service the fee was one fifth of the credit advanced. Since the bookkeeping service would continue for an indefinite time, the charge might seem to be too high for an industrious man who should quickly earn and deposit more than the credit advanced, and too little for the slothful fellow, continually in debt. But you will see from later studies of larger accounts that the charge should average out, being very {183} reasonable; and, of course, credit agreements could allow for adjustments. You will also see, I believe, that in the jubilee economy there would be no lack of employment for those wanting to work; so the poor man of this example, health permitting, could certainly find work or make profits with which to repay the credit advanced to him.

However, you should also know that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ should look to God's principles in order to survive financially. A principle to be observed here is that if men would use the credits they now hoard for usury to employ people to make things and profits for

themselves, instead of hoarding the credits, there would be no “unemployment problem.”

But we cannot expect bankers to copy non-usury methods, since they make loans for *increases* to make profits.

### *A Prudent Credit Policy*

And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.

And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.

Please notice two things about these two verses: The possession which justifies the credit advance is “his house,” not including the land on which it rests, for as God said in Leviticus 25:23, “*The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is Mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me.*” The second thing to note is that God speaks of the man’s own house. This must have been a house free and clear of all debt; he would not be given a credit advance on the value of a house he hoped eventually to own, as is common practice in this world’s economy, which sometimes ends in credit failures and foreclosures. But let us keep our minds open to the possibility that God provided a way to restrain overoptimism to avoid credit failure and miserable foreclosures.

Let us consider the probable way of making a credit advance on a house valued at 100,000 shekels before jubilee calculations, assuming that the next jubilee will be ten years in the future. Then basing our calculations on the principle of Leviticus 25:16b, “*according to the fewness of the years thou shalt diminish the price of it,*” we see that with only a fifth of a fifty-year jubilee to go, the fifth of 100,000 shekels is {184} 20,000 shekels. Accordingly, the priest could make a credit advance of 20,000 shekels with the understanding that the man’s credit standing would be reduced by 1,000 shekels per year. The sanctuary simply would not honor attempted withdrawals in excess of whatever his credit standing might become. For this service the owner of the house would pay 4,000 shekels, being one-fifth of 20,000 shekels, an average of 400 shekels per year. This would provide him with a bookkeeping service for ten years, accounting for all of his deposits and withdrawals.

God thus restrained the over-optimistic granting and use of credit, saving His people losses from inflation and depression.

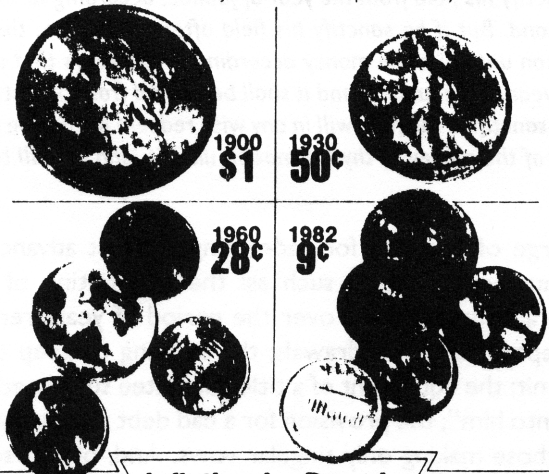
PICTOGRAM

# Our Shrinking Dollar

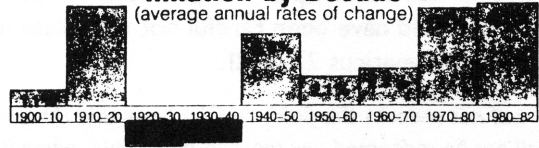
AS THE LONGEST, most vicious spiral of inflation in modern U.S. history winds down, many experts envision a period of relative price stability ahead. And yet if inflation can be held to only four percent each year until 2000, the value of the 1900 dollar—just nine cents today—still will shrivel to a mere four pennies.

Condensed from U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

## Buying Power of 1900 Dollar (as deflated by the consumer price index)



### Inflation by Decade (average annual rates of change)



USNEWS—Basic data U.S. Dept. of Labor

Reprinted from *U.S. News & World Report*  
Copyright, 1983. U.S. News & World Report Inc. {186}



### *The Lord Sets Standards*

As we study Leviticus 27:16 we see that God sets standards which permitted the jubilee economy to flourish without inflation:

And if a man should sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof, an homer of barley seed shall be valued at 60 shekels of silver.”

And thy estimation shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel. (The last two lines are from 27:25.)

The first thing I hope you will notice here is that shekels of silver are named as the standard of value. We have no *standard* of value in the United States today, but instead base values upon the opinions of men. And we have become so used to the resulting inflation that few people know the importance of a *standard* of value; but you can look at the pictogram on the previous page (Our Shrinking Dollar) to see the result. Evidently many people having bonds and/or savings accounts have been brainwashed by the inflation phenomenon (and laws), into accounting that they have made profits on which they pay income taxes and/or inheritance taxes when in reality their true worth, in terms of things they can buy, has decreased.

The second important thing to see here is about relative value. Here, the value of a certain quantity of barley is related to the value of a given weight of silver. Priests probably had tables of relative values from which to base their estimates for credit advances. {185}

Of course, there would be considerable fluctuation in the amount of the grain a given field would yield from year to year because of the Sabbath years, possible crop failures, the fertility of the land, and the competence of the farmer. So, probably, the estimation was very conservative and based upon expected averages over a period of years. So, then, the credit advance was probably offered and accepted in accordance with conditions similar to those of verses 17–19, and to those which applied to other credit advances.

### *The Charge for Service*

Let us look to Leviticus 27:17–19:

If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy estimation it shall stand. But if he sanctify his field after the jubilee, then

the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubilee, and it shall be abated from thy estimation. And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.

The charge of one-fifth for redeeming a credit advance evidently covered a number of things such as: the negotiating of the credit advance; the accounting costs over the period of years remaining, for recording deposits and withdrawals; the auditing to keep the account within the limit; the equivalent of a title guarantee suggested by “it shall be assured unto him”; the provision for a bad debt reserve; and the free service for those making only singular vows. And, of course, since the non-usury economy was based upon the principle of “*no increase for loans*,” the Levites should have been careful not to violate it.

We come now to Leviticus 27:20–21.

And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more. But the field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest’s.

We can understand why a farmer and his family might choose to give up a field and find other work, since they had the freedom to change occupations. In the non-usury economy, farm income came from working the land, not from land value. And with credits not hoarded to cause {187} unemployment, and therefore with many demands for goods and services, everyone had a wide choice of opportunities from which to earn sufficient incomes.

### *We Are “Caught Up” in Usury*

After studying the twenty-seventh chapter of Leviticus, we have some idea of an economy so different from ours that some people might consider it to be a myth, as they do of God’s provision of an ideal environment for Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. God provided the children of Israel with the jubilee economy; but it would be difficult to prove that it worked successfully, except we can suppose that under Joshua the children of Israel were obedient and prospered. But we can suppose that even in Joshua’s day, the inordinate desires of men and women to possess things and to pay usury to get them before paying in

full, probably led to usurious practices like ours today. The jubilee economy required a devoted and disciplined priesthood which men like Eli and his sons failed to provide.

Before being caught up to be with the Lord in the air, we must realize that we are caught in the world's usury system: many of us owe long-term debts, paying usury; some of us have bonds and/or savings accounts which pay interest; many there are who are poor and exploited among us; and there are the unemployed who can't find work while the credits which could be used to employ them are hoarded to earn high rates of usury instead of being used in productive enterprises.

As you who now pay usury and/or receive usury know, all people, including Christians, have been subjected to almost irresistible temptations. We are among the hosts who have desired to possess things before they could be paid for in full and were willing to pay usury on long-term debts. The temptation to go into debt-servitude was made attractive to those earning large incomes because much of the usury can be income-tax expensed. And many others who could make down-payments on properties were tempted to pay usury on long-term debts, hoping that inflation would let them pay with cheaper money, and that it would make their property increase in value. And the god "usury" is precious to those who sacrifice to him: his devotees do not have to work for the "increase" he bestows. {188}

### *Let Us Leave Off This Usury*

Now we know that many churches are in debt and pay usury. So sacrificial donations are burned in part on altars to usury. This ought not so to be. We read from James 3:11: "*Doth a fountain at the same place send forth sweet water and bitter?*" King Josiah, as reported in 2 Kings 23:4-5, encountered a similar abomination permitted by the priests:

And the King commanded Hilkiah the high priest, ... to bring forth out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal, ... and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and he put down the idolatrous priests....

Of course many who permit sacrifice to usury today have done so ignorantly, being deluded by corrupt translations. Hereafter, however,

they can no longer plead ignorance: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).

The subtle nature of usury (only partly concealed when it is called interest), is exposed as an abomination when it is seen in combination with other violations of God-given principles. We have no standard of value in the United States today. Men in government have found it easier and more politic to increase public debts than to lay and collect taxes; the federal debt “limit” today is \$1,389 billion, and immeasurable billions are owed for “entitlements”; states, counties, cities, and governmental subdivisions, owe additional astronomical sums of bonded debt. There are also business and personal debts which add to the staggering total of debt (shall we forget the debt of socialist nations?). Vast hosts of people at home and abroad feast on usury incomes. We live in a nation which does not serve God, even a nation which restricts corrective Bible education, and which shall be utterly wasted. In the meantime we suffer from the ever-increasing burden of these and other violations of God-given principles, even as similar violations of principle plagued Jerusalem until Nehemiah said, “I pray you, let us leave off this usury” (Neh. 5:10). And the people obeyed, bringing recovery.

### *Non-Usury Church Finance*

A church is paying 9 ½ percent usury on a \$35,000 debt. In seven years, with payments of \$405 per month, usury will cost \$19,624, and \$14,396 {189} will be paid off. Thus 56 percent of the congregation’s donations will go the god “Usury,” not to the Lord God. And the church will still owe \$20,604.

Now look at this from an investor’s point of view. From the following table we see that the average rate of inflation for the last five years has been 9.76 percent. If inflation should be 9.76 percent this year, the consumer price index would equate \$35,000 to \$38,416 cpi, which is \$91 more than \$35,000 plus usury at 9 ½ percent. And since we have seen inflation get out of man’s control in France, Germany, Italy, Argentina, Brazil, Israel, etc., etc., a 9 ½ percent return on one’s capital should not be attractive.

### *Consumer Price Index*

Year	Index	% Change
1967	100	
1978	195.3	7.6
1979	217.7	11.5
1980	247.0	13.5
1981	272.3	10.2
1982	288.6	6.0

Of course some speculators make great profits during inflation, but most ordinary people see their savings melt away. So perhaps you will consider a unique sort of person: one who conserves his savings and investments in a way not to be overcome by inflation; and I will add the unique quality that he does so while avoiding usury increase.

Now as a *conservator*, suppose you say to that church snared by usury, if you will give me a lien of \$35,000 against your property, I will provide \$35,000 to pay off the debt to the bank if you will agree to pay me \$416.66 the first month, and in accordance with the consumer price index thereafter. For example, if inflation becomes 10 percent this year, at the beginning of the second month, retroactively, you would owe  $\$416.66 \times 10 \text{ percent} = \$458.33$  for that month. (The \$416.66 per month starting payment, instead of \$405, is so the church will be free and clear of debt in seven years, in compliance with the principle taught by Jubilee.)

### *Practical?*

To conclude the non-usury church finance brief, we see that: The church would escape from the god usury, and become free from debt {190} after seven years, while saving \$20,604 instead of still owing the bank that much. The conservator would be using his savings for the Lord's work, instead of using his money to finance speculators and/or usurers. The conservator should also feel more secure, having converted his savings to consumer-price-index value, and having payments due from churchgoers, than when seeing inflation overtake his income.

However, we should not take it for granted that inflation will continue without interruption. On the contrary, look back to the pictogram on page 185 where you will see a black section on the chart

representing the years 1930 to 1940. Those were years of deflation, when, for example, had there been a consumer price index, and the change for a given year was *minus* 5 percent, the church would have owed \$395.83 that month. And the conservator, while suffering a paper loss, still should have felt secure with his capital converted to the cost of living.

Another example is that of a home which sold for \$210,000 with \$40,000 paid down in cash, and with a \$70,000 first trust deed to a bank at 13.5 percent usury, and with the owner taking back a second trust deed for \$100,000 at 12 percent usury for five years, with a final \$100,000 “balloon” payment. So after five years the buyer’s cost will be:

The down payment	\$ 40,000
Five years of usury	107,250
Balance due the bank	70,000
Balance due the seller	100,000
The cost of which \$170,000 will remain unpaid.	\$317,250

(Of course the government permits a home-buyer to escape much of the \$107,250 usury cost, with greater benefit to those with the larger incomes, thus transferring a tax burden to other people.)

### *We Should Seek Instruction*

Now please consider two consumer-price-index alternatives: For the first alternative use the sales price of \$210,000 with \$40,000 down, and with the owner taking back a \$170,000 cpi non-usury first trust deed payable at \$1770.84 cpi per month for eight years. Upon completion of these payments the buyer would own the home free and clear, plainly a great saving over the usury transactions. For a second {191} alternative use a sales price of \$252,500 with a \$40,000 down payment, and the owner taking back a \$212,500 cpi non-usury first trust deed payable at \$1770.84 cpi per month for *ten* years. (Still other alternative prices and terms might well be acceptable to both parties.)

Now consider the case of the seller. Should inflation continue at a higher rate than the consumer price index, he would gain, but he

would lose if it were lower. So suppose the cpi becomes *minus 50 percent*! “Improbable,” you say, but possible. A *minus 50 percent cpi* would give the buyer a good chance of keeping the home by paying \$885.42 per month. And the seller, I believe, would be better off receiving only this much than by losing more, as did so many folk in the depression.

Obviously, persons desiring to have a home built and contractors who would like to do the building can also negotiate consumer-price-index business. Similarly, those wanting autos, appliances, furniture, etc., together with dealers, merchants, and conservers, can do likewise.

But before venturing into consumer-price-index negotiations, you are advised to pray, study, and counsel with one another.

Everyone can use the booklet *Toward Jubilee* to assist them in getting an understanding of God’s principles; and some, certainly, should want to learn more about Him.

### *Blessings Come with Obedience*

*Toward Jubilee* should be read by a pastor willing to observe and to do all the Word of God, and I hope he will distribute *Toward Jubilee* to members of his congregation and teach those who are unlearned, inexperienced, and/or brainwashed.

*Toward Jubilee* has revealed three essential financial principles:

Observe a practical time limit on the term of debts.

Usury increase is an abomination.

Use a standard of value.

This study has used the consumer price index, which is like using a rubber band to measure a hot-air balloon, but it is the best measure I can think of today, although it is subject to political manipulation. Yet those who will observe God’s principles will not suffer as much as those who violate them.

However, with the success of some people who have escaped the clutches of the god usury, some may realize that our merciful God has {192} provided for His children much better than do politicians and bankers. Will not some of them who see the failing usury economy be surprised to learn that in the book of Leviticus, God established the non-usury jubilee economy about 3,500 years ago? Has there been

intellectual degeneration, not evolution? Yet today we can go Toward Jubilee, and arrive in the millennium.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. (Eph. 3:20–21)



2.  
**THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF RELIGION**

# CONTEMPORARY CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN CULTURE

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## A Practical Application of Van Til's Apologetics

*Douglas K. Erlandson, Ph.D.*

### *1. Introduction*

It is not customary for an author to introduce himself at the beginning of a scholarly paper. I am making an exception in this paper because who I am and my history is relevant to the significance to be attached to my conclusions.

A reader has a natural tendency to suppose that an author who vigorously attacks a position does so because he lacks understanding of that position. (This is particularly true if the reader is sympathetic to that position.) “Certainly,” he argues, “if this author only understood the position—if he would only eat, breathe, and sleep the position—he would not be so critical but would discern the element of real truth in it.”

Well, I received my doctorate in philosophy from a well-respected “institution of higher learning” (Johns Hopkins University) and taught the history of philosophy and philosophy of religion for eight years at a creditable state university (the University of Nebraska). During my four years of graduate studies and for the first six years of teaching I *did* “eat, breathe, and sleep” the positions that I am going to criticize so mercilessly in this paper. For over ten years I studied and lived Anglo-American analytic philosophy, Continental philosophy, and even the largely American inventions—process philosophy and pragmatism. I also studied and lived the theologies coming out of all of these traditions {200} and even gorged myself on the delicacies provided by so-called “critical” biblical studies.

Therefore, I do not speak from ignorance of what I am criticizing. However, I do have utter hatred for these views and for the sinful attitudes which they represent. I have had this hatred pretty much since a day in mid-September 1978 when by God's grace I became convinced that I, like those who held such views, was "holding the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18) and was thus subject to the just wrath and condemnation of almighty God.

Since that day, as I have increasingly become aware of the biblical analysis of the problem with man's thinking and its approach to those who pervert the revealed truth of God, I have come to see that this hatred and contempt is quite justified. For if we trust Scripture there is no neutral ground—no, not the least millimeter—upon which we can stand in basic agreement with those who hate God and from this determine what—if anything—is true.

No, rather, we must be blunt. While we certainly must treat the sinning thinker with compassion, for, save by God's grace we would be as he is, we must not sweetly smile when he mouths his blasphemies and commend him for his bit of insight into the truth of which we have perhaps a somewhat better perspective. Yes, it *is* a matter of differing perspectives. But, *no*, it is not *just* a matter of differing perspectives. Rather, it is a matter of life and death, of righteousness and sin. We must have compassion on those who sin intellectually as well as on those who follow the more common lusts of the flesh. But just as we who are trusting Christ would be wrong not to warn the prostitute or drunkard, so we would be wrong not to warn the scholar who unrighteously perverts the truth. For both are subject to the just condemnation of God and will perish under His heavy wrath unless they repent. To unabashedly call sin what it is and to call the sinner—even the sinning scholar—to repentance, is the only true act of godly compassion in this situation.

I believe that I am on solid ground in saying that "Christian" philosophers are not doing this. As an undergraduate I attended Wheaton College, a bastion of conservative Christianity. I number several of the past and present philosophy faculty members at that institution among my friends. I have read their writings and those of other conservative Christian scholars. I read *Christianity Today* regularly and have read several issues of *Christian Scholar's Review*, both respected conservative

{201} Christian publications. I have never seen non-Christian thinking labeled “sin” or “unrighteousness” and have seldom witnessed any discussion of its apostasy that is more than mildly critical or less than fully cordial. I have also attended parts of several “Christian” philosophy conferences in recent years (“parts” are all that I can tolerate), including those at Wheaton College, and have been thoroughly appalled that blasphemies uttered by the admitted non-Christians who have appeared as guest speakers have gone unnoticed or at least unchallenged. Our *duty* as Christians, yes, our duty in Christian love, is to warn such men that they are sinners and that the wrath of God abides on all who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

### **The Audience for Which This Paper Is Intended**

The original audience for this paper is a group of Reformed ministers who meet for a retreat every year after Labor Day. Accordingly, I have not presupposed prior knowledge of the history of modern philosophy. Some familiarity with Scripture and with theology is assumed along with a basic understanding of the purpose of Christian apologetics. Nevertheless, since I hope that this paper can profitably be read by the educated layman, I have tried to keep from assuming too great a familiarity even in these areas.

Given the audience, and given that my primary purpose is to criticize and to warn, I make no pretenses of describing in detail the writings of the philosophers whom I am examining. Many subtle nuances go entirely unnoticed. Anyone interested in them can certainly delve into the works of these philosophers or can read from the voluminous writings of those essentially parasitic individuals who spend their lives examining the thought of someone more brilliant than themselves.

Because of the programmatic character of my paper, a critical scholar familiar with the men whose ideas I am examining will notice that I have sometimes oversimplified, am occasionally inaccurate in detail, and show almost no recognition that the thought of these men has developed over time. While I acknowledge oversimplifications and possible inaccuracies in detail, I am confident that the conclusions that I derive do not rest on these. I am not raising my criticisms on the basis of some minor issue that I may have oversimplified or misinterpreted. I am criticizing the very foundation of the thinking of these philosophers, and am dealing with the ideas that lie at the heart of their system

and which {202} all agree that they hold. As for the fact that I take almost no account of the development of their thought over time, I must respond that although these philosophers did develop in their thinking (as we all do), nevertheless, their overall commitments remained remarkably unchanged over time. My focus is on these overall commitments.

### The Thesis

My thesis is simple. All thought that is not based firmly and thoroughly upon the revealed Word of God—i.e., upon Holy Scripture itself—breaks down, and when pressed to its logical conclusion, leads to chaos. While this has always been true, philosophers prior to this century have disguised their thought with a veneer of rationality that has made it difficult for most to see the chaotic end-result. Immanuel Kant's so-called "Copernican revolution," however, by grounding the starting point of non-Christian philosophy firmly and irrevocably in man, made possible an explicit relativism which, although fully realized only in the twentieth century, has pushed philosophic thought to the brink of sheer anarchy. The result has been increasing chaos within philosophy and in culture.

Although this is easy to allege and fairly easy to show, there is only one antidote for this chaos. And that is a belief system firmly grounded in the Word of God. Any so-called Christian philosophy or apologetic that begins with the assumption that unregenerate and regenerate man share a neutral common ground will be unable to explain the reason for this anarchy and chaos (if it can even discern that such anarchy exists) and will eventually itself wind up in chaos.

To date, only one group of Christian apologists and philosophers have consistently avoided these pitfalls—Cornelius Van Til and his followers, most notably Greg Bahnsen, R.J. Rushdoony, and John Frame. Other than Rushdoony to some extent in *The One and the Many*, none of these men as far as I know has explicitly zeroed in on the contemporary philosophical scene and its ramifications for modern culture. Since a criticism sometimes leveled at Van Til is that he is working against a background of the British idealism of the turn of the century and that therefore it is sometimes hard to grasp the relevance of what he is saying, I would like to show that a Van Tillian apologetics can be

effectively used against the thinking of twentieth-century philosophy and its ramifications in today's culture. {203}

### Acknowledgements

It is customary for an author to acknowledge those who have in one way or another aided him in his writing. Over the past four years I have devoured the works of Van Til and Rushdoony. Their writings have helped me to clarify my thinking and have provided motivation for my own work in Christian apologetics. I have also benefited immeasurably from numerous conversations over the past six years with Rev. Warren Embree, presently of the Grace Reformed Church (RCUS) of Hastings, Nebraska. God used his persistence to get me to question my own unrighteous thinking. He also introduced me to Van Til's thoughts.

I am indebted to a number of people in a negative way. First, to the members of the philosophy departments at Johns Hopkins and the University of Nebraska, as well as to the many guest speakers who delivered papers at philosophy gatherings at these universities. These ladies and gentlemen very early on convinced me of the bankruptcy of Anglo-American analytic philosophy and theology and caused me to examine Continental thought, in the mistaken belief that truth was to be found somewhere in the speculation of human reason. Although it was not until much later that I came to see that the problem was not intellectual but ethical—a result of man's rebellion against God—at least I was forced to greatly expand my horizons. Secondly, to the greater number of conservative Christian philosophers who, because of their unwillingness to confront head-on the ungodliness of non-theistic philosophy, drove home the fact that those who refuse to confront ungodliness but seek a neutral common ground will capitulate in the end.

On a more positive note, I would like to thank my wife, Elizabeth, whose constant encouragement has been a most wonderful motivation, and who tirelessly reads and evaluates most everything that I write.

### 2. The Basis for Van Til's Apologetics

Christian *apologetics* is the defense of the Christian faith. As a theological discipline, it is the reasoned defense of Christianity against skeptical attack.

Historically, Christian apologetics has proceeded along one (or more) of several lines.

First, *rationalism*. The rationalist believes that a core of agreement may be reached between the thinking Christian and the thinking skeptic, {204} which can then be exploited by the Christian apologist to show that Christianity is true.

We may identify two major rationalistic trends. *Deductivistic rationalism* (or *rationalistic a priorism*) supposes that on the basis of certain facts which believer and skeptic alike will see to be evident, a formal and valid deductive argument (or arguments) can be constructed which will conclusively prove the truth of Christianity. The soundness and validity of such arguments should be seen by all, and only the obtuseness of the skeptic will keep him from seeing this. The most notable example of this way of thinking is found in Thomas Aquinas, particularly in his *cosmological arguments* for God's existence.

The plan of *inductivistic rationalism* (or *rationalistic a posteriorism*) initially appears less grandiose. It claims that on the basis of certain evident facts available to the believer and skeptic alike, one or more inductive arguments can be constructed which, although they do not conclusively prove the truth of the Christian faith, do show that it is sufficiently probable to warrant our confident belief. Again, only the dull-witted or the intentionally perverse will fail to see this. John Locke and Bishop Butler are leading examples of inductivism.

Because deductivistic and inductivistic rationalists are likely to present different arguments, their apologetics are superficially different. But their underlying assumptions are really identical. They both agree that not only do believer and skeptic alike have available to them a common body of data, but that there is a neutral area of the mind—a common and neutral ground—which both believer and unbeliever can use to draw the same conclusions given the shared data. Thus, the rationalist believer appeals to the reason of the unregenerate, supposing it to be no different from his own, to get him to see the truth of Christianity.

The program of rationalistic apologetics has never worked, and it is a tribute both to a lack of understanding of the history of thought and a refusal to trust the scriptural view of man that rationalistic Christian

apologists (e.g., Norm Geisler, Stuart Hackett, Clark Pinock) can still make their pitch and be respected as leading Christian intellectuals.

That rationalism has never worked historically is evident. Those prone to belief in Christian theism may find themselves subjectively strengthened in the faith by reading or hearing rationalistic arguments of one sort or another. But seldom if ever has the unbeliever fallen to his knees in worship of the one true and living God through conviction that the conclusion of these apologetic arguments is indeed true. Yet this {205} should happen with great frequency if the rationalist's myth of a common, neutral reasoning-ground were true. Rather, the skeptics—at least the scholarly—have written books which purportedly show that the theist has misunderstood the facts or has engaged in shoddy arguments. Thus, the debates over the cosmological and ontological arguments go on, nearly a millennium after their formulation, with the salutary effect today of providing publications for a few faculty members frantically seeking tenure, but with little evident evangelistic success.

The obvious historical failure of rationalism has led some Christian apologists to the opposite extreme—namely, *irrationalism*. If Christianity cannot be shown to be rational, so they would argue, it must be because it is *irrational*. Now, the initial response that one naturally makes to a claim that it is irrational to believe something is that it should therefore not be believed. However, the irrationalist claims that though Christianity is irrational, this is precisely why it should be believed! Notice, he is *not* claiming that Christianity simply appears irrational to the unregenerate. Rather, his claim is that it is irrational and therefore appears irrational to everyone—believer and skeptic alike. Why, then, should it be believed? Because only if it is rationally absurd can it be believed on *faith*. The irrationalist says, “I believe *because* it is absurd,” and, “The greater the absurdity the greater the faith.” Soren Kierkegaard and most of the so-called “neo-orthodox” theologians, as well as fideists such as William James, are irrationalists.

Irrationalism is not apologetics but capitulation. It is not a defense of the faith but an acknowledgement that there can be no defense. Moreover, it cannot even be held except by the insane and probably not consistently by them. No matter how hard I (or anyone else) may try, I cannot believe what I know to be absurd. If I know that it is absurd to



believe that the moon is made of green cheese, I cannot believe it. I can, of course, entertain the thought that it is, and I can imagine what a green-cheese moon would be like. But I cannot believe it unless I know that there is reason to believe it, and if there is reason for my belief, then it is no longer absurd. (This comment and the following also apply against *fideism*—which is really a type of irrationalism—namely, the view that I can will to believe something which it would be beneficial to believe, even if I have no other reason for so believing.)

Moreover, the Christian irrationalist gives us no reason for why Christianity, if it is irrational, is to be preferred over a host of other irrationalities. Certainly, *if* it were possible to believe what one thinks is {206} irrational, and *if* the possibility of faith increases with the degree of absurdity accepted, then we should go much farther than Christianity, which cannot be *all* that absurd, since many otherwise normal individuals have argued that it is eminently rational. We should look for the greatest absurdity we can imagine and put our hearty trust in that. We should really make our “leap of faith” to a trust in something like a four-headed, green, slimy monster who rules the world and who, for pleasure, eats the corpses of deceased inhabitants of the Tyrolean Alps.

Ultimately, and most importantly, however, irrationalism runs aground on the hard rock of Scripture. Faith and grace on the one hand are never opposed to reason on the other. They are always opposed to works. Scripture does not tell me to believe because it is absurd. God rather comes to His people and says, “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isa. 1:18). Throughout Scripture, God treats His people as though they are rational human beings, capable of understanding His revelation to them and able to discern truth from error. Moreover, He holds the covenant-breaker morally responsible for refusing to acknowledge the truth of divine revelation. This would be sheer capriciousness on God’s part if Christianity were an absurdity that we were rationally bound to reject.

Its refusal to take seriously the scriptural account of man must also be our ultimate reason for rejecting rationalism. The irrationalist rejects rationalism because of its historical bankruptcy. The Christian ought to reject rationalism because Scripture itself opposes it (every bit as much as irrationalism). A Christian apologist must begin with and

not ignore the scriptural analysis of man. And, according to Scripture, there is no neutral ground of reason on which the believer and skeptic may stand and find agreement. This is so *not* because the unbeliever is rational and the believer irrational, *but* because the unbeliever hates God and uses his reason (often quite rationally) to refuse to acknowledge the true and living God. The believer, on the other hand, being renewed by the Holy Spirit, comes more and more to love God, and more and more, by the grace of God, uses his reason rightly to interpret the facts in accordance with God's revelation.

If we accept Scripture as God's revelation, then we must accept what Scripture says is the root problem. Scripture is blunt and explicit. Paul tells us in Romans 1:18–21:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; {207} because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

The first thing one should note about this passage is that the ungodly in some sense know God. They know Him in that He is clearly revealed to all mankind in creation. Therefore, it is *not* a matter of the ungodly not having the relevant facts. No, they have the facts in front of them. Therefore, they are without excuse for their refusal to acknowledge the eternal creator God.

The next thing to note is that the ungodly “hold the truth in unrighteousness.” The Greek word which is here translated “hold” is *katechōnton* (from *katécho*), and means in this context to hold illegally or possibly to hinder. (*Katecho* never means “suppress” as it is translated in the RSV and NIV.) Paul is accusing the ungodly *not* of ignorance of the truth, but of having the truth but holding it illegally or wrongly.

What is this illegal or wrongful holding of the truth? Paul clarifies this over the next several verses. In addition to verse 21, in which he says that the unregenerate “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened,” he goes on in verses 22–23 and 25 to say:

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things....Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

In other words, the ungodly have the truth of God plainly revealed to them, they know the truth of God, but in their depravity they continually and systematically take the very truth that is seared into their minds and twist it and distort it because of their hatred of God.

Moreover, as Scripture clearly indicates, the natural man (i.e., the ungodly and unregenerate man) is *dead* in sin (Eph. 2:1–3), and considers the preaching of the Gospel foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18). He does not and cannot receive the teaching of God’s Word, since this can be accepted *only* by the one in whom God has been pleased to work by the regenerating and renewing influence of the Holy Spirit. As Paul says in {208} 1 Corinthians 2:14:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This being the scriptural account, the Christian apologist *cannot* assume a neutral ground on which to reason with the unregenerate. No matter how many facts are compiled, no matter how minutely examined, no matter how many arguments and counterarguments are raised, the unregenerate, because he hates God and because spiritual things are foolishness to him, will operate with the underlying and overarching presupposition that there is no eternal, creator sovereign God of Scripture, but that he himself, as an independent, autonomous being, is the ultimate reference point and final arbiter of all truth. Because of this he will always “illegally” interpret all facts in order to reach antitheistic conclusions.

However, the regenerate person, by God’s grace, knows that he is not the ultimate reference point, but that God is. Moreover, he knows that God has revealed Himself to man both in creation and in Scripture, and that to understand all the data rightly we must begin with the presuppositions of a sovereign, creator God, and that all facts must be interpreted in light of God’s revelation to man.

These simple but true and scriptural points have been more or less missed by all Christian apologists, with the exception of Cornelius Van Til and those who have followed closely in his path. However, the Christian theist, if he desires to be true to God's Word, *ought* to accept Van Til's analysis at this point and the consequences which follow from it, since Van Til's apologetics are thoroughly based on the Word of God.

What are some of these consequences? To begin with, we must not infer that we are left to shout presuppositions back and forth with the unbeliever, as some critics of Van Til would claim. Granted, we cannot rationally convince the unregenerate, since his very problem is that in his unregenerate state he uses his rational thought processes to distort the truth.

Knowing, however, that it is heart rebellion against God that keeps him from discerning the truth, and knowing that only God, through the Holy Spirit, can change his heart, we are freed from the burden of thinking that we can convert him, and we are freed to bear witness to the truth. {209}

How may this be done? Certainly, we must present the Gospel to him. We must tell him of the sovereignty of God. We must tell him that he is a sinner under the wrath of God. We must present Christ as the only Savior. And we must trust that God by His grace and through the Holy Spirit will cut him to the heart and convict him of the truth.

Our duty as apologists, however, goes beyond this. We must also show him step by step that his system leads to *chaos*. All systems constructed by rebellious man are based on a fundamental error—namely, that man, not God, is the ultimate reference point, and that fate or chance rather than the sovereign God of Scripture rules the world. Because they are so based, they cannot explain everything and ultimately can explain *nothing*. No matter the difference in the details, all the systems of the ungodly lead inevitably to a hopeless sea of self-contradictions and chaos. As Christian apologists we must ruthlessly drive home this point and do so in all the detail necessary. Although this will not convert the unbeliever (remember, only God can do this), it may lead him to despair. God often uses a realization of despair in the sinner as a first step to getting him to seek the truth.

We must turn around, then, and challenge him to show the same for Scripture and the view of God and creation given therein. He may try

to do this, but since the source of all truth of Scripture is the all-knowing, infinite Creator Himself, he will be unable to do this—if what we present to him is consistently scriptural. (This is why the Christian apologist must also have a truly scriptural theology.) Neither will this convert him. Save by the grace of God, he will find ways of rationalizing all this away, for his foolish heart *is* darkened. Thereby he will add to his condemnation. On the other hand, God *may* be pleased to use what we have done to tear down his ungodly pride and to make him turn to Christ for his redemption.

At any rate, a Christian apologetics ought to be scriptural. Van Til's is scriptural. Accordingly, I have chosen to label what I will now be doing an “exercise in Van Tillian apologetics.” I am going to apply this apologetics to contemporary Continental philosophy and show how it results in chaos, both in itself and in its broader cultural implications.

### 3. *Historical Reference Points for Contemporary Continental Philosophy*

To understand the philosophy of a given age we must understand something of the history which leads its philosophers to deal with problems {210} in a particular way. Of course, the problems that philosophers confront are remarkably similar from age to age, and though the answers may differ, in all non-Christian philosophy tensions arise which ought to be resolved but which cannot be.

#### A. Immanuel Kant

If we are to understand contemporary Continental philosophy we must begin with a few words about Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). It is commonly thought that he so changed the course of the subsequent history of philosophy as to be one of a small handful of philosophers rightly called “watershed figures,” and that he so thoroughly refuted certain ways of looking at things that to ignore his conclusions would simply be obtuse.

Kant himself did not philosophize in a vacuum. He had a peculiar problem facing him—the “skepticism” of David Hume (1711–1776). As the well-known story goes, Kant was contentedly philosophizing in his own tradition (*viz.*, Continental rationalism) when he happened upon the writings of Hume and was “awakened from his dogmatic slumbers.”

Hume had not said anything that had not been said before at one time or another, except that he said it with more force and apparent logic. Two areas of Hume's skepticism were particularly disturbing to Kant. First, *Hume's view of causality*. According to Hume, there is no good reason to believe that any causal bonds exist in the world. For example, when we see a cue stick hit a cue ball and that in turn send another ball into a pocket on the billiard table, we naturally suppose that some causal force bonds those actions together. Hume, however, says that we have never *seen* this ethereal force (which is very true) and that therefore there is no such force—at least not so far as we know. How, then, does our idea of cause and effect arise? Through what Hume calls “constant conjunction” in our minds of our ideas or impressions of these objects. I believe that a cause and effect relationship occurs between the striking of the cue ball and the second ball going into the pocket because in the past I have inevitably observed that when a cue ball strikes another that second ball moves. Yet, the sum and substance of causality is this constant conjunction, and because of this there is *no good reason* to suppose that in the future these balls will react as they have in the past. Granted, because of the connection that has arisen and been reinforced in my mind, I have no doubt that the next time when {211} the cue ball hits the second ball, the second ball will move. But, I cannot know this. I simply have habitual behavior to go on, and habits can change.

The second major difficulty that Hume presented Kant was *his view of the mind*. Hume argues that while it is commonly supposed that the mind of an individual goes on existing from birth to death, we have no good reason to believe this. A unified mind over time requires that there be something that bonds together the contents of the mind over time. But, as I examine the contents of my own mind, all that I can find are the ideas and impressions that make up the contents of my mind at any given moment. I can never get behind these to find some unifying apparatus which binds these together over time and which would give me evidence that there is but one mind. So, although I may believe that my mind is one from birth to death (as I inevitably do), I have no good reason to believe this. I cannot know, really, that I have a mind.

Kant was legitimately upset and perplexed over the conclusions that Hume had reached. During the last thirty or so years of his life he set

about dealing with them and answering them to his satisfaction. The conclusion he reached was quite ingenious.

According to Kant's Continental tradition, the order of causality was part of the world itself. Hume, argued Kant, was right in denying that causality and any other structure was to be found in the world. On the other hand, we do know that the world is *not* disorderly, but whether we are talking of causality and the world or the mind itself, we know that there are unifying structures which give order to our world.

At this point, Kant introduced his since-famous "Copernican revolution" in philosophy. Just as Copernicus had revolutionized thinking by abandoning a geocentric point of reference for a heliocentric, so Kant supposed that he would revolutionize philosophical thought by changing the reference point for philosophy. Rather than beginning our philosophical investigations with an examination of the world, we ought to begin with man and *then* draw the inferences as to why man perceives his world as he does.

It is problematical whether man can be the reference point of philosophy if we have no reason to believe that the human mind exists. Accordingly, Kant argues that the only legitimate explanation for the experience of unity in the thought-process of the individual is that there must be a mind. Not only do we believe that there *is* a mind, but our experience would be nothing but a confusion of disconnected ideas if {212} there weren't a mind. In fact, it wouldn't even be discerned as our experience. And so Kant argues that there is both an *empirical* ego, that is, the unified mind as we experience it, and a *transcendental* ego, which we do not experience, but which must be there to account for the unity of our experience.

Having established the unity of the mind to his satisfaction, Kant goes on to argue that the mind of man, particularly the transcendental ego, gives order to the world that man experiences. Kant claims that Hume is absolutely right in supposing that there is no good reason to believe in any order in the universe. He is right because, according to Kant, there is no order in the world itself. Rather, the order is in the mind of man. As the unorganized data enter the mind of man, the transcendental ego works on these data and provides an ordering schema. This schema includes the structure of time and space, and twelve categories (of which causality is one). Because of this schema,

then, the data which the mind receives, though unordered in themselves, become ordered, and so our experience is of a well-ordered world.

The consequences of Kant's "Copernican revolution" are far-reaching. The most startling is that the world, as we experience it, is not "out there," beyond us, but in our own minds. This means that our starting point and ultimate reference point *must* be in the mind of man. Moreover, since the world as we experience it must be in our own mind, we have no way of getting beyond the mind and of knowing whether there is anything out there or what it may be like.

Kant thinks that he has answered this latter problem by positing his realms of the *phenomenal* and the *noumenal*. The phenomenal realm is the world that we experience, really, the world that is ordered in and ultimately *is* in our own mind. The noumenal world, however, is the world that lies beyond the phenomenal, the world of the *ding-an-sich* (or *thing-in-itself*). This world, argues Kant, *is* really out there, but of it we can know nothing, except in a negative way. Since space and time and the twelve categories are the structure of the mind, we can know that the *noumenal realm* is spaceless, timeless, and is not structured as is the *phenomenal realm*. However, we must suppose that it exists, since something must be there to *cause* the data which we experience and interpret and which make up the phenomenal realm.

With this brief statement we have pretty much covered what we need to say about Kant. Although Kant rejected many of the traditional proofs for God's existence and although his "Copernican revolution" {213} pretty much precluded for him any belief in a sovereign God and in His revelation as the ultimate reference point, Kant nevertheless *did* present a so-called "moral argument" which he believed demonstrated the existence of God. However, since God for Kant becomes nothing more than a limiting concept needed to ensure the existence of a moral order in the universe, and since his system precludes our having any knowledge of God, his argument need not detain us. If one wants to gain a flavor of Kant's beliefs concerning God, he can examine his *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. This book, totally at odds with orthodox Christianity, is rendered somewhat less dangerous in itself by the fact that Kant wrote it near the end of a very stodgy life. It reflects all of the stuffiness that one would expect from an East Prussian pro-



fessor of philosophy. The ideas implicit in it, however, are dangerous, and in the hands of various nineteenth-century “liberal” theologians, they became one of the bases for a consistent, vicious attack on orthodox Christianity.

For our purposes of understanding the subsequent course of Continental philosophy, Kant’s views on religion are tangential. We need to see, rather, that Kant tightly shut up man in his own mind. Yet, we know that this cannot be. Man *does* experience a world beyond himself, and there is order in that world. Nevertheless, non-Christian thought, unwilling to acknowledge a sovereign God Who is the very source of order, Who gives order both to the world and to man’s experience of the world, is stuck with Kant’s conclusions. The subsequent history of Continental thought shows that man, determined to make himself the ultimate reference point, either accepts (sometimes blithely, sometimes with sorrow) being shut up in the contents of his own mind or seeks to lose his mind in the external world itself.

### B. Hegel

Measuring by philosophical time, in which responses are carefully worded and ordinarily take years to formulate, the ink had barely dried on Kant’s later publications when a crucial flaw was noticed at the very heart of his system. Kant had hoped to preserve an external world (and God Himself) by positing the *ding-an-sich* and a *noumenal realm* which, although we could not experience, we could believe with confidence because something, after all, had to cause our ordered experience of the data which makes up the *phenomenal realm* which is in our mind. The {214} problem, however, is in the little word “cause.” Kant, you see, had confined causality to the ordering structure of the mind and had explicitly denied that causality could be part of the noumenal world. Yet, his very argument for the existence of the noumenal rests on his assumption that it is needed to cause the phenomenal. Since by nature it cannot do this, the only reason for positing such a realm drops by the wayside, and we are left with nothing but the phenomenal. In other words, we are left with nothing but the mind and its experiences, a philosophical doctrine known as *idealism*.

The philosopher driven to idealism has a choice of two basic alternatives. On the one hand, he can suppose that the mental world (which is all that there is for the idealist) is entirely within his mind. This is a

view known as *solipsism*. Along the same line he can opt for a view in which there are really *many* distinct minds, all of which are separate “mental” worlds. Solipsism, interestingly enough, is the more consistent of these two related positions. At least the solipsist can explain why others appear to be acting in an orderly fashion, or for that matter, why he experiences others at all. Namely, the supposed other mind is simply part of the grand world being constructed in his own mind, and since there is no reason for why a single mind should not act in a reasonably self-consistent and orderly manner, there is no reason why the supposed other mind should not appear to be thinking and acting consistently. Of course, the objection to solipsism is that it makes *everything* quite illusory and would mean that I must deny in theory what I must accept in practice (e.g., that I have a body and that *other* people with bodies and minds really exist). Solipsism can only function behind the walls of a professor’s study. One *cannot* live as a solipsist.

The view that there are many distinct minds and hence many separate “mental worlds”—properly called *subjective idealism*—is immediately untenable, not only because it falls prey to the error of solipsism, namely, that I cannot live as though there were no physical world, but because it *cannot* explain how *separate* minds, without any world external to all of them mediating communication between them, can ever know that the others of them exist. If I am a “mental world” without an external environment, I cannot possibly know that there are any other mental worlds “out there.” And, if I cannot know this, I cannot know whether or not other mental worlds engage in rational behavior and thinking. It would be a matter of mere chance if any two mental worlds operated on the same principles. {215} Because of the difficulties besetting these forms of idealism, the philosophers who came after Kant opted for what has come to be known as *Absolute Idealism*. Along with various lesser lights, the three major Absolute Idealists were Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Of these three, G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831) spelled out this idealistic system in the greatest detail.

According to the Absolute Idealist there is really but one Mind or Spirit. (Since the German word is *Geist*, one of those maddening words which has the connotation of two English words, it doesn’t matter all that much whether we speak of Mind or Spirit.) This is *all* that there is. But, through a process of diversification, various finite spirits, which

are really part of the Absolute Spirit, also arise. We are all finite spirits. But because ultimately we are a part of Absolute Spirit, we can be assured that our experiences are similar to those of other finite spirits.

Several questions arise immediately. The first is, “Why would Absolute Spirit even desire to diversify and posit various finite spirits?” According to Hegel, at any rate, it does so *in order to realize itself*. Absolute Spirit, at the beginning, is in a state of total potentiality (to bring Aristotelian terminology to bear here). Quite frankly, it doesn’t know its own mind. And so, to realize itself, it posits the Other. The Other is first of all the apparently external and physical world, but is really just Absolute Spirit coming to self-realization.

Now, Hegel never really explains how something in total potentiality can begin to actualize itself, to begin that historical process of creation of the world and of ultimate fulfillment. We know that it is doing so. After all, we are part of that process. But ultimately we must accept as brute fact that a wholly potential Absolute Spirit can arouse itself from its unconscious slumbers to enter time.

Moreover, it seems that the Absolute Spirit must be engaged in deception of self and others. To actualize itself it must posit an Other—a world and other spirits—which appear to it to be genuinely other. But they are not. They are really Absolute Spirit in disguise. And they are disguised both to Absolute Spirit and to themselves—until the very end of the historical process. At the very bottom of the Hegelian system, then, is massive self-deception.

Furthermore, since all of reality is simply the actualizing of Absolute Spirit, Spirit is nothing more than world history (in its broadest sense). Hegel’s dictum is, “The rational is the real, and the real is the rational.” By reducing all to Absolute Spirit, Hegel at the same time reduces spirit {216} to history. Thus, although he may call it Spirit, it is indistinguishable from matter. This is why it was so easy for Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx to “stand Hegel’s system on its head” and to consider world history to be nothing other than the working out of a materialistic process.

Of course, this means that there can really be no morality. What *is* is what *ought to be*. Absolute Spirit cannot issue moral commands, since a moral command presupposes possible disobedience to that command. But since everything inexorably manifests the will of Absolute Spirit,

the very idea of morality becomes superfluous. Man simply does what Absolute Spirit must do in realizing itself.

Finally, the Hegelian system falls prey to the fact that time passes it by. Reasoning consistently from the fact that Absolute Spirit would not see itself as such until *all* otherness, that is, all finiteness, was seen to be part of Absolute Spirit, Hegel argued that since Absolute Spirit had now been discovered by his system, Hegel's own system was Absolute Spirit come to full self-realization! Now, many commentators have tried to get Hegel out of what is obviously a most absurd conclusion, but with little success. Hegel's system *demand*s that the one who discovers the grand historical plan of Absolute Spirit, the one who comes to see what Absolute Spirit is really doing, is also the one in whom Absolute Spirit is fully actualized, since until that time Absolute Spirit is more or less hidden from itself and essentially self-deceived. And so, not only does Hegel's system make Hegel into the deity, but his system *requires* that history come to an end with Hegel. History is simply the actualization of Absolute Spirit. Once Absolute Spirit is actualized, which occurs in Hegel's system, there can be no more history. That there is a subsequent course of history shows the utter folly of Hegel's system.

### C. Kierkegaard

Non-Christian thought exhibits a constant vacillation between extremes. Whenever a thinker or a school totters dangerously near one precipice, a secular "prophet" arises to call men back to the opposite ledge. Such a "prophet" was Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855). In this brief historical survey we hardly have time to comment on all the central aspects of his thought. Although a profoundly disturbed individual, he also was a man of deep, if often mistaken, insight.

However, we must note three aspects of his thought, since they are most influential in contemporary Continental philosophy. The first of {217} these is the *predominance of the existing individual*. Hegel's system effectively stifled the individual. In fact, if Hegel were correct, not only was the individual swallowed up in the absolute, but the individual after Hegel, could not so much as exist. Kierkegaard rightly took Hegel to task for this, often with biting and telling sarcasm.

In so doing, Kierkegaard swung to the opposite extreme. The existing individual human being became both the beginning and the end of his philosophy. Although often profound in his insights concerning

human character, the fact is that Kierkegaard almost morbidly dwelt on his analyses of the dark recesses of the human heart, so that the existing human being becomes the center, the very focal point of his universe. While this tendency is uncommon in nineteenth-century thought, it becomes predominant in contemporary Continental philosophy.

To see fallen man as the beginning and end of one's philosophy, to so emphasize him to the exclusion of all else, is sinful pride. In a word, it is to assert man's would-be autonomy from God. Nevertheless, Kierkegaard claimed to be a Christian. How this squares with his nearly exclusive emphasis on the individual leads us to the next two closely-related aspects of his thought.

The first of these is that *true faith is belief in the absurd*. In Hegel, the real was the rational and the rational the real. In Kierkegaard, this may be true for the sciences that deal with the objective, external world. But for the matters of the heart, the emotions and man's religious belief, the real is really the *irrational*. The knight of faith for Kierkegaard is not the man who believes in something because it is plausible but precisely because it is implausible. Where there is no paradox (really, no absurdity) there is no faith. And the greater the absurdity the greater the faith.

I have already commented on the absurdity of this view of faith (see section 2). At this juncture I would simply like to add that contemporary Continental "existential" theology has pretty much taken over wholesale what Kierkegaard says about faith, with the result that the *truth* of Christianity is hardly an issue any longer. Rather, it becomes a matter of inward feeling.

The other aspect, which explains why Kierkegaard can contentedly say that true faith requires belief in the absurd, is that *truth is subjectivity*. For Kierkegaard there is objective truth, but that truth is confined to science and unrelated to the affairs of the heart and of religion. For the existing individual, particularly as a religious being, truth is {218} subjectivity. By this Kierkegaard means that the entire truth content of religious belief resides in the nature of the heart of the believer. Whether the object of religious belief exists or not is irrelevant.

In one place, Kierkegaard asks where there is more truth—in the hypocrite who goes to church to put on a display of worship of the God of Christianity or in the pagan who in deep heartfelt faith worships an

idol at a shrine? Any Christian who believes in the God of Scripture and who knows that He is the very God of truth, will answer that although hypocrisy is deplorable, nevertheless, the hypocrite does “worship” the true God and therefore there is more truth in that situation, whereas the pagan, for all his sincerity, worships a lie and therefore is mired in utter falsehood. But for Kierkegaard, since objective truth in religion is quite impossible and therefore the object of belief is irrelevant, more truth is to be found where the pagan sincerely worships at his shrine.

Christianity, then, becomes incidental for Kierkegaard. It is what we in the West happen to believe, and the God of Scripture is Whom we happen to worship. But, since truth is subjectivity and the proper heart relationship of faith is all that matters, we could as well worship some other god and still be every bit as much in the truth.

In fact, the only reason to prefer Christianity is the extremity of its paradoxes. Believing that the greater the paradox the greater the faith, Kierkegaard finds Christianity admirably suited for producing great faith. That the eternal God, the eternal Absolute, should come into time and live as a flesh and blood individual is the height of absurdity, claims Kierkegaard, and therefore to passionately believe it requires great faith and shows truth of the heart.

One wonders, of course, whether if Kierkegaard could be shown a greater absurdity he would abandon the absurdity of the Incarnation for this other, in order to gain even greater subjective, inward truth. But that is neither here nor there. The fact is that while the Christian realizes that the Incarnation is a mystery, he also knows that it is blasphemous to call it an absurdity. Moreover, the extent of Kierkegaard’s understanding of the Incarnation seems confined to the fact that the Absolute and eternal has come into time. Even when considering the death of Christ on the cross the only thing he can discern is the paradox of the death of the eternal. Kierkegaard has no understanding of man as a sinner, under the wrath of God, and in need of redemption. Since the solution for Kierkegaard lies in man’s efforts to save himself by having the right heart attitude of passionate inwardness and thereby to gain {219} subjective truth, there is no understanding of the objective and forensic nature of Christ’s atoning work nor of the need of man, by God’s grace, to avail himself of that work.

We can see from this that, no matter what the final state of Kierkegaard's own heart (which God alone judges), as a thinker Kierkegaard, despite all the religious trappings and the superficially Christian terminology, is not Christian. In fact, the belief that truth is subjectivity, which places the ultimate reference of truth in the finite individual, yes, in sinful man, is utterly antithetical to Christianity, in which the ultimate reference of truth is in God Himself and in His Word.

Contemporary Continental philosophy and theology have both been quick to follow the Kierkegaardian idea of truth. The idea of an objective truth, whether in the world or in God, is progressively lost as philosophers and theologians alike more and more see truth as nothing more than a matter of the heart. What we believe becomes irrelevant. How we believe it is all that counts. But man cannot consistently live this way. Inevitably, he finds truth somewhere beyond the subjective recesses of his heart. Having abandoned the only true source of all truth, however, he tries to find truth in the sinking sands of human opinion and thereby succumbs to a hopeless morass of relativism.

#### **D. Schopenhauer**

Kierkegaard was not the only one who reacted negatively to Hegel's Absolute Idealism. Another thinker who, as it turned out, had a less obvious influence than did Kierkegaard on contemporary Continental philosophy, but whose thinking foreshadowed the breakdown of Western thought and a pining after Eastern mysticism, was Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860). Describing Hegel as a “monument to German stupidity,” Schopenhauer set out to provide an antidote for idealism *not* by abandoning serious philosophizing in favor of paeans to the existing individual, but by returning to Kant and at the same time providing a corrective to those problems in Kant's philosophy which led to the one-sided emphasis on Spirit.

As will be recalled, the philosophical problem in Kant's thinking is the lack of any motivation for the *noumenal*, due to the fact that we could not legitimately infer a causal connection between the noumenal and the phenomenal. This, of course, is what brought about the {220} abandonment of the noumenal and the clinging to the phenomenal alone, which became Absolute Spirit in German Absolute Idealism.

Schopenhauer agreed with Kant that there is both a noumenal and a phenomenal realm, but he disagreed that the noumenal could not be

known. Using a somewhat different terminology, Schopenhauer divided the world into *Vorstellung* (*Idea* or *Representation*) and *Wille* (*Will*). The world as *representation* is for Schopenhauer the world of our experience. It includes our own bodies and those things we see around us—e.g., chairs and tables and other bodies. The world as *will* corresponds roughly to Kant's noumenal world, except that, according to Schopenhauer, we *do* have direct and real experience of the world as will.

The focal point of this direct experience is our own bodies. We experience our bodies not only as physical objects within the world as representation, but when we move our bodies (e.g., when we raise our arm, walk, speak, etc.), we experience will as well. Thus, each of us knows his own body to be not only representation but will.

From this apparent datum of our experience of our own bodies as both representation and will, Schopenhauer gives what may properly be called an argument from analogy to make the inference that other bodies, which we directly experience in the world as representation, are *also* will. I experience myself as both representation and will. But other human beings, whom I experience directly only as representation, also act very much like me. Therefore, I can reasonably infer that they too must be both representation and will.

However, we can go further. Schopenhauer argues that, having found this connection between representation and will, we may assume that the whole world is really a dual world—a world of representation and will. This can be seen in the animals, the higher of which engage in behavior at least dimly analogous to that of human beings. Certainly, they too exhibit will. But even the plants, as they push their way through the ground and grow to maturity, exhibit will. Really, everything does.

This will, however, is *one*. Schopenhauer contends that space, time, causality, and individuation apply only to the world as representation. Because they do not apply to the world as will, we must suppose the unity of will. So, underneath it all, everything is one. It is right here where Schopenhauer, fascinated with and knowledgeable of Eastern mysticism to an extent uncommon in the West prior to the twentieth century, imports into his system the Oriental idea of the oneness of all {221} things. In all non-Christian thought there is, of course, an uneasy



tension between the one and the many. In the East, this has usually resulted in the many being swallowed up by the one. And so it is with Schopenhauer. Even though there *is* individuation in the world as representation, this world is ultimately illusory. In fact, Schopenhauer uses the Buddhist term “veil of Maya” to describe this world, a veil which, according to Buddhism and to Schopenhauer, must be pierced if we are to get beyond illusion to the underlying unified reality. So, at bottom, as will, we are all one. I am you and you are me.

The will is also *irrational*. Intelligence is a product of the world as representation. The will simply uses the world of representation in its inexorable striving to continue its existence. At one point Schopenhauer makes the analogy between the will and a strong blind man who carries a sighted lame man (the world as representation) on his shoulders so that he can make his way around in the world. Representation, then, arises simply to serve the purposes of the will, which is a will to live, but which in itself is utterly irrational. The will strives to live. It is, as Schopenhauer describes it, a hungry will. But it is not conscious and it is living to no purpose. And so, at bottom, not only is diversity swallowed up in unity, but rationality is swallowed up in irrationality.

Just as the Eastern idea of oneness has made inroads into Western thought, so has this idea of ultimate irrationality. Schopenhauer is by no means the last thinker whom we will encounter who exhibits this tendency.

#### **4. The Road to Chaos: An Interpretive Analysis of Contemporary Continental Philosophy**

We are at last to the point to which our brief survey of Continental philosophy since Kant is leading—contemporary Continental philosophy. The many lesser lights may profitably be forgotten, since like most followers they add little to the thought of the originators. As the occasion warrants we will mention the various theologians who have applied the ideas of the leaders to the study of theology. At this point three men of note deserve our consideration—Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Jean-Paul Sartre. {222}

##### **A. Husserl**

By the turn of the century it became increasingly evident that the Kantian synthesis, achieved over a hundred years earlier, had not

resulted in substantial agreement amongst philosophers. Kant's own philosophy had been in large measure altered, if not abandoned completely, by the Absolute Idealists. They in turn had been severely criticized by Kierkegaard and Schopenhauer and had been "stood on their head" by the dialectical materialists. By 1900, Friedrich Nietzsche had died in insanity and his nihilistic doctrines had become well-known. To the discerning eye philosophy was bankrupt.

Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) had such an eye. Not only did he perceive the disunity and disarray of philosophy, but he also saw the apparent unity within the physical sciences which seemed to him to be making progress. He declared philosophy to be in crisis and sought a new method which would bring unity to philosophy and which would ground it in as certain a foundation as the physical sciences seemed to possess.

For our purposes we may ignore the fact that the unity of the physical sciences is an illusion, that, for example, physics, the foundations of mathematics, as well as the life sciences have undergone periods of crisis when competing and conflicting claims have all but shattered the apparent unity. Husserl may surely be forgiven his assumption, since he began philosophizing before the advent of quantum physics, which led to the breakdown of the Newtonian synthesis, and since, towards the end of his life, he did extend his view of the crisis to include the physical sciences.

We need rather to focus on what ought to be done when confronted with the sort of disunity in thought that Husserl perceived. On the one hand we may acknowledge that man is both finite and a sinner, that as finite he never will have exhaustive knowledge, and that as a sinner the knowledge available to him will be distorted and will result in disunity and ultimately in chaos. If we acknowledge this, then we will seek the eternal and all-knowing God, Who is the Truth, and Who has given through His revelation to finite man all that he needs to rightly understand the various aspects of his world. Discovery, whether in the realm of the physical sciences, in the understanding of the nature of man, or in man's knowledge of God, will proceed from a true foundation, and will not go forth in disarray or lead to chaos.

Or, we may deny the finitude and sin of man and suppose that the problem is simply that man has not yet hit on the right method of study. Husserl took this alternative.

Husserl believed that the right method was what he called *the phenomenological method*. By this he meant a method which would proceed {223} by giving a faithful and complete *description* of what could be observed, doing so at progressively deeper levels of observation, until we hit rock bottom, and only then formulating conclusions which would serve as the groundwork for our theories. It was to be a *descriptive* rather than an evaluative method. Husserl hoped that this would be preferable to previous methods in philosophy. The problem as he saw it was that philosophy had traditionally begun with its theories and preconceived notions and only then had examined the data. This had led to all sorts of unchecked speculation. If, however, philosophers could but first faithfully and thoroughly examine the data, they would then arrive at agreed-upon and correct conclusions.

Husserl never abandoned the phenomenological method and its ideal of making philosophy a descriptive science. Neither did those who came after him. Twentieth-century Continental philosophers *claim* to be phenomenologists. They claim that their task is primarily to describe the data. They think that they are engaged in a scientific endeavor. And they think that this is all that is needed to find out what is true.

Some of the consequences of this are amusing and relatively benign. Husserl, for example, besides publishing quite a few lengthy—and rather boring—works, also left behind over 40,000 pages of unpublished manuscript. Many of the lesser lights after him more or less followed his example, and their lengthy tomes are well suited as cures for insomnia or to help while away the time between the action in a televised baseball game (or golf tournament).

Other consequences are not so benign. No matter how many pages of manuscript one writes, one cannot describe exhaustively. One must pick and choose. To do so is to evaluate. Only God, Who is all-knowing, could do what the ideal of phenomenology requires. Man cannot do this. But phenomenology requires man to be God.

Of course, man cannot be God. And so the phenomenologist places limits on what we need to describe. We need to pay careful attention

*only* to those facts that are relevant to our purposes. Relevancy, however, is a matter of evaluation, and thus the descriptive ideal of phenomenology is undercut right at the start. Without knowing it the phenomenologist is going to decide relevancy and in general pick and choose from the data in accordance with his theoretical presuppositions. He may not even be aware of what they are. But because he has them, and because they determine the way he describes the data, his eventual “findings” and hence his conclusions will invariably support what he believed {224} all along. Phenomenology, then, is undercut before it even gets underway, and it becomes an enterprise reminiscent of the quest of “liberal” theology for the “historical Jesus,” who, depending on who was examining the data, became alternately a social-gospel liberal, a gun-toting revolutionary, or a wild-eyed eschatologist.

Essentially, the phenomenologist becomes a fraud. Claiming to be neutral, claiming to be a descriptive scientist, he imports all his preconceived theoretical apparatus into his work. His charlatantry is particularly dangerous because, unwilling to begin with the God of Scripture, Whose revelation ought to be the source of all our presuppositions, he begins with theoretical presuppositions inconsistent with Scripture and then, applying his “neutral” method, “demonstrates” the truth of an anti-scriptural view of man.

This has happened time and again not only in phenomenological philosophy but in theology as well. Rudolf Bultmann, for example, “demythologized” Scripture and Christianity by trying to distill the “truth” of the Gospel message from the dross that could no longer be accepted because it was an accretion of a prescientific culture. He did this in the name of a scientific theology. Of course, his own presuppositions ruled out blood atonement, the miraculous, and, ultimately, a personal God at all. It is not surprising, then, that through the “objective” eye of truth he could so demythologize Christianity as to transmute it beyond recognition. Yet, he did this without any apparent realization that his conclusions rested on his presuppositions, and his devoted followers also failed to recognize this sham, so convinced have men become of the myth of phenomenology—that man can objectively, dispassionately, and exhaustively examine the data from a the-

ory-free pinnacle, and can thereby arrive at the right and proper conclusion.

How did Husserl apply the phenomenological method to the problems besetting philosophy? A primary problem for all non-Christian philosophy is how man can have knowledge of the “external” world, that is, the world beyond his mind. Or, to put it another way, “How can I *know* that anything exists beyond me and my thoughts?” Kant could not answer this. The Absolute Idealists swallowed up the human mind in the “divine” mind. Schopenhauer talked about the will, but made the whole world of representation an illusion.

No. Modern philosophy prior to Husserl did not do this. What made its failure so perplexing was that Rene Descartes, nearly three centuries earlier, had tried to establish our knowledge of the external {225} world on a firm and indubitable foundation. As is well known, he proceeded to doubt everything that could be doubted until he came to the bedrock of the undoubtable, which was that he was thinking. Hence, he proclaimed, “I think, therefore I am.” From this indubitable and impregnable foundation, Descartes tried to establish all other knowledge, including knowledge of the external world. For reasons which need not concern us, subsequent philosophers found flaws in Descartes’s reasoning, which is why Husserl was faced 250 years after Descartes’s death with the fact that the existence of the external world had not yet been established.

In order to place philosophy on a firmer foundation than the one upon which Descartes had rested it and thereby to provide a bedrock for an edifice that would rise as gloriously as did the physical sciences, Husserl did what any sensible nontheist would do—he intentionally embarked on a program of even more radical doubt than Descartes. Perhaps Descartes did not find the indubitable bedrock. But perhaps he did not dig deep enough.

And so Husserl doubted, although he did not call it doubting. For him it was *bracketing*, that is, setting in brackets or placing to one side for the time being all that we could not know with certainty until we discover something which *is* certain. Well, out goes the external world. Out goes the “I,” or the self, since, as Hume had long before pointed out, Kant notwithstanding, when the contents of the mind are examined, one never sees the mind, the “I,” the self, but only the contents.

With the world and the self in brackets, Husserl hit the indubitable bedrock. There he discovered what he thought was gold. For he found, or so he believed, that the *contents* of the mind at any moment, that is, the instantaneous contents of *consciousness*, were what Husserl called *intentional*. They were like an arrow, directed *to* something, and this something was always an object. Consciousness is never consciousness, plain and simple. It is always consciousness *of* something. Even those parts of our consciousness which we do not think are directly about the external world—e.g., our memories—still have an object. I never simply have a memory. I always have a memory of something.

Having made this wonderful discovery right at the firm bedrock of the indubitable, Husserl proceeded to reconstruct the world upon this sure foundation. Step by step he showed how my consciousness was always consciousness of one thing or another, even how my consciousness of my memories and my ideas (which I do *not* feel have reference to {226} an external world) differs from my consciousness of objects which I do believe are part of an extra-mental world. In this way Husserl demonstrates how the idea of an external or extra-mental world is a part of the indubitable properties of consciousness. He even tries to explain how the idea of the self or the “I” is founded in consciousness.

Despite Husserl’s lengthy and painstaking efforts, however, he never gets beyond the contents of the mind and therefore never demonstrates anything other than the existence of consciousness. The fact remains that if the intentional object of consciousness is still *in* consciousness—and Husserl believes that it is, since to claim otherwise would be to accept as true what is doubtful, hence, bracketed, namely, an extra-mental world—then, no matter how different the intentional object of a memory may be from the intentional object of something which I *think* is extra-mental, the fact remains that *the object of consciousness is still in my mind*. I am left with nothing but the contents of my mind. They may be grandiose, including a mental “external” world and even mental world history, but they are still the contents of my mind and nothing more.

Husserl’s view leads to *solipsism*. This is inevitable. Any philosophy that makes the mind of man its starting point must do this. If certainty is only within the contents of my mind or consciousness, and if I cannot be certain that I am having any *direct* contact with the external

world, then I can never claim experience of the external world. I can claim experience only of the contents of my mind. This results in my being shut up with my thoughts, with a whole world that is ultimately within me.

The alternative is to assume that the *direct* object of consciousness is the object in the world itself. But this is to bridge the gap between the mental and the physical without argument. If the mental is distinct from the physical, if our consciousness is always mental both in its subject and object pole, hence, if the direct object of consciousness is still in my own mind, then, although I may want to believe in an external world, though I may want to think that something beyond me is responsible for what I am experiencing, so long as I hold to the anti-theistic assumption that the indubitable starting point of philosophy must be human consciousness itself, I can never break out of my solipsistic egg.

### B. Heidegger

Nevertheless, solipsism is untenable, and those philosophers who came after Husserl generally rejected his conclusions. But how could {227} they? Well, rather than rejecting the validity of his arguments or the details of his analysis, they rejected his very starting point. They were in agreement with him that philosophy must adopt the descriptive method. Hence, they considered themselves to be phenomenologists. But they argued that consciousness, and thus any descriptive analysis of consciousness, cannot be divorced from the world, because human consciousness is by nature a part of the world, *engaged* in living in the world. Therefore, the task of the philosopher is not to describe consciousness apart from the world but as existing in the world. Because of their emphasis on the existence in the world of consciousness, they are called *existential phenomenologists*, or sometimes simply *existentialists*.

We may observe several things about this shift of emphasis. First, the shift is made not with argument but by assumption. If starting with human consciousness apart from the world is mistaken because it leads to the untenability of solipsism, then it is *assumed* that the only other starting point available is human consciousness engaged in the world. That the human being is the only legitimate reference point for philosophy is not questioned.

Secondly, the problem of how human consciousness, which is mental, hence, nonspatial and nonphysical, can have direct spatial contact with the physical is not dealt with. It is swept under the rug.

Thirdly, this shift does not change the phenomenologist's claim to be describing rather than evaluating on the basis of theoretical presuppositions. But now, rather than being conducted in the *relatively* harmless area of the philosophical problem of skepticism concerning an extra-mental world, this sham is now conducted in relation to all areas of man's life in the world. Man existing in the world engages in interpersonal relationships. He is a moral being, a sexual being, a religious being. The existential phenomenologist no longer studies one or two rather technical philosophical problems (e.g., whether the mind or the external world really does exist). He examines man in all the variegated aspects of his life. And thus the sham becomes quite dangerous. The existential phenomenologist will pass off as philosophical *fact*, as the assured result of his painstaking description, what is really simply his preconceived notion of what ought to be, a notion which has no grounding in reality, but is ultimately conceived in the depravity of his own heart. In perpetrating this sham he rails against the revelation of God and against God Himself on behalf of the assured results of his investigation, not admitting that these results have their very origin not {228} in fact but in the dark recesses of his heart.

Of the various existential phenomenologists, two stand out because of their originality and influence. The first of these is Martin Heidegger (1889–1976). Heidegger's thought may be divided into two periods, the earlier, which centers on his major work, *Being and Time* (1927), and the later, which covers a much longer period (from the 1930s on), and which includes a series of shorter and increasingly disorganized writings.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger set out to describe man as a being existing in the world. For our purposes we need not go into an analysis of the details. Nor do we need to introduce much of Heidegger's arcane and at first baffling terminology. His major points are quite simple. (Really, the unique terminology, which includes much coinage of words in the German, is an example of what one critic of Paul Tillich, Heidegger's disciple, called "a bombastic redescription of the obvious." A quack will try to make his message sound more impressive by



disguising it in fancy words intended to obscure it for all but the initiated or those willing patiently to learn the vocabulary.)

Man is *Da-sein*, or *being-there*. He is *being-in-the-world*. Or, put another way, his nature is to be a being engaged in existing in the world. Man, however, does not discover any ultimate reason for why he is existing, particularly for why he is existing at this particular time and place. Rather, he just does. This is what Heidegger calls his *facticity*. As a “factual” being, that is, as a being who just happens to be *there* in the world, man experiences himself as *thrown* into the world. Not knowing from whence he came or where he is going, he has a sense of thrownness. He also experiences himself as *fallen*. By this we should not understand Heidegger to be saying that man realizes that he is a sinner or that *fallenness* is sin. No, fallenness is simply man’s state of being cast adrift into a world that is not his own choosing and that he does not understand.

Man’s fallen existence *is*, however, *inauthentic* existence. As Heidegger would say, “in the first instance and for the most part” man is fallen and inauthentic. This is simply a lengthy way of saying that man is naturally and usually inauthentic.

What characterizes inauthentic existence? *Everydayness*. By this Heidegger means the way that most people usually act, engaging in idle talk, amusements, meaningless tasks, a workaday life, and the like. Why does man do this? According to Heidegger, he does this because he is fleeing from whom he really is, namely, a *being-towards-death*. Man does {229} not want to acknowledge that just as his life has a meaningless and arbitrary beginning, so too it has a meaningless end. And so he flees in the face of death. He does these everyday things, some of them quite *useful* (e.g., nine-to-five jobs, hobbies), to keep from having to face the brute fact of death.

Eventually, however, man experiences *dread* (or *angst*). Dread is different from fear. Fear has an object, but dread has none. Dread comes when man realizes the *nothingness* of his own existence, when all the everydayness that covers up this terrible fact is stripped away, and man is confronted with his impending death, the snuffing out of his earthly existence, and the apparent meaninglessness of all that he has done.

Up to this point Heidegger’s description is admirable. We must fault him on using the term “inauthentic.” After all, this is an evaluative

term, and Heidegger has no right to evaluate. Evaluation presupposes a standard, and Heidegger has given no such standard. But if he doesn't contrast this with anything "authentic," if everything is inauthentic, then he is doing just what depraved man who hates God *should* do—declare everything to be meaningless. Of course, we could fault Heidegger for taking so many pages and using such obscure terminology to do what Solomon did so concisely and so beautifully in Ecclesiastes. But Heidegger could be forgiven of this, since he was German and not Hebrew and was not inspired of God. And so, if Heidegger ended his description with the meaninglessness of the lot of man apart from God, we could admire his honesty and accuracy.

But Heidegger is not honest. Purporting to describe, he proceeds to evaluate, for there is, after all, *authentic* existence. And for Heidegger it is not to "fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccles. 12:13). No. To be authentic is *resolutely* to face death, and in the face of death to resolve to be oneself, that is, not to simply be part of the world, not simply to go along with the crowd, but to realize one's full potentiality.

How does one do this? Here Heidegger lapses into sheer mysticism, even in *Being and Time*, and more so later on. Authenticity is found in openness to *Being*, really, in encountering Being. And so Heidegger's philosophy becomes one of *mystical encounter*. Being, after all, is not a *thing* that can be encountered or experienced. I cannot encounter Being in the way I can a person. I cannot even encounter Being in the way in which I can encounter God, through His handiwork displayed in creation and through His written revelation. No. I can encounter Being only in some mystical and ethereal fashion. Encountering Being becomes {230} nothing other than the mindlessness of the Buddhist encounter of Nirvana or the Schopenhauerian experience of the universal Will. Ultimately, it is an attempt to lose one's mind, which, since the mind cannot *really* be transcended, becomes a chaotic and confused sham.

*Truth* also becomes utterly mystical. Heidegger contrasts two ideas of truth. One is *scientific truth*. Here truth is simply the accurate correspondence of a belief with a state of affairs in the world. For example, my belief that the cat is on the mat is true only if in fact the cat *is* on the mat. This sort of truth for Heidegger is derivative, typical of man's concerns in his everyday existence, and therefore inauthentic. The authen-

tic truth on which it rests is *truth as disclosedness of Being for Dasein*. Making much of the fact that the Greek *aletheia* originally meant uncovering or disclosing, Heidegger asserts that truth is primarily and originally a relation in which man finds himself, namely, the relation of encountering Being, or of Being being disclosed to him. Since the idea of man encountering Being is itself mystical, truth also becomes mystical. What is true is no longer what is, but is a chaotic, mystical sham.

At this point Heidegger is doing little more than echoing Kierkegaard's view of truth. As will be recalled, Kierkegaard himself saw truth *not* as the right knowledge of the true and living God but of having the proper heart relationship of faith no matter what the object of worship, so that the pagan worshipping in the heathen shrine in sincerity of heart was in the truth while the hypocrite "worshipping" the God of Scripture was not. Thus, the object of worship dropped out as irrelevant. "True truth" was the right attitude of heart no matter what the object. So with Heidegger. But now there can be no object of truth. Objects are things. Being is not an object. So, if one is *in* the truth when one encounters Being, then truth is simply the proper relationship to *no thing*. This is chaos. Indeed, this is nonsense!

Nevertheless, "Christian" theologians such as Bultmann and Tillich both look to Heidegger as their inspiration. Bultmann explicitly declared Heideggerian philosophy to be the proper medium in which to theologize and to reconstruct the Christian message for modern man, once we have "demythologized" it. This is why the reality of the eternal Creator God is unimportant for Bultmann, and why the historical Jesus can remain a shadowy figure and His true teachings utterly obscure. All that we need is the Christ of faith. And the Christ of faith who comes to us through the medium of Bultmann is strikingly like an existentialist prophet. Having faith in Him and in God is nothing more than having faith {231} in ourselves, freed from guilt, freed from the burden of everydayness, freed to be free, and freed to go on living resolutely in the face of death. For Bultmann, Christianity has not only been "demythologized." Christianity has been replaced by existentialist nonsense and then superficially reinstated by reintroducing scriptural terms (e.g., grace, incarnation) with existentialist meanings. Bultmann, then, is guilty of a double sham. Not only is his existentialism sham

philosophy, but he is guilty of the further quackery of passing off his existentialism as Christianity.

Similarly, Tillich opts wholly for the Heideggerian idea of truth and of Being. Superficially he sounds Christian. God, after all, is the *ground of Being*. But by this he doesn't mean that the eternal, self-existing, all-knowing, all-powerful God of Scripture is the Creator and the sovereign and providential Sustainer of the universe. No, "we must transcend the God of theism," he confidently declares in *The Courage to Be*. And for whom or what? Ultimately, really, for that faceless nonentity which is the non-object of all mystical experience. Ultimately, for that vacuous nothing which gives us the *courage to be* ourselves, to be resolute in the face of death, and so on and so forth.

Heidegger, of course, was only beginning his search for the perfect disclosure of Being when he wrote *Being and Time*. A "tragedy" of sorts occurred which somewhat altered the course of his search. Hitler came to power in Germany. Now, that wasn't the tragedy. The tragedy was that Heidegger had been misled as to just where Being would be disclosed. As a good German he had great hopes that the German people, through their culture, their art in particular, and especially their poetry, would provide a means for the breakthrough of Being. Hitler appeared to be rekindling the proper spirit in the German people. Accordingly, Heidegger jumped on the Hitler bandwagon, participated in various book-burnings, and even met Edmund Husserl, his former teacher, who was Jewish, at the Freiburg library door to inform him that he was *persona non grata* at the university.

After a couple years (by 1935), Heidegger began to sense the excesses of Hitler and saw that he was leading the German people not to the promised land of disclosed Being but to war and eventual destruction. Accordingly, he remained silent throughout the rest of Hitler's regime, neither supporting nor condemning him. (As far as I know, he never repudiated his early statements supporting him.) He retired to the Black Forest, where he lived the rest of his life in solitude, seeking the disclosure of Being elsewhere. {232}

The *real* tragedy of this is *not* that he had misidentified the disclosure of Being, but that his philosophy gave him no way of identifying ungodliness. Hitler's regime was based on hatred and egotism. But Heidegger's philosophy lacks any ethics except the ethics of self-realiza-

tion. An ethics of self-realization cannot condemn hatred and egotism until it be seen that these are leading not to self-realization but self-annihilation. So long as ungodliness appears to be leading to self-realization, an ethics of self-realization must support it. And so Heidegger's philosophy suffered a failure of nerve precisely when its moral content was tested.

After retiring to the Black Forest, Heidegger became more and more obscure. This obscurity was not accidental. Heidegger increasingly came to perceive *language* and philosophy as being responsible for the covering up of Being to Dasein. In a chicken-or-the-egg routine, Heidegger alternately blamed the one or the other for being the cause of this cover-up. Nevertheless, they both played their part. And so to find the disclosure of Being, Heidegger looked back first to the pre-Socratic philosophers and then even beyond them to the early Greek poets to find a time when language still was a vehicle of thought by which Being was disclosed.

We need not dwell on his analyses of the Greek language. They are obscure and for the most part unconvincing to Greek scholars. For our purposes we need simply note the results of his journey to find Being amongst the early Greek poets. The first result was that he declared that the poet, not the philosopher, is the one who discloses Being to any culture. The poet is less bound by the restrictions everyday man places on language and hence is freer to use language in the creative way needed for the disclosure of Being. The second result was that his mysticism became even more pronounced. Rejecting the history of Western philosophy as a progressive cover-up of Being, Heidegger rejected as well the attempt of sinful man to at least understand his world rationally (which the philosopher tried to do). And so more and more he talked about things such as the homecoming of Being for Dasein, Dasein standing in the Clearing of Being, and the like. Thus, the irrationality of Heidegger's mysticism progressively got the upper hand. (Heidegger's love of the irrational is seen in his exaltation of the poet. The poet, because he does use language with greater freedom, also runs the danger of using it too loosely and thus ending up with irrational nonsense.)

We see, then, the end result of Heidegger's philosophy. Having suffered its own failure of nerve, and having been unable really to accom-

plish {233} its purpose, which is to find authentic existence through the disclosure of Being, it becomes a *philosophy of conspiracy* and of blame-placing. The real failure in Heidegger's philosophy is the failure of all mysticism. Where there can be no object of encounter and no object of adoration there can be no achievement. Where there can be no achievement there can be no true purpose. Where there can be no purpose there can be only despair. Of course, only if the Creator God through His Word and through the Holy Spirit quickens sinful man, can he in any sense encounter the only worthy object of adoration. (And even then the encounter is always mediated through the Word and the sacraments, since "no man hath seen God at any time" [John 1:18].) Nevertheless, sinful man who believes that truth is still in the object and not in a meaningless no-thing such as Being Itself may delude himself into thinking that an object of adoration has been found. The mystic has no such object. Hence he is left in despair and is left to pine away or to cast blame for his despair. Heidegger casts blame on language and philosophy.

### C. Sartre

We come now to the last of the three major philosophers of twentieth-century Europe, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1979), who, because of his influence as a novelist as well as a philosopher, is the best known of the three to the educated public. With Sartre we have the breakdown of anti-Christian thought come into its own but coming to us under the guise of serious philosophy. In reality, Sartre is probably no more representative of that breakdown and chaos than is Heidegger, but since he wrote more clearly than did Heidegger and in a way more palatable to the public (and even to other philosophers), the breakdown is more easily discernible.

Although Sartre was certainly acquainted with Heidegger, and although his thinking exhibits many similar tendencies, his philosophical works show little explicit recognition of Heidegger. His jumping-off point is Husserl (with whom he studied briefly). It is not surprising, therefore, that the philosophical problem with which he was initially engaged and the answer to which forms the basis of much of his thinking is the problem of the relation between the mind and the world. Like Heidegger, he rejects the idea that the mind is shut up from the external world, but unlike Heidegger, who was content to examine man as a

being-in-the-world, Sartre analyzes what it means for man's mind to be engaged in the world. {234}

Just as with Heidegger, we need not be concerned with all the details of Sartre's analysis but may concentrate on the most salient points. The first of these is that man's mind (or *Ego*, as Sartre calls it) is *wholly* within the world. Starting with the Husserlian discovery of consciousness as *intentional* (i.e., as consciousness *of* something), Sartre rejects the idea that there is any subject pole of consciousness at all. There is only an object pole. When human consciousness is fully engaged in its day-to-day activities, such as reading a book, writing a letter, picking vegetables from a garden, it is actually engaged in the world itself. It is not really a "mind" at all. In fact, the idea of a mind as something internal, or something distinct from consciousness engaged *in* the world, is secondary and derivative, and arises only when consciousness ceases to be engaged in the world and becomes reflective consciousness, that is, consciousness thinking about itself. For example, so long as I am reading, I am fully engaged in reading. Only when I stop reading or am for some reason interrupted, do I think "I have been reading." It is only then, as the ego reflects upon its activities, that it recognizes itself as an ego, and only then does it think of itself as something (e.g., a mind) *distinct from* its engagement in the world. Since this is reflective and derived, the subject pole of the ego is an unreality. Consciousness is really engaged in the world, and the mind as distinct from its engagement in the world is ultimately a myth.

Thus, right at the foundation of Sartre's philosophy man loses his mind in the world. This counter-intuitive consequence, however, is the only consistent consequence for anti-theistic philosophy, other than the equally consistent and equally counterintuitive idea that man is hopelessly shut up in his thoughts and cannot know of the existence of the external world. For anti-Christian thought, the world is either lost in the mind of man or the mind of man in the world. We must at least give Sartre credit for taking anti-Christian thought at this point to one of two logical limits and for accepting the absurd consequences.

Sartre also shows himself to be a *mystic* by doing this. The mystic need not strive to lose his mind in the nonbeing of Nirvana or of Being. He may, like the nature mystic, try to do this through merging with nature. In effect, this is what Sartre does.

For Sartre, however, it is not explicitly a merging. Sartre wants to keep being (or the world) and consciousness distinct. Since the world is being and since consciousness is not the world itself, it must be the opposite of being. It must be *nothingness!* (Hence, the title of Sartre's major work, *Being and Nothingness*.) {235}

Consciousness, however, is a strange sort of nothingness, for it is very creative. Being in itself, or the world, is not as we experience it. In itself it is pure, undifferentiated being (*the plenum of being*). It is only because consciousness, as nothingness, can engage the world that being becomes for consciousness differentiated into various objects. Objects, after all, are distinct from each other. Distinction, division (without which there would be no objects), cracks in being, if you will, can arise only if there is something other than being. That something other can only be nothingness, and consciousness is nothingness. So, the world for me becomes a world of objects and not an undifferentiated *plenum* because my consciousness is engaged *in* the world to create these distinctions. As Sartre says, "Nothingness lies coiled in the heart of being—like a worm."

This radical distinction between being and consciousness (or nothingness) gives rise for Sartre to another equally startling distinction. The world of being is for Sartre a world of cause and effect relationships. Things proceed in an orderly and thoroughly determined manner. But consciousness, as nothingness, is the opposite of being. Therefore, there can be no causality for consciousness. Consciousness is utterly undetermined, even from one moment to the next. That means that man, as consciousness, is free from all determination. He is *totally free*.

Sartre has here drawn the extreme but mostly proper consequence of his view of man. He is, of course, dealing with the age-old problem of human freedom and causal determinism. For anti-Christian thought there are only two consistent solutions. At the one extreme is mechanistic determinism, in which everything, including the mind of man, is determined down to its smallest minutiae by an inexorable cause-and-effect sequence marching through time. Even this is not totally consistent, for at the very source of the whole causal network is nothing but chance. No explanation can be given for why everything happens in the



way it does and not some other way except that it simply *does*—i.e., by chance.

Those who have tried to avoid determinism in relation to man's actions have generally been utterly inconsistent and unable to explain how certain actions can be caused and others uncaused or how actions can be partially caused. Therefore, Sartre, by denying causality to any and all human actions, at least avoids their inconsistencies. But in so doing he is stuck with a chaotic view of man. If all actions of human consciousness are uncaused, then not only am I free at any moment to radically change {236} my behavior by becoming a homosexual or a heterosexual (to use Sartre's example), or even to vacillate between the two as often as I want (a consequence which is itself at odds with what we know about human beings), but I am free, even if a cripple, to become a professional baseball player, or, like Superman, to leap tall buildings in a single bound. If Sartre draws back from this latter consequence (since we all know that I cannot simply choose to be Superman) and claims that the body imposes certain limits on the mind, we can remind him that the body in itself as a physical object is nothing more than a part of the undifferentiated plenum of being and that human consciousness should be able to differentiate its body in whatever way it wants, and that includes making it into Superman.

This brings up a further point. Even though by espousing complete indeterminism of consciousness he is more consistent than some, Sartre's own view of consciousness and nothingness should have taken him *much* further, if he were truly consistent. After all, the plenum of being cannot be part of any cause-and-effect network, since an undifferentiated mass cannot be subject to causality in its nonexistent parts. Only because consciousness makes breaks in this plenum can there be parts and hence cause-and-effect relationships. But, consciousness, which is utterly creative and utterly free, should be able to differentiate the world in whatever way it desires. Consciousness should be able to create whatever cause-and-effect network it wants. In short, because it is without bounds and limits, it should be as free to make its own world as it is free to choose its own nature. The utter anarchy of consciousness should produce utter anarchy in the world—a world entirely moldable and molded by me. Sartre, of course, does not draw this con-

clusion. No one in his right mind would. Yet this is precisely where Sartre's indeterminism would lead him, if he were entirely consistent.

Sartre, having determined that man is totally free, argues that this total freedom gives rise to *anguish* and *forlornness*. Man senses *anguish* when he sees that his conduct may be whatever he makes of it. Knowing that he is completely free, knowing that he can blame no one other than himself, he sees that he is responsible and must accept responsibility for his conduct. He may try to flee from this conclusion by arguing in what Sartre calls *bad faith* (*mauvais foi*) that he is not free and responsible. But in his heart he knows that he is totally free and hence responsible.

Man, moreover, sees that there is and can be no external standard to which to look in deciding what he ought to do. When he realizes this {237} he is *forlorn*, for he knows that he is utterly abandoned to decide for himself what is right and wrong and what he must do (and for all of which he will be responsible). Why can there be no external standard? Because there is no God.

Sartre *assumes* rather than argues that there is no God. We hardly need a counterargument at this point. His own philosophy, which admirably demonstrates the consequences of man's reasoning apart from God, is itself a striking argument *for* God. What is again somewhat commendable in Sartre, however, is that he, unlike many other anti-theists, sees that if there is no God there can be *no* standard of morality to which man can turn in deciding right and wrong. If Kantians, utilitarians, and many others had realized this, much time and many words would have been saved, since there would have been no desire to show how the various non-standards which they proposed could function as a standard for morality. (Of course, there has been one result of utilitarian benefit. Several philosophy professors have certainly gained tenure by arguing in writing the pros and cons of the Kantian categorical imperative or the utilitarian greatest-happiness principle of such a standard.)

On the other hand, what Sartre does, having once seen this, is certainly less commendable. If there can be no external standard, whether the law of God, the law of society, or even a utilitarian principle, then there is nothing that I can be responsible to, and the idea of responsibility for my conduct simply does not make sense. Responsi-

bility requires a standard and law. If there is no standard, there is nothing to which to hold me responsible, and the idea or responsibility drops by the wayside.

Nevertheless, having asserted that I am utterly responsible because I am totally free, Sartre goes on to make another startling claim (and another *non sequitur*). In choosing as I do, I choose not only for myself but for all mankind. For example, in choosing to be a heterosexual today I choose heterosexuality for everyone (at least today). For that matter, in choosing a T-bone steak rather than a sirloin steak from the freezer for dinner, I choose T-bone steaks for all mankind. (If I choose heterosexuality for all mankind I choose T-bone steaks for all as well. Without a preexisting standard there can be no appeal to the moral relevance of the one or the irrelevance of the other.) Man, having no preexisting moral law, becomes a universal lawgiver every time he acts.

To ascribe this status to finite man is at once pathetic and absurd. It is pathetic because it shows total (but culpable) ignorance of the One {238} true lawgiver. It is absurd because it gives to each man something he cannot be. Man is finite and there are many men. If each man is made a lawgiver, his law becomes applicable only to himself and to those whom he can overpower. This creates moral anarchy, not moral order.

With all these flaws in Sartre's reasoning before us, it seems hardly worthwhile even to ask whether he gives us any guidance as to how we should make our moral choices. In fact, by his own reasoning we can derive both the conclusion that he should and should not tell us how to act. Since there can be no preexistent standard, Sartre should tell me nothing, since to do so would be to pretend that there is a standard for me to follow. However, since in choosing for myself I am choosing for all mankind, Sartre should do everything within his power to get me to accept the standard that he has chosen.

Not surprisingly, Sartre does something in between. He tells us that we ought to choose with a willingness to accept responsibility for the consequences of our choices. If we are thus willing, we are said to choose *resolutely*. Moral choice, right choice, then, for Sartre boils down to choosing resolutely, to choosing with a willingness to accept the consequences of one's actions.

This, if followed by very many men, would lead to chaos. So long as Hitler was willing to endure the wrath of various nations and his own eventual destruction, his choices—killing of the Jews, invading other countries, and the like—were morally commendable. So long as a tax-evader is willing to risk his life, his breaking of the law is commendable. Abortion is commendable if those who practice it are willing to accept whatever consequences may follow. Antiabortionists are to be commended if they force their way into an abortion clinic and kill its occupants, so long as they accept the consequences. Bashing in the heads of homosexuals, of bisexuals, of heterosexuals is commendable—if only those who practice such things choose to do so resolutely. We could multiply examples, but the point is already clear. If this is a basis for morality it will lead to nothing but utter anarchy if left unchecked.

Sartre, then, is to be faintly praised for quite unwittingly, I am sure, showing how anti-theistic thought, if taken to its logical limits, leads to chaos and anarchy. He is, however, to be condemned for his perpetration and propagation of these doctrines. Anti-theistic thinking ought to be condemned no matter how well it may provide grist for the apologetic mill. Moreover, because of his influence upon contemporary thinking, his views must be attacked and his ideas held up for the scorn and {239} ridicule that they deserve so that people, by the grace of God, will reject them and will seek the truth where it may be found.

### *5. Cultural Shockwaves*

Although philosophers may devise their theories in offices high in the garrets of ivy-covered red-brick buildings, and although they may never propound them beyond the classroom or in professional journals read only by their colleagues, a trickle down of ideas does take place from their lofty heights to the general public. Philosophers, moreover, are not only originators; they are also reflectors. A philosophical theory, then, not only affects the thinking of a culture but may well arise from tendencies already found in that culture.

I cannot say how the lines of influence between philosophers and the culture have proceeded in twentieth-century Continental thought. It may even be impossible to tell whether the philosophers have been largely originators or reflectors. For our purposes, it is irrelevant. The

fact is that the ideas being expressed in recent Continental philosophy are increasingly displayed in a concrete fashion in the culture as a whole.

I am not going to try to show this in any detail. To begin with, by training and vocation I am a philosopher and theologian. I am not a cultural analyst, a student of the fine arts or literature, although I have a passing acquaintance with these. While I go to the movies and watch television, I do so infrequently. Despite this, I certainly have had enough contact with the culture in which I am living to see that it increasingly exhibits in a concrete way what is part and parcel of the thinking of contemporary philosophy. I also am capable of noting the implications of a philosophy for *any* culture that would take it seriously and desire to live as it enjoins us to live.

I would like to focus on two general areas in this discussion of recent Continental philosophy and contemporary culture. The first is theology and the church. The other is culture in general.

### **A. Theology and the “Church”**

Theologians read philosophers. (Philosophers sometimes read theologians, when they are not too prejudiced to do so.) Theologians teach in seminaries. Prospective ministers attend seminaries. Sometimes men who are already ministers go back to seminary for further {240} training. Ministers give sermons, conduct Bible studies, counsel people, and otherwise explicitly or implicitly apply what they learn in seminaries to their congregations. If philosophers had no other way of reaching the general public, theologians would certainly provide the door.

As we already have seen in section 4, Bultmann and Tillich both claimed to derive their inspiration from Heidegger. Though others may not explicitly claim such a direct impetus, the fact remains that by and large contemporary theologians have been profoundly influenced by existential phenomenology. Even when they claim another guiding light (such as Marxism), the influence of existential phenomenology also shines through.

In several areas in particular, theology (and thus the minister of the church) has been profoundly influenced by contemporary philosophy. First and foremost is the starting point of philosophy. Because it has presupposed that it is through man that we learn about reality, philos-

ophy since Kant's "Copernican revolution" has started with a study of man. Man thereby becomes the measure of all things. Nowhere is this more evident than in existential phenomenology in which the beginning and end of philosophy is to describe man's situation as a being-in-the-world— "only this and nothing more."

Contemporary theology has this very same starting point. We do not begin with God and with His revelation to man in creation and in the Word. Rather, we begin by describing man in his "existential predicament." We see man as someone who experiences himself as lost, as without meaning, someone full of fear and experiencing anguish in the face of meaninglessness and death. Caught in this predicament, man seeks meaning. He seeks after a god. And it is up to him to find his god, and thereby to give meaning to his existence. Theologians have devised a variety of ways of expressing this, but the overall idea is always the same, and the starting point never varies. God cannot be the source of our knowledge about Him. If He can reveal Himself at all, He cannot reveal Himself apart from man's consent. We must start with man and see if by studying him we can somehow be led to God. But, it is always up to man to find God.

Making man the starting point of theology has many ramifications for the ministry of the church. Although not always self-consciously following the dictum to start with man, the leaders of the church come to see that talk about God is largely irrelevant. If the beginning and the end of theology is man, one doesn't really need theology. Students for the {241} ministry are not taught doctrine. Sermons, then, lose doctrinal content. Children are no longer instructed from the church's catechism (if it ever had one). The focus of the preaching ministry and all the other programs of the church is not to get people to understand Who God is and who they are in light of God's revelation. Rather, the church seeks to "minister to the concerns of the people," to "deal with the people's needs in a loving, caring way." Now, the church must do these things. But it must not do this to the exclusion of teaching sound doctrine, and it cannot do this rightly *unless* it teaches sound doctrine.

If man is our starting point and if therefore we are *not* concerned with Who God is in Himself, our only concern about God can be with the way in which man encounters Him. If the encounter is all-important, however, then propositional word revelation is unimportant.

Many contemporary theologians have argued as though their rejection of propositional word revelation is due to its impossibility. Either the very idea of verbal revelation and an inspired text seems inconceivable (for one reason or other), or Scripture, because of alleged errors or cultural conditioning, doesn't fit the bill. Their arguments are not convincing. Their attack on word revelation as impossible is simply a rationalization for their presupposition that word revelation is unimportant. The encounter is a subjective thing, especially for the contemporary theologian. The object in a subjective encounter is irrelevant. Propositional revelation is therefore unimportant. I will say more about the irrelevancy of the object later. For now I want to concentrate on the abandoning of propositional revelation.

Because contemporary theology has done this, not only can it not say any more Who God is (hence the irrelevance of doctrine for the contemporary church), but it cannot know what God has commanded us to do. Contemporary theology must therefore reject biblical law. It does this quickly and with relief. This rejection is the second area in which theology has been profoundly influenced by contemporary philosophy.

Contemporary theology is ruthless in its war against biblical law. Moses may have had a genuine "encounter experience," but the law which *he* propounded was relevant only for his time, for the essentially nomadic and later agricultural children of Israel. (Of course, it's not as simple as all this. Most "critical scholars" would tell us that Moses either did not exist or that if he did he didn't formulate most of the Mosaic law, but that it arose over many centuries during the development of the life {242} of the nation of Israel. Why these scholars, who reject its relevance, should be so interested in dissecting it is a matter of some perplexity.) Today we may gain some "inspiration" from the law of Moses, insofar as it relates to our situation, but we need not accept it.

The ethics of the historical Jesus fares no better. Because we are "Christians," we believe that Christ is the head of the church. But because we are existentialist encounter Christians, we believe that "Christ" is the one who encounters us *now* and not a shadowy figure who lived some two thousand years ago. We cannot be sure what He preached. Some of it may be found in the Gospel accounts. But, who knows? Anyway, whether His teachings are accurately presented or not

is irrelevant. What the Christ who now encounters me tells me is what is relevant.

And what does this Christ tell me? Well, not those things I don't want to hear. Not that the unrepentant sinner will go to hell (e.g., Matt. 25:46). Not that He came to give His life on the cross as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28). The historical Jesus *may* have said this. Or he may not have. Who knows? Who really cares? What's important is that as modern man I can't make sense of that, so my Christ can't encounter me with that message. He must deliver a message that I can understand.

What is this message? Ultimately, it is precisely whatever I as a sinner want to hear. Of course, the contemporary theologian doesn't put it this way. If he is a good existentialist, he talks about things such as self-authentication and resoluteness in the face of death. But whatever he says, it will be sufficiently vague that when I seek to apply all this to the concrete situation, I will find that I am in a position to decide that what is right is exactly what I want to be right. We have already seen this consequence when discussing the so-called ethics of existential philosophy. It is no different with existential theology. In the end, the Christ of existential encounter tells me to do my own thing, whatever that may be.

Without a standard of righteousness the churches are left to flounder hopelessly in a sea of relativism. Recently, the World Council of Churches opened its convention in Vancouver, British Columbia, on the note that it was facing "terrifying issues," such as nuclear disarmament, world hunger, civil rights, and the like. Now, these issues are admittedly complex, and even the Christian who believes in God's standard of righteousness as revealed in His Law will admit that the solutions are by no means easy. But to one who has a standard by which to judge all things {243} issues are not *terrifying*. Difficult, yes; but terrifying, no. The World Council of Churches, however, made up as it is of member churches and theologians which have by and large swallowed wholesale the myth of encounter theology, must be terrified. For ultimately not only are there no easy solutions to the problems and issues facing us, but there are no solutions. Or, rather, there are as many solutions as there are "Christs" who encounter each one of us in the existential moment. If the Law of the Bible is not our standard of righ-



teousness, if Christ is not the very historical Jesus the record of Whom is given with unerring accuracy in the Gospel narratives, then the “Christ” whom we encounter may teach us to do anything whatsoever. Let us unilaterally disarm! Let us stockpile more nuclear weapons! Let us give all our grain to the “Third World”! Let us blow the Third World off the face of the earth!

In fact, it never works quite like this. The liberal churchman, having abandoned the Word of God as his standard of righteousness, does not have a standard. He has no right to it. Ultimately, he cannot defend it. But he has a standard. And that standard typically conforms fairly closely to the thinking of the *avant garde* of society. Since the *avant garde* have themselves swallowed the myths of atheistic existentialism, particularly the myth of man’s total freedom, which is not true freedom (found only in obedience to God), but is license to sin, the standard of the liberal churchman is itself generally ungodly. Thus, more and more the churches and their leaders espouse the causes of revolution, Marxism, homosexuality, abortionism, and the like. In doing this they are simply practicing what the theory of the theologians has been all along, that in the area of morality, anything goes. As long as I am self-authenticating in preaching it or doing it, then anything goes.

Anything, that is, except biblical morality. The real root of the willingness to espouse the *avant garde* is not existential encounter theology. This is a causative factor. But the source of the kinship between the modern churchman and existential theology and philosophy, yea, the root of existentialism itself, is hatred of God. Paul says of those who hate God that they do wrong and have pleasure in others who do the same (Rom. 1:32). This implies that they hate those who do righteously and would defend righteousness.

And so we see that the one person the modern churchman really hates is one who would defend the scriptural standard of righteousness. He cannot stand the one who would defend a hell for unbelievers, who would condemn homosexuality, adultery, women clergy, governmental {244} seizure of property, and the like. He hates the Christian, because as one who hates God, he hates righteousness.

It is sheer hatred of God and of righteousness that motivates him. It cannot be his theory. The “Christ” of existential encounter can as well tell me to hate homosexuality as sin and to believe in a hell for

unbelievers as it can tell him the opposite. I can be as authentic in despising adultery and considering it sin as he can be by espousing and practicing situational “free love.” If he is unwilling to admit that “anything goes” according to his theory, then he must tell us what standard he is using to rule out *my* existential encounter. It cannot be a standard within that momentary encounter. That encounter is entirely subjective and not open to any external check or verification. The standard to check or limit the “Christ” of existential encounter cannot be the historical Jesus of Scripture, since, according to him, that Jesus is irrelevant or unknowable, and, anyhow, the Jesus of the Gospel narratives is *not* on his side on the moral issues that divide us. No, if he has a standard, it is one of human construction. All such standards, however, have been shown by history to be unconvincing to most men and by internal inconsistency to be untenable. These all have perished in the quicksand of relativism. And so, if the modern liberal churchman or theologian is to be consistent, he should admit that anything goes, that I have just as much right to condemn homosexuality as he has to condone it, that every conflicting idea of right and wrong has equal claim to be heard, which is the same as saying that there is no right or wrong. In the end, existential encounter theology leads to moral chaos. That existential theologians and modern liberal churchmen do sometimes reach agreement on what is right or wrong shows merely that they are inconsistent with their theory, and when this agreement results in a concerted attack on those who would defend the Law of God (as it often does), it shows how much they really hate God.

The third area in which contemporary theology and the church has been centrally influenced by existential philosophy is in the matter of the very nature of truth and in its object (or lack thereof). According to Kierkegaard, subjective truth was a matter of the proper heart-attitude, not of the proper object of truth. For Heidegger also, truth lies not in a proper understanding of an object but in man’s *authentic* encounter with Being. Since Being is not a thing (really, a no-thing), truth resides simply in man’s somehow having the proper attitude or relationship. Existential theology tells us something similar. I again find {245} truth not by learning of the God Who is the Creator and Who is revealed to me through His creation and through the Word, but through the moment of encounter. But encounter with what? Again, not with an

object. No. It is in the encounter itself, in the experience, where truth resides. Ultimately, then, for existential theology the object of truth is irrelevant.

If this thinking is taken to its logical conclusion, some pretty startling consequences follow. Primary among them is that any object the presentation of which creates in me the encounter experience (or puts me in a state of subjective truth) is an appropriate object of religious concern. After all, the object can only be the vehicle. The goal is the experience itself.

Now, since most churchgoers have identified God and Christ as such objects, since grace and mercy are familiar terms (although they have never learned what these mean), the minister of the religion of existential encounter may as well still talk about God and Christ and of God's grace and mercy. After all, his congregation will not as readily warm to talk about Buddha, Nirvana, the Ground of Being, the Clearing of Being, or whatever else the minister of existential encounter may prefer to talk about, if he wants to talk about anything at all. Since it's most important that the congregation subjectively be in the truth or have the encounter of the divine in their lives, presentation of whatever object does this best is the appropriate thing to do. Since the congregation warms to talk about God and Christ, grace and mercy, it's best to keep talking about them. (It's also practical. After all, it's much less work than having to revise all the hymns to excise references to God and replace them with references to Being. And, moreover, it's a lot harder to represent Being in a stained-glass window than it is Jesus. And what would a church be without stained-glass windows?)

Because the object is irrelevant the minister needn't be ashamed of his duplicity in meaning something by his "religious language" that his congregation will take for something else. Since the encounter experience is the end, the minister needn't worry that when he says "God" he means "the Ground of Being" while the congregation thinks that he means the eternal Creator of the universe, or that when he says "Christ" he means a principle of self-sacrifice that makes me aware of the need for self-sacrificial living while the congregation thinks he means a man who lived two thousand years ago and died in the place of sinners. No, with a free conscience (at least as far as he is concerned) he may {246} stand behind the pulpit Sunday after Sunday as an anti-

theist, knowing that he has convinced his audience that he is a Christian and that they have heard the Gospel. After all, the end has been served. They have had an encounter experience. And through it they have gone away with a vague idea that they should be more self-sacrificing, love everybody (especially minorities) a bit more, work for disarmament, hate right-wing dictators, or something else equally vacuous.

This duplicity is precisely what is going on in the modernist, liberal “church” of today. Over the past several years several ministers and priests have confided to me the necessity of teaching what they do not believe. They must talk about the Incarnation of Christ. But they do not believe in it in the sense that their congregations understand. The extent to which they show any anguish over this predicament depends on how much their conscience has been deadened by the myth that the locus of truth lies in the subjective encounter itself.

In all this the existentialist minister exhibits a tension that is seldom resolved in his own mind (if he is even fully aware of it). From the hodgepodge that he has gotten at seminary, from reading liberal scholarly and denominational journals, and from his discussions with other ministers, he has found out on the one hand that God is really just the Ground of Being (or something else equally vacuous, perhaps the Hope of the Future, if his existentialism has been sufficiently tinged by process theology) and that this vacuous object is supposed to somehow subjectively encounter me. On the other hand, he has also learned that this encounter is to include a message not entirely without content. In fact, the message which he has received has a “moral” flavor to it.

Just as existentialist philosophers fail to see that these same two tendencies in their thinking are inconsistent with each other, since morality requires an objective standard of right and wrong, and God alone, and not the vague object of existentialist encounter, can give us that standard, the existentialist-trained modernist minister similarly fails to see these inconsistencies which plague his thought. Typically, one or the other tendency will predominate or win out completely.

His theology of existentialist encounter should lead him more and more to mysticism. The church service will become an “experience,” a “happening,” an “expression.” It may continue to be baptized with vaguely Christian terminology—a celebration of joy, a happening to

celebrate the advent of hope, or something like this. But at heart it will be sheer mysticism. As mysticism, the emphasis will be on creating the {247} right experience. Increasing attention will be paid to proper lighting, musical accompaniment, liturgy, and the like. If a service fails or “doesn’t come across quite right,” changes will be made in these areas to create the proper “chemistry.”

Mysticism, however, cannot be completely subjective without leading to chaos. The content *does* matter, after all! Otherwise, the minister would be equally open to celebrations of hate, happenings to celebrate the advent of despair, and the like. Of course, having abandoned the God of Scripture, he has no *good* reason to prefer joy to hate, hope to despair—except that he and his congregation somehow think joy and not hate is a good thing.

Moreover, the people coming to church do believe some things are right and other things wrong. The minister cannot rightly derive any morality from his existentialist encounter theology. We have already seen the bankruptcy of both existentialist philosophy and theology in this regard. If he wants to remain a good existentialist, about all he can say is that “God” always encounters him with the idea of self-sacrifice, love, hope, nuclear disarmament, equal rights for minorities (including homosexuals), and the like. And, moreover, God usually encounters his seminary teachers and fellow ministers with these same ideas. But if as a good existentialist he wishes to maintain the primacy of the subjective encounter experience, he will have to admit that this is just the way it usually is, and if someone should claim with all apparent genuineness that God encountered him with the idea of egotism, hate, and nuclear warfare, such a person should have equal rights to his ideas. In the end, we either go with the majority or let everyone do his own thing.

If such a minister doesn’t have his congregation fully mesmerized (which he often does), they will certainly laugh in derision as he explains all this. Since no one wants to be laughed at, the existentialist minister will usually abandon his existentialist “morality” and in utter inconsistency (as existentialist philosophers usually do) make some bold and categorical pronouncements on right and wrong. To make such pronouncements, however, requires some objective basis for determining right and wrong. There can be none, other than God’s Word. The minister may, for example, having tasted the delights of lib-

eration theology, boldly proclaim that we must work to liberate the oppressed people of the world. The question remains, however, why, short of what Scripture may say, we should do so, or why we shouldn't ignore the oppressed and save our own skins. {248}

Ultimately, then, contemporary non-Christian theology (i.e., all theology not grounded squarely on Scripture as God's authoritative revelation) leads to chaos. Those ministers who try to follow it lead their congregations to confusion. Although there will always be those who do not know how confused they are, others will. Most people will take confusion only so long. Since they can take only so many celebrations of joy, they will leave when this confusion becomes evident—when no answers are given or when the answers keep changing depending on which liberation theologian or “theologian of hope” the minister happens to be reading at the time.

Those who are God's elect will by His grace hear the Gospel, and, enabled by the Holy Spirit, will place their trust in Christ and believe God's Word. The others will seek to find answers in contemporary society.

## **B. Culture**

I will be briefer in talking about the ramifications of contemporary philosophy for culture in general. First, cultural analysis is not an area of personal expertise. Secondly, many of my comments concerning its influence on theology and the life of the church are equally applicable in the area of culture and therefore may be noted very briefly.

A philosophy of chaos will lead to chaos in all areas of life for those who accept it and take it seriously. Evidence of this is becoming increasingly apparent.

Existentialism is a philosophy of mysticism. At the same time that we as a people are supposedly trusting in “science” more and more, we are becoming increasingly involved in mysticism of one sort or another. Eastern religions are flourishing (although they usually have to be given a Western flavor when imported to this country). The initial rush which we witnessed in the 1960s and early 1970s has abated, yet a hard core of interest remains.

Moreover, along with and in place of the influence of traditional Eastern religion has arisen a fascination with the occult and various “mind-centered” belief systems, such as Eckankar, the New Age move-

ment, and many, many more. Movies dealing with the paranormal become box office hits, and a whole cult has grown up around so-called science fiction such as Star Wars. While there may be external dissimilarities between these various phenomena, a common thread runs through them all—a reality deeper than our everyday experience may {249} be found in an *encounter* with something beyond us. The *veil of Maya* confronts us waiting to be pierced. Whether this piercing is thought to lead us to the Clearing of Being, to Nirvana, to direct communication with other minds in E.S.P., or wherever else the heart of sinful man may imagine we can be led, the fact is that the focus is on somehow *getting beyond* this world, getting into a realm beyond ordinary experience, and thereby finding reality.

These ways, however, are hard and sometimes unrewarding. After all, not everyone who sets out to do so will find the Clearing of Being, or Nirvana, or will levitate or taste the divine nectar (which the followers of Mahara-ji claim as a goal). And so there are also drugs. Mysticism is ultimately mindlessness. It is also a denial of our confinement within our world and ultimately of our finitude. Mysticism is escapism. And what easier way to escape than through drugs? If the reality sought by the mystical experience is a bit difficult, if the Clearing of Being or Nirvana continually recedes no matter how hard we try to find it, then drugs may be the answer, the way to get there more rapidly. The drug culture, then, arises—among other reasons—in order to obtain the same encounter that the mystic seeks. I am not claiming in this that existentialism leads to drugs. No, *but* the same idea of the primacy of experience, and particularly of authentic experience in what lies beyond everydayness, which is so much a part of existentialism, is also very much a part of mysticism in general and an important motivation for taking mind-altering drugs. A culture well-read in the existentialist myth of the authentic encounter experience will be a society prone to other sorts of mysticism, including drug mysticism.

Existentialism is not only mysticism but also *individualism*. The focus of contemporary Continental philosophy is on the individual. Indeed, it is the exaltation of the individual. This cannot but have an effect on a culture that listens to its message. And its “prophets” have been heard. People are encouraged to be themselves, to “do their own thing.” They are encouraged not to let others make of them something

they are not. Everyone must figure out for himself who he is. The hippie of the 1960s was living testimony to the impact of the existentialist. Of course, he was also a fraud. The very fact that he was easily identified as a hippie and easily caricatured testifies to his *lack* of individuality. But he certainly was trying to be individualistic.

In itself this cult of individualism is almost laughable. In existentialism it is combined with the cult of *libertinism*. The existentialist confidently {250} tells us that men are free, indeed, have complete freedom to do what they want. He also tells us that there is no moral law and that men have total freedom to choose whatever morality they want. Taken seriously, this leads to total anarchy, where only the strongest survive.

I would certainly be belaboring a point to give extended examples of the increasing moral relativism in our contemporary culture. One need but read magazines and books or watch television or the cinema to observe this. A quick reading of the newspaper on any evening gives evidence that this moral relativism is being acted upon.

This relativism is not due solely to existential philosophy. Non-Christian thinking is either internally inconsistent or it is relativistic. As a result there has always been some rather explicit relativism either in the theory or the application of non-Christian thought. So, the seeds were already there. At times the seeds had already grown into weeds, as was true with *pragmatism*, which so greatly has influenced judicial and educational theory, particularly in America, from the latter part of the nineteenth century to the present.

However, even in pragmatism, as in other theories in which relativism is prominent (e.g., utilitarianism), there is still the idea that a standard is to be found which transcends the totally free and autonomous individual. Pragmatism asserts that something must *work* for the group or for society to be acceptable. Utilitarianism requires the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Existentialism, however, gives apparent philosophical legitimacy to total relativism. Because I am totally free, and because no moral order exists outside myself, I have a right to do *whatever* I want. I have a right to create my own morality, *whatever* that may be.

In making this assertion, existentialism is much more consistent than were the older relativisms. All ethical theories based on the idea



that what is good is what benefits the group or society as a whole require a judgement on the part of the individual. In the end, this gives the individual license to decide right and wrong for himself. The existentialist, then, is more consistent in short-circuiting society entirely and beginning its moral relativism with each individual.

At the same time, however, this leads to complete chaos. And, the more our culture believes the existentialist view of morality and acts on it, the more chaos will result.

Of course, no one can live with the complete chaos of existentialist ethics. The relativist hates some things and admires others, and he wants {251} you to do the same. And, as he comes to hate God more and more and thereby departs more and more from the biblical norm, he will desire to justify common immorality and to condemn godliness. However, not having any objective ground on which to stand, and if he is an existentialist, not even having any superficially objective ground—such as the greatest good of the greatest number of people—he increasingly must resort to emotion and trickery to get his point across. Movies are an excellent case in point. The adulteress, homosexual, or communist are portrayed as warm, sensitive, loving human beings. Their antagonists (quite often people who are caricatures of conservative Americans or even of fundamentalist Christians) are portrayed as unloving, illogical, and, under a veneer of religiosity, filled with seething hatred. The television series *All in the Family* provides another good example. Women's liberation, adultery, homosexuality, and atheism are all commended to us, *not* usually through explicit preaching, but by being set in contrast to the very negative personality of Archie Bunker and his often illogical and nearly illiterate defenses of something vaguely akin to biblical morality. In so doing, the morality of the ungodly is commended to us. And it is commended by trickery and deceit. But it is only in this way that ungodliness can be made to seem to be moral. If the ungodly really had to defend their idea of right and wrong in a logical fashion they could not do so. The only way in which the wrong can be called "right" is first to deny that there can be any standard of right and wrong (which the existentialist does when he says that each person must choose for himself what is right or wrong) and then, having chosen for no good reason something to be right (e.g., adultery), claim that that thing is indeed objectively right. Since

the self-contradiction in this procedure would be too evident, the ungodly must resort to various forms of chicanery in order to gain sympathy for his position.

In these brief remarks I have focused my attention on the influence of contemporary Continental philosophy in the areas of mysticism, individualism, and morality. Obviously, it has also contributed to the breakdown of the arts—music and the graphic arts, as well as literature. Others have documented this in detail and quite ably, and any comments that I would make would simply repeat what they have already said.

What may we conclude? First, that not only in philosophy, but in theology as well, and hence in the life of the liberal-modernist “church,” the outcome of contemporary Continental philosophy has been nothing other than disorder, confusion, and self-contradiction. Secondly, in culture {252} in general, it has led to mysticism, to moral anarchy, and to the breakdown of the arts. In so doing it has simply brought out the logical conclusion of what is implicit in all anti-theistic thought—namely, chaos. Until the advent of existential phenomenology, non-Christian thought had for the most part kept its inconsistencies in sufficient tension so as to mask its chaos to both proponents and detractors. Occasionally, it did come perilously close to chaos, as in the *skepticism* of Hume. But his skepticism was rendered partially benign by his theory of *natural belief*, whereby he gave back with his left hand what he took away with his right, claiming that men have a natural belief in causality, order, morality, and even in God, that was to be respected, although philosophically indefensible and inexplicable. Occasionally philosophers in the face of the chaos of skepticism fled to the precipice of idealistic solipsism. But most commonly philosophy held its mutually self-contradictory ideas in tension. Existential phenomenology has in some ways been more ruthlessly honest. As a result, though it has attempted to draw back from some of its extreme consequences (for example, by reintroducing its indefensible morality), it has shown as philosophy seldom or ever has before the chaos and anarchy of non-Christian thought.

## 6. A Scriptural Antidote

Man *does not* live in chaos and anarchy. Man *cannot* live in chaos and anarchy. Even though he may draw close to this in his philosophy or his life, he invariably draws back and lives and thinks with a certain amount of order. Total chaos would be total insanity. But even the insane are not totally insane. Even they exhibit some order, no matter how tenuous and perverted it may be.

If there is order then there must be an explanation for order. If non-Christian philosophy, starting, as it invariably does, with man and trying to explain order from man or nature, cannot explain it but winds up in chaos, then the explanation can only lie in a divine source of order, in God Himself.

Logically speaking, it is sufficient for the apologist to say this much and then rest his case. If order does exist and if man believes in a difference between right and wrong, and if non-Christian thought, starting with the anti-theistic presupposition that order and morality are to be explained without reference to God, cannot explain it, then the only alternative is the theistic presupposition that order and morality have {253} their ultimate reference and starting point in God. The fact that non-Christian philosophy ends in chaos shows that Christian theism must be true.

But, having shown that non-Christian presuppositions lead to chaos, we may also engage in the positive apologetic task of showing that the problems that have faced philosophers may be consistently solved by adopting the presuppositions of Scripture and of Christian theism. Since my primary task in this paper has been polemical and negative—to show that non-Christian thought, which rests on anti-theistic presuppositions, leads to chaos—I will not do this in any detail. However, I would like to make a few brief, programmatic remarks to show in a positive way how a Christian apologetics may proceed. I will focus on those areas which have been our center of attention throughout this paper.

Non-Christian philosophy has found it impossible to explain how we know a world external to the mind exists and how we have knowledge of it. Invariably, it winds up either saying that we do not have direct knowledge—which places an unbridgeable gap between mind and the world and logically results in solipsistic idealism—or asserting

that we do have direct knowledge—which blurs the distinction between mind and matter and results either in an implausible materialism (a doctrine which we have not discussed) or the Sartrean idea that the mind is engaged *in* the world (which if meant literally is utterly bizarre).

The Christian apologist must contend that the fault lies in the very starting point of nontheistic philosophy—namely, its presupposition that the mind of man and the material world are the two co-ultimates. According to Scripture, neither are. Rather, there is *one* ultimate—God. Moreover, God, says Scripture, is eternal and all-knowing. That is, He is the supreme and absolute Mind, although *not* in the way that Absolute Idealism understands this. For the latter, Absolute Mind gains knowledge only through the historical process and really *is* that process. According to Scripture, and thus for the Christian, God knows all eternally. Yet God also has eternal knowledge (indeed foreknowledge) of the universe. As the Creator of the universe and as the *all*-knowing God, He knows He has *true* knowledge of the universe. In other words, there is no possibility of skepticism with God's knowledge. As all-knowing, He knows that He is not deceived as to whether the universe of which He is the Creator really does exist. (The possibility of skepticism in relation to human knowledge of the external world arises because of the finitude of human knowledge. If the human being not only could experience {254} what he thought was the world but *knew* that his experience was accurate, the problem of skepticism would never arise. Since God is all-knowing, this skepticism cannot arise with Him. On the other hand, non-Christian thought presupposes that there can be no all-knowing God. Since omniscience is necessary to forestall that skepticism, and since man is not omniscient, non-Christian thought logically winds up in skepticism.)

Moreover, this all-knowing God has declared to man through His Word that He has created the heavens and the earth. This solves skepticism concerning the external world for man. If he trusts Scripture he knows that the world exists. Furthermore, God, Who is all-knowing and Who does not lie, has placed man in creation to have dominion over the earth. This would be impossible unless man were given the ability to receive mostly accurate information concerning the world around him. Therefore, we know not only that there is an external

world but that man has the capacity to and does obtain accurate information concerning his world.

We also know that man's information, though true, is also limited. Scripture declares that man is not God and that he fully understands neither God nor the world. (See particularly Job chapters 38–42 in this regard.)

Finally, we can explain why error does occur. The fact of error in our perception of the world has led philosophy to question whether we ever have accurate perception of the world. The Christian notes that man is a sinner and that since the Fall his ability to gain knowledge of his surroundings is diminished and therefore he does make errors. But the Christian also knows that God in His love and grace and because He still commands man to exercise dominion (e.g., Gen. 9:1–3) will not permit this error to totally eclipse the truth in man's perception of the world, and that therefore man does have real, though finite, knowledge of the world.

This does not mean that the Christian knows all the details of exactly how our knowledge of the extra-mental world arises. This is a matter for discovery. But he can go about this investigation with the confidence that Scripture has ruled out the possibility of systematic deception. For him the problem of skepticism and the possibility of solipsism or philosophical idealism does not arise.

Our discussion of anti-Christian existential phenomenology has also shown us that the philosopher seeks some way of explaining how man {255} might go about encountering something beyond what he does in his immediate day-to-day existence. Had we broadened the scope of our inquiry we would have seen that philosophers almost everywhere throughout history have sought to explain how man might make contact with what lies beyond the world of sense experience. Philosophers who have tried to do this have either reached the skeptical conclusion that God is unknowable despite man's desire to know Him, or have supposed that this knowledge was to be gained in the immediacy and indeterminacy of the mystical experience. No convincing explanation has ever been given of how one can be sure that one is encountering the divine in this experience, or, indeed, of how the infinite can be directly encountered by the finite mind.

The presuppositions in all this are, first, that man to start with has no knowledge of God, and, second, that he must initiate the process of discovering God. If we begin with these presuppositions, however, we will never be sure that we have gained any knowledge of God. Since our initial position is agnostic we cannot gain knowledge of God indirectly through His creation. How do we know whether the universe reveals to us anything about God if we have no idea of the sort of being we are seeking to discover? Our only hope is through direct encounter. But this fares no better. If I don't know what I am looking for, I don't know whether the object that I am directly experiencing is God or not. Moreover, I cannot even be sure what it would be like to experience something infinite and "other-worldly" since all my experience is of finite and this-worldly things. As a result, beginning with anti-theistic presuppositions, I am driven either to skepticism concerning an experience of God or to mysticism, in which I must claim that yes, I have experienced God, but no, I cannot know that I have had this experience—in other words, my experience is utterly indefensible.

The Christian, however, presupposes the existence of God. Moreover, he presupposes that man is created in the image of God and therefore is capable of knowing God. At the same time he recognizes that man and his mind are finite and that therefore God does not reveal Himself to man in the blinding flash of mystical encounter but through the mediation of His creation and His Word. God, that is, reveals Himself to man through the finite, but since man is created in the image of God, man has the intellectual capacity to know that these things are revelatory of God. Moreover, the Christian knows that the eternal Creator is the very God of truth, and that because He is, He will most {256} certainly reveal Himself truly, so that man's finitude and "this-worldliness" is no bar to his coming to a true knowledge of God. Man's failure to gain true knowledge is a result of his sin, not his finitude.

It is only on Christian presuppositions, then, that we can explain not only the very real fact that man generally believes that something greater than himself exists, but also how man can and does know God. Non-Christian thought cannot explain this. At the same time the Christian shows thereby the only way in which this knowledge can be gained, namely, through creation and the Word, the vehicles by which God has been pleased to reveal Himself.

Finally, we come to the issue of morality. Man is a moral being, and he cannot live as man, nor can he function in society, unless he considers some things right and other things wrong. Non-Christian thought, in trying to tell us how we may distinguish right from wrong, presupposes that the origin of morality must lie in man or in the universe itself. It cannot lie in the universe, since the universe or the world is not a moral agent and thereby not ethically revelatory. Theories of ethical naturalism have always foundered on this elementary fact. If it lies in man, it must rest either in mankind as a whole or in an individual. It cannot rest in mankind, since if it did, there should never be disagreement over right and wrong. Nor can it rest in the majority, since this would counter the agreed-upon fact that majorities are capable of being wrong. If it rests in man at all it must rest with the individual to determine right and wrong. But why listen to another finite individual? Why even listen to him when he claims to give us a standard for moral decision-making, such as the categorical imperative or the utilitarian greatest-happiness principle? Not only are these human constructions unable to give us such a standard (since they can be consistently applied in a way which circumvents morality and leads to the grossest immorality), but there is no reason whatsoever to listen to someone who proposes one of them as a moral standard. For example, suppose a utilitarian should commend to me his greatest-happiness principle. I may ask him, "Why ought I to accept this standard?" Either he must appeal to something beyond this standard to justify it, in which case he shows that it cannot be the standard of moral justification, or he must assert that universal acceptance of the utilitarian standard will lead to the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people, which presupposes the validity of that standard and thus begs the question. {257}

The Christian, however, presupposes that the eternal and all-knowing Creator God is the very source of righteousness. Because He is all-knowing He knows the difference between all right and all wrong. Because He is righteous He will surely command what is right, and forbid what is wrong. Moreover, in His benevolence He has not left us without a witness, but through His Word has given us His moral law whereby we may accurately distinguish between right and wrong. The Christian knows that the standard contained in God's Word is true, since God is the moral lawgiver, and that it is complete, because God is

eternal and all-knowing. He knows, then, that this is the one objective standard of right and wrong and that all human standards can be and ought to be subjected to the scrutiny of this divine moral law and rejected to the extent that they do not conform to it.

The Christian, then, starting with scriptural presuppositions, can give a consistent account in these and all other areas as well. While non-Christian thought, starting with anti-theistic presuppositions, winds up in disorder and confusion in whatever area it seeks to investigate, Christian theism, based squarely on the very Word of God, does not. The Christian apologist welcomes the unbeliever to show that biblical presuppositions, consistently applied, lead to the chaos inherent in non-Christian thought. He is confident that they do not. Unbelief is due, not to any inconsistency in thoroughly scriptural thinking, but to the rebellion of the unregenerate heart against the very God of truth.

### ***7. Concluding Scientific Postscript: Some Notes on the Follies of Contemporary Anglo-American Philosophy***

I have confined my comments in this presentation to Continental philosophy and theology and their impact on contemporary culture for two reasons. First, the Continental tradition has had more impact on both theology and culture than Anglo-American philosophy has had. Secondly, my training primarily has been in the latter, and I was afraid that if I set about criticizing this tradition in the body of the paper, I would get too bogged down in details and in interesting sidelights. Accordingly, I have confined my remarks to this postscript and hope to make them brief. {258} Contemporary Anglo-American philosophy is often called *analytic philosophy*. To begin with, we must distinguish between this sort of philosophy as a *method* and as a *program*. Many analytic philosophers would have us believe that they are engaged only in a particular method, whereas they are really practicing a whole program. As a *method*, analysis is simply a desire for clarity of thought and preciseness of argumentation. Thus confined, analytic philosophy may have a salutary effect. Existential phenomenologists and their theological fellow-travelers have often gotten away with all sorts of charlatany because profundity of expression and obscurity of wording has hidden to most the fact that their reasoning was at best shoddy and at worst absurd.



Under the guise of method, analytic philosophers, however, have engaged in a program or programs with very definite philosophical biases. Of course, it is debatable whether a method without a philosophical program is ever possible in practice. But the idea of method has an aura of neutrality, and the analytic philosopher has often claimed to be engaged in nothing greater than a theory-neutral analysis of arguments and clarification of thought. Because he has not done this and probably cannot do this, he is himself a quack, passing himself off as something he is not.

During the first part of the twentieth century (ca. 1900–1930), analytic philosophy went through a period known as *logical positivism* or *logical atomism*. (There is a slight difference between the two, but one which needn't concern us.) The positivists were less concerned with the aura of neutrality than were later analytic philosophers. They were, however, concerned to pass off their philosophy as scientific.

Accordingly, they declared that only two kinds of statements had meaning—the tautologies of logic (e.g., “Something is either A or not-A”) and statements of verifiable empirical fact (e.g., “The cat is on the mat”). All other statements concerning morality, aesthetics, and God (as well as “metaphysical” statements in general) were meaningless and could not be countenanced by a scientific philosophy.

These dictums initially created problems in the area of scientific theory. Few statements made by scientists are directly about the observable world. Many scientific statements are theoretical. Obviously, some way of showing how scientific theory could be meaningful was needed. The logical positivists were unsuccessful in their various attempts to do this. {259}

But this difficulty paled before a much more crucial one. What was the status of the so-called “verification principle” (i.e., the principle upon which tautologies and statements of empirical facts were alone called meaningful)? It was certainly not a tautology of logic nor true by definition. Nor was it a statement of verifiable fact. How, after all, could we go about verifying that the only meaningful statements were the tautologies of logic and statements of empirical facts? No, the verification principle on its own criterion of meaning was meaningless. It was, in fact, a statement of religious faith.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, perhaps the most outstanding representative of this faith, was more honest than most when he said at the close of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1918):

My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: Anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright.

What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.

Wittgenstein, having thrown the ladder away, passed the ten years after 1920 in silence, leaving the British university scene, and dwelling in relative obscurity in his native Austria, where he taught grade school, built a house for his sister, and worked as a gardener for a monastery.

In later years a cult of sorts grew up around the *Tractatus*. A short book of apparent scientific rigor, but of crisp, almost pithy statements, the *Tractatus* waxes quite mystical towards the end. It is this mystical tendency that led a group to set some of it to music in the form of a chorale.

In 1930, Wittgenstein reappeared on the British philosophical scene and began what is sometimes called *ordinary language philosophy* and sometimes *linguistic analysis*. According to this view, the mistake that the logical positivists made was unduly to restrict the range of the meaningful. *All* (or at least most) discourse is really meaningful. It's just that people play different "language games" in different areas of life. By examining the way ordinary people use ordinary language in various areas—e.g., in morality, in religion, in art, in sports—we will come to understand what people mean and what they believe.

Accordingly, the ordinary language philosopher embarked upon his program of describing how people played various language games and {260} what they meant when they played them. The problem with this, however, is that it cannot be a neutral enterprise, although the linguistic analyst often talks as though it can be.

To describe people using ordinary language is a bit boring, and I really don't need a philosopher to do this. If I want to hear a person talk about right and wrong I can listen to him myself. If I want to hear "religious" language, I can go to church, look at a hymnal, read a tract, turn

on CBN, pour through the work of a systematic theologian, or do many other similar things.

Obviously, the ordinary language philosopher will not be content simply to describe, nor has this ever been his intent. He wants to find out what people *mean* when they use language in various areas of life. At this point, however, any thought of neutral philosophical observation is forever abandoned. What I decide that people really mean is dependent on my presuppositions. Since I am a language user, indeed, since I use it in my day-to-day life, I will assume that other people use language in much the way that I do. However, I use it in a theory-laden fashion. When I say that a work of art is *good* or *pleasing*, I have criteria in mind. When I say that an act is *morally right*, I am claiming that it conforms to some standard. When I use words such as “God” and “grace,” I use them within the context of a whole theological framework in which I believe.

The philosopher cannot divorce himself from his presuppositions, and if he claims the ability to be a neutral observer, he simply hides them from himself and others. What he is going to do is “discover” that language users mean what corresponds with his own theoretical presuppositions. If he is a utilitarian in ethics, he is going to conclude that when people say that an act is right it is because they believe that the greatest good will result from doing it. The Kantian, on the other hand, will see an appeal to the categorical imperative lurking behind the ordinary use of moral language.

This folly has reached its extreme when philosophers have tried to see how ordinary people use “religious language.” On the one hand there are those who, like R.M. Hare, conclude that the “religious person” happens to believe in a realm in which most of us do not believe, that it is neither rational nor irrational to believe in this realm, but that it really doesn’t make much difference one way or the other. On the other hand, D.Z. Phillips, who apparently received a dose of encounter theology somewhere along the line, finds that the “ordinary believer,” not just today, but apparently Jesus Himself, believes in the existential {261} encounter with the “divine” which results in a life of resoluteness and self-sacrifice. (Phillips doesn’t put his findings in quite the terms of existentialist theology, but the results are the same. The believer winds up holding to a “demythologized” and de-supernaturalized religion all

the same. But Phillips goes further than Bultmann. Apparently the ordinary language of Jesus is such as to convince him that our Lord also held to these naturalistic ideas. See Phillips's *Death and Immortality* for a particularly pathetic attempt in this area.)

Many contemporary analytic philosophers have not been content with "describing" how people use ordinary language. Perhaps realizing that pure description is rather unfruitful, or that ordinary language philosophers, in purporting to describe the various language games, invariably did much more, linguistic analysts have commonly abandoned language game description in favor of determining whether what people say is true. At this point analytic philosophers have one distinct advantage over their Continental counterparts. They have had drummed into their heads from their first college course in philosophy on down to the admonishment of their doctoral thesis advisor that they must be clear in what they say and that their arguments must exhibit strictness and rigor. Whether this advantage, however, is a result of any salutary effect that analytic philosophy may have had or whether it is due to the fact that Anglo-American philosophy has always stressed clarity is an open issue.

At any rate, if the analytic philosopher is going to go about the task of determining whether the claims that people make in various areas, such as morality and religion, are true, he is going to have to import a whole philosophical bias and hence a whole set of presuppositions on which to operate. If he doesn't, he has no way of determining the truth or falsity of anything. However, he doesn't realize that he must do this. While he has been taught to be clear and logically precise, he has also been taught that the philosopher is essentially a neutral observer, and therefore he has never been taught to watch his presuppositions.

Because he lacks discretion, he is most likely to import his presuppositions from the nearest philosophical tradition, which for the analytic philosopher is British *empiricism*, which has had a good deal of staying power in the English and later in the American university philosophy departments through the years. (In fact, logical atomism is simply an extreme application of British empiricism.) British empiricism, however, operates with various anti-theistic presuppositions, the subordinate of which need not concern us. Its major tenets include its belief that the {262} starting point of all knowledge is in the human

mind and that all that is knowable is human sense experience and what can be derived from sense experience. That personally godly men such as John Locke and George Berkeley were empiricists is due to the happy inconsistencies that abounded in their thinking. The agnosticism of David Hume represents a more consistent application of empiricism.

Resting unwittingly on the anti-theistic presupposition of British empiricism, the analytic philosopher sets out to decide in what he considers a neutral fashion what is true in various areas, including morality and religion. Not surprisingly, he reaches anti-theistic conclusions. In the area of ethics he is likely to be a utilitarian, and when he applies his philosophical analyses to specific moral issues he usually reaches conclusions in conflict with the Word of God. (It was hardly surprising that a newspaper petition urging support of a recent so-called Gay Rights Bill that was up for a vote by the citizens of Lincoln, Nebraska, was signed by several members of the University of Nebraska philosophy department faculty.) In the area of religion, he is likely to be militantly anti-Christian. Granted, there are some men who are conservative, Bible-believing Christians (e.g., Alvin Plantinga, R.M. Adams, George Mavrodes) who have in large measure adopted the approach of contemporary analytic philosophy. But these men are deceived if they think that their defenses of traditional Christian belief appear at all convincing to those militantly opposed analytic philosophers. The fault lies not with anyone's analysis. It lies with inconsistent presuppositions. So long as the defenders of the Christian faith fail to attack the very presuppositions upon which many philosophical analyses rest, their whole enterprise is doomed to failure.

Because contemporary Anglo-American philosophy on the whole rests on ungodly presuppositions, it is no better off than existential phenomenology. Despite its apparent advantage of clarity, the presuppositions it has accepted ground it in sinking sand. Like all anti-theistic philosophy, it will collapse under its own weight and will disintegrate in disorder and confusion.

# 3. BOOK REVIEWS

# BOOK REVIEWS

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**Anthony Campolo, *A Reasonable Faith:  
Responding to Secularism.***

Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1983. 199 pp., \$8.95.  
ISBN 0-8499-0325-4.

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**Reviewed by Philip Rollinson,  
University of South Carolina**

This is a brief, seductive attempt to justify contemporary humanism and relativism from a perspective that is said to be Christian but is actually an existential version of Christianity (Kierkegaard, Tillich, and similar authorities are frequently cited with approval and appreciation), and so the “Christian” point of view of this author is quite close from the start to the secular humanism he attempts to justify. In fact Campolo is apparently a Marxist, although he defends his colleague Ron Sider from the same charge (144). He accepts as true “that history is a class struggle between the oppressed peoples of the world and their oppressors” (13) and later explicitly defends Marxism and liberation theology as representing legitimate concerns and positions (142–45).

The book itself is divided into three parts. The first discusses the nature of secularism. The second proposes an intellectual Christian response to secularism, and the third explores the question of where we find God. The style is lively and sometimes cute (the postscript is entitled “A Warning from Mission Impossible: This Message Will Self-Destruct”), and the development of the arguments depends heavily on personal experiences, usually in academic settings, which Campolo relates. {194}

Insisting on relevant contemporaneity, Campolo disparages the Reformation and orthodox Christian faith. The Reformers are chastised for not knowing “that religious faith survives most easily in an environment of magic and superstition” (39), and we are told that there is more faith in the “secular mind-set” than “in most churchmen” (47). Campolo’s position here is definitely universalist. God, he says, “mystically dwells in every human being and gives to each and every one of us eternal significance” (59). The Holy Spirit, of course, indwells only

saved, regenerate souls, and the eternal significance of all the unregenerate is spiritual death in this life and eternal damnation in the next. American “religious pluralism” is also repeatedly approved (e.g., 140 and 145), and in one specific example Seventh Day Adventists are described as “evangelical Christians” (132) rather than what they are, a cult (see Anthony Hoekema’s classic study, *The Four Major Cults*).

As for Jesus, He is only an example of right living, and salvation involves peoples’ trying “to do those things that Jesus would do if He were in their situations” (79). No mention is made of rebirth (79–80), and Christian conversion, Campolo tells us, is a “process of reconstructing the past” or what the sociologist Peter Berger calls “alternation of personality” (85). What is important is not salvation and rebirth but “being human” (see 162–78), and so Campolo concludes that Jesus is “mystically present and waiting to be discovered in every person you and I encounter” (172, 177, and 192). Jesus is, of course, most definitely not in every person we encounter. Only the saved have Him and a personal relationship with Him. Our, i.e., believers’ communion, as the creed states, is only with fellow believers, those who are born again.

Basically, Campolo treats the Bible as myth and Christian doctrine as allegory, for which the proper interpretation rests in the diverse panorama of modern, secular thought. The underpinning of this diversity seems to be existential phenomenology (see esp. 94), and with that Campolo conforms Christianity to the secularism he describes (this is pointedly apparent on p. 99). For him, man is again, as with Protagoras, the measure of all things.

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**Francis Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*.**

Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1984.

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**Reviewed by Howard Ahmanson**

The tireless Francis Schaeffer has gone to be with God, leaving us with one last book—a book written almost literally on his sickbed. {195} Indeed, Schaeffer relates in the foreword that if the publisher, Lane Dennis, had not labored overtime while Schaeffer lay at the Mayo



Clinic, the book would not have been ready to be sold on Schaeffer's final seminar tour that he took with his son, Franky, in March of 1984. Dr. Schaeffer regards this book as part of a unit with his son Franky's new book, *Bad News for Modern Man*, and with Franky's satirical film, originally of the same title, which he retitled *The Great Evangelical Disaster* after his father's book.

Dr. Schaeffer's theme in this new book is what he regards as the tendency of evangelicals to compromise on such issues as inerrancy, abortion, and feminism. Where Richard Quebedeaux pointed and giggled in *The Worldly Evangelicals* a few years ago, Schaeffer now warns. The first half of the book is vintage Schaeffer themes: form and freedom, the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and the defrocking of J. Gresham Machen. He calls the inerrancy issue (does Scripture speak without error concerning history and the cosmos?) the "watershed of the evangelical world" (43–45). The "watershed" is a key image of the entire book, and we are given a magnificent description of a ridge under snow, a continuous snow bank, but divided by an invisible line, on one side of which the melting snow will flow to the North Sea, and on the other side of which it will flow into the Mediterranean (43–44).

After page 95 most of the material is new. He relates about the evangelicals of the 1950s, and that they had a sincere desire to be more of "salt and light" in the culture than earlier fundamentalists had been (96–97). But in more recent times there has been a trend among evangelicals not to confront, however lovingly, but to accommodate to the surrounding culture. "It is so easy to be a radical in the wearing of blue jeans when it fits in with the general climate of wearing blue jeans," he says (99), and since then, I trust, the same is true of khakis and pin-stripes! It ends up with the non-statement, "I am personally against abortion, but..." (101). Human life is definitely one of the great watersheds (108).

In chapter 5 he tackles some even newer issues. Many evangelicals, he says, have made the changing of economic structures the cure for evil in the world. Without pretending to be an economist, he declares, "The answer is not some kind of socialist or egalitarian redistribution. This would be much more unjust and oppressive than our own system, imperfect though it is" (113). Without endorsing Reconstructionism as such, he says that instead of accommodating, "Evangelical Christians

{196} should be better scholars than non-Christians because they know that there is truth in contrast to the relativism and narrow reductionism of every discipline” (119). He wonders why evangelical magazines like *Christianity Today* had nice things to say about the World Council of Churches convention in Vancouver last year, when *Time* was quite critical of the same conference’s anti-American bias (121–27). He speaks out against unilateral disarmament, as he did in the little book, *Who Is For Peace?* (128–30). He finds many evangelicals willing to twist the Bible’s teachings in the area of the sexes to conform them to the world (130–40). He concludes, “If there is not loving confrontation ... then history will look back at this time as the time when certain ‘evangelical colleges’ went the way of Harvard and Yale, when certain ‘evangelical seminaries’ went the way of Union Seminary in New York, and the time when other ‘evangelical organizations’ were lost to Christ’s cause ... forever” (151).

Some say all this represents a new Francis Schaeffer, strangely changed from the one we knew and loved. I don’t think so. He may be confronting some new issues, but then we all are confronting these issues now which we never used to talk about before. In that way Schaeffer is following the trends. But he never tires of insisting that confrontation must be loving, and he never tires of pointing out that “the devil never gives us the luxury of fighting on only one front” (150), that there is usually an opposite error that we need to watch out for too. This is something the Christian Right could often do well to remember. (Actually, single-issue Christianity is hardly a monopoly of the Right.) This is definitely the old Schaeffer, not any “new” Schaeffer. He has even reprinted his old *The Mark of the Christian* as an appendix.

If I were writing the book, I would probably have wanted to mention a few more watersheds. Especially I would have mentioned the one that surfaced in the *Power for Living* affair. That the most heavily advertised book in history was called in and rewritten in the middle of its distribution—surely such a story might qualify as the biggest religious news story of the second half of the century, like the defrocking of J. Gresham Machen in the first half. David Chilton, in a recent essay, thought that the rewriting involved a change from a primarily ethical view of the faith to a primarily metaphysical or “staying close to Jesus” view.

What is clear from some of these issues is that, while inerrancy is important, it is not sufficient. If the Bible is “without error in all that it affirms,” as the Lausanne Covenant said, then the real question is, *what {197} does it affirm* when it talks about science, history, war, economics, the sexes, and the ethicalist-metaphysicalist issue? After all, the Jehovah’s Witnesses believe in inerrancy. Schaeffer admits that when he saw the Lausanne phraseology, he had a feeling it was going to be used as a loophole (57). The newer watersheds are probably going to be hermeneutical, concerning what the Scriptures *mean*.

Nevertheless, while this work is not on the level of some of Dr. Schaeffer’s great works such as *How Shall We Then Live?* it is a fine little book for him to leave behind him as he goes to glory, leaving us with the problems he describes. I would recommend it to anyone.

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**McKendree R. Langley,**  
*The Practice of Political Spirituality: Episodes from the Public Career of Abraham Kuyper, 1879–1918.*

Jordan Station, Ontario, Canada: Paideia Press, 1984.  
Paperback, xxi, 179 pp.; \$1.95 Canadian; \$7.95 U.S.

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**Reviewed by R. J. Rushdoony**

Abraham Kuyper needs a careful study by a scholar who is neither Dutch nor a graduate of the Free University; this work is at least half a step in that direction.

Langley restricts himself to Kuyper’s application of biblical faith to the political sphere. Kuyper fought for the equality of all before the law, and for freedom of education. He recognized the elitist premises of liberalism. He insisted that God’s sovereign law is as applicable to the state as to the church, and that every sphere has the obligation to obey God. Civil government rules by the grace of God; it must require the use of the oath in court as the premise of true witness, and it must keep the Lord’s Day free from all state functions.

Langley gives us an excellent survey of Kuyper’s political career and its premises. What is now needed are further studies which will remove

Kuyper from the narrow limits of a Dutch and a Free University perspective.

For example, a very powerful and rapidly growing “sovereign grace” movement in American fundamentalism owes much to Kuyper’s Princeton lectures on Calvinism and to Warfield’s *Plan of Salvation*. To limit Kuyper’s influence to Dutch and traditionally reformed circles is to narrow very seriously the scope of his impact. In fact, it means missing most of Kuyper’s influence, because the traditional circles are insular and provincial.

Langley rightly calls attention to Kuyper’s great admiration for the United States and its Christian character. Strangely, the self-styled followers {198} of Kuyper consider it a virtue to despise the United States and the Puritans. They are about as sensible as a man who approaches someone he plans to evangelize and begins by telling him he is a bastard and his mother a whore. Communication with Americans is effectively ended!

Needed also are studies of Kuyper dealing with two areas. *First*, Kuyper’s political influence ended quickly, and the Netherlands moved rapidly into a revolutionary ideology which has had little opposition. The Netherlands are now the world center for child pornography; socialism thrives, and church and state are far from Christ. To what extent did Kuyper contribute to this development? Prior to his rise to power, Reformed orthodoxy there was theonomic. Kuyper insisted that the world was under law, under God’s law-structures or spheres. However, Kuyper insisted on freeing God’s law-structure from biblical law, a deadly step. The law-structures were now like natural law spheres, not God’s law. Contemporary Kuyperians are hostile to biblical law and somehow have their own private revelations of God’s law-structures.

*Second*, in philosophy Kuyper exercised a profound influence. The two great names here are Cornelius Van Til and Herman Dooyeweerd. (The recently established Dooyeweerd Foundation has begun the rescue of Dooyeweerd from the misunderstandings some have created.) The development of this facet of Kuyper has been most important, and its future in the United States is especially promising.

Kuyper belongs to more than a limited and parochial tradition, and studies towards a recognition of the expansion of his areas of influence are very much needed.

# THE MINISTRY OF CHALCEDON

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[Proverbs 29:18]

CHALCEDON (kAlSEEdon) is a Christian educational organization devoted exclusively to research, publishing, and cogent communication of a distinctly Christian scholarship to the world at large. It makes available a variety of services and programs, all geared to the needs of interested laymen who understand the propositions that Jesus Christ speaks to the mind as well as the heart, and that His claims extend beyond the narrow confines of the various institutional churches. We exist in order to support the efforts of all orthodox denominations and churches.

Chalcedon derives its name from the great ecclesiastical Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), which produced the crucial Christological definition: “Therefore, following the holy Fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man.” This formula challenges directly every false claim of divinity by any human institution: state, church, cult, school, or human assembly. Christ alone is both God and man, the unique link between heaven and earth. All human power is therefore derivative; Christ alone can announce that “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18). Historically, the Chalcedonian creed is therefore the foundation of Western liberty, for it sets limits on all authoritarian human institutions by acknowledging the validity of the claims of the One who is the source of true human freedom (Galatians 5:1).

Christians have generally given up two crucial features of theology that in the past led to the creation of what we know as Western civilization. They no longer have any real optimism concerning the possibility of an earthly victory of Christian principles and Christian institutions, and they have also abandoned the means of such a victory in external human affairs: a distinctly biblical concept of law. The testimony of the Bible and Western history should be clear: when God’s people have been confident about the ultimate earthly success of their religion and committed socially to God’s revealed system of external law, they have been victorious. When either aspect of their faith has declined, they have lost ground. Without optimism, they lose their zeal to exercise dominion over God’s creation (Genesis 1:28); without revealed law, they are left without guidance and drift

along with the standards of their day.

Once Christians invented the university; now they retreat into little Bible colleges or sports factories. Once they built hospitals throughout Europe and America; now the civil governments have taken them over. Once Christians were inspired by “Onward, Christian Soldiers”; now they see themselves as “poor wayfaring strangers” with “joy, joy, joy down in their hearts” only on Sundays and perhaps Wednesday evenings. They are, in a word, pathetic. Unquestionably, they have become culturally impotent.

Chalcedon is committed to the idea of Christian reconstruction. It is premised on the belief that ideas have consequences. It takes seriously the words of Professor F.A. Hayek: “It may well be true that we as scholars tend to overestimate the influence which we can exercise on contemporary affairs. But I doubt whether it is possible to overestimate the influence which ideas have in the long run.” If Christians are to reconquer lost ground in preparation for ultimate victory (Isaiah 2, 65, 66), they must rediscover their intellectual heritage. They must come to grips with the Bible’s warning and its promise: “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he” (Proverbs 29:18). Chalcedon’s resources are being used to remind Christians of this basic truth: what men believe makes a difference. Therefore, men should not believe lies, for it is the truth that sets them free (John 8:32).

*Finis*