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For Economic Democracy

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Editorial

While searching through the Catholic *Weekly Review* for evidence of fascism and anti-semitism, Douglas Hyde, news editor of the communist *Daily Worker*, became aware of a fuller, freer, more intellectual debate on the social, economic and cultural issues of the day than the hate-filled secular polarisation to which he had unquestioningly devoted his talents and energies as a communist. In the half-century since *I Believed* was published, an aggressive secularisation, with its simplistic 'either/or' 'good/bad' labelling, continues to stifle intellectual debate, as the penultimate paragraph of Philip Conford's book review demonstrates.

Despite a century of materialism, the most intellectually lucid works on the science of the social-political world are still those informed by a faith perspective. C.H. Douglas was, of course, a committed Christian and made no secret of his view that the monocultural money economy had replaced a world in which Christian values permeated the social, political and economic spheres of life (see quotation below). Like most authors quoted in this issue of *TSC*, Douglas suggests that people mindfully examine their role in the money economy in order to become masters of their daily lives, rather than slaves of impersonal forces apparently beyond their control.

In this issue of *TSC* we collect

together extracts from major reflective and theological writings in which 'globalisation' is a cause for concern. *The Dignity of Difference* by Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks and Cardinal Cahal Daly's *The Minding of Planet Earth* are essential reading for all who would voice an opinion on the politics or economics of the 21st century.

At the heart of the globalisation dilemma is the apathy for real thinking and learning generated by global culture. In these pages we offer glimpses of substantial works available to counter that apathy. The full texts of books mentioned in this issue of *TSC* are available through local bookshops and/or libraries, or through the Social Credit Secretariat Library – see the web site www.douglassocredit.com or write for details.

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The current issue and at least six back copies of The Social Crediter can be accessed on our web-site (see column 2). Readers may like to print and share extracts with friends and colleagues. The full text of Breaking Bread..... and full details of the books we have quoted from are available from the Secretariat.

C H Douglas, in the course of an address to the Constitutional Research Association, Mayfair, London, 8 May 1947:

"The main point to be observed is that to be successful, Constitutionalism must be organic; it must have a relation to the nature of the Universe. That is my understanding of 'Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven.' When England had a genuine trinitarian constitution, with three interrelated and interacting loci of sovereignty, the Crown, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons, these ideas were instinctive and those were the days of Merrie England. Since the Whig revolutions of 1644 and 1688, and the foundation of the Bank of England under characteristically false auspices in 1694, the Constitution has been insidiously sapped by the Dark Forces which knew its strength, and the obstacle it offered to treachery. We now have only the mere shell of the Constitution, Single Chamber Government.....based on unitary sovereignty, to which the next step is the secular materialistic totalitarian State, the final embodiment of power without responsibility".

We are grateful to Jack Hornsby for drawing this piece to our attention..

Extracts from:

Breaking Bread: The Economy of the Eucharist and the Global Food Economy

by Michael Northcott

The Foot and Mouth crisis ranks as one of the low points in the recent environmental history of England. A little known incident made it all much worse. In March 2001 government vets advised the Prime Minister and MAFF that a policy of vaccination would be much less costly to the country than mass slaughter. Holland had tried it and many other countries around the world used it successfully. At a meeting between Tony Blair, the supermarkets, the NFU, MAFF and government vets the policy of vaccination was announced and 500,000 injections were already distributed to the army and trained civilian volunteers. However Nestlé and a couple of other large corporate food exporters lobbied hard against the plan and ultimately persuaded the government to abandon it, in favour of the disastrous policy of mass culling. The reason was tragically simple: Nestlé have a large powder milk factory in Dalston, Cumbria which employs 500 people and 75 per cent of its output goes to developing countries where powdered milk is sold to mothers who are persuaded by adverts of healthy white babies that it is better for their children than their own breast milk, despite the fact that they very often lack either clean water or the means to sterilise bottles to make the powdered milk safe. But after lobbying from Nestlé the government abandoned the advice of its own scientists and chose instead to cull more than a million animals rather than threaten the profits of the multinational food exporters.¹

Britain is of course not alone in putting the interests of international trade above those of its own animals, farmers and consumers. Indeed the essence of the rules of world trade overseen by the devolved sovereignty of the World Trade Organization is that international exchange of goods across borders ought to take priority

over parochial interest. The reason for this is well known: it is the economic assumption that economic growth is the key to the welfare of all the citizens of the planet and that international trade and open borders are the keys to economic growth.....

...We in Britain know all about risk aversion when it comes to food supplies because it was precisely food scarcity during the Second World War which led to the policies of subsidy and over-production in Britain which have contributed to the vast food surpluses we are now dumping on other parts of the world. But the point is that risk averse behaviours are perfectly rational and yet not allowed for by the 'rational-choice' theories of firm and consumer behaviour now in vogue with Western neo-liberal economies. Nor are they allowed for by the current state of world trade rules and debt conditionalities, or even by those rules as they might be revised by a fair-minded international jury. Why is this? Well quite simply local agriculture which supplies local people is by far and away the most secure way of providing people with food in good times and in bad. And not only is it more secure – since it does not leave a populus at the mercy of future traders in Chicago or London – but it is more ecologically benign. It involves less food miles for one, and hence less energy expenditure, and for two it involves the maintenance of connections between urban and rural communities, and between city dwellers and the cultures of farming. Now again you may say, why are these connections so important.

Well there is certainly not time today for a full history of chemical and industrial agriculture in the last fifty years though for those who want such a history I can think of no better

places to begin than Wendell Berry's wonderful book *The Unsettling of America* or Colin Tudge's more recent book *So Shall We Reap*. Suffice to say that the industrial food economy in the last fifty years has made paupers of small farmers all over the world, has destroyed local food markets and the connections between diet, food growing and nutrition which for thousands of years were the basis of agriculture, while at the same time decimating the habitats of the other species – birds, small mammals, insects – with which farmers have traditionally shared their fields. The growing disconnect between farming and consumption also has consequences for human food cultures, hence the growth in the diseases of obesity and of malnutrition. The globalisation and industrialisation of the food economy has brought about an orgy of over-consumption in the West, where many no longer even know how to eat well or to deal with fresh food, let alone understand how food is grown, and of course in many inner city areas people do not even have easy local access to fresh food. But at the same time there have never been so many people on the planet who have not had reliable access to a good diet, or so many small and subsistence farmers forced onto the road or into shanty towns as refugees from their traditional lands – in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. There is as one writer puts it a 'famine at the heart of the feast' which the chemically laden and technologically driven over-production of food has produced in the world these last fifty years.² As we export the surplus of cheap food our farmers have mined from the soil and dredged up from the depleted and polluted water table so local markets for food are destroyed overseas.

The Reverend Dr Michael Northcott is Reader in Christian Ethics, University of Edinburgh (endnotes on page 29)

Extracts from **I Believed** by Douglas Hyde

In 1950 Douglas Hyde published *I Believed*, an autobiographical account of the journey of himself and his wife from Communism to Catholicism. Hyde was a member of the Communist Party, working as news editor on the *Daily Worker*.

His loss of faith in communism originated from his reading of the *Weekly Review*, originally with a view to searching out evidence of fascism and anti-semitism in leading Catholic figures. Note – the fact that this was the policy of marxists/communists is highly significant. Since Hyde wrote, fifty years ago, smear campaigns have been used with increasing frequency and, sadly, effectiveness, to stifle honest debate by fuzzy innuendo and non-sequiturs. We have only space for a few extracts from *I Believed*. Written by a journalist, the book contains many moving passages, and is well worth studying as a whole.

As Hyde explains:

“One day, reading the *Weekly Review*, a thought struck me which was so obvious as to be almost laughably so. Yet it was so opposed to all I had held for so long that it cast doubts upon almost all my thinking to date.

For twenty years I had been troubled by the evidence of the unequal distribution of wealth and the social injustices which appeared to flow from it. I had reasoned: ‘The unequal distribution of property [used here in the sense of ‘means of production’] gives rise to great social injustice.

Therefore private property is wrong and should be abolished.’ Millions have reasoned along similar lines. It has influenced an entire generation.

Now suddenly the slipshod character of such pre-fabricated thought struck me between the eyes. The maldistribution of property did not necessarily prove that private property was wrong in itself. If it proved anything at all it was surely that its distribution was wrong and that a means must therefore be found to spread it more evenly over the population as a whole. The formulation should have been: ‘The unequal distribution of property gives rise to great social injustice. Therefore property should be more equitably distributed.’

It had hitherto seemed axiomatic that those who revolted against inequality should turn to Marxism for a solution and that those who stood for the perpetuation of inequalities and injustices should oppose communism as a consequence. That there could

possibly be a solution which was not a Marxist one had hardly occurred to me.”

Douglas Hyde and his wife Carol explored Catholicism through the printed word.

“We had found it difficult to accept the existence of God intellectually. We had quite sincerely believed that we knew all the answers without Him. Dialectical materialism had explained to our satisfaction, the whole universe for us; like Nietzsche it had proclaimed that ‘God is dead’ and we had believed it and felt it to be true.

For us He had been dead for years. We had appeared to get on alright without Him. We had been aware of the existence of no inner life, of no spiritual needs. Our communism had been our whole life. When doubts had come about the policies of the Party, about its methods, even about the desirability of its goal, they did not necessarily and immediately undermine our dialectical materialism nor prove that it must, therefore, be wrong.

Even the exciting realisation that the culture of the Middle Ages which I had loved for so long was still alive, and that it was a Catholic culture which had not died with the Reformation, did not prove the existence of God, although it helped. Belief in God might be but the product of a certain stage of man’s historical development, surviving into a later period along with the rest of the ‘ideological superstructure’ that went with it. That superstructure of

the Middle Ages might be attractive, it might include a great outpouring of human genius in terms of magnificent churches and cathedrals, glorious music, works of art which took one’s breath away, literature which gripped as nothing else could – and still not prove that God was alive or even necessary as an explanation for it all, even though faith in God had been its inspiration.

But that phase had passed. We had come to accept the intellectual case for God, to see that without it not only Catholicism but the universe itself made nonsense. We had discovered with some surprise that the great thinkers and philosophers of the Church had made out a better case for the God’s existence than Marx and Engels had done for His non-existence.

Yet we realised that that was not enough. Belief meant being able to *feel* the existence of the spiritual, to know *about* Him. Christians even said they loved Him, they talked to Him and listened to Him. That was still outside our experience and, in moments of depression, we feared that it would remain so.

Yet all paths seemed to lead to Rome. I was asked to review Avro Manhattan’s book, *The Catholic Church against the Twentieth Century*, along with a pamphlet by the Rev. Stanley Evans. The first was a large book set out to prove, by means of telling the story of Vatican policies since World War I, that the Catholic Church was fascist.

The other had much the same

intention, attempting to show that the Church was against all 'progress'. Once, I should have had great fun with them, using them to smear Catholics and fascists at one and the same time. I tried to do the same now, failed and hated myself for even attempting it. It was a last desperate attempt to salvage the way of life I had loved. It failed completely.

Instead I found myself saying: The Catholic Church against the twentieth century? So what? So am I, if the twentieth century means the crazy world I see about me which has endured two world wars and goodness knows how many revolutions already, and with the war clouds gathering so soon after the last war.

Against the twentieth century?
Against the century of the atom bomb? Against a world right off the rails? Against those beliefs which lead to people persecuting men like Archbishop Stepinac and preparing a Red Terror against the Slovak peasants? Against the crazy post-war conditions right here in Britain? Why not? So am I.

Instead of gaining ammunition against the Church from Manhattan's book, I learned, despite the tendentious writing, something of the Church's social teaching. It was written to make anti-Catholics. It helped to make me 'pro' instead.

The Anglican Stanley Evans I knew already and I knew his type of parson-cum-communist-sympathiser well enough. The Party uses such people, but it rarely respects them. I had used such types myself. I read his pamphlet with distaste. He wanted to show that the Church was opposed to 'progress' everywhere. And again, so what? It all depended on what you meant by progress.

Was Nagasaki progress? When the story, one of a vast number which

make such things normal to newspaper life, came over the tape machine about a boy of eighteen sent to jail by a London court for theft and described as living on the immoral earnings of his twenty-year-old divorcee wife, was that progress? ... Were the preparations now going forward in Hungary for the persecution of the Church and suppression of the religion of the vast majority of the people there progress? Was it progress for our generation more and more to move away from the idea of the worth of the individual to that of the impersonal masses?

And in any case was it really so certain as we had imagined it to be that the world must inevitably 'progress', that the past was necessarily less good than the present and still less so than the future? Must the new always, automatically, be superior to the old?

Somewhere I had seen a reactionary described as one who, finding himself on the edge of a precipice, sees the danger and steps back in time. On the basis of that definition I was a reactionary. And again, so what?

Perhaps in one of life's grand Chestertonian paradoxes, the 'progressives' were really the reactionaries – in the light of their own definition of the term – and those who saw the danger and drew back might yet be the progressives, possessing a new solution which was really the oldest of all. The line of thought those two anti-Catholic publications set in motion helped me along my road to Rome."

With reference to September 1946, Hyde wrote:

"Members of the Political Bureau [of the Communist Party] who had been to Czechoslovakia had been told that it was believed that the fight against

the Church could be carried through without too much difficulty in the Czech lands, so strong had the Party become there. But the Slovak Catholics, they were told, were much more completely in the grip of the priests and bishops, and 'special measures' would be required. At a *Daily Worker* executive meeting we were told that those special measures would probably have to take the form of armed action at some point. Sooner or later the Catholic peasants could be provoked into violence, some incident would be presented as the intended forerunner of armed insurrection and tough counter-measures would then provide the chance for conducting the thorough-going purge which was required. A bit of terror would soon settle them.

Again, I should almost certainly have approved and justified such schemes before I began to read and think along Christian lines. Now I was filled with an uneasiness which at times amounted to revulsion as I heard it all explained. It was not communism but I that had changed, but I now found the application of our theories and tactics clashing with all I felt to be right.

But that was just it. I was beginning to say that some things were right and some were wrong. I was judging communist behaviour on the basis of ethics and not expediency – a thoroughly un-Marxist thing to do.

It was still not always a fully conscious process, but I became increasingly aware of what was happening and found myself viewing it from outside myself as it were, an interested and often astonished spectator of my own mental and spiritual processes.

Thus, for example, in a break between editions, one of my reporters, son of a well-known author, who had worked on the Yugoslav Youth Railway, was describing some of the things he had

seen.

He told how at communist meetings the local populace would be brought to gather to hear a speech from Tito, or from one of the other communist leaders. At pre-arranged points during the speech Party members in the crowd would start to chant 'Tito, Tito,' or maybe 'Tito, Stalin, Tito, Stalin,' and the crowd would take it up, repeating the names over and over again. It was a technique used by Mussolini and Hitler and was now being turned to good account in the cause of communism.

He went on to describe how, when he had turned up at one such meeting, the word had gone around that an English comrade was present and they had quickly switched to 'Tito, Stalin, Harry Pollitt [General Secretary of the British Communist Party], which they had kept up for an astonishing length of time. My reporters laughed uproariously at the story. Suddenly I realised that I was making myself conspicuous by not laughing at all; instead I was feeling utterly disgusted.

It was not sufficient now to tell myself that the end justified the means. Once a Marxist begins to differentiate between right and wrong, just and unjust, good and bad, to think in terms of spiritual values, the worst has happened so far as his Marxism is concerned."

(continued from page 26)

1. John Vidal and Peter Hetherington, 'Food lobby forced PM into u-turn on plan for vaccination', *The Guardian*, Saturday September 8, 2001.

² See further 'Behold I have set the land before you' (Deut 1.8): Christian Ethics, GM Foods, and the Culture of Modern Farming', pp. 85-106 in Celia Deane-Drummond, Bronislaw Szerszynski with Robin Grove-White (eds.) *Reordering Nature: Theology, Society and the New Genetics* (London: T and T Clark, 2003).

Extract from: **The Dignity of Difference: How to avoid the clash of civilizations**

by Jonathan Sacks

"Mankind was not created to serve markets. Markets were made to serve mankind." Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks explains that Judaism was a 'living protest' against hierarchical societies that gave some, but not all, dignity, power and freedom. Instead it insisted that if any individual is sacred, then every individual is, because each of us is in the image of God.

The central question therefore is: how do we build social structures that honour and sustain the freedom, integrity and creativity of the individual? The brief answer is that the Hebrew Bible is an extended critique of what we would today call big government. At one extreme is the biblical portrait of ancient Egypt, a nation which builds extraordinary buildings but at the cost of turning human beings into slaves. At the opposite extreme we have the justly famous eighth chapter of I Samuel, in which the people come to the prophet and demand a king. On the instruction of God, Samuel tells them that if they appoint a king, he will eventually seize their sons and daughters, fields and vineyards, and a percentage of their harvest and cattle. Even constitutional monarchy, in other words, will involve a sacrifice of rights of property and person. 'When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you on that day' (I Samuel 8: 18).

The classic Judaic view is that governments are necessary for defence and the maintenance of social order. As a rabbinic teaching of the first century CE puts it: 'Pray for the welfare of the government, for were it not for the fear of it, people would eat one another alive.' (Mishnah *Avot* (*Ethics of the Fathers*), 2.2) But state action always stands in need of justification, because any government, however democratically elected, *ipso facto* represents a curtailment of certain fundamental rights such as the right to enjoy the fruits of one's own labour. It can only be justified on the grounds that secure possession of those rights depends on the existence of a central power that

defends individuals against lawlessness on the one hand, and foreign invasion on the other. Long before Hobbes, Locke and Jefferson, therefore, biblical Judaism is a theory of *limited government*. This principled insistence on the moral limits of power is the only secure defence of the individual against the collective, whether it be the tyranny of kings or what John Stuart Mill, following Alexis de Tocqueville, called the 'tyranny of the majority'. God, in the Hebrew Bible, seeks the free worship of free human beings, and two of the most powerful defences of freedom are private property and economic independence.

Václav Havel

The Art of the Impossible

Politicians at international forums may reiterate a thousand times that the basis of the new world order must be universal respect for human rights, but it will mean nothing as long as this imperative does not derive from respect for the miracle of Being ... It must be rooted in self-transcendence: transcendence as a hand reaching out to those close to us, to foreigners, to the human community, to all living creatures, to nature, to the universe; transcendence as a deeply and joyously experienced need to be in harmony even with what we ourselves are not, with what we do not understand, with what seems distant from us in time and space, but with which we are mysteriously linked because, together with us, all this constitutes a single world; transcendence as the only real alternative to extinction.

The above extracts from Havel opens Jonathan Sacks' chapter entitled "The Dignity of Difference: Exorcizing Plato's Ghost". The Chapter is a powerful call for people of all faiths and none to value through recognition the different traditions which have created our common humanity.

Extracts from

The Church and Farming

by Fr Denis Fahey CSSp (first printed February 1953)

From The Foreward

Liberalism or Individualism stressed the first part of Article 1 of the Declaration of 1789,¹ namely, "men are born free." Each man with his material needs and passions is an autonomous whole, absolutely free with an unrestricted liberty. The individual is thus his own end for himself, and the whole aim of society is to maintain this autonomy. In presence of the inequality of conditions, however, by which the unconditional was continually hampered, Individualism sacrificed the weak to the strong, and obliged the former to respect the contracts made with the latter out of dire necessity, though with all the external marks of liberty. Hence Liberalism in practice sacrificed the fundamental equality of human *persons*.

The oppression of the weak by the strong led to the coalition of the weak in their endeavour to defend the fundamental rights of human nature, in which all are equal. Unfortunately, the leadership of this reaction was seized by Communists and Socialists impregnated with the same revolutionary doctrine of "the autonomy of the individual." They inaugurated a system as anti-social as the other, by stressing the second part of Article 1 of the Declaration, namely "men are born equal." In the name of the essential equality of human nature they aimed at suppressing the inevitable accidental inequality of human conditions. The only way to succeed in this was to suppress the actual organisation of society in which the law maintains the inequality of conditions, especially through the possession of private property, and to reconstruct a society in which all the citizens shall be equal not only *de jure* but also *de facto*. In this ideal society the State shall own everything and will oblige all, without distinction of classes, to work for the Collectivity,

distributing to each his proper share of the common store.

The Individualists are right in admitting, in opposition to the Communists, the natural inequality of human conditions, but the false doctrine of the autonomy of the individual, that is, of the unconditional liberty of fallen human beings, leads in practice to the denial of the rights of human persons to great numbers. The Communists, profiting by the reaction against this denial of fundamental rights, in which all human persons are equal, want to suppress the inequality of conditions. Given the false foundations of both doctrines, namely, the autonomy or immanent divinity of the individual human being, both will lead to much the same form of omnipotent State ruling over hapless slaves. If society is conceived to be, as the Masonic Declaration of 1789 and the Social Contract of Rousseau suppose, a material juxtaposition of autonomous individuals, then either *in the name of liberty* the strong will oppress the weak, or *in the name of equality* the planners and manipulators will oppress everybody else. In both cases, men will be treated as mere *individuals*, not as human *persons*.

From Chapter II: Farming

"Pre-liberal society," writes Mr Jenks,² "though it had undergone many modifications since the Middle Ages, still retained the principles which characterized medieval society...It was personal, functional, hereditary and agrarian. Status and property were vested in the person (i.e. they were *organic* 'rights' or 'liberties'), and with them went social responsibilities. Behind all economic arrangements lay the recognition of the land as the

primary source of wealth and of the over-riding necessity for tilling it. The peasant may be bound to the soil...But conversely, the soil belonged to him. The craftsman, likewise, whether carpenter, mason, smith, leatherworker or miller, had a secure place in society. His craft, like the skill of the husbandman, was an integral part of himself; and being a social function, it integrated him both with the natural environment whence he derived his materials, and with the society he served. It gave him *status*. Nor did the hereditary landlord 'possess' his estates in the way that a man today 'possesses' a motor car, with absolute rights in its use and disposal. In fact he was bound to the land in much the same way, though perhaps not to the same degree, as the humblest cottager on it. From it he derived certain rents and privileges, by virtue of his *status*. But in exchange he was required to fulfil certain personal responsibilities, originally those of protection and dispensing of justice, subsequently those of social leadership and material maintenance...

The enthronement of money and the emergence of "Economics"

In sharp contrast with this pattern of organic relationships was the intellectual ideal of abstract 'rights' vested in the human individual by liberal philosophy....Diversity is essential for the functioning of society, and diversity necessitates distinctions. The abolition of distinction by birth, vocation and rank did not abolish social gradations; it merely shifted the emphasis from *quality of person* to *quantity of material possessions*. In other words, *status* (and to a large extent *function*) was transferred from persons to things, more particularly to that thing which, in a free economy, can most readily be converted into other things, namely, *money*; and money is

essentially inorganic. In the economic sense at least, liberalism did not so much liberate man as enthrone

ii: money, replacing a possibly degenerate aristocracy with an almost unlimited plutocracy, and social ties by economic pressures.....

Just as money became the common denominator of the new plutocratic society, so it came also to be regarded as the embodiment of wealth...Money came to be used increasingly, not only as a *measure* of value, but as the *standard* of value.³ Thence it was but an easy step to the calculation of all capital in terms of money, so that 'capitalism' in modern parlance means, not a system which conserves the sources of real wealth, but a system by which accumulations of money exercise effective control over the means of production and the disposal of the product—in short, money-power.⁴

By establishing the freedom of money from moral restraints, Liberalism set up money, not only as the chief motive of economic activity, but the chief measure of prosperity. The arrangement of society for production, distribution and exchange came to be considered, not as a means of furnishing that sufficiency of material goods required by the average human being in order to live and discharge his function as befits a member of Christ, but "a complicated piece of apparatus for the 'making' of money....If an activity 'paid' (i.e. yielded more money than was invested), it was regarded as *ipso facto* 'good business', or, in modern parlance, 'economic'.".....

....It came to be assumed that money had a natural 'right' to interest, which it was said to 'earn,' even when lent for unproductive purposes or without risk...Since money...is in fact 'made' only by banks of issue, interest on loans...derives solely from scarcity value, that is, it is a charge for use of a scarce article. What happened in practice, therefore, to the allegedly

self-regulating free economy was that its central mechanism—the market—became regulated in a highly arbitrary way by money-power, through changes in the rate of interest.....

From Chapter V

To dealers in money or exchange-medium must be assigned their proper place in States

.....Farmers, along with other vocational groups, have a vital interest in striving to have those who control money or exchange-medium relegated to the position in the State to which their art entitles them. The Economic science, alien to the moral law, which arose as a consequence of Rationalism, gave free rein to human avarice.⁵ When private individuals succeeded in getting the power to create claims for goods and services, that is, to manufacturer money, *out of nothing*, it was evident that it was only a question of time till they became the dominant power in States.⁶ Other people have to give up their goods or their labour to get money or exchange-medium. Bankers, as Professor Soddy has for so long insisted, give up nothing. "Their power becomes particularly irresistible," writes Pope Pius XI, "becausethey are able to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the life-blood to the entire economic body, and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no-one dare breathe against their will."⁷

Principles of monetary reform

The *creation* of exchange-medium and the *lending* of it must not be in the same hands. That is fundamental. If private individuals control the two operations, they will speedily become a super-government, and those who exercise an art that is by its nature an *auxiliary art* will be the dominant power in the State with the disastrous consequences we see at present in the world....

....We have seen how the present reversal of order, by which human beings are subordinated to production, and production, distribution and consumption, to the manipulation of finance, has told heavily against farming with its slower rhythm. "The fundamental processes of farming are governed by Nature's Laws and not by our own: seed times and harvest, the period needed to produce an animal, the age at which a cow can begin to give milk—these and many other things which set the pace of farming operations are out of our control. The unit of time is not the day or the week, but the year; sometimes indeed it is longer and covers the whole period of the rotation."⁸

....the different Vocational Groups in the State ought to select several of their members to study finance, in order to make sure that Social Justice is being observed in all questions concerning money. Farmers especially should not be remiss in this matter.

¹ *The Masonic declaration of the rights of man*

² *From the Ground Up* by Jorian Jenks (Hollis & Carter, London 1950)

³ As an example of the extraordinary lengths to which the money-standard has been carried, Mr Jenks quotes a few lines from Dr Lionel Pierson's book *Thoughts on Feeding* (published by Faber & Faber), to the effect that "it is common to find that young women cannot convince themselves that their own breast milk which costs nothing, can be as good as a patent (baby) food which costs much money."

⁴ *From the Ground Up*

⁵ cf Pope Pius XI: *Quadregesimo Anno* (1931)

⁶ William Patterson, the promoter of the Bank of England, is reported as saying: "The Bank hath benefit of interest on all moneys which it creates out of nothing" (*Britain's Problem*, by B D Knowles, p 49)

⁷ Encyclical letter *Quadregesimo Anno*

⁸ *English Farming* by Sir John Russell

The death of intimacy

Martin Jacques

A selfish, market-driven society is eroding our very humanity

It has become almost an article of faith in our society that change is synonymous with progress. The present government has preached this message more than most, while it is a philosophy that most people seem to live by. It is nonsense, of course. Change has never always been good. And recent surveys indicating that we are less happy than we used to be suggest a profound malaise at the heart of western society and modern notions of progress.

The findings are not surprising. The very idea of what it means to be human – and the necessary conditions for human qualities to thrive – are being eroded. The reason we no longer feel as happy as we once did is that the intimacy on which our sense of well-being rests – a product of our closest, most intimate relationships, above all in the family – is in decline. In this context, three trends are profoundly changing the nature of our society. First the rise of individualism, initially evident in the 1960s, has made self the dominant interest, the universal reference point and one's own needs as the ultimate justification of everything. We live in the age of selfishness.

Secondly, there has been the relentless spread of the market into every part of society. The marketisation of everything has made society, and each of us, more competitive. The logic of the market has now become universal, the ideology not just of neoliberals, but of us all, the criterion we use not just about our job or when shopping, but about our innermost selves, and our most intimate relationships. The prophets who announced the market revolution saw it in contestation with the state: in fact it proved far more insidious than that, eroding the very notion of what it means to be human.

The credo of self, inextricably entwined with the gospel of the market, has hijacked the fabric of our lives. We live in an ego-market society.

Third, there is the rise of communication technologies, notably mobile phones and the internet, which are contracting our private space, erasing our personal time and accelerating the pace of life. Of course we remain deeply social animals. We enjoy many more relationships than we used to: café culture has become the symbol of our modern conviviality. But quantity does not mean quality. Our relationships may be more cosmopolitan but they are increasingly transient and ephemeral. Our social world has come to mirror and mimic the rhythms and characteristics of the market, contractual in nature. Meanwhile, the family – the site of virtually the only life-long relationships we enjoy – has become an ever-weaker institution: extended families are increasingly marginal, nuclear families are getting smaller and more short-lived, almost half of all marriages end in divorce, and most parents spend less time with their pre-school children.

The central site of intimacy is the family – as expressed in the relationship between partners, and between parents and children. Intimacy is a function of time and permanence. It rests on mutuality and unconditionality. It is rooted in trust. As such, it is the antithesis of the values engendered by the market.

Yet even our most intimate relationships are being corroded by the new dominant values. There is an increasingly powerful tendency to judge love and sex by the criteria of consumer society – in other words novelty, variety and disposability. Serial monogamy is now our way of

life. Sex has been accorded a status, as measured by the incidence of articles in newspapers, not to mention the avalanche of on-line porn, that elevates it above all other considerations. Unsurprisingly, love – which belongs in the realm of the soul and spirit rather than the body – becomes more elusive.

It is the deterioration in the parent-child relationship, though, that should detain us most. This, after all, is the cradle of all else, where we learn our sense of security, our identity and emotions, our ability to love and care, to speak and listen, to be human.

The parent-child, especially the mother-child, relationship stands in the sharpest contrast of all to the laws of the market. It is utterly unequal, and yet there is no expectation that the sacrifice entails or requires reciprocation. On the contrary, the only way a child can reciprocate is through the love they give, and the sacrifice they make, for their own children.

But this most precious of human relationships is being amended and undermined. As women have been drawn into the labour market on the same scale as men, they are now subject to growing time-scarcity, with profound consequences for the family, and especially children. The birth-rate has fallen to historic new lows. That most fundamental of human functions, reproduction, is beleaguered by the values of the ego-market society. Couples are increasingly reluctant to make the inevitable "sacrifices" – cut in income, loss of time, greater pressure – that parenthood involves.

Parents are now spending less time with their babies and toddlers. The effects are already evident in schools. In a study published by the

government's Basic Skills Agency last year, teachers claim that half of all children now start school unable to speak audibly and be understood by others, to respond to simple instructions, recognise their own names or even count to five. In order to attend to our own needs, our children are neglected, our time substituted by paying for that of others, videos and computer games deployed as a means of distraction. And the problem applies across the class spectrum. So-called "money-rich, time-scarce" professionals are one of the most culpable groups. Time is the most important gift a parent can give a child, and time is what we are less and less prepared to forego.

It is impossible to predict the precise consequences of this, but a growing loss of intimacy and a decline in emotional intelligence, not to mention a cornucopia of behavioural problems, are inevitable. Judging by this week's survey of the growing emotional problems of teenagers, they are already apparent. Such changes, moreover, are permanent and irrecoverable. A generation grows up knowing no different, bequeathing the same emotional assumptions to its offspring.

But it is not only in the context of the changing texture of human relationships that intimacy is in decline. We are also becoming less and less intimate with the human condition itself. The conventional wisdom is that the media has made us a more thoughtful and knowledgeable society. The problem is that what we learn from the media is less and less mediated by personal experience, by settled communities that provide us with the yardstick of reality, based on the accumulated knowledge of people whom we know and trust. Indeed society has moved in precisely the opposite direction, towards an increasingly adolescent culture which denigrates age and experience. In the growing absence of real-life experience we have become prey to what can only be described as a

voyeuristic relationship with the most fundamental experiences.

Death – which most of us now only encounter in any intimate way in our 40s, through the death of a parent – has become something that we overwhelmingly learn about and consume through the media. But as such it is shorn of any pain, any real understanding, wedged between stories about celebrity or the weather, instantly forgotten, the mind detained for little more than a minute, the grief of those bereaved utterly inconceivable, the idea that their lives have been destroyed forever not even imaginable in our gratification-society: pain is for the professionals, not something to detain the ordinary mortal.

The decline of settled community and the rise of the media-society has desensitised us as human beings. We have become less intimate with the most fundamental emotions, without which we cannot understand the meaning of life: there are no peaks without troughs. Life becomes shopping.

So what is to be done, I hear the policy-wonks say. Nothing much, I guess. But the observation is no less important for that. What, after all, could be more important than our humanity? Perhaps if enough people realise what has happened, what is happening, we might claw back a little of ourselves, of what we have lost.

Martin Jacques is a visiting fellow at the London School of Economics Asia Research Centre. This article featured in *The Guardian* of 18 September 2004 and is reprinted here with the kind permission of the author.

Creed of Transformation

I believe in God
 who didn't create the world as something finished
 as a thing which has to remain the same forever
 who doesn't rule by eternal laws
 which are irrevocable

nor by natural order of poor and rich experts and uninformed rulers and helpless.

I believe in God
 who wants the conflict among the living
 and the transformation of the existing
 by our work
 by our politics.

I believe in Jesus Christ
 who was right when he
 'an individual who cannot do anything'
 like ourselves
 worked on the transformation of all
 things in existence
 and perished doing it.
 Looking at him I realise
 how our intelligence is crippled
 our fantasy suffocated
 our efforts wasted
 because we don't live the way he lived.
 Every day I fear
 that he died in vain
 because he is buried in our churches
 because we have betrayed his revolution
 in obedience and fear
 of the authorities.

I believe in Jesus Christ
 who rises into our lives
 in order that we may be freed
 from prejudice and arrogance
 from fear and hatred
 and may carry forward his revolution
 towards his kingdom.

I believe in the spirit
 who came with Jesus into the world,
 in the community of all nations
 and in our responsibility
 for what will become of our earth,
 a valley of misery, starvation and
 violence,
 or the city of God.
 I believe in just peace
 which can be achieved
 in the possibility of a meaningful life
 for all men
 in the future of this world of God.

Dorothee Sölle

Book reviews

Twelve Types

G.K. Chesterton

(1902), re-published IHS Press,
 95pp \$8.95

What is the ugliest thing in the world? The new Scottish Parliament

building? The BMW '7' series? A century ago G.K. Chesterton had his sights turned on that glaring example of out-of-control urban brutality, the pillar box. There was nothing more offensive to the eye, he calculated "in all created nature." Everything about the column of utilitarian ironmongery appalled him : its shape was "unmeaning", its height and thickness were "neutralising" each other. Worst of all was the colour : "red without a touch of blood or fire, like the scarlet of dead men's sins." In all, it was shabby treatment for "the treasure house of a thousand secrets."

Here we have the essence of Chesterton's writing : poetic insight, froth, a great deal of provocation, passion that occasionally leads him over the top, shot through with a combination of mysticism and harrumphing at the modern world. The passage comes from a Chesterton appraisal of William Morris, one of the mini-biographies contained in this mini-volume retrieved by a militant Catholic printing house. Modern sensibilities may find it a touch overblown, but the merry phrasemongering, harnessed to Chesterton's acute perception and bravura Christianity make it an engaging read. Can you resist someone who writes (of the trend towards simple living) "It is natural, according to the humanitarian revolutionist, to kill other people with dynamite and himself with vegetarianism"? Or (defending Robert Louis Stevenson from the charge of bloodthirstiness) : "It is not...that (he) loved men less, but that he loved clubs and pistols more." Stevenson and Sir Walter Scott come out of the exercise well. Chesterton approved of romances because they offer a vision of the possibilities of things – "far more important than mere occurrences." Chesterton's own marvelling at creation's extravagance is the main prop of his Christianity: "The whole order of things is as outrageous as any miracle which could presume to violate it." Within this order certain decencies must

prevail. Chesterton ticks off Carlyle for endorsing slavery and (less sympathetically) applauds Savonarola for his book-burning antics.

The Florentine bonfires were designed, Chesterton claims, to encourage men to "turn back and wonder at the simplicities they had learned to ignore." Like any good journalist, he then promptly reverts his position, scoffing at Tolstoy's back-to-Christian-basics theology. "A self-conscious simplicity," he thunders, "may well be far more intrinsically ornate than luxury itself." This did not prevent Chesterton eventually espousing Distributism, with its plan for every man to have three acres and a cow.

Erlend Clouston is a freelance journalist who worked for The Guardian from 1979

Flee to the Fields: The Founding Papers of the Catholic Land Movement

With an original preface by Hilaire Belloc and a new introduction by Dr Tobias Lanz

First published 1934: new edition published 2003 by IHS Press, Norfolk, Virginia
pbk, pp.153 ISBN: 0 9718286 0 1

The Catholic Land Movement was an offshoot of Distributism, itself a subsidiary feature of Catholic social thought between the wars. Associated most notably with the writings of Belloc and Chesterton, Distributism sought to dispel the evils of capitalism without resorting to Socialism's 'servile state', through widespread distribution of small-scale property-owning. Centred on family networks and local economies, the Distributist order would consist chiefly of independent farms, craftsmen and light industries owned by the workers. Human relationships would be rescued from the atomistic slavery of urban industrialism, and politics would be freed from the machinations of bureaucracy and the hidden influence of the finance system.

The Land Movement originated in Glasgow in 1929, formed by a group of clergy and laymen to establish an agrarian economy as an alternative to an apparently collapsing industrialism. It did not regard itself as Luddite or utopian, rather as realistic about the requirements for a fully human and spiritual life; though this new edition of *Flee to the Fields* carries on its cover a quotation from Harold Robbins, asserting that the clock would be put back 'as far as may be necessary.....When noon is Angelus-time the clock is right.' (Robbins, not to be confused with the block-busting novelist, edited the movement's journal *The Cross and the Plough* and was a founder-member of the Soil Association.) The movement's social aim was to liberate people from dependence on an insecure system; its ulterior purpose was to create the conditions in which a vibrant Catholic culture could again flourish after four centuries of oppression by the Protestant industrial spirit.

The movement received no practical help from the Church, was maligned in the press as reactionary or quaint and had lost its most articulate spokesman by the end of the war. Many Catholics supported capitalism as a bulwark against Godless totalitarianism; the war rearranged the national economy to the advantage of the State and big business, and agriculture was heading rapidly towards a large-scale mechanisation. Given that the Land Movement had minimal impact even within the Church, one may wonder what purpose is served by re-issuing these essays. Dr Lanz supplies the answer in his Introduction. The chief reason for the movement's failure was that it was too far ahead of its time; its relevance can be more clearly seen at the start of the 21st century, as we face such problems as family breakdown, urban crime, the collapse of agriculture and the destruction of tradition and environment by unfettered free-market economics.

Flee to the Fields presents the case for the prosecution of industrialism in a substantial historical essay by Cdr. Herbert Shove, and the following eight chapters point the way to an alternative, post-industrial future. Small groups will be trained in agricultural and craft skills, families will move to the land, communities based on a subsistence economy will feed themselves without being snared by middlemen, the profitable but corrupting *divertissements* of urban culture will lose their hold, and the Catholic faith will re-establish itself, undoing the damage of the Reformation. It is an immensely ambitious programme, based on belief in the power of gradualism, the inspiration of example and the grace of God.

Non-Catholics will find in these essays a clearly-expressed analysis of the instabilities of industrial capitalism and a persuasive case for self-sufficiency and land-based decentralisation. The book stands in a line of descent traceable from William Morris to John Seymour and its thesis will be familiar to those who know that tradition.

What may be of interest to the politically-minded, though, is the sense that in these pages we verge on the world of anti-semitic conspiracy theory and far-Right politics. A reference by the Rev. H E Rope to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, along with the appearance of names such as Arthur Penty and Fr Denis Fahey in the list of social critics to be published by IHS Press, should alert us to the ambiguities of back-to-the-land Catholicism. According to the editorial notes, Brocard Sewell said that Herbert Shove looked like William Morris; the notes do not tell us though, that Sewell also records that Shove joined the British Union of Fascists, or that the Distributist *Weekly Review*, in the years after Chesterton's death, exhibited a distinctly pro-fascist strain. As with

the early development of the organic movement, in which Distributism played a supporting role, the fascination of *Flee to the Fields* lies in the challenge of disentangling its unappealing historical affiliations from the continuing pertinence of its central critique.

Finally, there is a serious error in the end-notes which must be corrected: far from being an enthusiastic advocate of organic farming', the agricultural scientist Sir John Russell was one of its most formidable opponents.

Philip Conford is Visiting Research Fellow at the Rural History Centre, University of Reading

***The Minding of Planet Earth*
Cardinal Cahal B. Daly**

Veritas, 2004, pp254 £14.95
ISBN 1 85390 579 8

Cardinal Daly offers *The Minding of Planet Earth* to the reader with the following words:

"I have felt the pain of seeing people reject the faith because of thinking that faith and science, religion and reason, are incompatible with one another. I have felt the pain also of seeing people cut themselves off from the Church without ever having really known its message in the fullness of its truth, its beauty, the sure hope it offers and its sheer goodness and joy. Hence I have put aside my hesitations and I push the boat – and this book – out, in the hope that it might at least stimulate reflection."

The book celebrates the work of major poets, writers, philosophers and theologians throughout the ages as they appreciate the Creative Mind of God, the Maker of reason in human beings and Creator of rational patterns in the universe. Although western science owes its origins in no small part to Christian culture, the

development of science and technology independently of a faith perspective generates the phenomenon of power with neither love of, nor responsibility for, God's Creation. Drawing upon decades of scholarship, Daly places environmental and social concerns into the holistic context of faith in God.

The Minding of Planet Earth is a hymn in praise of God and His universe. A substantial resource for all concerned at the ongoing wars of destruction against the earth and its peoples, it is a timely call to the faithful to share joyfully in the minding of God's planet. Quoting from official sources, Daly clarifies Catholic social teaching, for example on the subordination of ownership rights to property, land or money to the laws of God and respect for the common use of the goods of creation. A book for all to treasure and re-read, this will become a classic for our times.

Editor

The Cosmic Circle: Jesus and Ecology

Edward P. Echlin

Columba Press, 2004, pp160
ISBN 1 85607 451 X

Drawing upon a range of literary and theological sources, Dr. Echlin presents the rural Christ in an idiom accessible to the early 21st century reader. Arguing that it is a sin to desecrate the earth and its living communities, the author places his personal example and experience within the wider context of the growing awareness that all is not well on the planet. On a practical note, it might have been useful to offer a brief description of the organisations listed (pp154-6) as 'useful resources'. Nevertheless, the book provides a useful introduction to the subject for clergy and lay people only just becoming aware of the subject.

Editor

Excerpt from 'The Tree of Life'

by H J Massingham

The world needs not a "different Christianity" but a truly catholic and creative one with not only co-operation between the Churches but between them and those lay minds who sometimes realize better than they that there are only two sides in modern life, the side of organic and Christian man which observes the English covenant with Christ and its native land and the machine-made world of the heathen and industrial State. "Our civilization," to quote Christopher Dawson once more, "Is passing blindly and painfully through a crisis which may destroy or renew it," and the Churches are being more and more certainly confronted with the same God or Caesar alternative with which the Roman Empire confronted the primitive Church. The secular State, extending its sway over the whole of social and individual life, will in the end tolerate no Church which refers to another Master but itself. A mere ecclesiastical Church cannot survive the modern world.

From the Christian point of view, says Toynbee, "...our industrial and economic society is not merely defective but vicious and radically anti-Christian." Unless religion can restore faith to society, religion and free society with it though against it will perish under the demon's wig of the World Totalitarian State which, so far as it has any goal, is the end of Progress.

Books by C H Douglas

(available in the Social Credit Library)

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Asses in Clover
(Jon Carpenter £11.00)



H J Massingham
The Tree of Life
(Jon Carpenter £13.99)

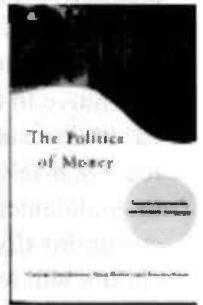
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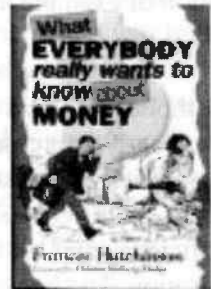


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