

Christianity & Society

*A Quarterly Journal for the Application of Christian Principles
to Contemporary Society*

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Christianity & Society is the official organ of the KUYPER FOUNDATION, a Christian educational trust founded in 1987. The Kuyper Foundation exists to promote a renaissance of Christian culture in society by furthering awareness of the implications of the Christian faith for every sphere of life, including the Church, family and State. Its vision of Christian society was expressed in the words of Abraham Kuyper, the Dutch Christian theologian and statesman, who said: “One desire has been the ruling passion of my life. One high motive has acted like a spur upon my mind and soul. And sooner than that I should seek escape from the sacred necessity that is laid upon me, let the breath of life fail me. It is this: that in spite of all worldly opposition, God’s holy ordinances shall be established again in the home, in the school and in the State for the good of the people; to carve as it were into the conscience of the nation the ordinances of the Lord, to which Bible and Creation bear witness, until the nation pays homage again to him.” The Foundation seeks to promote this vision of Christian society by publishing literature, distributing audio-visual materials, and running lecture courses and conferences. The Kuyper Foundation is funded by voluntary donations from those who believe in the cause for which it works. More information on the ministry of the Foundation can be obtained from the address below or from the Foundation’s web site.

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COVER PICTURE:

One of a series of pictures on “The Raven” by Dimitri Tsouris,
from the poem *In Defence of the Raven* by Peter Abbs.

In Defence of the Raven
BY PETER ABBS

And it came to pass at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove. (Genesis 8:6–8)

It did not leave at once. For two hours
Or more it perched on the ark.
Eyeing the waves and the slanting horizon:
A dark witness under the storm clouds.

Nor, when it finally left, did it go lightly.
At first, unsure of direction, it flew
Without grace. An equivocation of wings,
A mere inch above drowning water.

By all means cherish the dove. It returned
Loyally with good news in its beak.
So make it your icon on banners of peace
And hang them over the warring cities.

But, at night, as you try to sleep, remember
Far horizons, black holes, exploded nova stars;
Remember the curved edge of God’s
Incommensurable mind—where the raven flies.

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Principles to Contemporary Society*

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EDITORIAL

SOCIALISM AGAIN!

by Stephen C. Perks

RECENTLY I was sent a newspaper cutting from *The Catholic Times* for 9 November 2003. The article, by Robert Doyle, related how Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tegucigalpa in Honduras, Central America, who has apparently been tipped as a future Pope, has attacked capitalism as “savage” and called for a return to the principles of socialism. According to the report in *The Catholic Times* the Archbishop said “The historic achievements of the welfare state are being dismantled and, as a result, the differences between the rich and the poor are growing.” The Archbishop said further that “whereas states won a protagonist role on the economic terrain in the twentieth century, today their power is decreasing more and more.”

Now, I cannot comment on the size of the State in Honduras. But the Cardinal was speaking of the world situation and his talk addressed the issue of globalisation. It seems astonishing to me that anyone should make the claim that the modern State is decreasing. The situation in Europe is completely the reverse, with an ever growing European super-State that seeks to regulate and control just about every aspect of our lives and society. This European State is thoroughly socialist.

But what is more astonishing is that, given the track record of socialist States from Hitler’s Third Reich and Stalin’s Soviet regime, through to the tin-pot imitators of these oppressive States in the Third World, clergymen should see the socialist State as a liberator of the poor and defender of the oppressed. More than any other form of State power it has been socialist States (and remember that the Soviet regime never claimed to have realised the communist ideal of society, but rather a *socialist* State) that have oppressed the poor and tyrannised their peoples. The unlearned Cardinal stated, according to *The Catholic Times* report, that “a savage capitalism is returning which history has already judged harshly in the view of the conditions to which it subjected the proletariat in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.”

This has increasingly been shown to be a biased and incorrect view of both capitalism and socialism. The Industrial Revolution did not worsen the conditions of the working classes; it improved them greatly. And socialism did not improve the conditions of the working classes; it created worse conditions and led to their harsher treatment. The implementation of socialist economics in Russia following the Revolution led to a decrease in standards of living for the masses.¹ As a result the peasants of Soviet Russia did not

achieve the standard of living they had enjoyed under tsarist rule immediately prior to the Revolution until the early 1950s.² The masses who voted with their feet to leave the land on which they were starving and work in the factories during the Industrial Revolution did not do so because they were forced by State decree to do this. It was the result of progress in a free society. It contrasted starkly with the treatment meted out to the peasants and working classes in Soviet Russia and other socialist States. Everything that makes modern life in the West superior on the material level to the drudgery of poverty that countless masses have had to endure throughout history is the result of the economic organisation of society on the capitalist model operating in a free society underpinned by a *Christian* world-view. This was the context in which economic progress changed the fate of the peoples of the Western world.³

Yet Christians have become obsessed with socialism.⁴ And judging from the report in *The Catholic Times* the Cardinal seems quite oblivious to socialism’s ugly and ungodly beginnings. The report states that Cardinal Rodriguez “went on to call the concept of globalisation a ‘myth’ that masked the exploitation of the poor and added that only a new solidarity based on the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity could save the world from ruin.”

Well, this kind of rhetoric has been heard many times before. It is the rhetoric of the French Revolution. Strange though, there’s no mention in the report of the Cardinal commenting on Robespierre’s reign of terror and Marx’s call for it to be repeated, nor of the many actual repeats of the terror that have followed revolutions based on these lofty ideals both in Europe and the Third World. What’s sauce for the goose is certainly not sauce for the gander in the Cardinal’s book. But there again, capitalism, and subsequently economic progress, was never popular in Roman Catholic cultures. The economic progress experienced by Protestant nations following the Reformation typically lagged behind in Catholic countries, where the Roman Catholic religion ensured that the “proletariat” (to use the Cardinal’s Marxist terminology) was kept in its place by superstition and ignorance. It is truly ironic, therefore, that Roman Catholics should bewail and point the finger so much at a form of economic organisation of society that was, in its origin if not now, part of a Christian world-view, Protestantism, that liberated the masses from the superstition and ignorance that had oppressed them for so long and gave them not only material progress and wealth hitherto undreamed of, but spiritual liberty from the tyranny of the Roman Catholic Church.

The irony does not end here however. The very values that the Cardinal is reported as championing, “liberty, equality, fraternity” were the shibboleth of a revolution that

1. Wilhelm Röpke, *A Humane Economy: The Social Framework of the Free Market* (London: Oswald Wolff [Publishers] Ltd, 1960), p. 150f.; P. T. Bauer, *Reality and Rhetoric: Studies in the Economics of Development* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), p. 187f.; Carol Quigley, *Tragedy and*

Hope: A History of the World in Our Time (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), pp. 386–405.

2. G. North, *An Introduction to Christian Economics* (The Craig Press, 1973), p. 81. North cites as his source Janet Chapman, *Real Wages in Soviet Russia Since 1928* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 150.

3. For more on this see Stephen C. Perks, *The Political Economy of a Christian Society* (Taunton: The Kuyper Foundation, 2001). See also Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: George Allen and Unwin, [1930] 1985).

4. The exception to this seems to be Christians in the USA, who are far more aware of the deficiencies and non-Christian nature of socialist ideology.

erupted largely as a violent reaction against that very oppression of the masses in which the Roman Catholic Church was so complicit. The Roman Catholic Church persecuted and murdered the Huguenot (i.e. Protestant) Church in France, and yet it was Protestantism that gave Britain a religious and ethical value system that enabled it to avoid such a revolution. Had the Huguenots survived and flourished in France, as Protestantism did in Britain, it is questionable whether there would have been a French Revolution of the type that actually did occur. It seems rather hypocritical for Roman Catholics to turn round now and accuse the capitalist form of economic organisation of being oppressive, especially in view of the fact that capitalism has been the source of virtually all the economic progress that has enabled modern societies to improve the material and social conditions of the masses, thereby alleviating oppressive poverty.

The French Revolution was a reaction against a system of Roman Catholic mediaevalism that had passed its sell-by date two hundred years previously but which had been used to oppress the masses, who were denied not only the economic progress experienced in the Protestant nations largely as a result of the Reformation, but also the spiritual and ethical guidance, i.e. a Protestant world-view, necessary to control the burgeoning economic aspirations of society in a humane way. The result was the ungodly social explosion we call the French Revolution, the principles of which have remained with us and continue to cause untold suffering for people the world over. (On the future of the UK under the political ideology of the Revolution see Bob Graham's article on the European Union in this issue.)

While writing this editorial I received through the post for review a book on ethics by someone described as an "outstanding Catholic intellectual."⁵ The blurb on the back stated that the author "took Christianity to be deeply subversive of capitalism since it [i.e. Christianity] declares as possible the (to us) improbable prospect that people might live together without war or domination or antagonism but by unity in love." The author comments on the Eighth Commandment: "You shall not steal. Certainly the most misunderstood of all the commandments. It has *nothing* to do with property and its so-called rights. What it refers to is stealing men. Taking away their freedom to enslave them. It is a curious irony that in the name of this commandment we have built up a whole theory of the sacredness of possessions, of objects, a theory that has led to the wholesale enslavement of men—the very thing the commandment in fact denounces."⁶

This is truly astonishing. One wonders whether this "outstanding Catholic intellectual" ever read a word of twentieth century history. Was it the ideology of capitalism that enslaved and slaughtered millions in the concentration camps of Hitler and Stalin? When and where has capitalism led to the wholesale enslavement of men? And since when has socialism ever accomplished the prospect of men living together without war and domination? Socialism is responsible for the worse atrocities of the twentieth century. Millions died in Hitler's and Stalin's pogroms and persecutions, and the record of their disciples in the Third World is equally bad. Least of all do socialists have any right to speak of their beliefs ending war and oppression. Socialism, whether it has been the national socialism of Hitler or the international

socialism of Stalin, has been responsible for the worst wars and campaigns of oppression, enslavement and mass murder the world has ever seen. Yet here we are again with so-called Christians and clergymen promoting socialism as a Christian ideal. What planet are these people living on?

The ideology behind Hitler's Third Reich and Stalin's Soviet Russia was *not* capitalism, it was *socialism*—red in tooth and claw. Can someone tell me, please, which mass murdering political regimes of the twentieth century (or any other century for that matter) were motivated by the ideology of capitalism? The Christian concept of intellectual honesty and integrity, indeed the very concept of truth, seems to be entirely foreign to the prophets of socialism, "Christian" or otherwise. And we should not expect anything else. Truth has always been the first victim of socialist propaganda and socialist politics. Socialist utopias have always been pursued by means of lies, deceit, persecution, oppression, the enslavement of the people and mass murder. Are we to expect anything else from people who believe God's law can be set aside so easily? If the Eighth Commandment can be set aside so easily by socialists it should not surprise us that the others, including the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," can be cast aside as well. But what are we to make of "Christians" who say that the Eighth Commandment "has *nothing* to do with property and its so-called rights"?

This obsession with socialism by Christians is not confined to the Roman Catholic Church however. In the twentieth century Protestants too became enamoured of socialist ideology—at least in Britain and Europe. This can be seen at many levels, both officially and unofficially. For example, the previous Anglican Archbishop of Liverpool, David Sheppard, argued in his book *Bias to the Poor* that justice should be biased to the poor.⁷ Yet Scripture specifically *forbids* those whose office it is to administer justice from exercising such a bias (Ex. 23:3; Lev. 19:15). Sheppard acknowledged that such a bias involves more than the biblical injunction that the wealthy in society should help those who are genuinely poor by exercising charity. He says "The call for justice jars on many ears. To those who broadly believed the status quo to be a just one it seems more wounding than a demand for charity or welfare . . . But I want to press the points about justice and about more equal opportunities for all to make real choices about their destiny. That will mean the shift of powers and resources."⁸

But any *shift of resources*—i.e. redistribution of wealth from one class to another in society—that is not the result of voluntary decisions on the part of those from whom the resources are redistributed, e.g. through trade or charity, in other words any shift of resources that is achieved by force, is called theft in the Bible, even when such force is exercised by the State (cf. Lev. 25:23, Num. 36:7, and Ezek. 46:18 with 1 Kings 21:1–19). Such theft is not excused by the needs of the thief (Pr. 6:30–31); though neither does this fact relieve the wealthy of their responsibility to help the poor (Pr. 22:9; Lk. 14:13–14).

Another, and rather extreme, example of this attitude was the case of the Anglican priest who claimed that shoplifting from large superstores is not theft and that such activity helps to effect a badly needed redistribution of

5. Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love and Language* (London: Continuum, [1968] 2003). 6. *Ibid.*, p. 122, my emphasis.

7. David Sheppard, *Bias to the Poor* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983). 8. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

economic resources in society.⁹ *The Times* reported the priest as stating that superstores are “places of evil and temptation.” This would not have been the first time a clergyman decided that the way to deal with temptation is to give in to it, but the reasons given by this clergyman for his views on shoplifting were more ideological, involving a religious perspective that is socialist, not Christian. The Bible forbids theft (Ex. 20:15) and requires a thief to make restitution to his victim plus compensation of between a fifth and five times the values of the goods stolen, depending on the nature of the theft (Ex. 22:1, 4; Lev. 6:2–5; Num. 5:6–8). I remember myself being sternly warned by an Anglican priest that the Bible does not support the concept of private property. My offer to rifle through the pockets of his coat on the way out met with an equally stern and humourless countenance.

This is typical of socialists. It is only other people’s property that is not protected by the Eighth Commandment. And this really is the point. If socialism is a biblical ideal what on earth is the Eighth Commandment for? Of course, it is true that the Bible teaches that all wealth is a gift of God and that we are only the stewards of what we own. It is our duty to use the wealth that God has given us stewardship over in a way that conforms to his standards, and this includes the showing of mercy and charity to those in need. But this is just the point. God has made *me* the steward of the resources he has put at my disposal, not someone else, and certainly not the State. For someone else to usurp my responsibility under God to exercise stewardship over the resources he has given me is a crime not only against me, but against God himself because it is a transgression of his law and a denial of the social order that he has established for mankind in his word. This is no less the case when the State usurps my God-given responsibility. It is this point that “Christian” socialists seem to miss altogether. Their idolatry of State power blinds them to the obvious. God has not granted the State stewardship over society’s economic resources. The State has a legitimate but limited social function as a ministry of public justice, and it is authorised by Scripture to collect taxes in order to enable it to fulfil this specific function, and this alone (Rom. 13:1–6). It is not authorised by Scripture to collect taxes for any other purpose.¹⁰

Furthermore, socialism has always shown itself hostile to Christian values. What socialist government has ever upheld the rights of God, defended institutions like the Christian family, preserved Christian ethics in medicine and sexuality, passed legislation that enables a man to leave an inheritance for his children (Pr. 13:22) rather than confiscating his children’s inheritance? Socialist governments have been inimical to all these values from the beginning. Least of all do socialist governments uphold righteousness. Socialism is an engine of social revolution that seeks to overturn everything that Christianity values. True, many socialist politicians claim to be Christian. But Christ taught us that it is by the fruit that they bear—i.e. by their *works*—that we shall know who are his, not by their mere profession (Mt. 7:16). Politicians who proclaim themselves Christians yet who stand

against Christian values and deny the ethics of God’s word should not be accepted as believers. Rather they should be seen for what they are, social revolutionaries who are in rebellion against God and his kingdom.

Of course it would be absurd to argue that free market capitalism is the answer to man’s problems, that poverty itself can be eradicated completely by adopting the capitalist form of economic organisation. But this does not mean that society should not adopt a capitalist form of economic organisation, merely that its adoption, per se, would not solve all the problems of poverty. The fact that capitalism does not solve the problem of poverty does not mean capitalism is “savage” any more than the fact that socialism has not solved the problem of poverty means it is sinful—though of course socialism is morally unacceptable for other reasons. The issue of poverty is much more complex than that. The free market is not a theory of everything, and to treat it as such is to reduce the whole of life to the economic aspect, to seek the meaning of life in the created order itself, and thus a form of idolatry, and this is the problem with the Godless libertarianism that has flourished in recent years. But the choice is not between capitalism as a theory of everything and capitalism as the source of man’s problems. Capitalism relates to one aspect of life, the economic, and therefore finds its proper function and purpose alongside other forms of human activity, all of which find their ultimate meaning in God’s creative purpose for mankind. Free market capitalism, therefore, is a valid and correct way of organising society economically, but it can only find its proper place when due consideration is given to the other functions of man’s life and when it is not used to define human life in its totality. Historically modern capitalism arose in societies where economics was not the defining feature of life, where it was only one aspect of human activity and where a Christian world-view provided ultimate meaning and purpose for society as a whole. If free market economics have been divorced from this social context in the modern world, thereby distorting the true meaning of man’s life, this does not mean that the capitalist form of economic organisation is evil per se, merely that sinful men have idolised it. We must resist all such idolatry. But we must not throw out the baby with the bath water. The capitalistic organisation of economic activity is the correct approach to one aspect of human life, and therefore *part* of the answer to man’s needs, but it can only function effectively and properly as part of the whole that God intends human society to be when it finds its context in relation to the other functions of human life as God has ordered it by his word. Capitalism, therefore, is not in principle evil, even if it can be perverted for evil ends by sinful men, as is often the case.

Socialism, by contrast, is evil in principle because it is predicated on the rejection of God’s order for man’s life, even if it is adopted as an ideal by men with good intentions. It is really a religion, not merely a form of economic organisation, because it functions as an all-embracing world-view. Socialism reduces life to the economic aspect and is therefore idolatrous in principle. Mammon is then the answer to man’s problems. This fact can be seen in the way socialist governments seek to solve virtually every kind of social problem. If only more money were available, if only there were more economic equality, we could solve all our problems. But money does not solve man’s problems. There are more funds available to the State now than at any other

9. Michael Horsnell, “Priest advocates shoplifting from ‘evil’ superstores” in *The Times*, Saturday 15, 1997, p. 3.

10. For more on this and the exegesis of Rom. 13:1–6 see Stephen C. Perks, *A Defence of the Christian State* (Taunton: The Kuyper Foundation, 1998), Appendix A and *passim*. See also Stephen C. Perks, “A Christian View of the State (Civil Government)” in *Christianity & Society*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (Oct. 2002), pp. 18–24.

period of our history (due to the success, ironically, of capitalist enterprise), and we have more economic equality than at any other time in our history (due again to the success of capitalistic enterprise), but this has not solved our problems. Socialism has palpably failed to deliver the goods it has promised; indeed it has failed even to deliver the narrow economic benefits it promised to the masses. The extent to which modern Western society has these economic advantages is due entirely to the success of capitalism, not socialism.

Requiring the State to fulfil our responsibilities for us has not solved society's problems. Far from solving our problems the socialist State has exacerbated them. For example, the modern State, which seeks to control so much of our lives, is one of the worst vandals history has known. It squanders vast millions on useless and destructive projects that contribute nothing to the betterment of human society and culture, quite apart from the millions spent on unnecessary wars. Nor is this the case only with the tin-pot socialist dictatorships that seem to be endemic in the Third World and that only seem to reduce their societies to greater poverty. Western States are equally guilty of waste and vandalism at all levels, whether it is spending millions of taxpayers' money on computer systems that do not work or giving grants to students to enable them to engage in idiotic performance art. I am thinking here of an arts grant given to some students in Leeds a number of years ago for a performance art project in which two hard hats were yoked together on the top by a short plank of wood. The performance of the art, for which the art grant was awarded, consisted of two students walking around the streets of Leeds wearing these hard hats yoked by the plank of wood. A local TV news programme carried the story.

Well of course, art is a necessary element of human life. (For more on art as a necessary aspect of human life see Dimitri Tsouris' article on "Ethics in Art Practice" in this issue.) In the most desperate of conditions men have shown themselves to be artists. Art is vital to culture. I do not doubt this. But does the taxpayer really have to fund the bill for this kind of thing? Where art is not funded by the State this is unlikely to happen. Stupidity is not art. Where people are allowed to retain responsibility for the stewardship of the resources that God has given them they can choose not to subsidise stupidity and they can subsidise excellence instead. The socialist State, ever ready to regulate society in accordance with the wishes of those lobbying groups who can gain the ear of politicians and promise votes at elections, has been a poor and wasteful sponsor of the arts, and consequently has engaged in cultural as well as economic and military vandalism. The modern State is anything but responsible in its attitude to taxpayers' money. Its record as a steward of society's resources is one of the worst.

The Bible gives stewardship of the economic resources of society to the family and the individual, not to the State. To insist that the State usurp the role of the family and abridge the liberty of the individual by calling for the socialist organisation of society is rebellion against God.

It is, of course, our duty as individuals, as families, as communities and particularly as the Christian community of faith, the Church, to help the needy and to care for the genuine poor. But it is not the duty of the State to usurp our responsibility to do this by providing welfare that is funded by taxation, which confiscates the very funds necessary for

individuals, families and Churches to fulfil their God-ordained responsibility to care for the needy and help the poor. The State has no authority, no mandate in God's word, to take these responsibilities away from us. When it does so it distorts the humane social order that God has ordained in Scripture and creates in its place a dysfunctional society because the other institutions responsible for these things (family and Church) are not able to function according to their divinely-ordained roles—and neither does the State itself function according to its God-ordained role in these circumstances. As a result, justice itself, which it is the proper function of the State to uphold, is compromised.¹¹ Neither does the usurpation of the roles of these other institutions by the State create a caring society, as socialist propaganda would have us believe. Rather, it creates an *un-caring* society, a society in which individuals, families and communities—and alas even the Church—abdicate their responsibilities to the anonymous State. The State is then *expected* to shoulder all of man's social responsibilities, a role for which it was never intended and which it is not competent to fulfil. The result of the State's attempts to fulfil this expectation is the near total control and regulation of life by the State—i.e. totalitarianism, the abolition of freedom. And this is the moral that socialists have never understood: if men will not shoulder their responsibilities they will inevitably lose their freedom. This is a lesson that has been demonstrated time and again in those countries that have embraced socialism. It will be no different in the UK, since our freedom has already been abolished in principle and replaced by the fraudulent secular humanist ideal known as "human rights."

Furthermore, there are insufficient funds available to enable the State to fulfil the role that socialists conceive for it. How is this problem to be solved? The answer of just about every socialist I have ever known is that his *neighbour* does not pay enough taxes and should be taxed more. But not our socialist comrade. Of course, he pays his fair share already, if not too much. It would be unreasonable to expect him to pay more taxes. ("Christian" socialists should here take note of the biblical commandment to love one's neighbour as oneself.) I have yet to see a wealthy socialist calling for more taxes—and there are plenty of them doing this, particularly in the world of entertainment and the media—who is willing to donate some of his wealth to the State (which is not the same thing as donating it to charity, and socialism requires the *State* to provide for man's welfare, not charity).¹²

In the perspective of the socialist, you see, private property is wrong, *except* for the private property in *his* pocket. Socialism is the politics of envy, and as even our unlearned, tipped-to-be-Pope Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez knows, envy is *sin*. As another religion, an alternative to Christianity, which is what it is,—and therefore an idolatrous philosophy of life—socialism rejects God's word in principle. It is no wonder then that the fruit produced by the

11. On the compromising of the State's duty to administer public justice effectively where it seeks to act beyond its proper limited function see Stephen C. Perks, *The Political Economy of a Christian Society*, pp. 207ff.

12. I should add here that Conservatives are often not much better than socialists in their thinking. Indeed, modern Conservatism is often merely an alternative style of socialism. The only real difference is that Conservative socialist ideals come into play at a higher income bracket. I remember one Conservative councillor stating his philosophy in this way: "My car is blue, but there is a streak of red down it." The problem is that so often this streak of red turns out to be the undercoat.

tree of socialism in the twentieth century, the century of socialism, was so inimical to Christian values at all levels—e.g. health care (witness abortion and euthanasia); sexual ethics (witness the permissive society and homosexual liberation); education (witness indoctrination of the secular humanist religion in the State education system and the abolition of Clause 28); law (witness the overturning of justice due to the victims of crime and the indulgence with which criminals are treated); economics (witness legalised theft on a grand scale by the State); the family (witness the welfare State in combination with permissive legislation on divorce, which has virtually destroyed the Christian conception of

family life). Where, and in what principles, policies or practices does socialism conform to Christian ideals? Nowhere!

Socialism is a world-view, a religion, diametrically opposed to the Christian religion in its view of God, its code of ethics and its teaching on social and political order. Christians must see the socialist agenda for what it is, revolution against God's will for man's life. The Church is called to speak the prophetic word of God to society and call the people back to obedience to God's law. If she is to do this faithfully she must resolutely stand *against* socialism in all its forms. C&S

ETHICS IN ART PRACTICE

by Dimitri Tsouris[†]

Introduction

I believe that the purposes of God's kingdom are directly subversive of many of the (pre)valing social and economic goals of our dominant modern commercial culture. I believe the kingdom of God is an inverted or upside down way of life, in contrast to the prevailing social order.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness
Prepare the way of the Lord
Make his paths straight
Every valley shall be filled
and every mountain and hill shall be brought low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways shall be made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. (Lk. 3:4–6)

John the Baptist shouted these words of Isaiah the prophet as a red carpet for the advent of Jesus. The Baptist used four images to describe the coming kingdom: filled valleys, levelled mountains, straightened curves and rough places made smooth.

Mary's song of exaltation—"the Magnificat"—also announces an upside down, inverted way of life to come, with many radical consequences.

He has scattered *the proud* in the imagination of their hearts
he has put down *the mighty* from their thrones
and exalted those of *low degree*
he has filled *the hungry* with good things
and *the rich* he has sent away empty. (Lk. 1:49–53)

Five types of people are in for the shock of their lives. The positions at the top of the social pyramid occupied by

the proud, the rich and the mighty are shattered. Things are not what they appear to be. Patterns of social organisation which are routinely taken for granted in modern culture are questioned by Kingdom values.

The dynamics of the social/political order and the practice of art making cannot be separated. The Christian mind needs to be aware of these disciplines if our art is to have influence or impact in our communities. If our art is to be God-honouring and a blessing, the Christian artist needs to be aware of contemporary cultural ethics, come out of isolation and engage with the world in such a way as to have a credible explanation for our faith and our work—not some bland "evangelical" pat answer. If we are to bring about change we must turn the tide of the mediocre self-satisfying Christian art that lacks any real credibility and says nothing.

I believe, too, that we are first called to be culture makers, to be leaders in our field and God-honouring stewards (although this runs against the grain of our modern consumerist society), so much so that the creative Christian might touch the heart of the corner newspaper-seller, or so inspire the sinful character into effectively transforming nature, that this action and work become the divine model for societal preparation of the establishment of God's kingdom on earth.

Stewardship of all things involves everything in God's created order. It means laying hold of any discipline and applying God-honouring work practice to it. The Christian creative person is one who works, shapes, builds and constructs; but he is also one who brings a different mind-set to bear on his vocation and has a different view of life.

The calling to be stewards does not simply mean to be "green" and concerned about the environment. There is a plethora of applications involving cultivating and giving shape and form to the structure of creation, all within the God-given covenanted task. What does this mean? It means that we apply acceptance and appreciative worth to the things we can see and the things we cannot see and that we

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work in whatever field of talent and expertise we have with all good workmanship. We have, therefore, been called to be “culture makers.”

What is lacking today is not the expertise or technical skills of the artist, but the enthusiasm that gives light and life to the vision of a biblical mandate for the arts. Vision is so important. Vision goes beyond the spirit of utilitarianism to freedom of the art form, transcending self and piety to bring about God-honouring fulfilment in art practice that changes the world. The Church has fulfilled this task many times before—and it can be done again.

Interaction in art practice

As we enter the twenty-first century I perceive a certain trait within the Church; that is, that much of the Church’s lifestyle and spirituality is privately engaging but at the same time socially irrelevant. On the one hand there are some wonderful social and political engagements with the world today, and there is the vibrant and caring nature in the growth of the Church, but on the other hand, what we observe is that far from providing a leadership role, the Church’s lifestyle appears to be the same as that of the rest of the world in its outworking of relational, ethical, business and societal structures and realities. Rather than providing leadership in the major spheres of life, the Church seems to be led by the world through all manner of unbiblical legislation. By our mere absence and detachment from the world, (retreating from the “sinful and evil world”), we not only endorse but give credence to non-biblical cultural traits. Influence in our society ought to be from the Christian mental/intellectual capacity operating on biblical ethics and standards.

Despite the Christian Church’s many interactions within our communities, towns and cities, overall we can say the Church has little effect at the end of the twentieth century (or so it would seem), since the faith of Christians is so individual and personal that it has no social relevance whatsoever. That great movement of “Christian social interaction” of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which gave rise to many child, family and educational institutions, hospitals, care centres, Sunday schools, ethical work practices etc. has all but disappeared. The powerhouse that led those great movements is still the same and remains at the Church’s disposal. The difference today is that we have relegated so much of that needy work to the State and have washed our hands of the outworking of the true gospel and all its implications, and the arts are no exception to this ruinous road.

The question therefore needs to be asked—why does the Church of late not live out her confession? Likewise with the arts. The Church gave rise to so many aspects of the arts and crafts over the centuries. Under her wing artists and craftsmen began great and wonderful artistic creations throughout Europe, from stained glass windows to stone carvings, from frescoes and icons to beautiful ornamented wooden structures and exquisitely executed embroideries. History shows us that during the Renaissance and the ensuing Reformation and Baroque eras, the Church led the way in so many art forms that this gave rise to an incredible leap forward with new, vibrant expressions of art: Handel’s *Messiah*, Bach’s *Ayre in G*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. The Renaissance of the 1400 to 1600s saw such great artists as Dante,

Giotto and Cimabue as part of the great Christian tradition in the arts that eventually led the world.

Christian leadership carried forward into the Reformation with believers such as Handel, Bach, Rembrandt, Milton, Vermeer and many others. It is here interesting to note that many of these Christian artists were supported by Christian patrons of the arts. These patrons were willing to invest in the gifts and talents of so many of the artists at that time. This gave rise to an extraordinary push forward in the world of the arts. Great emphasis was made with tremendous sacrifices in order to nurture and promote their artists. Overall, this support undergirded these great artist, which in turn allowed them to grow in maturity in their art and go on to lead the world.

Today the patrons have all but gone. The artists are left to their own devices. “We live in the presence of the future” said one commentator regarding Kingdom values. The Christian artist has to live in the coming Kingdom realm, preparing with strong innovative, stirring, provocative and subversive artwork that will not only excite and give honour to the Creator but bring about change in the midst of our society.

Artists . . . the first men

In his book *The Everlasting Man* G. K. Chesterton gives an insight into the origins of man’s creativity and passion for the arts. The book is in two parts. The first part deals with man and woman; the second is a narration of Christ. But in the first part he visits the cave paintings in France and comes to the grand conclusion which gives us a perspective on the arts.

The secret chamber of rock, illuminated after a long night of unnumbered ages, revealed on its walls large and sprawling outlines, diversified with coloured earths, and when they followed the lines, they recognised across that vast void of ages—the movement and gesture of a man’s hand. These were drawings of paintings, of animals and they were drawn or painted, not only by a man—but by an artist. Under whatever archaic limitations, they showed that love of the long sweeping or long wavering line, which any man who has ever drawn or tried to draw will recognise. They showed the experimental and adventurous spirit of the artist, the spirit that does not avoid but attempts difficult things. In this and plenty of other detail, it is clear that the artist had watched animals, with a certain interest, and presumably, a certain pleasure. In that sense, it would seem that he was not only an artist but a naturalist.

Here Chesterton is now wondering about the theory of evolution—about man evolving from the animals and the apes. He comes to the following conclusion:

It is the simple truth that man does differ from the brutes in kind and not in degree; and the proof of it is here; that it sounds like a truism to say that the most primitive man drew a picture of a monkey and that it sounds like a joke that the most intelligent monkey can draw a picture of a man. Something of division and disproportion has appeared. *Art is the signature of man.*¹

What Chesterton recognises is that the oldest record is not of a cave man resembling a monkey, but the oldest record we have of pre-historic man is of man the artist. This is a sign of our humanity, an expression of yearning, searching, sometimes of confusion, sometimes of fear, dread, anger,

1. G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man* (1925).

wrath. This signature—i.e. all the multitude of art forms in life—of man, is outworked in the yearning/crying, taking pleasure, joy, and freedom within our human attempts at expression. Further, Barnett Newman, the painter, also conceives of man from the earliest written history of human desires, from the outset, as a fundamentally creative being

On Mount Sinai, God not only delivered the Ten Commandments, but also commanded Moses to construct a meeting place from God's own blueprint, where the people might commune with him, and in such a way that all the known representational art forms, which we have since come to take for granted, should be encompassed.

Bezalel was chosen and anointed with the Spirit of God in order that he might fashion and execute art work in the tabernacle, and interestingly, this is the first written example of God filling someone with his Spirit—and that man turns out to be an artist!

I have filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God and have given him the skill, ability and knowledge to do all kinds of work. He is able to design pieces to be made from gold, silver and bronze, to cut jewels and put them in metal, to carve wood, and to do all kinds of work . . . I have given skills to all the craftsmen and they will be able to make all these things. (Ex. 31. 1–11)

Note here that God did not choose for the walls of the tabernacle to be covered in white or magnolia paint, but gave instructions for the adornment of the walls with patterns and designs on fabrics that would grace any palace. The furniture was beautifully handcrafted with all manner of workmanship. Precious metals were used in the building of many items such as the pillars that held the outer court fabrics, the candle stick, the brazen altar, the laver, and of course the ark of the covenant. If we were to enter the tabernacle, and compare our empty and dreary buildings of the present day with the grandeur of that “tent,” we might well feel that we have lost the essence of that deep, spiritual symbolism that the ancient Hebrews were so acquainted with. Surely our places of worship ought to reflect the grand creativity of our Creator God, otherwise we relegate our faith to the area of spirituality alone.

The children of Israel supplied the materials for creating the tabernacle, giving freely, and with enthusiasm, as they shared in the building and adornment of God's house. So great were their contributions that supply far exceeded demand, resulting in Moses' announcement for a halt to any further contributions. With their handiwork the Hebrews went on to produce the various furnishings of the tabernacle with joy and praise to God. The willingness with which these offerings were presented and dedicated to God demonstrates the heart of the people at that time. These were sacrificial offerings, dedicated not from poverty of spirit but out of the riches of the soul, and gladly given back to their Redeemer in grateful thanks for all the riches of his grace. This one aspect of the arts demonstrates an overflowing joy in service and stewardship.

The need today is for a Christian art movement, an excitement of Christian artists and performers in all genres of the arts world, to regain, take hold of and turn around the nauseating, false, proliferation of contemporary film, dance, installation, visuals masquerading as art. At the start of the twenty-first century the prophetic words of Marshall McLuhan have a ring of truth in them when he says in his

monumental book, *The Medium is the Message*, of the state of the arts during the sixties, “Art is anything you can get away with.”

Once the call for a Christian art movement has been heard, and effective means taken to bring life into art practice by laying hold on whatever artistic means are available in all good workmanship, the next step would be to bring the arts into the everyday, the normality of daily societal life.

Art alongside life

I want to concentrate now on the aesthetic and artistic dimensional norm in God's created reality as a potentially distinct sphere of activity within art practice. Twentieth-century Modernism has cudgelled and manipulated the aesthetic and artistic spheres of life, systematically separating art practice from the everyday, making it a shrine, something “other.” It has divorced art practice from the norm that all should participate in and execute, bringing to it joyful exuberance, showing God's little blessings and grace to those who look at the art they make.

The biblical mandate for the arts clearly endorses within the created order the legitimacy of art practice as a distinct activity. And we must affirm this. But that does not mean that it should be separated from daily life. At times it will be necessary to explore the arts as a definite sphere of human activity. Historically, art has existed alongside the daily chores, recreations and festivals of peoples. Poetry, storytelling, music, dance, crafting have been the aggregate of love and joy. They have brought news, discourse, history, politics and much more to life; and, most importantly, have made these attributes accessible to everybody. And this was made possible through what I call “art practice.”

Christians should be able to show the full radical implications of the Christian faith. For within its message we find that the Creator God is concerned with all of life. In Paul's letter to the Colossians we are told that all of life is to be in harmony with him: “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross” (Col. 1:19–20). The Christian faith affects all the areas of life, those we can see and those we cannot see, including politics, medicine, education, family, culture, thoughts, emotions and much more. For in the truth of the faith lies the ability to establish truthfulness and integrity in these areas while being obedient to God. He is as much concerned with our artistic lives as with our social and economic lives. He demands that we should be obedient not simply in our non-artistic activities but in all aspects of our lives.

Art embracing life

Let us view the arts within the context of God's created world order, as something integral and intrinsic within the gospel and not something that stands outside it. The arts are not to be viewed as something added on to the faith, but as integral to faith. The proclamation of the Christian faith and the exercising of creative talents and abilities in the world are not to be seen as exclusive to each other, but as partners together, stemming from that common faith. If we are to have an all-round biblical world-view we need to embrace all of life in all areas of our creaturely reality. This is God's

world, and we are part of his Creation. There is a vast potential within the arts, having the power to minister to people and possessing overwhelming implications for the Church's stewardship of this creative outflow. God has set the artist within the Church for the adornment of the buildings we worship in, the clothes we wear, the music we hear, the smells we smell, the dramatisation of the parables and many other creative elements. With these we may worship God—not only in a spiritual sense but with all our senses, as they are brought into the practice of giving God praise and thanks with the whole man, for in God's image are we created. “. . . if Christianity is really true, then it involves the whole man, including his intellect and creativeness. Christianity is not just ‘dogmatically’ true or ‘doctrinally’ true, but true to what is there, true in the whole area of the whole man in all of life.”²

Peripheral arts

The arts are integral to the Christian life. They are not peripheral. They are important elements when used to the glory of God and can be “things of beauty” in themselves. As a result, all of this has a dramatic and implicit bearing on our understand of the Creation and therefore in assisting us towards formulating a biblical world-view.

Creation is seen as something that God continues to uphold and direct through human involvement and activity. It is not a one-off created act, left to wind down and be torched at the end of its time. This is all still a part and an integral aspect of the created order in which we live and move and have our being. This is created reality, in which God has set us to work (stewardship) and to give shape and form to all the features of the world that we find ourselves in.

2. Francis Schaeffer, *Art and the Bible*, (1973).

But through the application of God's norms to society human beings bring to fruition in the fallen world the possibilities of a redeemed development. Here is the artist's task: creating dynamic and life-giving work in clay, paint, performance, voice. This, then recognising the many structures that go up to make human involvement and activity within the created order, is what we would call reality.

One of the reasons the arts have gone so quickly and powerfully with the winds of rebellious secularism and anti-Christian sentiment is that the Church and well-meaning Christians barricaded themselves into a Christian sub-culture. This only produces a ghetto mentality. In other words the arts, along with other cultural pursuits, have been more or less abandoned by Bible-believing Christians, and the world was more than happy to allow and to encourage that abdication.

So now we find ourselves as Christians at the beginning of the twenty first century with very little real voice or influence in the arts in our surrounding secular culture. The calling of Christians into the arts, media and entertainment industries today within our “image-loaded and mediated” society is one of the highest callings within the Church and places Christian involvement at the forefront of our culture and social decision-making.

The implication here is that the Church may yet be again at the cutting edge of important, strategic and influential roles in demonstrating the clarity of a biblical vision for the culture of the land. This calling is all the more necessary in postmodern society, where the emphasis on what it is to be human in God's created reality is such a key issue. More importantly, and especially for the younger generation, biblical life values and guidelines must be established that will influence society rather than the secular humanist values that dominate society today. *C&S*

From His Hands

HERE is where you stand, straight on.
 No angle distorts your image.
 This picture, unframed.
 Canvas, unglazed.
 No wall displays you as a finished surface,
 because the artist is not one to hurry.
 There will be changes, of colour, of shape, of tone.
 Details which cannot yet be seen.
 Your edges, ragged.
 Unhung, brushes and tools surround you.
 And you will become the complete picture.
 Do not seek to change yourself;
 the hand that touches you will alter and perfect.
 And forever in His gallery you will show the glory of his creations.
 But wait. The brush is not yet laid down.

Susannah Wrigley, 2003

SUSANNAH WRIGLEY is a photographer and poet. Her purpose is to praise God and show heavenly values to those who do not know Jesus. She is currently starting a small business named “Joy Photography,” the vision being that it is “a joy to photograph truth and creation, showing joy to others, evoking joy in others, for the glory of God, Creator of all that is good.” She is working on gallery contacts and gradually making her work known. She is also writing and illustrating a children's book. She says “Art is my way of being myself and being truthful; it is my expression.”

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE FUTURE GOVERNANCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM[†]

by Bob Graham[‡]

I INTRODUCTION

THE European Union is of special interest at this time because of two major decisions which we, the United Kingdom, will have to make in the very near future, namely, first, the question of whether or not Britain should join the single currency, and second, the adoption by the member States, including the United Kingdom, of a new Treaty that will provide the European Union with a written constitution.

Which of these decisions will have to be made first is uncertain, but in terms of significance the decision on the proposed constitution is almost certainly the more important one—not least because I believe that there is an increasing recognition among those who are determined that the United Kingdom should be incorporated into an emerging European super-State, that once we have adopted this new EU constitution, there will then be no further reason to oppose our full participation in the single currency.

The issues that arise are not only complex but can also be discussed at different levels of generality and detail.

The content of this paper is therefore a fairly broad-brush outline of the undoubted dangers that the adoption of the European Union's Draft Constitutional Treaty poses to the continued existence of the United Kingdom as an independent sovereign nation.

There are three texts from Holy Scripture that I would

have you bear in mind as you read this paper. They are Ps. 127:1: "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: Except the LORD keep the city, The watchman waketh but in vain"; Pr. 14:12; 16:25: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"; Mt. 6:33: "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

II WHAT IS A WRITTEN CONSTITUTION AND SOME OF ITS PROBLEMS?

What is a constitution? Put briefly, a constitution is a statement of the fundamental principles and rules that govern such matters as the composition, powers and procedures of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary; the structure of offices which authorise, exercise and adjudicate the use of State power; and the relationships between the State and its citizens. What is the difference between a written and an unwritten constitution?

1. A *written* constitution will contain these fundamental principles, rules, structure of offices and relationships within one document whose provisions are specially safeguarded from change by being made subject to amendment only by an exceptional, or difficult, procedure—an example of this can be found in the constitution of the United States of America.

2. An *unwritten* constitution is one in which any such fundamental principles, rules, structure of offices and relationships are part of the ordinary law and custom of the land and are therefore not entrenched, i.e. they can be changed through the normal legislative process. The most famous example of this type of constitution is of course the British constitution.

Thus a major difference between these two types of constitution is that a *written* constitution tends to be far more rigid, i.e. much more difficult to change, and its interpretation lies in the hands of a special constitutional court, whereas an *unwritten* constitution is much more flexible, i.e. it is much easier to alter, and its interpretation lies in the hands of the ordinary courts because, for example in the

[†]The essay is the text of a paper delivered at the Kuyper Foundation Fellowship Weekend on 4th October 2003 at Brunel Manor, Devon, England

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UK's case, it is largely contained in the ordinary law of the land, namely, in the common law and in statute law.

What main problems will face the United Kingdom if it becomes subject to a *written* constitution? There will be two major types of problem. The first set of problems results from the very fact that it is a *written* constitution. The second set of problems arises because of its actual *content*, i.e. from the political principles, structures and substantive policies it stipulates.

Let us now look at some of the more important of this first set of problems (I shall refer to the second set of problems in the next Section—III). Note that references to the Draft Constitution are taken from the official text as given in *The Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, The European Convention, Brussels CONV 850, dated 18 July 2003*.

First, because the European constitutional provisions will be entrenched, i.e. difficult to amend, this means that any change will almost certainly require not only the approval of a large majority, if not the unanimous agreement, of the member States but also will require the approval of the EU institutions. The actual draft constitutional “Procedure for revising the Treaty establishing the Constitution” is now contained in Article IV–7 and the following excerpts demonstrate just how difficult it will be to change or amend the constitution once it has been adopted:

The government of any Member State, the European Parliament or the Commission may submit to the Council proposals for the amendment of the Treaty establishing the Constitution. The national Parliaments of the Member States shall be notified of these proposals.

If the European Council, after consulting the European Parliament and the Commission, adopts by a simple majority a decision in favour of examining the proposed amendments, the President of the European Council shall convene a Convention composed of representatives of the national Parliaments of the Member States, of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States, of the European Parliament and of the Commission. The European Central Bank shall also be consulted in the case of institutional changes in the monetary area . . . The Convention shall examine the proposals for amendments and shall adopt by consensus a recommendation to the conference of representatives of the governments of the Member States . . . The conference of representatives of the governments of the Member States shall be convened by the President of the Council for the purpose of determining by common accord the amendments to be made to the Treaty establishing the Constitution.

The amendments shall enter into force *after* being ratified by all the member States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

This is entrenchment with a vengeance!

Secondly, the interpretation of this new European constitution will certainly not lie in the ordinary courts of the United Kingdom, nor even in our House of Lords. It will instead be under the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice, which will become the supreme constitutional court for the whole European Union. And because the ECJ is a “politically proactive” court, its constitutional judgements will tend to favour any interpretation that upholds, and even extends and strengthens, the powers of the central European Union institutions, such as the European Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament, and thus will further weaken the powers of the individual member States.

Thirdly, once the United Kingdom has adopted the European constitution, it will find it extremely difficult if, at

some future time, it wishes, for whatever reason, e.g. a change from a pro-European Union government to an anti-European one, to withdraw from the European Union.

The actual draft constitutional procedure for a “Voluntary withdrawal from the Union” is contained in Article I–59 and again indicates some complexities in the procedure. It reads as follows:

Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the European Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements. A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention; the European Council shall examine that notification. In the light of *the guidelines provided by the European Council*, the Union shall *negotiate and conclude an agreement with that State, setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal, taking account of the framework for its future relationship with the Union*. That agreement shall be concluded on behalf of the Union by the Council, *acting by a qualified majority, after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament*. The representative of the withdrawing Member State shall not participate in Council or European Council discussions or decisions concerning it.

Again, this is a fairly complex and highly political procedure. Take a possible and understandable (see immediately below) substantive policy change by a future British government: the repatriation of an important United Kingdom national interest—*fisheries policy*. The following quotation comes from Christopher Booker's *Britain and Europe: The Culture of Deceit* (Bruges Group Paper 42, 2001):

Another revealing measure of how deeply the culture of deceit had now set in was the curious story of the common fisheries policy, and the Heath Government's response to the crude ambush set up by the Six to ensure that, as part of their price of entry, the four applicant countries, Britain, Ireland, Denmark and Norway, would hand over their fishing waters, the richest in the world. (All documents cited on the CFP [Common Fisheries Policy] are from PRO [Public Relations Office] files in FO [Foreign Office] 30/656–9.)

On the very day the applications [for membership of the EEC] went in, June 30, 1970, the Six hastily approved the principle that member-states should be given “equal access” to each other's fishing waters, under Brussels control. The point was that, because this had now become part of the *acquis communautaire*, the body of existing Community law, the applicant countries would have to accept it as a *fait accompli*. Within a few years, as every one knew, national fishing waters were due to be extended out under international law to 200 miles. Because the waters belonging to the four applicant states would then contain most of the fish in European waters, this would give the Six an astonishing prize.

In fact the Six knew their new fisheries policy was not even legal. Among the Foreign Office papers released in 2001 was an internal Council of Ministers document, dating from June 1970, which shows how desperate the Brussels lawyers had been to find some article in the Treaty of Rome which could be used to authorise such a policy. There was none. The policy therefore had no legal justification, and other papers show that the Foreign Office knew this too.

But so determined was Mr Heath not to offend his prospective new partners that he decided not to challenge them. Britain would simply accept the illegal new fisheries policy, even though this would mean handing over one of her greatest renewable natural assets and would spell disaster for a large part of her fishing fleet.

Now, let us suppose that, after the UK's adoption of the new constitutional treaty, a future British government, say, Conservative, having promised to do so in their election manifesto, were to act to recover control over Britain's national

fishing waters—no unreasonable objective given the above account by Christopher Booker. This would, obviously, require either an amendment to the new EU constitution (see Article I-12: Exclusive competence and I-13: Areas of shared competence and Part Three: Section 4: Agriculture and Fisheries: Articles III-121 to 128), well nigh impossible given the entrenched nature of the constitution, *or* voluntary withdrawal from the European Union itself, extremely difficult, to say the least, given the loss of Britain's national fishing waters to the European Union.

Whereas at present the United Kingdom can by the ordinary legislative process simply repeal the European Communities Act of 1972 and return the nation to the *status quo ante*, i.e. to the position it was in prior to joining the European Economic Community, *or* pass an Act of Parliament which expressly repeals the application of European Fisheries Policy legislation to the United Kingdom, again by the ordinary legislative process.

And note also that the adoption of a *written* European constitution would more or less destroy the important British constitutional principle that “no Parliament can bind its successors.”

Fourthly, the procedure for the adoption and ratification of treaties (remember that the draft European constitution is contained in a document titled “Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe”) does not require an Act of Parliament, but rather lies within the prerogative powers of the Crown.

What actually are prerogative powers? A. V. Dicey in his *Law and the Constitution* defined these as “. . . the residue of discretionary power left at any moment in the hands of the Crown . . . every act which executive government can lawfully do without the authority of an Act of Parliament is done in virtue of this prerogative,” i.e. it is exercised by the Executive—namely, by the government.

Examples of these prerogative powers are powers to send British troops into war and powers to enter into international treaties and conduct foreign relations. There may of course be before or after the adoption of a treaty be debate in Parliament. But the decision to adopt lies only with the government of the day. And this is one of the reasons put forward why the present government strongly rejects any idea of a referendum on a European constitution—e.g. Peter Hain, the previous Minister for Europe, has insisted that the government has no intention of holding a referendum on this new European constitution. And the other more basic reason is no doubt its fear of almost certain defeat if the voters are given any choice at all.

Therefore it is absolutely vital that every possible pressure be exerted on the present government, before it is too late, to promise, as it was compelled to do concerning the Euro, to hold a referendum on this new European constitution prior to its adoption by the United Kingdom.

Fifthly, and also of extreme importance and following on from the comments I have just made about the use of the prerogative power of the Crown to adopt such a constitutional treaty, and thus by-pass Parliament, there seems, to me at least, a very strong possibility that the present government will be tempted to “leapfrog” over their promise of a referendum on the Euro. For example, we know that the Euro-referendum will not be held before the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, reports a second time on his—now famous—five economic tests and the Treasury's second report

is due sometime this year, 2004. And a favourable report will almost certainly mean a referendum on the Euro “fairly soon thereafter.” But what if the second report's conclusion is yet again “no—at least, not yet” and a further third assessment of the five economic tests is scheduled for, say, 2005, thus delaying the promised Euro-referendum into the next Parliament, say, to sometime during 2005–2007.

Now here's the rub. If the government continues to refuse a referendum on the new European constitution, as it clearly intends to—a *la* Peter Hain, and Parliament uses its prerogative power to adopt the treaty on a constitution for Europe, then, as I strongly suspect, it will only be a matter of time before, say by the end of 2004 or at the latest sometime during 2005, a question starts being asked by the pro-Euro lobby, namely:—

Now that we have adopted the European constitution and we are full members of this new legal entity, called, as has been recommended in Article I-1, the “European Union”; and, further, considering that the Union's objectives as defined in draft Article I-3 include, among other things “. . . balanced economic growth, a social market economy, highly competitive and aiming at full employment and social progress . . . promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States”; and, still further, its Article I-5: “Relations between the Union and the Member States” declares: “Following the principle of loyal *cooperation*, the Union and the Member States shall, in full mutual respect, assist each other to carry out tasks which flow from the Constitution”; and, still yet further, Article I-5 states that “The Member States shall facilitate the achievement of the Union's tasks and refrain from any measures which could jeopardise the attainment of the objectives set out in the Constitution”; and, finally, given the present government's determination to join the Euro and avoid defeat in a Euro-referendum—then the question that will almost certainly be asked is this: is there now, given our adoption of this new constitution for a United Europe, any longer any need at all for a referendum on Euro?

In other words the danger is that the adoption of this new European constitution will allow the British government, in effect, to “leapfrog” over the promise of a referendum on the Euro and therefore the United Kingdom will have become a full member of the Single European Currency and of the European Economic and Monetary Union by default, as it were. And so the last significant remnants of our national independence and sovereignty will have been lost. A grim prospect indeed.

III

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF SOME OF ITS CONTENTS

I will briefly consider some of the contents of this new draft European constitution but in sufficient detail to indicate that, as one commentator expressed it, “Giscard's draft Constitution represents a qualitative leap forward in the creation of a unitary European State.”

Let's look at some of the Articles of the draft EU constitution that have been produced by the Convention on the Future of Europe.

1. Article I-1: Establishment of the Union of the proposed constitutional Treaty starts off by stating that “Reflecting the *will* of the citizens and States of Europe . . .” But

unless there will be a national referendum on this constitution, it can only very indirectly be argued that this constitution has the clear approval of the British people. The mere approval of a government using the prerogative powers of the Crown, even with a debate, and even a vote, in the House of Commons, remembering the strength of the governing party, what Lord Hailsham once referred to as an “Elective Dictatorship,” could not politically or morally justify a claim that the government adopted this constitution in accordance with the “will” of the British People.

Article I-1 also recommends that this new European State, having chosen from a list of possible names which had appeared in earlier drafts—e.g. “European Community, European Union, United States of Europe, United Europe”—be called “European Union.” The June 2003 draft also deletes the controversial concept “federal” and replaces it, against the protests of a large majority of the Convention, with the phrase “in the Community way.” Thus Article I-1: Establishment of the Union now reads: “1. Reflecting the *will* of the citizens and States of Europe to build a common future, this constitution establishes the *European Union*, on which the Member States confer *competences* [i.e. legislative and executive powers] to attain objectives they have in common. The Union shall co-ordinate the policies by which the Member States aim to achieve these objectives, and shall exercise *in the Community way* the *Competences* they confer on it.”

But this political decision, by the Convention Praesidium, to omit the concept “federal” and replace it by “in the Community way” does not, and will not, change the nature of the EU as an evolving Unitary State with all major executive, legislative and judicial powers exercised by the EU institutions: European Council, Council of Ministers, European Commission, European Parliament and European Court of Justice.

Note that the Preamble to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which is also incorporated as Part Two of the draft constitution and which proclaims the basic objectives of the Charter and which the ECJ will also use when adjudicating on questions of interpretation and/or application of the Charter and the constitution, includes that now well-known, and from our point of view notorious, phrase: “in creating an ever closer union.” The full sentence reads: “The peoples of Europe, *in creating an ever closer union* among them, are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values.”

So, despite the deletion from Article I-1 of the word/concept “federal,” which earlier drafts had contained, and its replacement by the phrase “and shall exercise in the Community way the competences they [i.e. the Member States] confer on it [i.e. the Union],” it is clearly intended that the drive towards a unitary—i.e. “federal” as understood by the majority of European politicians—State will be maintained.

Even if it is argued, using the constitution of the United States of America as a model, that there is intended to be a strict separation of powers between the Union’s governmental competences and those that may be reserved to the member States, with some “shared competences” in the middle, even the USA has experienced over time a clear shift of power away from the individual States to the Federal Government.

Such a shift of power from the member States to the EU institutions has not only occurred historically, since its

inception, but can be expected to continue given the clearly expressed views of leading European and British politicians.

Further, Article I-11, concerning “shared” competences, states: “When the Constitution confers on the Union a competence shared with the Member States in a specific area, the Union and the Member States shall have the power to legislate and adopt legally binding acts in that area. The Member States shall exercise their competence *to the extent that* the Union has *not* exercised, *or* has decided to cease exercising, its competence.”

In addition, the draft constitution provides in Article I-17 a Flexibility Clause which authorises the Union to assume further powers: “If action by the Union should prove necessary within the framework of the policies defined in Part III to attain one of the objectives set by the Constitution, and the Constitution has not provided the necessary powers, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after obtaining the consent from the European Parliament, *shall take the appropriate measures.*”

Some hold that any further centralisation of power by the EU institutions will be prevented by the constitution’s statement on the “principle of subsidiarity,” which allows the national parliaments to monitor and if necessary limit any centralising tendencies of the European Union. Article I-9 states that: “Under the principle of subsidiarity, in areas that do not fall within its exclusive competence the Union shall act *only if and insofar as* the objectives of the intended action *cannot* be sufficiently achieved by the Member States . . . but can rather . . . be better achieved at Union level. The Union shall apply the principle of subsidiarity . . . *National Parliaments* shall ensure compliance with that principle in accordance with the procedure *set out in the protocol.*”

But, just how strong is this constitutional check? The following quote from the draft constitution’s Protocol on the Application of the Principles of Subsidiarity and Proportionality strongly suggests that the Subsidiarity Principle will do little to prevent the transfer of legislative and executive power from the member States to the EU institutions:

The Commission shall send all its legislative proposals and its amended proposals to the national Parliaments at the same time as to the Union legislator. Upon adoption, the legislative resolutions of the European Parliament and positions of the Council of Ministers shall be sent to the national Parliaments of the Member States . . . The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission *shall take account of* the reasoned opinions issued by Member States’ national Parliaments or by a chamber of a national Parliament. The national Parliaments of Member States with unicameral Parliamentary systems shall have two votes, while each of the chambers of a bicameral Parliamentary system shall have one vote. Where reasoned opinions on a Commission proposal’s non-compliance with the principle of subsidiarity represent *at least one third of all the votes allocated to the Member States’ national Parliaments and their chambers*, the Commission shall *review* its proposal . . . After such a review, the Commission *may* decide to *maintain, amend or withdraw* its proposal . . .

This procedure will provide, at the very most, only a very weak power to national Parliaments to limit the centralising tendencies of the EU’s executive and legislative institutions.

Now arises an important question: who ultimately decides where the policy-making power lies in the event of doubt or disagreement? Answer: either the European Council of the Heads of States or governments, i.e. a political

decision made under the system of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV)—with no national veto allowed—and/or the supreme constitutional court of the Union, i.e. by the European Court of Justice. And this is, as pointed out earlier, a “politically proactive” court.

As a Danish MEP, Jens-Peter Bonde, puts it: “The proposed constitution is in reality a unitary State like France. There will still be a lot of rudiments from the period of nation states, particularly different representations in the United Nations, just like the Soviet Union had different representative for some of its participating states. But there is only one answer to the question: Who decides if there is a disagreement between a participating State and the Federation? The one and only answer in all questions is: the Federation.”

2. Article I-6: Legal personality, simply states that “The Union *shall* have *legal personality*.” Up until now the European Union has comprised three separate “pillars” or major clusters of activities: the first of these is the European Economic Community (EEC), responsible for the whole area of the single market, international trade relations etc., which already possessed “legal personality” and therefore could enter into all trade and commercial treaties on behalf of the member States as one European Union. The member States were therefore prohibited from negotiating their own individual trade treaties and these treaty-making powers had already been transferred by the United Kingdom government to the European Union by their adoption of previous European treaties. The second is an inter-governmental “pillar” covering “foreign and security policy.” The third is also an inter-governmental “pillar” covering “justice and home affairs.” Here “inter-governmental” refers to the need to achieve unanimous agreement among the member States before policies can be implemented by the European Union.

However, these three major clusters of activities will now be brought together under one European Union with the competence, i.e. the legal power, to implement its common policies. For example consider Title V: Chapter II: Common Foreign and Security Policy in Article III-195, which states that: “In the context of the principles and objectives of its external action, the *Union* shall define and implement a *common* foreign and security policy covering *all* areas of foreign and security policy. The Member States shall *support* the Union’s common foreign and security policy *actively and unreservedly* in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity. The Member States shall work together to enhance and develop their mutual political solidarity. They shall *refrain from* any action which is contrary to the interests of the Union *or* likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations.”

And compare Article III-206 which states, among other things, that “When the *Union* has defined a position on a subject which is on the *United Nations Security Council agenda*, those Member States which sit on the Security Council *shall* request that the Minister for Foreign Affairs [i.e. the European Union’s Minister for Foreign Affairs—see Article I-27: The Foreign Minister] be asked to present the *Union’s* position.”

You can see how, for example, that if the European constitution were already now in force, and if the common foreign and security policy had become subject to Qualified Majority Voting (QMV), then under the leadership of France and Germany the European Union would almost certainly have opposed the USA’s present military action in Iraq; and

the United Kingdom would have had no option but to refuse to support the USA or breach the very constitution to which it had agreed, resulting inevitably in serious sanctions against the United Kingdom and perhaps even expulsion.

Yet another implication, given the new United Europe’s possession of full “legal personality,” is that it would only be a matter of time before the European Union assumes its own seat on the UN Security Council, and eventually the UK would lose its seat. And then, through a France-German led majority in the Council of the European Union, the United Kingdom could be forced, no doubt reluctantly, into an ever-increasing anti-American position in foreign, security and defence matters.

For evidence that these are not mere empty speculations, just look at Article I-11: Categories of competence, and remember that “competence” means “legal power.” Section 1 states that “When the Constitution confers on the Union *exclusive* competence in a specific area, *only the Union* may legislate *and* adopt legally binding acts, the Member States being able to do so themselves *only if* so empowered by the Union or for the implementation of acts adopted by the Union.” And Section 4 states that “The *Union* shall have *competence* to *define* and *implement* a common *foreign* and *security* policy, *including* the progressive framing of a common *defence* policy.” Within the same Article I-11: Categories of competence, Section 3 states that “The *Union* shall have *competence* to promote and coordinate the *economic and employment* policies of the Member States.”

Herein lies the constitutional leverage by which a determined European Commission and European Parliament, together with a majority on the European Council, will be able to achieve, indeed “conspire” to achieve, the harmonisation of taxes throughout the European Union, and thus a common fiscal, i.e. taxation, policy, and then a common level of public expenditure, and on to a common exchange rate. And why not, after all this, a common interest rate? And now is there any longer any reason left to oppose a common currency? If that stage were indeed reached, the United Kingdom would finally have lost the last remains of her independence and sovereignty—and all through the “back-door” and by a process that had in effect leapfrogged, in a perfectly legal manner, the need to have a referendum on the Euro at all. And we would then indeed be a full member of a European super-State or, if you like, of a new Roman Empire.

Apart from the competences, i.e. the legal powers exclusive to the Union, there are the so-called “shared competences”—i.e. those legal powers shared between the Union’s Central institutions and the member States. These “shared competences” are listed in Article I-13: Areas of shared competences, Section 2 as: internal market, area of freedom, security and justice, agriculture and fisheries, excluding the conservation of marine biological resources, transport and trans-European networks, energy, social policy for aspects defined in Part III, economic, social and territorial cohesion, environment, consumer protection, common safety concerns in public health matters

But remember Section 2 of Article I-11: Categories of competence, where it is stated that “When the Constitution confers on the Union a competence *shared with* the Member States in a specific area, the Union *and* the Member States shall have the power to legislate and adopt legally binding acts in this area. The Member States shall exercise *their*

competence *to the extent that* the Union has *not* exercised, *or* has decided to cease exercising, its competence.”

Now, it is patently obvious that even in the area of “shared” competences this new constitution will give the European Union the final right to assume an exclusive competence simply by legislating and adopting legally binding acts in any of these particular areas—e.g. the “area of freedom, security and justice”—and all that that means in terms of a conflict between the principles of our common law and the Napoleonic Code of Continental Europe, such as our writ of Habeas Corpus, the presumption of innocence, and trial by jury.

We could examine a number of other examples of what this new European constitution means for the United Kingdom, but I will give just one more example, at least for the present: Article I–7: Fundamental rights, Section 1 states that “The Union shall recognise the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights which constitutes Part II of this Constitution.” This, obviously, means first that the whole of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, including its Preamble, becomes “entrenched,” i.e. protected, constitutional Law and thus can only be amended by a special legal procedure, as defined by the constitution itself; and second, that any disputes concerning its application or interpretation will be decided by the European Court of Justice, as the Union’s supreme constitutional court.

This second point is the basic reason why the European Union itself did not previously just simply accede to the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) as all 15 member States had already done, namely because to do so would mean that the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in Luxembourg would itself come under, in questions of Human Rights, the jurisdiction of the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. In other words: the ECJ would *not* be supreme in this area! And that would be unacceptable for this new European super-State, which wishes to keep all the levers of power in its own hands!

The effects of the point I am arguing are well illustrated by the following quotation from Anthony Coughlan, Senior Lecturer Emeritus in Social Policy at Trinity College, Dublin, when he states that

“If the Charter [of Fundamental Rights] is made binding in EU law, all EU legislation and all EU judgements of the [European] Court of Justice will acquire a new legal dimension, that of human rights as defined in the Charter. This would be portrayed as being ostensibly out of concern for people’s rights, but in practice removing final jurisdiction over these from national Constitutions and from the Court in Strasbourg by transferring it to Brussels and the ECJ in Luxembourg; and this would open vast scope for EU and ECJ legislative and judicial intervention in people’s lives.”

The fact that the European Union has now proposed that it accede to the ECHR will not substantially alter Anthony Coughlan’s argument above, because the ECJ’s decisions on Human Rights will be based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and will therefore still be binding on the member States of the European Union.

Another point to be noted is that the fundamental rights set out in the European Union’s Charter do not appear to be so fundamental after all because if we look at the Charter itself, Article II–52: Scope and interpretation of rights and principles, Section 1 states that “Any *limitations* on the exercise of the rights and freedoms recognised by this Charter . . .

limitations may be made only if they are necessary and genuinely meet the objectives of general interest recognised by the Union . . .” The explanation, given by the European Convention that created the Charter states that “The wording is based on the case law of the [European] Court of Justice . . . it is well established in the case law of the court that *restrictions* may be imposed on the exercise of fundamental rights, *in particular in the context of a common organisation of the market*, provided that those restrictions in fact correspond to objectives of general interest pursued by the Community and do not constitute, with regard to the aim pursued, disproportionate and unreasonable interference undermining the very substance of these rights” (from the judgement of 13th April 2000, Case C-292/97, paragraph 45 of the grounds).

So then, a question arises: how fundamental are “fundamental human rights”? Are, for example, the writ of Habeas Corpus, or the presumption of innocence, or trial by jury fundamental human rights? They certainly are for the British constitution. But will the European Court of Justice recognise them as such?

Before we end this analysis of this new European constitution, let’s take a couple of examples of these fundamental human rights from the Charter itself, which, remember, will also become entrenched provisions of the new European constitution. Article II–2, Section 2 states that “No one shall be condemned to the *death penalty*, or executed.” And let’s also take this Section 2 together with Article II–21, Section 1 which states that “Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or *sexual orientation* shall be prohibited”

It is obvious to those who believe in the overriding authority of biblical law that these two prohibitions, the case of capital punishment and discrimination *vis-à-vis* Sexual Orientation, are unacceptable. Even if, as at present, capital punishment is not allowable in British law; nevertheless, the majority of the British people are not opposed to its re-introduction—it is only a large number of the Members of Parliament who would oppose its restoration as part of our criminal law. It would surely be totally unacceptable, if a future British government were to seek to re-introduce capital punishment by Act of Parliament, that such legislation should be declared unconstitutional because it is prohibited by European constitutional law, and any attempt by a British government to amend the European constitution would prove well-nigh if not completely impossible because of the entrenched nature of such law.

But it is even worse than that! Some commentators have pointed out that under the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, incorporated as Part Two of the draft European constitution, we will not even possess the even more fundamental political freedom to *campaign* for the restoration of the death penalty because Article II–54 states that “Nothing in this Charter shall be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms recognised in this Charter or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for therein.”

Thus, any attempt whatsoever to criticise, challenge or advocate change to the prohibition of the death penalty (Article II–2) or the prohibition of discrimination on the

ground of sexual orientation (Article II–21) will in itself be a violation of the constitution and, therefore, be subject to sanction by the courts.

IV

CONSTITUTIONS: WRITTEN AND UNWRITTEN

Written constitutions, i.e. a *written* set of rules which identifies the principal institutions of the State, their powers and relationships with other State institutions and the relationship between government and citizens—in effect the fundamental rules from which all other law derives legitimacy and to which they must conform—are a comparatively modern development.

The first example is Sweden (in 1772) whose King Gustavus III organised a sort of *coup d'état* against the nobility and forced the Riksdag to accept a constitution in the form of a single comprehensive document. This was soon followed by the American colonies' declaration of independence from Britain and their creation of a Union with their written constitution of 1787. And of course one of the results of the French Revolution was the production of their own written constitution in 1792. From then onwards, written constitutions proliferated, usually as the result either of revolution or on the grant of independence by the imperial power. Now the only nations in the world without written constitutions are the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the State of Israel.

One of the major differences between written and unwritten constitutions is that a written constitution is made, quite deliberately, extremely difficult to alter. For example, alterations to the constitution of the USA requires that any amendments must first be proposed by either $\frac{2}{3}$ of both Houses of Congress or on the application to the Congress by the Legislatures of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the several States; secondly, they are then required to be ratified by the legislatures of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the several States or by Conventions in $\frac{3}{4}$ of the several States. And you will have seen from Section II above just how difficult it will be to revise the new European Union constitution. Whereas an unwritten constitution, such as the United Kingdom's, is part of the ordinary law of the land and its alteration is through the normal legislative process and in terms of the legislative supremacy of the Queen in Parliament.

It is, however, very worthwhile noting the difference in length between, say, the United States constitution and that of the draft European Union constitution. The USA's constitution, including all of its 27 Amendments dating from 1791 to 1992, comprises only 17 A4 typed pages, while the draft EU constitution, as at 12th June 2003, comprises some 240 A4 typed pages. Some, but only some, of the explanation for this huge difference in size, some 223 pages, is the result of the more complex institutional structure required by a Union of 15, soon to be 25, nation states. However, this takes up only 48 pages out of the 240 pages of this new constitution. The remaining 197 pages, except for the final 5 pages covering General and Final Provisions, contain Part Two: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union (25 pages) and Part Three: The Policies and Functioning of the Union (167 pages).

Thus, these 192 pages (i.e. 80% of the new constitution) contain in effect the political, social and economic policies of

the European Union as it stands today. In other words,—and this is the vital point I am making—because these particular policies are contained in the constitution, it in effect freezes them; i.e. the constitution protects them from change. Any alteration to them will only be possible by pursuing a most complex and difficult process of constitutional change as already spelt out in Section II above concerning the “entrenched” nature of this proposed European constitutional law.

To help support my argument, let me quote from a recent book, *Constitutional Reform in the UK* (OUP, 2003) by Dawn Oliver, in which the author states:

One way of viewing European Community law is that it constitutionalizes the substantive law and policy of Member States, for instance in discrimination, social policy, employment and so on, by making it legally impossible for the Parliaments or Governments of Member States to alter these laws. This represents a departure from the liberal democratic tradition in the UK and many other countries, which treats Constitutions as neutral between political parties and does not dictate substantive policies. This tradition has been eroded in a number of respects in many modern democracies, including South Africa and India, which include principles of state policy or directive principles in their Constitutions and there are pressures in the UK to give legal status to social and economic rights that is comparable to the status of civil and political rights. There is in other words a trend towards constitutionalizing [i.e. entrenching] substantive policies in many parts of the world. (p 81)

It is as if the present government were able at this present moment to create a written constitution for the United Kingdom *and* were also able to include the political philosophy and the social and economic policies of the party itself as part of this new constitution, with all the entrenched power of such higher constitutional law and our own courts obliged to interpret all other laws, i.e. the ordinary law of the land, strictly in accordance with this constitution. It is therefore equivalent to any political party in power at the time, whether Labour, Liberal-Democrat or Conservative, being able to entrench their particular world-view and have its consequent substantive policies placed in an almost impregnable position for the middle to long term future, and so subvert the democratic process of British politics.

Similarly, given the general centralist, corporatist, bureaucratic and social market, political and economic structures and policies which, as many would argue, characterise the present European Union, adoption of the new draft constitution would have these written in stone. The knock-on effect would be that these particular political structures and socio-economic policies would become constitutionally normative for the United Kingdom itself because of the primacy of European law over the law of the member States, as per Article I–10, thus making future radical change, at least in the short to middle term, almost impossible and, dangerously, this would encourage the growth of revolutionary modes of political protest.

Let me conclude this section of my paper by quoting just one example given by David Heathcoat-Amory MP, one of the two British Parliament's representatives to the Convention which produced the draft EU constitution, in his booklet, *The European Constitution and what it means for Britain* (Centre for Policy Studies: June 2003), which illustrates this very process in the creation of the new constitution for the European Union:

Another working group [of the Convention] considered Economic Governance and agreed that, “economic policy coordination should be reinforced.” This suggestion has huge consequences. Article I–14 of the draft Constitution states that “The Union shall adopt measures to ensure coordination of the economic policies of the Member States.” The same Article was later changed to include “employment policies” as well.

The compulsory coordination of the economic and employment policies of all Member States is a significant transfer of responsibility and decision-making from national governments to the Union, going far beyond the existing EU treaties. It would certainly cover the overall level of taxation, interest rates and public expenditure in each country, as well as pensions policy and employment taxes.

Article I–14 goes on to assert that: “The Union may adopt initiatives to ensure the coordination of Member States’ social policies.” So the Union advances in all policy areas economic, employment and social.

[Thus] the Economic Governance working group expressed this old-fashioned belief in centralised economic management but did not carry out any study or even refer to the economic problems of the EU. [And] this ignored the real issue which is the evident failure of the EU economic model as an engine of growth and employment.

The EU is a low growth, high unemployment zone, characterised by high taxes, particularly on employment, and a habit of over-regulation.

In world terms, Europe is becoming less and less competitive but this wider dimension was hardly ever mentioned and never discussed in the Convention.

The threat here is patently obvious; namely, that those presently holding the reigns of political power both in the United Kingdom and in the European Union will have broken the liberal-democratic rules by deliberately entrenching their own particular socio-economic philosophy and policies within the new European Union constitution.

V

CONSTITUTIONS: OLD AND NEW

The *unwritten* nature of the United Kingdom’s constitution reflects the particular history of the British people as an island nation.

The British Isles have never been successfully invaded for a thousand years. Even William Duke of Normandy (in 1066) had a reasonably legitimate claim to the English Crown—he was a second cousin to Edward the Confessor whereas Harold of Wessex was only Edward’s brother-in-law. And, quoting from John Hudson, *The Formation of the English Common Law* (Longman: 1996, p. 21): “William I and his sons emphasised their position as legitimate rulers of England by confirming the ‘Laga Edwardi,’ meaning the good old laws of the Anglo-Saxon period.” Although under the early Norman kings of England there was an incursion of Roman Civil and Canon Law, by the time of Magna Carta (1215) onwards the earlier Christian common law of Alfred the Great and Edward the Confessor was gradually restored.

Our British constitution is therefore the product of a long continuous process of incremental change; and the sources of governmental authority and the rules that regulate the exercise of power by the organs of State and the relationships between these and its citizens are many and various. They include for example the common law; judicial case law; written documents, ancient and modern; preroga-

tives of the Crown; Acts of Parliament; non-written, non-legal, but binding constitutional conventions—together with three basic constitutional concepts or principles which underpin the modern system of British government, namely, the legal supremacy of the Queen in Parliament, the separation of powers, and the rule of law.

On the other hand contemporary *written* constitutions very much reflect the circumstances of their birth. For example the French constitution of 1792 was the product of the French Revolution and an almost total break with the nation’s history before 1789. John Maurice Kelly in his book, *A Short History of Western Legal Theory* (OUP: 1992) pages 274–5, expresses well the point I am making here when he says that

At the end of the [18th Century], however, there appeared from the pen of the Irishman Edmund Burke (1723–95), star of the British Parliament and society, a passionate claim for the superiority of organically grown systems over those constructed from purely rational, or supposed “natural,” materials. At first sympathetic to the reform of French institutions—as he had been to the cause of the American colonists, as well as to the grievances of his native country—he was so appalled by the course taken by the Revolution (and this was while Louis XVI was still alive and still king, and long before the Terror) that he turned into a fierce opponent of movements to uproot long-established systems in the name of reason and put artificial, purely rational constructions in their place.

In his famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) . . . [which was] formally constructed as a long open letter in reply to a French correspondent—[it is], curiously enough, although an assault on systems of reading off what “nature” is supposed by the rationalist mind to recommend, nevertheless [also a] celebration of nature in another sense; of that in institutions rooted in history; of the slow, organic progression and development of a nation in response to its own environment, and in a form suggested by its own genius.

Central to it is the contrast between the British Constitution, unembarrassed by rationalistic constructions, and quietly, as it were at a human pace, adapting itself simply and slightly as it went along to changing surroundings, and that of France, where structures which had been a thousand years in building were rashly pulled down overnight to make way for something thought up by theorists, although ample and far less destructive reform would have been possible by simple grafts upon, and excisions from, the old body . . .”

Kelly then quotes directly from Edmund Burke himself:

By a constitutional policy working after the pattern of nature, we [i.e. the British] receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives . . . By the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole [is] in a condition of unchangeable constancy, [and] moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation and progression . . .

You [i.e. the French] might have repaired those walls . . . built on those old foundations . . . [but] you began ill, because you began by despising everything that belonged to you; [whereas by] respecting your forefathers, you would have been taught to respect yourselves . . . Is every landmark of the country to be done away with in favour of a geometrical and arithmetical constitution?

By contrast our British constitution reflects at the same time both continuity and remarkable political, economic and cultural change. The growth over centuries of our common law system, as opposed to the European civil (i.e. Roman)

law based systems; the emergence of an increasingly representative Parliament from the 13th century onwards; the limitation of the power of the crown and its separation into the three now distinct institutions of legislature, executive and judiciary; and the creation of a truly liberal-democratic State—this is a truly remarkable achievement.

It is in so many ways a unique historical product that even the European nations, our closest neighbours, recognise a distinction between the “Anglo-Saxon” approach and the European approach to political, economic and cultural values and structures. Take for example the quote by the President of the European Investment Bank who said in 1996: “The purpose of a single currency is to prevent the encroachment of Anglo-Saxon views in Europe.”

We should not be too surprised by the hostility evidenced by such a comment. We are in many ways different from our continental neighbours and much more like our American cousins. This also helps to explain the clear determination of France and Germany to create a strong European super-State to be a countervailing super-power to the United States, which is now, especially since the end of the Second World War, the carrier of these Anglo-Saxon political, economic and cultural values.

VI

CONSTITUTIONS: DEMOCRATIC AND NON-DEMOCRATIC

Related to the previous points the proposed new European Union constitution reflects a much more centralised, bureaucratic and corporatist concept of governance.

For example, it was for good reason that the Laeken declaration of 2001, which established the Convention on the Future of Europe, recognised that the European Union was “behaving too bureaucratically” and that “the European institutions must be brought closer to the citizens.” The Convention’s purpose was therefore to define the respective powers of the Union and its member States, to simplify its rules, and to create “more democracy, transparency and efficiency,” with particular reference to the role of national Parliaments.

One of the major defects of the present European Union has been what is called the “Democratic Deficit,” namely, that the accountability of the European Union’s governing institutions to the peoples of Europe is not only weak but is also in many instances non-existent. The idea of a government’s accountability to its citizens is of course no new idea and its historical development helps to explain the more centralised and bureaucratic governmental approach of those European States with their civil (i. e. Roman) law history compared to the much more limited and accountable governmental systems characteristic of the common law inheritance. To quote again from John Maurice Kelly’s *A Short History of Western Legal Theory* (p. 92):

... the advancing autocracy of the Roman emperors had, as early as 200 [A.D.], been bolstered by juristic doctrine; [for example] the will of the princes [i.e. the ruler], Ulpian had written, makes law . . . and the atmosphere of the late empire, in which the last democratic forms had been shed by monarchs now more aptly called “lords and masters” than merely “chiefs,” was not one in which anyone sought to remobilise the original and fundamental authority of the people . . . The Germanic [i.e. the Anglo-Saxon] invasions, however, brought on to the old Roman lands nations

with quite other traditions, and kings of those nations who, at any rate at first, raised no such pretensions about their position as the Roman emperors had entertained.

A long perspective on political and legal theory in the early medieval world seems therefore to reveal a competition between two opposed conceptions of the source of authority and law within the state. The competing conceptions have been labelled the “descending” and the “ascending” theories of government.

The “descending” theory means the view according to which power is originally centred in the ruler, who is beholden to no human being for it . . . and whose subjects have no role in moderating or imposing conditions on its exercise, but must simply submit. On the “ascending” theory, power derives ultimately from the people, from whom it is delegated upwards to rest in the ruler’s hand: but, in conformity with the source of his authority, bound to respect the people’s laws which are antecedent to him.

By a neat if oversimple affiliation of each of these theories to one of the two main cultural elements in Europe at the outset of the Middle Ages, the descending theory is characteristic of the Roman, the ascending theory of the Germanic [i.e. Anglo-Saxon] tradition.

It is, of course, a basic principle of the British constitution that *political* sovereignty lies with the people, while *legal* supremacy lies with the Queen in Parliament.

One vital aspect of this important constitutional doctrine is that the people, i.e. the *demos*, can dismiss the government of the day in a general election and therefore ensure that the next government more closely reflects the will of the voters and, also most importantly, secure a peaceful transmission of governmental power to a different, and often radically different, political party, with all the political, social and economic change that will result. In other words, under our British constitution those who exercise political power are directly accountable to the people, i.e. the voters.

But what is the position vis-à-vis direct accountability of the European Union institutions to the people of its member States? The most powerful European institutions are of course the European Council and the Council of Ministers; the European Commission; the European Court of Justice; the European Central Bank; and the European Parliament—in that order. But in terms of accountability to the people, and especially to the people of the individual member States, how do the EU institutions measure up to democratic accountability?

First, both the European Council which “shall define its general political direction and priorities,” i.e. the strategic direction of the whole of the EU, and the Council of Ministers, which possess both legislative and executive powers, are at best only very indirectly accountable to their own respective Parliaments, especially given, for example, the United Kingdom Parliament, where the executive and legislative powers are exercised in terms of an “Elective Dictatorship” and where governments increasingly ignore, when it suits them, the fairly obvious wishes of their people.

Second, the European Commission not only has the sole responsibility for drafting all European legislation but also exercises executive power—yet it is not democratically elected, i.e. it exhibits the “Democratic Deficit” with a vengeance. And note, in the Commission’s own response to the Draft Constitution (dated Brussels, 13th June 2003), it has stated that “The Commission regards it as essential that the unanimity requirement [i.e. every remaining national veto] be lifted at once in [all] other areas too.”

Third, the European Court of Justice which will con-

tinue to pursue its “politically activist” interpretation of the new European constitution in terms of the European Charter’s wording “in creating an ever closer union” and whose accountability will be solely to its own interpretations of that very same European constitution.

Fourth, the European Central Bank’s decisions are free of any political oversight, whether from the central European institutions or those of the member States. The present interest rate is, for example, far too high for Germany and far too low for the Ireland.

Fifth, the European Parliament is the only European institution that possess some semblance of direct accountability, in that it is, at least, elected. But not only is the level of voter interest extremely low, especially in the United Kingdom where the average percentage of votes cast is well below 30%, but the size of the electorate each MEP represents is so large that his/her relationship with the citizen is tenuous in the extreme. For example, in my own area of Scotland average turnout percentage for Westminster elections was 71%, whereas average turnout percentage for the European Parliament election was 25%. Each Westminster MP represents an average of 53,000 voters, whereas each MEP represents an average of 498,000 voters—more than nine times as much. The result is that the typical MEP is all but invisible; and hardly anyone outside of political party activists know of his existence, let alone his name.

Given, therefore, that the direct accountability of the European central institutions is either weak or completely non-existent, can it not at least be argued that through their own directly elected Parliaments, the member States will now, in terms of the new Draft Constitution, be able not only to monitor the executive actions and legislative proposals of the Central European institutions but also to limit these through the specific inclusion within the new constitution of the highly acclaimed “principle of subsidiarity”?

I have already argued in Section II above just how ineffective and just how deficient this principle of subsidiarity will prove to be as a means of providing national Parliaments with the power to monitor and/or limit any further expansion of the European Union central institutions. Therefore one does not have to possess any great prophetic insight to predict that the much vaunted “principle of subsidiarity” will become largely a dead letter, and therefore no real check on a European Union determined—as historically it has been—to transfer power from the periphery of the member States to the centre of the European Union. Thus, if democratic accountability is an important benchmark of responsible government, even the present status of the European Union fails the test and the new draft constitution will merely compound that failure by distancing the European Union yet further from the peoples of the member States.

VII

CONSTITUTIONS: CHRISTIAN AND NON-CHRISTIAN

The first text I quoted in my Introduction was: “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: Except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain” (Ps. 127:1). This leads me on to the question of whether or not our Christian-biblical faith has or should have any effect at all on the governance of our nation.

This is obviously a subject requiring a much fuller

treatment than I am able to give it in this short paper. Nevertheless, a few important points are worth making before I come to some conclusions in Section VIII below.

During the Convention on the Future of Europe there was a strenuous attempt made, especially under pressure from the Roman Catholic Church, to include in the Preamble to the draft constitutional treaty a reference to the contribution made by Christianity to the historical development of European civilisation. This proposal was just as strenuously opposed and the first two paragraphs of the Draft Preamble to the new constitution now read as follows:

Conscious that Europe is a continent that has brought forth civilisation; that its inhabitants, arriving in successive waves since the first ages of mankind, have gradually developed the values underlying *humanism*: equality of persons, freedom, respect for reason,

Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and *humanist* inheritance of Europe, which, always present in its heritage, has embodied in the life of society its perception of the central role of the human person and his inviolable and inalienable rights, and respect for the law . . .”

But whether or not the framers of the draft EU constitution like it or not, the United Kingdom owes its constitutional and legal history largely to the influence of biblical Christianity. From the first century A.D. onwards the Christian faith has been present in our British Isles and its contribution to our law and constitutional practice has been immense.

Two of Stephen Perks’ books, *Christianity and Law* (Taunton: Avant Books, 1993), and *A Defence of the Christian State* (Taunton: Kuyper Foundation, 1998) are important references to be consulted. And Professor Francis Nigel Lee’s doctoral dissertation on the common law, *The Roots of the Common Law in Biblical, Iro-Scottic, Brythonic and English Jurisprudence* (Florida: Samuel Rutherford School of Law, 1993) is also well worth tracking down.

While not doubting at all the contribution, though largely detrimental, of Roman Catholic influence on continental Europe’s political development, in the United Kingdom our political development has come from biblical, i.e. from Protestant, Christianity.

Thus there are Christian and non-Christian constitutions, and the United Kingdom is explicitly and constitutionally both a Christian and a covenanted nation, while the European Union, especially in terms of its draft constitution, is not.

One fairly recent example will have to suffice for this paper. The Queen is our Head of State and all constitutional and legal power is exercised in the name of the Crown. The Queen’s Service of Coronation, itself based on the coronation oaths from earlier centuries, clearly indicates the covenantal status of the United Kingdom for all to see. For example, here are some excerpts:

First, the oath administered by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the monarch reads, in part, as follows: “Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true Profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law?” The Queen’s answer is: “These things which I have here before promised, I will perform, and keep. So help me God.”

Second, when the sword of State is deposited in the traverse of Saint Edward the Confessor’s Chapel, and the

monarch is to be girt with another sword in a scabbard of purple velvet in lieu of the sword of State, the Archbishop says the prayer as follows: “Hear our prayers, O LORD, we beseech thee, and so direct and support thy servant Queen Elizabeth, who is now to be girt with this Sword, that she may not bear it in vain; but may use it as the minister of God for the terror and punishment of evil-doers, and for the protection and encouragement of those that do well, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Third, when the Queen is dressed in the Robe Royal, and the Orb with the Cross is delivered into her hand, the Archbishop pronounces this blessing and exhortation: “Receive this Imperial Robe, and Orb; and the Lord your God endue you with knowledge and wisdom, with majesty and with power from on high; the Lord embrace you with his mercy on every side; the Lord clothe you with the Robe of Righteousness, and with the garments of salvation. And when you see this Orb thus set under the Cross, remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer”

Fourth, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland presents the monarch with the Holy Bible and says these words to the Queen: “Our Gracious Queen; we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; This is the Royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God.” Thus the final, and overwhelmingly the most powerful, reason why the United Kingdom must reject the draft European Union constitution is in accordance with God’s own command in Exodus 23:32, where he says: “Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.” Their ways are not our ways, nor are their gods our gods. We owe our allegiance to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and him alone we will serve.

VIII

SOME CONCLUSIONS

First, briefly, the question of the refusal by our present government to allow the British people a referendum on the adoption of this new European constitutional treaty. I referred previously to A. V. Dicey’s argument (in his *Law of the Constitution*) that in the British constitution political, as opposed to legal, sovereignty is located not in Parliament but in the people, and that therefore the will of the electorate should prevail on all subjects to be determined by Parliament.

Earlier, at the end of the 17th century, John Locke, in his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), had also argued the fiduciary character of government—i.e. that the executive and legislative powers of government were held on trust from the people and that if government breached that trust, that government should be dismissed and replaced by another. But the present government argues that it is not for the electorate but for *Parliament* alone to make the decision on

whether or not the United Kingdom should adopt the new EU constitution. It claims the right to make this decision on behalf of (i.e. instead of) the British people.

It is however quite clear, first, that the proposed new EU constitution is not merely the “tidying-up” exercise that the government claims it to be; and second, that there was no mention at all of a new constitutional treaty in the Labour Party Election Manifesto for the last (2001) general election. Therefore, the present government does *not* have an electoral mandate to carry out such a major and far-reaching constitutional change. Either there must be a general election or there must be a referendum on this issue if the government is not to violate the trust of the British people.

Second, my whole argument in this paper clearly illustrates the necessity for biblical Christians to recognise that the vast majority of contemporary evangelical Christianity in Britain today seems to believe that politics is something that only non-Christians do—and we don’t! In other words, the odd notion prevails that politics and religion do not mix, indeed, that they should not mix. But as a result of such a fundamentally mistaken view of the total application of the gospel of the Kingdom we are now in grave danger of seeing the destruction of our British Christian heritage, that very biblical heritage that earlier generations of Christians had struggled—aye, and in many cases died—to preserve so that our generation in turn would pass it on to future generations until he, whose right it is to rule, returns.

As Professor Francis Nigel Lee comments: “Early Christians knew how they would gain the victory over the world—through obedience to the Law of God” (*op. cit.*, p. 2091). Therefore, unless Christians do some serious biblical thinking, leading to some serious political action, we will only have ourselves to blame if we lose that distinctive Anglo-Saxon heritage that has contributed so much during the last 2000 years of European and world history to the creation of the political, social and economic freedoms we enjoy today. This would indeed be a tragedy of major proportions, not only for the United Kingdom itself but also for the world at the beginning of the 21st century of the Christian era. Hear, therefore, that most solemn warning from Holy Scripture: “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Pr. 14:12).

Finally, while determined opposition to the imposition of a seriously flawed EU constitution is essential to preserve the integrity of the United Kingdom as an independent sovereign nation, something much more is required in order to ensure that our British Christian heritage is not only maintained but strengthened. This is indicated by our third introductory text: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mt. 6:33). Only when the kingdom of God is given its due priority at every level of our national life—individual, family, Church and State—will the United Kingdom demonstrate a model of governance that other nations will wish to adopt. C&S

KINGDOM LIVING

by Derek Carlsen

JESUS spoke much about the Kingdom of God. Regrettably, however, many Christians don't really understand what the Kingdom is and thus don't know what Kingdom living is either. This is a massive subject, though I would like to share some thoughts on what this kind of living should include. Obviously much more could be said, but this can serve as a primer towards more consistent Kingdom thinking and living.

At the outset, it is vital to realise that the King of the universe doesn't have a post-dated reign on the earth (i.e. only effective some time in the future). The Lord who claims sovereign right to and authority over everything that exists (1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 24:1; 50:12), is the King who reigns not only in heaven above, but on the earth beneath (Dt. 4:39; Josh. 2:11; 2 Chron. 20:6; Ps. 83:18). The King is King now, and thus his reign and Kingdom are also now. The reason people have difficulty accepting this is due to their own misconceptions about the Kingdom. Similarly, in Christ's day, most of the people had a wrong view about what the Messiah's appearing would be like and thus they didn't know he was in their midst (see comments in my commentary at Jn 7:26, 27). When you have the wrong perception of something, the chances are you won't recognise it even if you trip over it. The highly educated religious leaders in Christ's time, with their false concepts about the Kingdom, asked when it would come. They were told that God's Kingdom, contrary to their expectations, would not appear with a great outward show (Lk. 17:20). Jesus added that the Kingdom could not be perceived by an audience looking on from the outside. It is impossible to sit back and observe the appearing of the Kingdom over there or over here (Lk. 17:21). The question these leaders asked revealed that they were confused about the essence of God's Kingdom and Jesus quickly pointed this out. He told them that inseparable from perceiving God's Kingdom was knowing and embracing it within their hearts. This is what Jesus had told Nicodemus, saying that unless a work of grace had been done in his heart, he wouldn't even be able to see the Kingdom (Jn 3:3). To enter into the Kingdom and to perceive the Kingdom both require a new heart (John 3:5). To enter the Kingdom is to be entered by the Kingdom and we *see* the Kingdom when the Kingdom has entered into us—this is the same as being told that to be in Christ, is to also have Christ in us (Jn 6:56; 14:20; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27; 1 Jn 4:12, 13).

When Christ began his public ministry, he immediately announced that the Kingdom was in their midst or at hand (Mt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Mk. 1:14, 15; Lk. 10:9, 11). Thus it is possible that the religious leaders' question (Lk. 17:20) was in response

to such statements. Jesus' answer was that the initial coming of the Kingdom was within the hearts of his servants—but this was only the beginning (Mt. 13:31–33). When the Kingdom comes or is birthed within a person's heart, we have to ask what the long term consequences will be upon the whole of that person's life. Once we are *born* into the Kingdom, surely we need to know what it means to *live* in the reality of the Kingdom. Our answer to this question however, must be strictly biblical, lest we explain it according to our own preconceived ideas and end up with a distorted view of Kingdom life. If our view of the Kingdom is wrong, the way we live our lives will bring neither glory to God nor real joy to us (Rom. 14:17). It is wrong to think that Kingdom life is *only* an inner, spiritual attitude of the heart that has no relationship to, nor makes any impact upon, the affairs of this world. While the fullness of the Kingdom is still future, there can be no escaping from its present reality. Though the Kingdom is birthed individually within people's hearts, the evidence of this inner reality is to be clearly manifested in every aspect of their everyday life (Lk. 6:43–49; 2 Cor. 10:5; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 1 Pet. 1:15). Cornelius Van Til said that the Bible is authoritative on everything of which it speaks and it speaks of everything (*Apologetics*, p. 2). Every principle that is necessary for living a God-glorifying life in every possible area has been supplied in the Scriptures. Kingdom living is knowing and doing all of this by the grace of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ultimately, God's Kingdom refers to his *divine rule* in all the affairs of life and he rules according to his eternal truth. Remember that God's Kingdom rule relates to both redemption and judgement—a single, two-edged sword bringing deliverance from sin and death to his children and destruction to his enemies. To be in the Kingdom is to serve the King, which means living in submission to his rule, and having the Kingdom within refers to that internal, quickening of God in one's life—evidenced by willing obedience to his rule, flowing from a new heart (Jer. 31:33; Ezk. 11:19, 20; 36:26, 27). It is important to realise that a significant part of God's ruling is done through the hearts and lives of his servants. Dr. J. I. Packer, who is regarded as one of the greatest living theologians, said “This kingdom came with Jesus the Messiah as a world-wide relational reality, existing wherever the lordship of Jesus is acknowledged in repentance, faith, and new obedience” (*Concise Theology*, p. 193). Thus, the essence of Kingdom living is obedient service flowing out of a deep relationship with the King—both of which rest upon the new birth. Relationship is the heartbeat of Kingdom life; that is, relationship with God and other

people. And God has revealed how we ought to relate in every situation. One of the necessities for serving the King is having absolute trust in his definition of reality and righteousness and applying these truths to the details of our many different relationships. In a nutshell, Kingdom living is relating to every situation that touches our lives in accordance with God's revelation, for his glory and in his power (Pr. 3:5; 23:4; 28:6; Jer. 9:23, 24; Mt. 4:4; 6:33; 1 Cor. 3:18–20; 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 2:12, 13). The Kingdom is inseparable from life and life includes everything. It is those who are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness that say there are some things in this life that are outside the Kingdom and therefore beyond the King's command.

Everything that exists has been made for Christ and his glory (Pr. 16:4; Is. 43:7; Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16; Heb. 2:10; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 4:11). The reason we exist is so that we can glorify Christ—this is why we breathe and our hearts beat. Our whole purpose for being can be explained in no other way. If we deny that we exist for the glory of God then our lives have no meaning or relevance. To find significance we must do what we were created to do and that is to serve the Lord with our whole being. Whatsoever we do we are to do with our might unto the Lord. Whatever we have we are to use for his glory and the advancement of his Kingdom. God's giftings and callings are so diverse because his Kingdom is as diverse as life itself and each individual is responsible before God to use their unique abilities and opportunities to advance Christ's name and purposes. We exist for God's glory, though our lives in him have many facets and so we must not think that living wholly unto the Lord means we never have fun, or rejoice or celebrate or relax; however, it does mean that even in these things, our focus is his Kingdom and glory (1 Cor. 10:31).

To glorify God in our lives we have to trust that he is in sovereign control of every detail and that nothing (including Satan's activities) happens without his ordering and permission (Job 1:12; Pr. 16:33; Dan. 4:35; 5:21, 23; Mt. 10:29, 30). This is vital, because while we are in the service of the King and his Kingdom, it is ultimately the *King* who is building his Kingdom and many times we will not know why certain things happen in the way they do. Our responsibility is not to scrutinise the Lord's working and complain about our circumstances, but to do his will in the midst of our circumstances. Proof that we are serving his Kingdom is not determined by how favourable our circumstances are, but by our doing the Lord's will in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. It is the sovereign Lord who is in control and shaping his Kingdom and we have to trust him in this—anything else is rebellion.

Christ's contentment and satisfaction, in the days of his flesh prior to his exaltation, were not dependent upon his circumstances, but on doing his Father's will. This confronts us with the personally searching question of whether we actually want to live for and do the Father's will. What is the real motivation and goal for our life? In John chapter 4, Jesus, after walking most of the day, was in much physical discomfort: tired, thirsty and hungry, yet his focus was still upon the needs of others and being about his Father's business. After reaching out to the woman at the well, his disciples were amazed to find him physically satisfied and refreshed and wondered who had fed him, but Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn 4:34). It is a great tragedy when we are neutralised by self-

centredness, discontent and frustration and thus fail to labour for the King's glory in the midst of our difficult circumstances. Rather than trusting that God is always working and therefore believing that we also must be working, we are made ineffective by our self-pity and complaining. The Kingdom is God's and he neither slumbers nor sleeps (Ps. 121:4). It is not only futile, but oppressive, to live for our own comfort, will and name. Kingdom liberty is saying to the King, with all sincerity, "Not my will, but your will be done" (Lk. 22:42; 2 Cor. 5:15) and then living accordingly, by his enabling. What significance and eternal relevance do our desires and names have? Zero! Christ is all in all and it is only as we use all we have and all we are, to advance his desires and name, that there is any meaning and value whatsoever in our efforts.

While we are called into Kingdom service, it is God alone who knows how best to build his Kingdom and what steps to take in order to reach the final goal. Most of these details remain hidden in God's secret counsel which we are not to concern ourselves with (Dt. 29:29). Nevertheless, even when we can't understand the timing or how things are going to work out, we still know how we ought to live and thus glorify God in our circumstances. Joseph certainly couldn't see how things would turn out during his long, lonely years of suffering. Try to imagine the trauma of being utterly despised by your siblings; being dragged off as a slave into a foreign land; the injustice and betrayal of Potiphar's family; being cast into a harsh prison environment; and finally, the disappointment of being forgotten in prison. However, despite these difficult circumstances, in every situation, year after year (for about 13 years), Joseph lived with integrity, serving others with his might for the glory of God (Col. 3:17, 23). Joseph had no basis for self-pity, since he had Kingdom work to do—he knew he was on God's mission, though the details were probably very confusing. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter (Rom. 8:36) and we are not our own, but have been bought at a price to glorify God with our whole being (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Until our minds are renewed by God's word and Spirit whereby we trust in the reality of God's sovereign ordering of all things as well as in his fatherly love for us, we will not effectively serve the Kingdom. We exist for him and his glory and he knows how best to refine and mature us so that we can be most effective in his service. Our responsibilities are simple: we are to do with all our might whatever our hand finds to do and we are to do it for his glory (which means, doing it in accordance with his revealed will). John the Baptist's bold stand against immorality cost him his head (Mt. 14:3–12). The apostle James was executed, while Peter was miraculously delivered from certain execution (Acts 12:1–10). Which of these incidents glorified the Lord and furthered his Kingdom? They all did. As Paul said, "if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:7, see too 2 Cor. 4:11; Phil. 1:20, 21; 1 Thess. 5:10). Neither one of these men knew what the outcome of their testimony would be, but they all faithfully did what they knew they had to do and left the results in God's hands. The Lord *will* use us in a way that will advance his Kingdom the most. However, the question is whether our focus will be upon God's will or our own. Are we going to experience discontent and oppression or true joy and liberty? God has promised the latter to those who live for his glory.

Kingdom living doesn't just happen. One does not stumble into this kind of life as one would fall down a hole one did not know was there. Jesus said, "from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force" (Mt. 11:12). He was *not* talking about guns and physical force, but presenting a picture of what is entailed in Kingdom living. There has to be earnest, intense determination to live in the fullness of what God has promised, which includes a casting off of the old life and all of its influences. Zeal and single-minded effort for Christ's glory are characteristics of those who are born again and made new creatures in Christ.

These characteristics of zealous determination, to receive all that God has promised, are clearly seen in Jacob. Jacob knew what was his and struggled to obtain the fullness of what God had promised to bless him with (Gen. 32:24–30)—he wrestled with God the whole night and said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me" (v. 26). The desire for Christ's name to be exalted should burn in our hearts so that we groan and agonise for him to be glorified. We have to get out of the clutches of our own perverse generation—out of its mindset and manipulation.

However, this is not easy, requiring such intense struggle that Jesus called it *violent* (cf. Mt. 10:21, 34). Our lives are so short (Jam. 4:14) and there is only one thing that gives meaning to our existence and that is serving the King by doing everything he has commanded. Hence the great need to know and quickly do his will contained in the Scriptures. Kingdom living is hungering and thirsting after righteousness and persevering and prevailing through prayer *and labour* so that righteousness (i.e. God's rule) is manifested in all areas of life—our own as well as that around us.

This is the same single-minded desire that Jesus likened to eating his flesh and drinking his blood (Jn 6:53ff)—which means sharing in Christ's self-sacrificial way of living for the Father's glory. Satisfaction is not received until the fullness of Christ enters into us and we enter into the fullness of Christ and his Kingdom. The Kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force (Mt. 11:12). Much earnest and untiring energy is required to possess the fullness of the Kingdom and truly glorify Christ. But we have to take hold of it with both hands and refuse to let go. Great blessings are only experienced by those who are not afraid to challenge, with the pure word of God, the man-made traditions and mindset of their own day. They do not count the cost but press in to take all that God has ordained, being motivated by the desire to glorify Christ's name.

Such burning zeal is the possession of a true child of God and the Father hastens to answer their prayers and prosper their efforts, for *this* is the Kingdom of God. Our assurance is to rest upon the fact that God is with us. When we stand upon his eternal truth and boldly make it known, God *is* with us—this is reality and our motivation and confidence arises from our certain knowledge of this and not from the circumstances surrounding us. Our minds need to be renewed so that we live our lives in the reality of God's Kingdom around us and within us. We are not to base our confidence upon our wisdom, words or strength, but are to draw all we need from God who has called us, gifted us, works through us and forever stands with us to accomplish his eternal purposes.

When we stand in Jesus Christ, the same truth and power that was the basis of his strength, hope and victory is the basis of our strength, hope and victory. The God who

sends us labouring into his Kingdom is also with us and in us, labouring in his Kingdom. *C&S*

Dancing Partner

Music. With a fast beat.
Quick steps, pounding feet.
Will you dance?

You're afraid.
You are tired.
You don't want to join the rhythm.

You've always been scared to dance,
yet you want to be asked. How can
a crowd seem so lonely?

When the music, loud,
Surrounds you.
And all the dancers, surround you.

You're afraid to let go.
The wall at your side
seems more a friend than the smiles and laughs
around you.
Is there a smile inside to
match them?

Dance. Your feet are longing to start.
But you hesitate.

Dance. Yes. I want to.
I want to dance.

As you step forward.
Just one step, it is enough.
This dancer has seen your intent.
Hand offered,
and accepted.

The music around you is quieter now,
it plays within.
Your heart beats the rhythm now.

This dancer has longed to be your partner.
He has watched you. And waited.
Waited 'til he saw your feet step
forward.

As the evidence of your desire.

He leads you, follow his steps.
Move with him.

And together you dance.
This dance will not end
Because your partner never tires.

He knows your step before you
take it.
You know this song so well,
but never on your lips has it sounded.

It's faster, louder, yet gentler.
You were afraid to dance. But you
know your partner will always
dance. With you. For you.

Always adore you.
Dance.

THE LIFE AND VISION OF ABRAHAM KUYPER

Joel R. Beeke *

As a multitalented Dutch neo-Calvinist theologian, Church reformer, university founder, journalist, statesman, and visionary of a Christian and Reformed world-view, the name of Abraham Kuyper is inseparable from any consideration of the ecclesiastical, political, and educational history of the Netherlands. When Kuyper had yet to become Prime Minister, Benjamin B. Warfield wrote in 1898, “Dr. Kuyper is probably today the most considerable figure in both political and ecclesiastical Holland.”

Kuyper summarised the dominating principle of Calvinism as “the sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole cosmos, in all its spheres and kingdoms, visible and invisible.” He spent most of his life implementing by pen and practice his most frequently quoted words, “There is not a square inch [literally, ‘thumb’s breadth’] in the whole domain of our human experience over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry, ‘Mine!’”

Let’s take a brief look at Kuyper’s remarkable life and consider the highlights of his Calvinistic world-view.

Childhood and Education

Abraham Kuyper was born on October 29, 1837, in the small fishing village of Maasluis, the Netherlands, the eldest son of Henriette Huber, a former teacher of Swiss descent, and Jan Frederick Kuyper, a minister in the Dutch State Reformed Church. By the time of Abraham’s birth, liberal modernists, who had abandoned Reformed confessional theology, occupied most of the pulpits in the Netherlands and held all the significant posts in the universities and seminaries. Truly Reformed ministers and people formed a minority within the State Church. Abraham’s father took a middle position between liberal modernism and the orthodox Reformed.

In 1841 the Kuyper family moved to Middleburg, the capital of the province of Zeeland. Growing up in this historic seaport, Bram, as he was nicknamed, developed a strong love for the sea and yearned to be a sailor. At

Middleburg, he was home-schooled, particularly by his mother who taught him French. His father taught him German. As a boy, he showed an aptitude for languages and the ability to master nearly any subject.

In 1849 Bram’s father accepted a pastoral call to Leiden. For six years, Abraham attended the Leiden “gymnasium,” a school that was geared to preparing students for university. He delivered the valedictory address in German on “Ulfilas, the Bishop of the Visigoths, and his Gothic Translation of the Bible.”

In 1855 Kuyper entered the renowned University of Leiden, which then had an enrollment of 500–600 students and a 280-year history but was infested with modernism. He was most influenced by Matthias DeVries, professor of literary studies, from whom he learned the beauty and power of good writing. Kuyper graduated in 1858 *summa cum laude*, but as a modernist from a modernistic school.

Following in the footsteps of his father, Kuyper prepared for the ministry in the Reformed State Church, receiving his theological education at the University of Leiden (1858–1861). The influences from the professors were uniformly liberal. Kuyper’s Church history professor, L. W. Rauwenhoff, embraced an evolutionistic view of history. Abraham Keunen, a higher critic, taught Biblical Studies. Joannes Henricus Scholten, who taught systematic theology, denied the bodily resurrection of Christ. Kuyper was deeply influenced by the modernist theology of Scholten and others at Leiden, even, at one time, joining in the student applause of a professor who openly denied the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In addition to these influences, two current schools of thought in the Netherlands molded Kuyper’s modernistic thinking. The first was the Groningen School, which dominated the National Church until about 1860; it promoted a Christian humanism after the order of Desiderius Erasmus, the most famous humanist in Reformation times. P. Hofstede de Groot (1801–1866), the foremost Groningen theologian and author of *Natural Theology*, promoted a religion of feelings and veneration of Christ as the leader of humanity, the supreme religious teacher, and an excellent moral example, while denying his Godhead and the Trinity. He and his colleagues at Groningen University published *Truth in Love*, a journal aimed at “cultured Christians to promote reasonable faith.” Second, the so-called Ethical School promoted an ecumenical religion of tolerance based on the inner, ethical life of man. Ethical Theology, championed by Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye (1818–74), a pastor in Leiden who published *Ernst en Vrede* (Sincerity and Peace), was a doctrine

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that taught that the term “ethical” conveyed the inner personal accent of faith that orthodox Calvinism lacked. The Ethical theologians denied the doctrine of human depravity and embraced all the critical theories of the day about the origins, composition, and reliability of the Bible. Although God governed Kuyper’s life in such a way that his surrender to modernism never became complete, his flirtation with liberal theology undoubtedly helps explain why he became such an ardent foe of all modernistic thinking after his conversion to orthodox Calvinism.

The University of Leiden conferred on Kuyper a doctorate in theology on September 20, 1862, after he had written a dissertation comparing the ecclesiology of the Polish reformer John à Lasco with that of John Calvin. Kuyper’s dissertation was of crucial significance for the development of his life and thought in two ways. First, the extraordinary, providential manner in which Kuyper located a treasury of à Lasco’s writings, after a frustrating and fruitless search of the holdings of major European university libraries, had a profound spiritual influence of his life. While Kuyper was a theological student at Leiden, the theological faculty at the University of Groningen offered a prize for the best essay comparing the ecclesiologies of à Lasco and Calvin.

The difficulty with this project, as Kuyper discovered, was that the majority of à Lasco’s writings seemed to have disappeared. The Leiden professor who had encouraged Kuyper to write for the prize, Matthias DeVries, suggested that Kuyper explore some private libraries, beginning with that of his father, a clergyman in Haarlem, in whose library Kuyper was astonished to discover a veritable treasure of à Lasco’s writings. Twelve years later Kuyper wrote of this find in reverent tones as “a miracle of God” (*een wonder Gods*) given by the “finger of God” (*vinger Gods*). “The impression which that almost unbelievable experience made upon my heart,” he wrote, “was so profound and lasting, that whenever I go back in my memory to recall the seeking love of my God, I still always, in one way or another, return to that miraculous find of Lasciana.” Kuyper wrote the essay in Latin and obtained the prize, then developed it for his doctoral dissertation.

The second important effect of this study project for Kuyper’s life is that it not only acquainted Kuyper with the writings of John Calvin, which would serve him well in later years, but it also brought to his attention the questions of ecclesiology and Church reform. Kuyper would become first and foremost a Church reformer, and his struggle to effect change in the Dutch State Reformed Church was especially informed by the ecclesiology of à Lasco.

Conversion and Early Ministry

By his own testimony, Kuyper’s conversion from liberal modernism to Reformed orthodoxy and his subsequent love and passion for reform of the Church was influenced by three factors: First, his sensitivity to what he considered to be God’s providential leading in finding the à Lasco collection. Second, the profound impression upon his soul of Charlotte Yonge’s novel, *The Heir of Redcliffe*, read during a time of nervous exhaustion due to overwork. The book, which is the story of a proud successful man, Philip de Morville, who is humbled, and a poor man who is exalted, broke Kuyper’s proud spirit and convicted him of sin as he identified with de

Morville. He later wrote: “What I lived through in my soul in that moment I fully understood only later, yet from that hour, after that moment, I scorned what I formerly esteemed, I sought what I once dared to despise.” Nevertheless, Kuyper did not yet understand or embrace the gospel.

Third, and above all, Kuyper’s evangelical conversion was effected by his contact with the Reformed orthodoxy and personal piety of the Church members in his first pastoral charge at Beesd from 1863 to 1867. In the summer following graduation, he married Johanna Schaay, with whom he moved to the Gelderland village of Beesd to begin his career as a pastor in the Dutch Reformed Church. The congregation at Beesd consisted of simple villagers, some of whom had embraced modernism and were worldly, while others were committed Calvinists, excelled in biblical spiritual experience and piety, and would concede nothing to Kuyper’s liberalism. Pietronella Baltus, a peasant woman in her thirties, confronted Kuyper directly about his modernistic thinking, lack of Reformed experiential preaching, and apparent lack of saving faith in Christ, even refusing to shake his hand. Kuyper, surprised and chagrined, prevailed upon her to shake his hand, but she made it clear that she did so only as a fellow human being—not because he was a brother in Christ. Upon repeated visits, this young woman told Kuyper that he was preaching false doctrine and that his soul was in danger of eternal hell. The simple biblical clarity, wedded to spiritual practice, of such parishioners profoundly moved Kuyper; he realized they possessed a faith in Christ that he lacked. Eventually, God was pleased to use Kuyper’s visits with such humble yet determined parishioners to lead him back to Calvin and the Reformed fathers, and from them to the Scriptures and to personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Preacher and Pastorate

Kuyper’s preaching changed substantially after his conversion. Possessed with “a new sense of divine things,” as Jonathan Edwards expressed it, the doctrines of grace and the Reformed faith dominated his pulpit expositions. His sermons married head and heart knowledge. They attracted attention both for his oratorical skills and for how they satisfied the thirst of the spiritually-minded *kleine luyden* (the common folk) like Pietronella Baltus. “My life’s goal,” Kuyper said, “was now the restoration of a Church that could be our mother.”

In 1867 Kuyper accepted a ministerial call to Utrecht, a Church with eleven ministers and 35,000 members. During his three years in Utrecht, Kuyper’s popularity as a preacher grew exponentially. At Utrecht, Kuyper met Groen Van Prinsterer and took up the cause of the Anti-Revolutionary Party.

Then, in 1870, Kuyper accepted a call to the Reformed Church at Amsterdam, the most influential and prestigious Church in the country, consisting of 140,000 members, 136 office-bearers, 28 ministers, and 14 sanctuaries and chapels. Here Kuyper, at the height of his power as a preacher, attracted large congregations. He was gifted, as are all great preachers, to reach both the intellectual and the *kleine luyden*, whom he loved. Children were fascinated with his teaching and he regularly spoke at orphanages.

His liturgical work in the pulpit was also highly esteemed. His prayers were eloquent and humble; his reading of Scripture, heartfelt. One fellow professor, Frederik L.

Rutgers, said that just hearing Kuyper read Psalm 148 from the pulpit was a clearer exposition than most sermons preached on that Psalm!

Kuyper's pulpit work faced great opposition in Amsterdam, however, which resulted in polarisation among the Church leaders and the people. When Kuyper preached a sermon on "The Assurance of Election," for example, a modernist colleague preached the following Sabbath on "Let Anyone Who Comes with Another Gospel than that Christ Died for All Men be Accursed." After a prolonged struggle and bitter infighting, the majority of ministers and elders supported Kuyper. That did not mean, however, that the modernists and liberals were expelled from the Church, for that was impossible in a State Church. Happily, however, Reformed preaching and instruction became the norm rather than the exception in Amsterdam.

Church Reformer

At Amsterdam the battle-lines were drawn between Kuyper and his modernist opponents in the Dutch Reformed Church, a battle which finally led to the second major secession from the State Reformed Church, the so-called *Doleantie* of 1886.

In many respects, the *Doleantie* was a continuation of the long-standing movement of protest against the Dutch Reformed Church that had led to the Secession of 1834. The *Doleantie* too was a protest against the doctrinal tolerance and laxity (*leervrijheid*) of the State-controlled Church. Like the leaders of the Secession of 1834, Kuyper and others also called for a return to the binding character of the Reformed doctrinal standards or confessions (the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort) and the Church Order of the Synod of Dort. This Church order, which stressed the autonomy and authority of the local congregation and its council or consistory, had been set aside by the royal decree of 1816. An important change in the Form of Subscription, which office-bearers in the Church had to sign to indicate their agreement with the Reformed confessions, resulted in ambiguity concerning their binding character. Prior to 1816 office-bearers had been required to subscribe to the text of the confessions themselves; after 1816 it was the "doctrine contained in the confessions" that was deemed binding. The key phrase in the new regulation, which caused considerable debate in the Church, called for an acceptance of "the doctrine, which in agreement with God's Holy Word, is contained in the confession of the Dutch Reformed Church." The debate, which raged furiously in the nineteenth century, centered around the question whether the confessions were to be considered binding because (*quia*) they agree with the Word of God, or *insofar as* (*quatenus*) they agree with the Word of God. By 1854 candidates for the ministry were only required to acknowledge and promise to defend "the spirit and main points of doctrine" contained in the confessions. Doctrinal slippage continued such that from 1878 on, as a consequence of synodical decree, consistories were not permitted to refuse Church membership and thus Holy Communion to anyone *for doctrinal reasons*.

The matter of Church membership and the authority of local consistories to exercise some form of meaningful Church discipline over its membership was the immediate cause of the *Doleantie* of 1886. The refusal of the majority of the

consistory of the Amsterdam Church to abide by this regulation, and its insistence upon maintaining strict standards for Church membership, resulted in the Provincial Board of the Reformed Church suspending Kuyper and four other ministers, forty-two elders, and thirty-three deacons. The suspension led to the formation of a protesting (*Dolerende*) group within the Reformed Church.

The Board also changed the locks in the cathedral consistory room and took possession of all the property and the archives. Synod upheld the Board's actions and deposed them all. Two hundred congregations left the State Church, with about 150,000 people. This movement, called *De Doleantie* (The Grieving Ones, or The Aggrieved Ones) because of their sorrow over the apostasy of the Church, led to a new denomination, the *Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk* (*Dolerende*), in 1886.

Even from this sketchy account it is clear that the Secession of 1834 and the Reformation movement of 1886 proceeded from similar principles. Both ecclesiastical movements had as their principal goal the maintenance of true doctrine, handed down by the fathers, by means of the Church government set forth in the Reformed confessions and the Church Order of Dort. Both movements strove for a Church free from the dominating influence of the State and free from what they considered to be doctrinal deviation in the State Reformed Church. Then too, like the Secession of 1834, the *Doleantie* primarily appealed to and received its basic support from the *kleine luyden*. Kuyper's own position of cultural and political influence in the Netherlands must not obscure this important fact. This tie to the people was not only a matter of political expediency but one of principle. Calvinism, for Kuyper, was and must remain a democratic movement of the common people.

Finally, there was also some continuity between the Secession and the *Doleantie* in terms of the character of its piety. The similarity between the Reformed experiential emphasis of the Secession and that of Kuyper, for example, is most evident from his numerous meditations that appeared weekly in the journal *De Heraut* and were collected in volumes with such titles as *Falling Asleep in Jesus*, *To be Near Unto God*, *As You Sit in Your House*, and *Honey from the Rock*. The fact that many of Kuyper's followers departed from this experiential emphasis doesn't negate the devotional piety that he and others, particularly in the area of Amsterdam, embraced.

Similarities notwithstanding, the Kuyper-led *Doleantie* was also significantly different from the Secession of 1834. Doctrinal differences centered on the covenant of grace—the Secession Churches stressing the need for covenant children to be born again and to experience the doctrines of grace whereas the *Doleantie* Churches, for the most part, embraced Kuyper's notion of presupposed regeneration, treating covenant children as possessors of saving grace in Christ from infancy. That naturally led to a down-playing of the experiential emphasis prevalent in the Secession Churches. Then too, the Secession had been strictly a Church-reform movement, motivated by the desire to free the Church from the shackles of State-control and doctrinal deviation and to return to the pure faith of the Reformation. The *Doleantie*, however, was more than a Church-reform movement because Kuyper's vision of the Reformed Calvinistic faith was broader than that of the leaders of the Secession. For Kuyper Calvinism was a world/life-view, a life-

system, a *Weltanschauung*, not merely an ecclesiastical-confessional or theological system. As a life-system it was antithetically opposed to other life-systems, such as paganism, Islam, Romanism, and modernism, “the daughter of the French Revolution.” Kuyper’s ultimate goal was not only Church reform but a spiritual victory over the atheistic world/life-view of modernism. In this struggle the Church and Church reform played a vital but nevertheless penultimate role. For Kuyper, the struggle against the modernist spirit of revolution was the real issue.

Despite these differences, Kuyper was instrumental in 1892 in merging the Kuyperian *Doleantie* Churches with the majority of the 1834 Secession Churches, forming a new Dutch Reformed Church, *De Gereformeerde Kerken, Nederland* (The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands). The new denomination consisted of four hundred Secession Churches, three hundred *Doleantie* Churches, and 300,000 members. It subsequently spawned the daughter Churches in North America called the Christian Reformed Church.

The merger proved to be a forced marriage. Tensions abounded. Eventually people referred to the Churches of the Secession as the A-Churches and the Churches of the Kuyperian group as the B-Churches. Frequently, neither the ministers or the people of one part of the Church desired to appear in the other.

Kuyper’s passion both to oppose the dominant spirit of modernity and to provide a viable Calvinistic *cultural* alternative to it motivated him to insist that Christians must draw clear battle lines over against the French Revolution’s dominant “life-system” (Dutch: *wereldbeschouwing*; German: *Weltanschauung*). Kuyper writes:

If this battle is to be fought with honour and with a hope of victory, then *principle* must be arrayed against *principle*; then it must be felt that in modernism the vast energy of an all-embracing *life-system* assails us, then also it must be understood that we have to take our stand in a life-system of equally comprehensive and far-reaching power. And this powerful life-system is not to be invented nor formulated by ourselves, but is to be taken and applied as it presents itself in history. When thus taken, I found and confessed, and I still hold, that this manifestation of the Christian principle is given us in *Calvinism*. In Calvinism my heart has found rest. From Calvinism have I drawn inspiration firmly and resolutely to take my stand in the thick of this great conflict of principles. . . . Calvinism [is] the only decisive, lawful, and consistent defense for Protestant nations against encroaching and overwhelming modernism.

Kuyper taught that the battle against modernism in all of its socio-cultural manifestations must be fought by opposing idea with idea and principle with principle. It was a spiritual struggle for the heart and soul of the nation, and the outcome of this struggle Kuyper judged to be pivotal for the very future of Western civilisation. According to Kuyper, the finest fruits of modern European civilisation in art, science, commerce, and industry, were to be credited to the influence of Calvinism. In particular, Calvinism was the origin and safeguard of constitutional political liberty. Only by forsaking the autonomy ideal of the French Revolution, therefore, and returning to a pre-Enlightenment theonomous (but not theocratic!) ideal, could Western civilisation hope to survive. It was Kuyper’s lifelong dominating passion, as a journalist, as the founder of the Calvinistic university (the Free University of Amsterdam), as the founder and leader of the Calvinistic political party (the Anti-Revolutionary Party), as a

parliamentarian and, for a period (1901–05), Prime Minister of the Netherlands, to bind upon the conscience of the Dutch nation the awareness of God’s ordinances for all of life in order that the nation might honor God.

Theologian

Having sketched in broad strokes Kuyper’s cultural vision, let us now consider the theological underpinnings of that vision. Most fundamentally, Kuyper’s neo-Calvinist vision was grounded in his conviction that the heart of Calvinism was the doctrine of God’s sovereignty. The “dominating principle” of Calvinism, he notes, “was not, soteriologically, justification by faith, but in the widest sense cosmologically, *the Sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole Cosmos* in all its spheres and kingdoms, visible and invisible.” It is for this reason that Kuyper regarded Calvinism as more than an ecclesiastical-confessional or theological-doctrinal position, but as a distinct and identifiable world/life-view. This fundamental principle of the “Sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole Cosmos” led Kuyper to four important related and derivatory doctrines or principles: common grace, the antithesis, sphere-sovereignty, and the distinction between the Church as institute and the Church as organism.

The doctrine of common grace is based on Kuyper’s conviction that prior to, and, to a certain extent, independently of, the *particular* sovereignty of God in grace and redemption, there is a *universal* sovereignty of God in creation and providence. It is this universal sovereignty, which restrains sin and its consequences in human society and culture, that forms the basis of Kuyper’s call to Christian involvement in the cultural, socio-political life of humanity. In the background of Kuyper’s development of the theme of common grace is his avid opposition to two alternative and, in his judgment invalid, Christian cultural ideals. On the one hand Kuyper stresses the contrast between universal common grace and particular special grace, as well as the relative independence of the former from the latter, because of his opposition to all Anabaptist, pan-Christian visions. Kuyper opposes these whether they lead to a world-flight rejection of human cultural involvement for the sake of Jesus, or in the case of radical Anabaptism, to attempts to erect the kingdom of heaven on earth by means of Christian revolution. On the other hand, Kuyper also rejects the medieval ecclesiasticising of cultural life. When it is understood as the emancipation of cultural life from the control of the institutional Church, Kuyper thus favors “secularisation.” Cultural life, rooted in creation and common grace, has a life and a goal of its own, apart from the particular saving grace of redemption.

Kuyper’s treatment of the doctrine of common grace in his *Gemeene Gratie* (3 vols.), systematically speaking, is not without inconsistency and even contradiction. At times he speaks of common grace as independent of special grace; at times he considers common grace exclusively as the fruit of Jesus Christ the *mediator of creation*; at times he expands the *redemptive* work of Jesus Christ to include the preserving, sustaining activity attributed to common grace. The important point to keep in mind, however, is that although he does achieve a *formal* systematic unity by rooting both common and particular grace in the eternal decree of God, Kuyper was less concerned with a systematically worked out and consistent definition of common grace than he was with its

polemical value in combating the cultural alienation of many orthodox Dutch Reformed people. Kuyper used the doctrine of common grace, according to S. V. Zuidema, “to stimulate, as well as to justify, truly Christian action by God’s people from out of the particular grace of regeneration by the light of Holy Scripture. Common grace supplies the believer with the material for fulfilling his calling to be culturally formative and to fight the battle of the Lord in the world of culture . . . Common grace is *the presupposition of the possibility of Christian cultural activity.*”

For this reason Kuyper’s views on common grace are inseparably linked with his insistence upon a radical *antithesis* between human cultural activity in general and distinctly Christian cultural activity. Kuyper’s doctrine of common grace is misunderstood if it is regarded simply as a call for Christians to join with all men in a common human cultural project. With respect to Christianity and modernity “two *life-systems* are wrestling with one another, in mortal combat,” he said. If Kuyper’s doctrine of common grace rests on the theological foundation of the priority and independence of creation with respect to redemption, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is the theological foundation for the doctrine of antithesis. The Christian religion, according to Kuyper, speaks of regeneration “which changes man in his very being, and that indeed by a change or transformation which is effected by a supernatural cause.” This has an important consequence: “This regeneration breaks humanity in two, and repeals the unity of the human consciousness.” Therefore, we “have to acknowledge *two kinds of human consciousness*; that of the regenerate and the unregenerate; and these two cannot be identical.” The implication Kuyper draws from this is that the “two kinds of people” will develop “two kinds of science.” The conflict in the scientific enterprise is not between faith (or religion) and science, but is between “*two scientific systems . . . each having its own faith.*” Different religious perceptions of reality result in different scientific conceptions.

What is true of scientific enterprise is no less true of the other areas of cultural activity, in Kuyper’s judgment, and he devoted his life to the establishment and promotion of specifically Calvinistic cultural institutions at all levels, including a Calvinistic university, a Calvinistic political party, and Calvinistic labor union and numerous other societal associations and organisations. Kuyper was not satisfied with opposing the spirit of modernism with general ecumenical Christian principles, but with specifically Calvinistic principles (*gereformeerde beginselen*).

Chief among these principles, rooted in the sovereignty of God the Creator, was the doctrine of sphere-sovereignty. This theme, which is absolutely fundamental to Kuyper’s cultural vision, is especially formulated to counter the notion of State sovereignty in various areas of life. Kuyper summarizes it in this way: “In a Calvinistic sense we understand hereby, that the family, the business, science, art and so forth are all social spheres which do not owe their existence to the State, and which do not derive the law of their life from the superiority of the State, but obey a high authority within their own bosom; an authority which rules, by the grace of God, just as sovereignty of the state does.” The various spheres are autonomous in their own right, an autonomy given by God himself by virtue of creation and it is to God alone that they are ultimately responsible. Kuyper concludes: “In this independent character a special *higher author-*

ity is of necessity involved and this highest authority we intentionally call *sovereignty in the individual social spheres*, in order that it may be sharply and decidedly expressed that these different developments of social life have *nothing above themselves but God*, and that the State cannot intrude here, and has nothing to command in their domain.”

Kuyper’s emphasis upon the variety of independent social spheres, each distinct because created thus by God, is directly related to his relentless attack on pantheism. Pantheism, he notes, obliterates these boundaries and distinctions beginning with the fundamental boundary between God and the cosmos. Kuyper argues that “God created boundaries. He himself is the chief boundary for all his creatures and the effacement of the boundaries is virtually identical with the obliteration of the idea of God.” Kuyper judges that the consequences of such pantheism are especially devastating in the political and civil realms. When the reality and consequent sovereignty of God are denied, the idea of government authority as ordained by God also disappears and the distinction between authorities and subjects is obliterated. Kuyper writes, “Both are dissolved in the one all-sufficient State. The State takes the place of God. The State becomes the highest power and the fountainhead also of right . . . A State is the highest ideal of human society—a State before whose apotheosis every knee must bow, by whose grace alone we live, and to whose word all must be subject.” When, in other words, the boundary between God and the governing authorities, and between the governing authorities and subjects is lost, then the distinction between “right as a divine ordinance and as a magisterial command” is also destroyed. Might then truly makes right. However, since in fact such a duality between authorities who rule and subjects who are ruled does exist, the political order is of necessity thrown into “a perpetual two-fold struggle: the strife of the State evermore to increase its power over the people, and the strife on the part of the people to make themselves masters over the State.” A public order based on constitutional law and civil liberty is thus threatened from one side by State absolutism and from the other by anarchy.

For Kuyper, therefore, the doctrine of sphere-sovereignty, by rooting all sovereignty and authority in divine sovereignty and authority, and thus safeguarding the public order from all forms of State absolutism, provides the necessary and only guarantee for civil liberty. It not only provides intellectual justification to pluralism but also creates structural means of curtailing the State’s power. The State does, however, have certain responsibilities with respect to the various spheres. Says Kuyper: “It possesses the threefold right and duty: 1. Whenever different spheres clash, to compel mutual regard for the boundary lines of each; 2. To defend individuals and the weak ones, in those spheres against the abuse of power of the rest, and 3. To coerce all together to bear *personal* and *financial* burdens for the maintenance of the natural unity of the State.” The proper relationship of the State and the various spheres of life must be guaranteed by law. Only constitutional government and constitutional public law can properly guarantee civil liberties and the proper autonomy of the various spheres. It is evident, therefore, that Kuyper’s opposition to a State-controlled Church and his insistence upon a “Free Church” was not *only* based on a concern to return to the orthodox Church order of Dort but was rooted in a fairly sophisticated theory of State and society which he considered to be a

legitimate implication of the Calvinist emphasis upon the sovereignty of God.

It should also be noted that the doctrine of sphere-sovereignty was intended to counter the mediaeval Roman Catholic notion of a *Church* sovereignty in society. God's rule over the spheres of human society is not mediated by the Church but is direct and immediate. Prior to and quite apart from his relation to men as redeemer, God is directly and universally related to men as their Creator and his law is the law of their life.

This leads us to the fourth important theological concept for Kuyper: the distinction between the Church as institute and the Church as organism. Although Kuyper's use of this distinction is not entirely consistent and without ambiguity, the basic distinction may be said to be one between the Church in general as the people of God in the world and the special sphere of the institutionalised, structured Church; the Church consisting of office bearers, gathered into congregations and broader assemblies, such as presbyteries and synods regulated by confessions and Church orders. The distinction is important for Kuyper since he stresses the need of *organised* Christian communal activity in areas other than the institutional Church. Christians, not as members of the institutional Church, but as members of the Church as organism, must form Christian labor unions, Christian political parties, Christian social organisations, and institutions of Christian education. Here, too, Kuyper's views and his vision were dominated by the principle of the sovereignty of the triune God. In contrast to the revolutionaries in France who had cried, "*Ni Dieu, ni maître*" ("No God, no Master"), Kuyper cried, "*Pro Rege*" (for the King).

Politician

In 1869 Kuyper had a life-changing meeting with the secretary of the king's cabinet, Groen Van Prinsterer (1801–1876), who held a doctorate in law and in literature and was a gifted lawyer and historian. Van Prinsterer attributed his conversion to the Reformation historian, J. H. Merle d'Aubigne (1794–1872), and was greatly influenced by other like-minded men associated with the religious revivals that occurred in various parts of Europe, beginning in French Switzerland, after the defeat of Napoleon. That movement, known as the *Réveil*, reacted against the rationalism of the German Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*). When the *Réveil* reached the Netherlands, Willem Bilderdijk (1756–1831), a Calvinist poet who led a study group aspiring to restore the Reformed faith in the Churches, and one of his converts, Isaak da Costa (1798–1860), assailed rationalists within the Dutch Reformed Church and militantly opposed the optimistic spirit of modernity. It sought to idealise the national Calvinism of Dutch Second Reformation (a seventeenth and eighteenth-century movement in the Netherlands akin to Puritanism in England) and sought to implement its goal of a Calvinistic national Church and State. The Dutch *Réveil* greatly impacted Hendrik de Cock (1801–1842) and other pioneers of the 1834 Secession as well as Van Prinsterer, though they responded to that influence in different ways. Van Prinsterer and Kuyper's cultural vision was less militant than that of the *Réveil*; the *Réveil* was *counter*-revolutionary rather than *anti*-revolutionary. Van Prinsterer and Kuyper's anti-revolutionary vision was more democratic, and as opposed to reactionary conservatism as it was to liberalism.

Furthermore, Van Prinsterer and Kuyper rejected the theocratic ideal of the *Réveil* in favor of a constitutionally recognised civil and ecclesiastical pluralism. Kuyper believed in what we might call a "limited pluralism." For him, pluralism meant making common cause with Roman Catholics for the cause of promoting political and cultural work that could be carried across confessional lines. He certainly didn't believe that the State should use the power of the sword to support the confessions of the State Church. Simultaneously, he would be aghast at what is now called "principled pluralism," i.e. that the State should be religiously neutral and that all kinds of religions should have equal validity.

Van Prinsterer described his own world-view as anti-revolutionary and Christian historical and, like Augustine, maintained an antithesis between the city of God and the city of man, which meant a contest between obedience to the authority of Scripture and the humanist rejection of all authority external to man. Van Prinsterer was the original think-tank behind what would evolve into the Anti-revolutionary Party (ARP) in the Netherlands, a political party that asserted Christ's lordship over public affairs and opposed the principles expressed by the French Revolution and political liberalism. Kuyper enthusiastically cast in his lot with the ARP.

In 1874, Kuyper was elected to the Second Chamber of Parliament as an ARP representative on his third try. Since Dutch law forbade anyone from being both a member of Parliament and an active minister of a Church, Kuyper resigned his position as minister of the Church of Amsterdam and assumed the roles of emeritus minister and ruling elder. Friend and foe questioned how Kuyper could leave the active ministry, which many still viewed as a call for life and as the highest of all callings.

The following year Kuyper was re-elected but that term was interrupted by his second major nervous breakdown from overwork. He was incapacitated for fifteen months, most of which were spent in Switzerland and Italy.

Upon his return, Kuyper thoroughly organised the ARP with a constitution, a statement of principles, and a well-formulated platform. Under his leadership, the ARP became the first properly organised Dutch political party, replete with a strong national committee, headquarters, treasury, newspapers, and annual national convention. In 1878 he published *Ons Program*, the party's political manifesto. His skills in promoting national and local organisation reaped dividends, as the party continued to increase its membership in Parliament.

Kuyper soon concluded pragmatically that the only way to break the hold of the two main liberal parties in Parliament united against the ARP was to form a coalition with the Roman Catholics. Though theologically opposed to each other, the Calvinists and Roman Catholics found they had mutual concerns about education. That coalition was effected (though Kuyper was roundly criticised for compromising his former position of not endorsing such coalitions) and became victorious in the election of 1888, but lost again in 1891, not returning to power until 1901, when Kuyper was asked to head the new government as Prime Minister.

Kuyper's five-year stint as Prime Minister bore limited success. Most importantly, a school bill was passed that gave Christian schools legal parity and equal subsidy with government schools. Kuyper was also instrumental in breaking the

crippling railway strike of 1903. Most of the ARP's goals, however, were not achieved.

After the defeat of Kuyper's coalition in the election of 1905, Kuyper briefly served Parliament two more times—once in the Second Chamber and once in the First Chamber. These terms were ineffective, however, as his age and infirmities were catching up with him. In his last years Kuyper became increasingly critical of his own party, writing openly of his concerns in the periodicals he edited. Some viewed him as becoming a bitter old man who could not surrender his autocratic leadership nor tolerate the leadership of any who disagreed with him.

The ARP abandoned most of its principles in the twentieth century. By 1980 it merged with the Catholic People's Party to form the Christian Democratic Appeal. Kuyper's heirs replaced antithesis with synthesis.

Journalist and Writer

Kuyper's influence continued throughout the last five decades of his life by his numerous books and unending stream of articles. His writing career began in 1866 with his preparation of à Lasco's works for the press, for which he wrote a lengthy introduction. Later, he edited and published selected writings of Franciscus Junius (1545–1602) and Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), leading Dutch Reformed theologians.

In 1869 Kuyper became associate editor of the weekly, *De Heraut* (*The Herald*), then assumed editorship two years later. Its purpose was conveyed by its masthead: "For a Free Church and a Free School in a Free Land." In 1872 he became editor of *De Standaard* (*The Standard*), a Christian daily newspaper and official organ of the ARP. He continued to function as editor of both papers until he was eighty-two years old, a span of nearly five decades in which he wrote thousands of articles. Both papers consumed great amounts of time and energy. Many of the series of articles he wrote in them were later published as books.

Kuyper was a prolific and diversified writer. He wrote in the fields of theology, history, philosophy, politics, and aesthetics. Some of his books were warmly devotional, such as *Nabij God te Zijn* (*To Be Near Unto God*), which some have wrongly classified as Reformed mysticism. He wrote hundreds of spiritual meditations, scores of articles on practical Christianity, and allowed his unedited *Dictaten Dogmatiek* (5 vols.; *Dictated Dogmatics*) to go to press. He prepared a frequently reprinted 4-volume exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism, *E Voto Dordraceno* (*According to the Will of Dort*), so named because of the famous Synod of Dort's imprimatur on the Catechism as a doctrinal standard to be used for preaching as well as teaching. He wrote three volumes on common grace and a massive volume, recently reprinted, on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as well as on *The Book of Revelation*. He published four volumes on eschatology (*Van de Voleinding*) and three volumes of *Pro Rege* (*For the King*). His magnum opus was probably his scholarly 3-volume *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology*. After touring lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, he wrote two large volumes on the geography, history, and cultural life of the peoples of these lands. Four volumes of his political speeches were published from 1908 to 1910. Other significant volumes include *Dat de Genade Particulier is* (*That Grace is Particular*—newly published in English), *De Leer der Verbonden* (*The Doctrine of the Covenants*), *De*

Hedendaagsche Schrift Kritiek (*The Present Biblical Criticism*), and *De Engelen Gods* (*The Angels of God*). J. C. Rullmann prepared a 3-volume bibliography of Kuyper's writings that lists 223 works, supplies background information, quotes reviews, and comments upon Kuyper's literary legacy.

Kuyper's writings continued to influence the thinking of thousands of Reformed Christians throughout the twentieth century. In the Netherlands, his books and articles generated both considerable praise and intense criticism. Men like Herman Bavinck and Herman Dooyeweerd, though not uncritical of various aspects of Kuyper's thought, were greatly influenced by him. A substantial number in the Churches of the 1892 union, however, led by Kampen professors Lucas Lindeboom and Maarten Noordzij, felt that Kuyper's theology was not sufficiently scriptural. They believed it was often too deductive and speculative, particularly his views of baptism on the basis of presumptive regeneration, justification from eternity, and the scientific character of theology. G. C. Berkouwer wrote, "There was doubt about his doctrine of common grace, doubts about his view of the antithesis between Christianity and other life-views, and doubts about the polemics that those views had aroused." Many feared that his doctrine was an attempt to culturise and secularise Christianity, such that Neo-Calvinism, as his doctrine was called, was regarded as "a deceptive synthesis" by them. In the eyes of many, his use of secular world-views, such as that adopted from contemporary German philosophy, as a model for developing his own served to weaken his case for the distinctiveness of the Calvinistic world-view.

Cornelius Van Til advanced Kuyper's ideas in the United States perhaps more than anyone else, particularly in the area of presuppositional apologetics. Francis Schaeffer helped popularise some of Kuyper's ideas, as did the so-called Moral Majority in the United States. And, of course, the Christian Reformed Churches in North America have been greatly influenced by Kuyperianism. In South Africa, the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education was modeled after the Free University of Amsterdam and has greatly impacted Christian education and scholarship in Africa. In fact, today Kuyper's influence is more strongly felt in North America and South Africa than in the Netherlands.

In the twentieth century, particularly Kuyper's doctrines of common grace and presumptive regeneration have given rise to views and practices that have carried the movement well beyond what Kuyper would have approved. Though Kuyper, through the influence of his writings and objectives, made common grace a doctrine of overriding and central importance far beyond traditional Calvinistic theology, he would not have endorsed his successors using his doctrine of common grace to elevate social responsibilities above evangelism, or to justify their conformity to worldly ideas and practices.

By his doctrine of presumptive regeneration, Kuyper taught that the covenant of grace warrants the presumption that children of believers are regenerated and hence possess saving grace from earliest infancy and are baptised on the basis of that presumption, even though those baptised may later reject the covenant and prove that presumption to be wrong. This led some to conclude that baptism assures salvation, or at least that covenant children need not be told that they need to be born again. Many children grew up thinking that sound doctrinal knowledge and biblical ethical

conduct was sufficient for salvation without experiencing conviction of sin and conversion, or any need for self-examination with regard to the marks of grace. The net result was that, over time, Reformed experiential religion became deemed largely superfluous. History has shown that Kuyper's view of regeneration is unique in Reformed theology and has borne detrimental fruits.

Educator

Kuyper was deeply concerned about establishing quality Christian education at all levels for all classes of people. Dissatisfied with the apostasy in the government-controlled universities, he set out to promote and establish a Christian university free from government control. After much labor on his part, the Free University of Amsterdam, designed to affirm a biblical and Reformed world-view throughout its entire curriculum, was established on October 20, 1880. Kuyper organized it as a school freed from governmental or ecclesiastical control, operated as a parental institution, and supported by the prayers and gifts of Reformed Christians.

The university was organized under five disciplines: theology, medicine, law, sciences, and arts. It began with five professors (including Kuyper who began as rector and taught theology, Hebrew, aesthetics, and literature) and only five students, but continued to grow and served to supply Reformed ministers to the new denomination that Kuyper had been instrumental in forming.

Kuyper's interest in university education led him to accept an invitation to deliver the Stone Lectures in 1898 and to receive an honorary doctorate from Princeton. The lectures set forth his Calvinistic world-view, and have often been reprinted as *Lectures in Calvinism*.

Kuyper served as rector and professor at the Free University from 1880 to 1901. After becoming Prime Minister in 1901, he introduced a bill that became law in 1905, which granted full legal standing for private universities and technical schools preparing students for higher education. Among other benefits, the Free University received State recognition of its awarded degrees.

The Free University departed far from Kuyper's teachings in the twentieth century. By 1960, many of its 12,000 students expressed no allegiance to the Christian faith. The institution declared in 1971 that it had abandoned its commitment to Calvinism though it would retain the gospel for its basis of teaching.

As a Man

Shortcomings notwithstanding, Kuyper strove to implement his Calvinistic world-view in his own life as a believer. He revelled in the life of his own covenant family, with his wife, five sons, and two daughters. He faithfully conducted family worship after the evening meal, reading and explaining the Scriptures to his family and servants.

Sorrows that touched his family were sanctified. A 9-year-old son passed away in 1892 and his beloved wife died in 1899 at the age of 58. Kuyper never married again. Though he carried these losses with him to the grave, he continued his heavy workload—except for his periods of nervous exhaustion—to the end of his life.

Kuyper's learning was vast. He spoke most European languages fluently, was well versed in Hebrew and Greek,

and lectured and wrote in Latin. His knowledge of history, philosophy, the natural sciences, and politics was profound. Some have questioned whether he may not have spread his gifts too thinly but no one questioned his devotion to carrying out personally the Calvinistic world-view he promulgated.

Though short of stature, Kuyper's appearance was commanding and his eyes were piercing. He preached and spoke thousands of times, holding his audiences spellbound with his forceful oratory and uncompromising convictions. Spiritually, his life was one of devotion and reflection on the Word of God. He was sustained through all the ups and downs of his long career by a felt sense of union and communion with Christ.

Perhaps Kuyper's greatest personal flaw was his intolerance of those who disagreed with him. His tendency to dictatorialism in ecclesiastical and political matters seemed to grow with age. The last years of his life were not the happiest or most fruitful.

Abraham Kuyper died on November 8, 1920 at the age of 83, after a public career of fifty-seven years. The funeral was simple, at Kuyper's request, and was concluded by the singing of Kuyper's favorite—Psalm 89:7–8 of the Dutch Psalm book. Thousands attended, including so many deputies from the Second Chamber that no business could be conducted that day due to lack of a quorum. On his tombstone were engraved the words:

DR. A. KUYPER
BORN OCTOBER 29, 1837
AND FALLEN ASLEEP IN HIS SAVIOR
NOVEMBER 8, 1920

Though most of Kuyper's organized expressions of Neo-Calvinism have not endured, his influence remains powerful among many Reformed Christians in several countries. The international Reformed community continues to wrestle with the comprehensive implications of Kuyper's declaration: "God's majesty and sovereignty require that we believe God's Word, not because of what it says, but because *it is His Word*, not because we think it beautiful and true, but because *He has spoken it.*" *C&S*

BOOK REVIEW

FAMILY AND CIVILIZATION
IN THE EAST AND THE WEST
BY CARLE C. ZIMMERMAN AND T. K. N. UNNITHAN

Rampart Row, Bombay: Thacker & Co. Ltd.

REVIEWED BY BRUCE DAYMAN

THE family in our time is rapidly undergoing change. A person only has to look to his own neighborhood to see single parent, blended and extended families. A number of countries are currently considering same-sex unions in their definition of what makes up a family. What these changes will bring in the future cannot be predicted with certainty. Yet in this book the

authors have researched what a family is and what societal changes affect it. Dr Carle C. Zimmerman at Harvard has spent his lifetime studying the history of the family and shows that it is the basic social unit of society. We can be grateful to the author, disregarding his statist bias, for his work provides a seminal framework on which to build.

The family is an institution that is responsible for the religious and moral aspects of society that in turn integrates with the legal and political structures creating governmental institutions. The nuclear family with its distinct biological base is fundamentally and basically the same the world over. It takes two to breed and those same two are generally deemed essential to rear the children properly. Husband and wife become parents joining with their children to form a nucleus. The nuclear family forms the basis of all variations of family life and the authors name three: trustee, domestic and atomistic.

The trustee family exercises those functions that are often performed poorly by the socialistic State. In this situation, organisations of kindred rule over many phases of the household family. These are known as trustees of the rights and powers of the society in regard to the family and the family in regard to society. The clan exercises discipline over the individual for its own purposes and on behalf of society as a whole. In this way the nuclear unit is connected to the world through family relatives. On the other end of the spectrum is the atomistic family. Here relatives have diminished rights and responsibilities to the individual to a large degree. An example today would be the “age of consent” laws being lowered. The adult individual is responsible for himself. If he commits a crime, statist institutions such as sheriffs, police or soldiers, apprehend the individual. Administrative bodies of justice attempt to repel wrongdoing on behalf of society as whole. Between these two is the domestic family that is a mix of relatives and governmental agencies providing justice.

The authors state, “Changes in the family system are the surest indications of major social change. And when social change arises from external causes sooner or later the family has to adjust” (p. 28). Examples from the history of Western culture are given to show how laws have changed regarding the family depending on what was happening in a particular culture. In

what the authors call the Triple Field Family Theory, the family as the basic social unit ties together the individual, moral (religious) and political interests of society and then relates them to the individual. An unbalanced theory of the family favours one field excessively to the detriment of one or both of the others (p. 164).

The significance of the family in civilisation cannot be overestimated. Whenever an atomistic family develops, in which the authority of the family is no longer paramount, then there is a quick disintegration in which the State takes over. This is followed by a radical collapse of civilisation. Then out of the ruins here and there a strong family develops until again there is a family-oriented civilisation. In our day and age, with the spectre of reproductive technologies in the air, the atomistic family, which is really no family at all, has produced homes which are simply a place to room and board. The State has taken over as father, looking to the needs of the family, providing for children and parents. When the family no longer cares for itself, civilisation collapses. Strong families produce healthy, productive societies. *C&S*

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KUYPER FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP WEEKEND

Friday 23rd July p.m. to Monday 26th July a.m. 2004 at

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Speakers

BOB GRAHAM

Christianity and the Criminal Law

STEPHEN C. PERKS

(subject to be announced later)

COLIN WRIGHT

Galileo or Rome—Who was Right?

MATTHEW WRIGHT

The Lost Meaning of the Book of Revelation

STEPHEN HAYHOW

(Sunday morning sermon)

The aim of the weekend is to provide a venue for fellowship and stimulating discussion and thought. There will be one talk on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings, and one talk on the Saturday morning. The emphasis will be on discussion and questions after an initial presentation of the subject matter and on informal and relaxing fellowship. We shall also hold a worship service on the Sunday morning.

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PLEASE NOTE: this event last year was very popular and we went beyond our initial allocation of rooms. Although we have more rooms available for the coming July 2004 weekend it may not be possible to enlarge our allocation once it is full.

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