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Cover photo: © Paul Stenhouse



Front Cover: Some of the statues of the Apostles and our Lord that line the façade of the celebrated Monastery of Montserrat, site of the legendary Castle of the Holy Grail, in the mountains about Barcelona, Spain. It is famous for its image of Our Lady of Montserrat, traditionally held to have been painted by St Luke. It certainly existed well before the 10th century. Here St Ignatius of Loyola hung up his sword. The monastery was partly destroyed in the Napoleonic wars of 1811-1812 and was restored in 1844.

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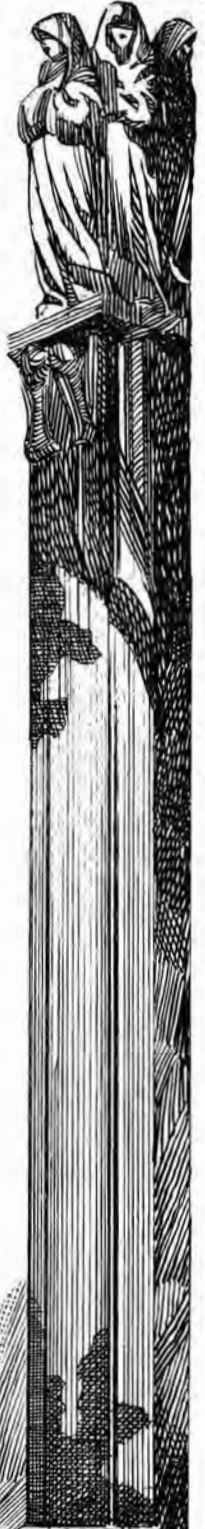
n the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Everyman's Prayer



O far today, God,
I've done all right:
I haven't gossiped,
I haven't lost my temper,
I haven't been greedy, grumpy,
nasty or self-centred.
I'm really glad about that.
But, in a few minutes, God,
I'm going to get out of bed
and then I'm going to need
a lot of help!
Thank you.

– *Anonymous*. Contributed by Valerie David.





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Pope attacked for defending the nature of Marriage

ARCHBISHOP'S RESPONSE

The recent statement on homosexual 'marriage', issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine and the Faith and approved by the Holy Father, has been labelled 'Catholicism's latest awful hypocrisy' by Melbourne's Age, and 'Pope launches global campaign against Gays,' by the Chicago Sun-Times. FRANCIS CARDINAL GEORGE, O.M.I., Archbishop of Chicago replies:



DEAR Friends in Christ: I stand before you not as the celebrant of the Mass but as the Archbishop of Chicago, the pastor of this local Church, to use this pulpit of the Cathedral in a way that I have not used it in the six years that I have been Archbishop here. For those of you who are visitors, I ask your indulgence.

I stand here to defend our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, against a false accusation made on the front page of the *Chicago Sun-Times* last Friday. The headline reads: 'Pope Launches Global Campaign against Gays.' The Pope, of course, did no such thing.

First, what did the Pope do to invite this false accusation against him? The Holy Father, through the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, approved a statement about the nature of marriage, a statement which repeats what every Pope has taught for two thousand years: marriage is the life-long union of a man and a woman who enter into a total sharing of themselves for the sake of family. This is not first of all a religious teaching, although Christ raised marriage to the level of a sacrament. This is an understanding of marriage from nature itself. Marriage predates our present government or any other and predates, as well, the founding of the Church. Marriage is not the creature of state or church, and neither a government nor the church has authority to change its nature. A government that claims such authority becomes totalitarian. What the Holy See concluded from the fact that there is neither biological nor moral equivalence between heterosexual marriage and homosexual unions is that there should be no legal equivalence either, in a well-ordered and wholesome society.

It is this conclusion, evidently, which was represented falsely as a 'global campaign against gays.' Because of a concerted campaign in movies and TV shows in recent years to shape public imagination and opinion into accepting same sex relations as normal and morally unexceptional, obvious truths now are considered evidence of homophobia. Because a morality based upon desires has largely supplanted a morality based upon the truth of things, a teaching which limits sexual self-expression of any sort becomes oppressive. In this context, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that people of homosexual orientation should be treated with every respect and with compassion; but the Catechism also teaches the truth about the nature of God's gift of human sexuality, a truth our bodies themselves proclaim and the lives of married couples attest to.

Secondly, who is the Pope and why should Catholics take to heart false accusations against him? The Pope is the Bishop of Rome, and therefore the successor of

the apostle who heard Jesus tell him: 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' (Mt. 16: 18-19).

The Holy Spirit invisibly anchors the Church in the truth of Christ. Truths of faith can be more adequately understood from age to age, but the Holy Spirit does not contradict himself. The Holy See, because of the personal office of the Successor of Peter, is a privileged and secure visible expression of the Spirit's guidance of the Church. Catholics therefore reverence the Petrine office as a gift from Christ himself and have a deep respect for the person holding that office. Divulging disinformation about the Pope, engaging in anti-papal propaganda, attacks all Catholics and is usually, in history, a preparation for active persecution of the Church. The Holy Father makes up nothing that he teaches. His is not the 'opinion of the Vatican.' His is the teaching of Jesus Christ, because he is the primary witness to the faith that unites us to Christ. In matters that are received over the ages and proclaimed by the Pope in ours, no person who disagrees to the point of denial can claim to hold the Catholic faith. Disdain for and hatred of the Pope are sure signs of anti-Catholicism.

Thirdly, then, what does the printing of a false accusation against the Pope in a major Chicago daily say about anti-Catholicism here? This is a question I never believed I would have to ask. The Catholic Church was here before any newspaper, before the incorporation of the city of Chicago or the establishment of the State of Illinois. The Church has been the instrument used by Christ to make thousands of Chicagoans holy. She has preached the Gospel and made the sacraments available, she has educated and healed, served the poor and raised a voice for justice. We Catholics are sinners and, at this moment, we are especially shamed by the terrible sins of some priests and bishops; but the Church remains holy in her gifts from her Lord. If her moral teaching were honoured in our conduct, there would be no sexual abuse of anyone, no rape or betrayal of marriage, no sexual promiscuity parading as freedom, no fraud in business or government, no false accusations or lies, published or unpublished. What the Church, which condemns all these sins, offers constantly is Christ's forgiveness of sinners.

The Pope is attacked for many reasons. In some Protestant circles, he is still regarded as the anti-Christ. Among secularists, his teaching office is a threat to human freedom. Among disaffected Catholics, the Pope must be discredited so that Catholics will be forced to change their faith. And the headline writers of the *Sun-Times*? I do not know their motivation. A bishop likes to presuppose goodwill, and what they did would find an echo in many places; but what I must say today is that a line has been crossed, and Chicago Catholics cannot ignore what has happened.

I have written a letter of apology to Pope John Paul II. He has visited this city many times and always asks of it fondly. He does not think of it as a centre of anti-Catholicism. For the first time in my life, I hesitated as I signed my title. I'm ashamed that this false accusation against the Pope was made in our city. At the very least, it is unfair; and we pride ourselves on fairness. I ask you to pray for the Holy Father; pray as well for the enemies of the Church; and let us pray for one another, for strength in the present and perseverance in the difficulties to come.



News Gathering or News Making?

MEDIA: IMPARTIAL OR COMPLICIT?

The media coverage of the war in Iraq against Saddam Hussein was like the allied bombing of Dresden – unceasing and exhausting. For all that, facts were thin on the ground, and the propaganda machine of Saddam Hussein was accorded extraordinary exposure by the Western media. PAUL STENHOUSE examines Paul Johnson’s charge that ‘Journalists covering a war occupy about the same moral position as arms salesmen and suppliers.’



WHAT has been described by some writers as the first modern-type interview, was by Gordon Bennett, the flamboyant editor of the New York Herald on April 16, 1836. It was in connection with the Robinson-Jewitt murder case. Ellen Jewett, inmate of a house of prostitution had been found murdered by an axe. Richard P. Robinson was accused of the crime. Bennett seized the occasion to print sensational stories and so build up the circulation of the Herald. Before long he was having difficulty producing enough copies to satisfy the demand. He exploited the case in every way, and planned and reported an interview with Rosina Townsend the madam who keep the house and whom he visited on her own premises.¹

One-hundred-and-fifty years later, in 1996, Louis Aragon [1897-1982], the editor of the French Communist Party’s literary magazine, was included among the authors of classic literary masterpieces by the Bibliothèque de la Pléiade,² along with Paul Claudel, Georges Bernanos, Dante, William Shakespeare, André Gide, Pierre de Beaumarchais and their ilk. This is the same Louis Aragon who defended Stalinist Terror with the words, ‘The blue eyes of the Revolution burn with cruel necessity,’ and in 1931 wrote a long paean of praise for the GPU, the predecessor of the KGB:

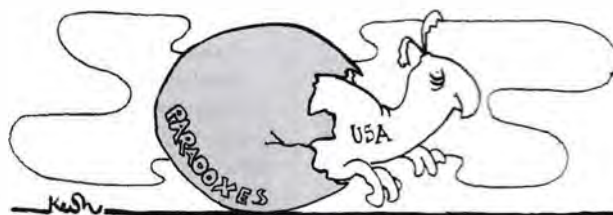
I sing of the GPU we need in France
 I call for the GPU to prepare for
 the end of the world
 Long live the GPU, true image of
 materialist splendour
 Long live the GPU, down with
 the Pope and the bugs (sic!)
 Long live the GPU, down with
 the family³

James Gordon Bennett’s successors in the media, we are told, were lyrical in praise of Aragon’s art; and strangely mute about the politics of a man who could call for the creation of a Communist version of the Gestapo in occupied

France in 1944.⁴ Strangely mute, too, about the absence of the writings of St Thomas Aquinas, or other Catholic authors like Jacques Maritain, Gabriel Marcel, or Maurice Blondel and their ilk, from the Bibliothèque’s shelves.

Why aren’t we surprised at the consideration meted out by the media to Aragon, the dedicated exponent of now thoroughly discredited Marxist-Leninist Social Realism?

All of us who work as journalists or in radio and TV walk an ethical tightrope that too few of



Stinging flies and paradoxes

JEFFERSON was elected Chairman of the Drafting Committee. Thus did he come to be the author of that Declaration, through which he is remembered as a philosopher and his reputation, as a prophet, is wholly in the dust. One or two of his clauses were afterwards struck out or altered. That, for instance, which condemned the slave-trade, had, since it was offensive alike to the delegates of the South, who owned the profitable slaves, and to those of the North, who owned the profitable ships in which the slaves were carried, to be omitted. Nor was the whole passed, until a swarm of stinging flies from a neighbouring livery stable, straying in through the window, created among honourable members an anxiety to cut the debate as short as possible. Yet substantially his work remained. Such are the services to civilisation of the stinging fly.

A handful of slave-owners met together and declared it to be self-evident that all men were born equal. Man’s natural right to life they made the excuse for a bloody war, in which many innocent men would be done to death. From such paradoxes were the United States born.

– Christopher Hollis, *The American Heresy*.



us acknowledge or even notice. We have a job to do that seems to confer a certain immunity from the everyday decencies and conventions, especially that of respect for the rights and feelings and privacy of others. One gets the impression that some media hacks are less interested in the truth than in the degree of controversy and outrage than an article or TV show can generate. There are undoubted privileges connected with journalism, but there are daunting responsibilities also.

We've all heard the story of newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst's provoking of the Spanish-American war in 1898 to encourage sales of his newspaper. 'Please remain. You furnish the pictures,' he replied to photographer Frederick Remington who wanted to return from Havana, Cuba, which was peaceful, 'and I'll furnish the war'. He also advocated political assassination in an editorial, only a few months before the assassination of President McKinley.⁵

'Mr Hearst in his long and not laudable career has inflamed Americans against Spaniards, Americans against Japanese, Americans against Filipinos, Americans against Russians, and in the pursuit of his incendiary campaign he has printed downright lies, forged documents, faked atrocity stories, inflammatory editorials, sensational cartoons and photographs, and other devices by which he has abetted his jingoistic ends.'⁶

Paul Johnson, writing in

1985 while the war in Lebanon was running its insane course pre-determined by Syria and its western allies, doesn't mince words:

'Journalists covering a war ... occupy about the same moral position as arms salesmen and suppliers. That is, they are there for the money. Whatever they may say, newspapers and television networks welcome wars and exploit them. Wars raise circulations and ratings, provided they are covered in an exciting manner. So great sums are spent to provide coverage and the journalists involved are highly rewarded and paid extra for the risks undertaken ... I have always thought photographers to be rather cold blooded creatures, clicking away while the wounded moan and the dead lie unburied.'⁷

What would Johnson think 16 years later of the TV cameramen following Northern Alliance tribesmen around Afghanistan, filming their torture and murder of Taliban fighters who surrendered to them? Is this legitimate

news-gathering? Are journalists who don't reach out to protect or save those whose deaths they record in cold four-colour images no longer recording events, but participating in them?

Ignorance and insensitivity, dare I say it, can play their part in lowering the standards expected of practitioners of the Fourth Estate. A less well-known element enters in when the so-called 'positivist' social 'scientists' claim that morality is irrelevant to understanding the past. They thus reduce the present to an a-moral dead-end, and expose those of us who live in it to the Darwinian scenario at its most nightmarish: the survival of the physically and economically and biologically fittest.

The pervasive influence of this neo-Marxist cant that 'value judgements merely express the ideological preferences of their authors' is taken by some in the media to mean that they are absolved from any complicity in the effects that follow from their often biased coverage of highly emotive or violent or divisive issues.

How could names like Göbbels, Himmler and Eichmann have become household words for cruelty and barbarism while few if any have heard of Dzerzhinsky, Yagoda or Ezhov? Yet the three Bolsheviks ran a systematic terror machine [the Cheka, GPU, OGPU, NKVD] that made the S.S. seem whimpy. The Great Terror [1936-1938] which saw 1,345,000

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people imprisoned, and 681,692 people executed was known in Russia as the Ezhovschina, 'The Reign of Ezhov'. When did you last see a TV documentary on Ezhov? The media are selective about whom they demonise.

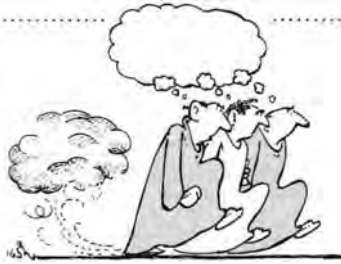
The TV crews were out in force and the print media had a field day when the terrible massacres in the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila took place in September 1982. Because Lebanese and largely Christian forces commanded by Israeli and Lebanese officers were involved and there were an estimated 3,000 victims, there was universal outrage.

Yet, where were the media a few months earlier, in February 1982, when between 6,000 and 8,000 Syrian soldiers and Mukhabarat [security forces] fell on Hama north of Homs in western Syria and killed more than 10,000 of their own people, most of them unarmed?

Where were the media in June 1980, when the Syrian army, mainly Alawites, murdered around 1,200 prisoners in cold blood in Tadmur Military Prison [those involved received 200 Syrian pounds as a bonus]? Finding information about these massacres, 20 years later, even using the internet, is an art form.

Few if any people haven't heard of the massacre carried out at the My Lai hamlet of the Son My village in the Quang Ngai Province of South Vietnam by a unit of the US 11th Light Infantry Brigade under the command of Lt William Calley on March 16, 1968. The media quite rightly protested attempts to cover-up the US involvement in the massacre of 22 civilians. The subsequent courts martial and uncovering of massacres by army units of hundreds of civilians at My Khe and Co Luy and the eventual guilty verdict for Calley, were covered extensively by the media.

But who has heard of the massacre carried out by Viet-Cong led by their North Vietnamese and Russian advisers a month earlier [February 1968]? More



Of one mind, therefore mind- less?

IN these days when papers and speeches are full of words like democracy and self-determination, anything really resembling the movement of a mass of angry men is regarded as no better than a stampede of bulls or a scurry of rats. The new sociologists call it the herd instinct, just as the old reactionaries called it the many-headed beast. But both agree in implying that it is hardly worthwhile to count how many head there are of such cattle. It does not follow that human beings become less human because their ideas appeal to more and more of humanity. Nor can we deduce that men are mindless solely from the fact that they are all of one mind.

- *The New Jerusalem*, by G.K. Chesterton,
1874-1936.

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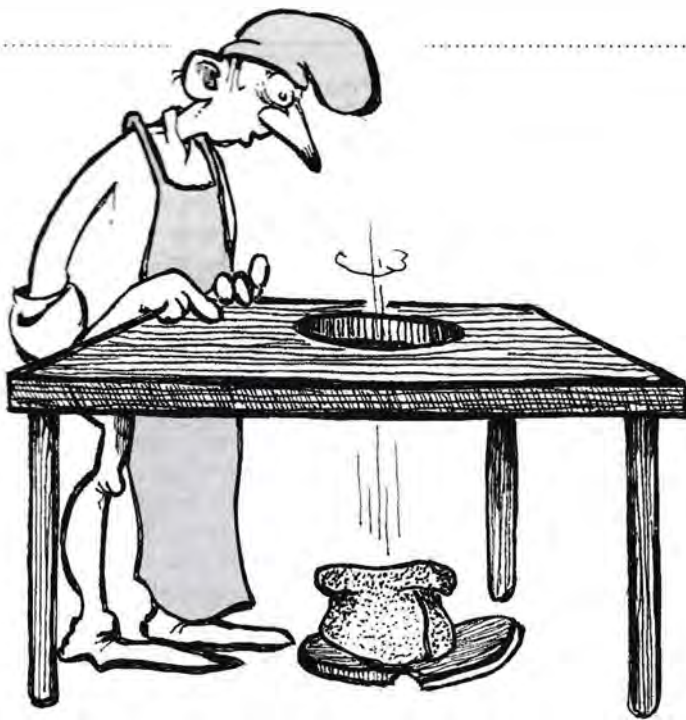
than 3,000 civilians died in Hue during the Tet offensive, including Vietnamese Catholic priests, French monks and nuns, German doctors and a number of officials and government workers.⁸ Some of those who died were buried alive, others were taken away for 're-education' and never seen again. None of these atrocities has ever been admitted. Where were the media then?

Some of my readers may recall that I spent a great deal of time travelling to and from Lebanon, after the so-called 'civil war' broke out in that little country in April 1975; and 'slung' a lot of ink describing for newspapers in this country and overseas as well as for *Annals*, the involvement of the Syrians in the conflict.

It took less than a year for the most beautiful city in the Middle East to be reduced to rubble, and for those of its citizens not killed in the initial violence, to be obliged to flee for their lives to the mountains. How uncertain a haven the mountains were to prove lay still in the future.

I received a number of invitations to go to Syria [which I had visited a number of times prior to 1975] to meet President Hafiz al-Assad and see for myself what a beneficent family-man he really was; not at all the calculating and callous power-broker he was made out to be in *Annals*. I never went, mindful of Aesop's story of The Wolf and the Goat.⁹ I had been given all sorts of assurances that I would meet the President, but none that convinced me that I would survive the meeting.

My first-hand experience of the multi-talented Hafiz al-Assad began a little after he seized power in 1970. When elections were called, banners across the streets in Damascus proclaimed in Arabic, 'Freedom, Unity and Socialism,' and then, as if explaining what 'freedom' and 'unity' were going to mean under the new Alawite dictator, other banners went on, 'the Ba'ath Party is the only Party in Syria'. As Assad was militarily a client of the Soviets, the Socialist boast



THE following recipe is from the *Sydney Gazette And New South Wales Advertiser* Sunday June 12, 1803. It is an extract from the report of the Society for bettering the condition and increasing the comfort of the poor by using a process of: – ‘MAKING BREAD with ALL the BRAN ADDED, so as to increase the Weight and Quantity of Nutriment.’ In actual fact it is probably a cheap way for the Colony’s rulers to feed their convict servants.

‘Take 7 pounds 7 ounces of bran and pollard and 4 quarts of water, and boil the whole very gently over a slow fire. When the mixture begins to swell and thicken, let it be frequently stirred to prevent its boiling over, or burning at the bottom or sides of the pot. With two hours boiling it will acquire the consistence of a very thin custard pudding. Then put it into a clean cloth, and twist it until the liquid is squeezed out; with a quart of which mix 3 pints of yeast and set the sponge for 28lbs of flour. The bran and pollard, which when the liquor has been squeezed out is of above four times its original weight before it was boiled, is then to be set near the fire, in order that it may be kept warm. In about two hours the sponge will have sufficiently risen; upon which the bran and pollard, then luke-warm, but not hot, and into which is to be sprinkled half a pound of salt. Should be mixed with the flour and the whole kneaded up very well together with a quart of the bran liquor and it should be then baked for two hours and a quarter in a common oven.’

The main purpose of this recipe would seem to be that the finished product would weigh half as much again as a similar recipe using flour instead of bran – perhaps halving the cost of feeding the convicts. Maybe the family could try to make some of this bread during the holidays so they could sample the bread that Australia’s convicts ate 200 years ago.

– John Colborne-Veel.

should have been another cause of unease for Syria’s neighbours. Photos of Assad with his family, as a commander in the air-force, as a simple citizen, were plastered all over the city. Not surprisingly Assad was elected unopposed.

Attempts by some journalists to re-assess the Kissinger ‘line’ which saw Hafiz al-Assad and Syria as agents for peace in the region, and to identify Syria as

the malign force that was playing all sides against the middle, were invariably met with the rejoinder: ‘Syria tried to help Lebanon in 1975 and got embroiled in a terrible war for its trouble. Blame the Lebanese.’

Yet, in the amphitheatre of the Arab University of Damascus on August 20, 1976 this is how Hafiz al-Assad himself described Syrian involvement in Lebanon:

‘Syria and Lebanon, throughout history, have been one people, one country, and this fact should be taken into account by all the world ... Because of this we felt obliged to furnish weapons and munitions, and we decided to intervene under the guise of the ‘Palestine Liberation Army’. This army entered Lebanon unbeknowns to everybody, and without our having consulted any of the national parties and without being authorised by anybody ...’.

Where were the media that day? Can anyone find one Western journalist or TV crew who attended or covered that event and reported the speech of Hafiz al-Assad? Why not? Does it matter?

In ‘The Peacemaker,’ not 1997’s best film, George Clooney is an American Colonel chasing baddies. ‘Permission to enter Russian Federation Airspace,’ he requests as he crosses the Turkish border in a helicopter. No problem, you say. But wait: the Russian Federation doesn’t have a common border with Turkey.¹⁰ If media flagships like Steven Spielberg’s Dreamworks can’t get it right, what hope is there for the *News of the World*, or the *Sydney Morning Herald*?

Perhaps the media really have lost it. Have we finally descended, as Daniel Boorstin predicted, in 1961, from News Gathering to News Making? Are we reduced to admiring, not to say demanding the pseudo-reality and dismissing or not caring at all about what is real?

Friend: ‘My, that’s a beautiful baby you have there’

Mother: ‘O that’s nothin’ ... you should see his photograph!’¹¹



1. See Daniel Boorstin, *The Image*, New York, Vintage, 1961.
2. *The Black Book of Communism*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p. xiii = *Black Book*.
3. *Prélude au temps des cerises*, Paris, Minuit 1944.
4. *Black Book*, p.xiii.
5. *The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia*, David Crystal, CUP, 1994, p.435.
6. Ernest L. Meyer, *Lords of the Press*, George Seldes.
7. ‘Innocent Victims?’ in *The Spectator*, March 30, 1985.
8. *Black Book*, p.572.
9. Fable 173.
10. See Mark Steyn, *The Spectator*, October 25, 1997.
11. Daniel Boorstin, op. cit. chapter 1.

THOUGHT FROM THE LITURGY OF THE DAY



SEPTEMBER

1 Mon Week 22 1Thess 4:17
We shall be with the Lord forever.

2 Tue Week 22 Psalm 27:14
Hope in the Lord. Hold firm and take heart.

3 Wed Gregory I 2Cor 4:6
God has shone in our minds to radiate the glory on the face of Jesus.

4 Thurs Week 22 Col 1:14
In the Son of God we gain our freedom: the forgiveness of our sins.

5 Fri Week 22 John 8:12
If you follow me, you will have the light of life.

6 Sat Week 22 Psalm 54:2
O God hear my prayer; listen to my appeal.

7 Sun Week 23 Isaiah 35:5
The eyes of the blind shall see.

8 Mon Mary's birthday Rom 8:30
He justified those whom he called, and shared with them his glory.

9 Tue Week 23 Col 2:10
You find your fulfillment in Christ.

10 Wed Week 23 Col 3:4
You will be revealed in all your glory with Christ. He is your life.

11 Thurs Week 23 Col 3:13
The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same.

12 Friday Week 23 Psalm 16:8
I keep the Lord ever in my sight.

13 Sat Chrysostom Eph 4:7
You have each been given your own share of grace.

14 Sun The Cross Num 21:8
If you look at him, you shall live.

15 Mon Mary's Sorrows
John 19:25
Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother.

16 Tue Week 24 Psalm 10:2
When, Lord, will you come to me?

17 Wed Week 24 Psalm 111:1
I will thank the Lord with all my heart.

18 Thurs Week 24 Psalm 111:10
To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

19 Fri Week 24 1Tim 6:7
We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

20 Sat Korean martyrs Mt 11:28
Come to me and I will give you rest.

21 Sun Week 25 Mark 9:37
Anyone who welcomes a little child in my name welcomes me.

22 Mon Week 25 Luke 8:17
Nothing is secret, but it will be known and brought to light.

23 Tue Week 25 Luke 8:21
Hear God's word and put it into practice.

24 Wed Week 25 Tobit 13:6
Sinners, come back to God, do what is right before him.

25 Thurs Week 25 Psalm 149:4
The Lord delights in his people.

26 Friday Week 25 Luke 9:20
Jesus asked: 'Who am I for you?'

27 Sat Vincent de Paul Mt 9:36
Jesus felt for them for they were harassed and dejected.

28 Sunday Week 26 Psalm 19:7
The law of the Lord is perfect, it revives the soul.

29 Mon Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael Psalm 103:21
Give thanks to the Lord, all his hosts, his servants who carry out his will.

30 Tues Jerome 2Tim 3:14
Keep to what you have been taught and know to be true.

Thoughts compiled by Father Michael Fallon, MSC.

JUDGE BORK CONVERTS TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH

By TIM DRAKE

FORMER circuit judge, U.S. solicitor general and 1987 Supreme Court judicial nominee Judge Robert Bork entered the Catholic Church on July 21 at age 76.

A senior fellow with the American Enterprise Institute, he researches constitutional law, antitrust law and cultural issues. He spoke with Tim Drake about his conversion and his forthcoming book, *Coercing Virtue: The Worldwide Rule of Judges*.

Was faith important to your family growing up? In which denomination did you grow up?

Up until age 17, I was in Pittsburgh. I have no siblings. My mother was a schoolteacher up until she got married because at that time you couldn't be married and teach. My father was in charge of purchasing for one area of a large steel company.

Until age 12, I was going to United Presbyterian Church. My mother and father belonged to two different Presbyterian denominations. Our faith wasn't terribly important growing up. My mother was interested in spiritual matters, but she was somewhat eclectic about it.

What led you to pursue law?

It was either that or journalism. I would have been a journalist by first choice, but I had the wrong idea that you had to get a graduate degree to pursue journalism. I didn't know any journalists or lawyers.

When I was about to graduate from the University of Chicago I wrote to the Columbia School of Journalism. However, because of the debate between John Dewey and University of Chicago president Robert Hutchins over the nature of education, Columbia wouldn't

accept a degree from the University of Chicago. They told me that if I would first go elsewhere for two years, then they would accept me. In a fit of pique I decided to go to law school and graduated from Chicago School of Law in 1953.

When were you married?

I was married in 1952. My wife died on Dec. 8, 1980. I remarried on Oct. 30, 1982. I was introduced to the Catholic faith through my second wife, Mary Ellen. She had been a nun for 15 years. I didn't know any priests or nuns. Although I had many Catholic friends, we

never discussed religion. I had been to a Catholic Mass a couple of times with friends when I was in my teens and early 20s, but I hadn't been to any church for years and years until I began going to Sunday Mass with my Mary Ellen.

What sparked your interest in the Catholic Church?

After I wrote *Slouching Toward Gomorrah* the priest at St. Anne's Catholic Church in Washington, D.C., Msgr. William Awalt, told me that my views on matters seemed to be very close to those of the Catholic views, which was true. Not being religious, the fact that our views corresponded wasn't enough to bring me into the Church, so it took me a while before I was ready to enter.

I had a number of conversations with Father C.J. McCloskey. He gave me some readings and he would drop by on his way home and we would talk for an hour to an hour and a half in my office. The one I liked best was Ronald Knox's *The Beliefs of Catholics*. I've taught classes, but I didn't feel like being taught a class. I wasn't eager to be a student. Our time together was informative and highly informal.

Were there any misconceptions that you had to overcome?

When I was between 15 and 16, I was taught that the Catholic Church was highly authoritarian and that the priests had strict control over your thoughts and ideas. By the time it came to convert I had been around the world a while, so I no longer had those ideas. I knew too many Catholics to believe that.

Does it seem to make a difference converting at age 76 rather than when you were younger?

I don't know that it has any effect. My mother is going to be 105 this fall. I don't feel old compared to



Both can't be right

NO one who has ever punched* Catholicism and who is religious and believes in Christianity has ever not embraced it at once. Newman arrived at the conclusion purely *a priori*. He had a spirit of hate for Catholics and had never been inside a Catholic church... Most people don't punch it at all and say, 'Oh priests and idolatry': but however bad priests are doesn't affect the question of, 'Is the Roman Church the Catholic and Apostolic Church of the Creed or is the Anglican?' And I think emphatically the Roman is and the Anglican is not...

— Maurice Baring, Quoted in *Literary Converts*, by Joseph Pearce, Ignatius Press, 1999.

[*Punch, here seems to have the meaning of 'encountered' or 'struck'. Ed.]

her. I haven't spoken to her about it yet, but I assume she'll take it well.

There is an advantage in waiting until you're 76 to be baptized, because you're forgiven all of your prior sins. Plus, at that age you're not likely to commit any really interesting or serious sins.

Was there anything in particular that pulled you toward the Church?

I found the evidence of the existence of God highly persuasive, as well as the arguments from design both at the macro level of the universe and the micro level of the cell. I found the evidence of design overwhelming, and also the number of witnesses to the Resurrection compelling. The Resurrection established as a solid historical fact.

Plus, there was the fact that the Church is the Church that Christ established, and while it's always in trouble, despite its modern troubles it has stayed more orthodox than almost any church I know of. The mainline Protestant churches are having much more difficulty.

Did your wife play a significant role in your decision?

Yes, although she never proselytized outright. She discussed things with me, but it was more her example than anything else. I don't know whether it's her faith or something else, but she is an extraordinarily fine woman. We received a note from Father Richard John Neuhaus saying that now all of the saints could get some rest from Mary Ellen's importuning.

Where was the ceremony held?

Since I decided I wanted only a small group of people present, the ceremony was held at the Catholic Information Center chapel in Washington. There were three priests at the baptism. Msgr. Awalt did the baptism. Father McCloskey gave the homily and Msgr. Peter Vaghi, pastor of St. Patrick's Catholic Church, also participated. I didn't talk about it to anyone beforehand.

My three children were as surprised about it as anyone. I told the sponsors, Kate O'Beirne and John O'Sullivan, only a couple of weeks before. I don't know how surprised they were. I never discussed it with them, but they



Scientific rivalry not religious oppression

THE decisive incident was again a laboratory mishap. Pasteur was studying his favourite mineral, Para-Tartrate, derived from the red Tartar deposit in the vats of fermented wine. One day one of his tartrate solutions became affected by a mould, and spoiled. This kind of thing frequently happens in warm weather; the normal reaction of chemists is to pour, with a gentle oath, the turbid liquid down the drain. Pasteur reversed the logic of the situation: he shifted his attention to the accidental and irrelevant mould, and turned 'accident' into 'experiment' by studying the mould's action on the tartrate. The result was the first line in the chain of arguments which led him into the study of fermentation, to the recognition that micro-organisms play an essential role in the economy of nature, and eventually to his epoch-making discoveries in the field of infectious diseases.

— Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation*. London, Pan Books, 1964.

probably expected that I wasn't far off.

In 1996, you published Slouching Toward Gomorrah. In light of the recent Supreme Court decision striking down Texas' anti-sodomy law, do you think we are still slouching or are we already there?

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— Editor, *Annals Australasia*.

Yes, we are slouching toward it if we haven't passed the city limits already. I'm afraid that the Supreme Court is playing a large role in moving the culture in that direction.

The book is going to be reissued with a new chapter that will discuss the recent Lawrence decision, the affirmative-action cases and the decision regarding computer-simulated pornography.

That is the subject of your forthcoming book, Coercing Virtue, isn't it?

Yes. It's a slimmer book based on the Barbara Frum Lecture that I delivered at the University of Toronto. Its theme is that all of the Western world's judges are taking issues of politics and morality away from legislatures. This can be seen not just in the United States but in Canada, Europe and Israel. It's now making its appearance in international law.

In the United States we tend to think that what is happening is the result of a couple of bad appointments, but this is an international phenomenon. The cultural war is an international phenomenon and the courts have the power of judicial review to strike down statutes or accept them. They have taken one side in the culture war - the side of the intellectual elite, or a term I like, the Olympians. They are those people who think they have a superior attitude in life and that those of us lower down the courts should be coerced into accepting their views.

What do you have planned next?

I'm going to edit a book with the Hoover Institution about courts and their effects on American values. I have five other authors who will be writing chapters. I have also promised to do a book on the freedoms paper trail examining the documents leading up to and including the Constitution.

After that I'm free to write what I want. I may write one on liberalism or I may write one on martinis.



TIM DRAKE is the managing editor of Catholic.net and the author of 'There We Stood, Here We Stand: 11 Lutherans Rediscover their Catholic Roots.' He writes from St. Cloud, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission from the National Catholic Register. All rights reserved.

Memorial to Commonwealth Airmen with no known grave

RUNNYMEDE

By LANCE HOBAN



At the summit of Coopers Hill, near Englefield Green, Surrey, England, looking down upon the lush meadows of Runnymede, the meandering River Thames, and playing fields of Eton College, stand three imposing Memorials, providing a scene and haven of unrivalled beauty, peace, serenity and tranquillity.

At the foot of the hill, in this serene setting stands the Magna Carta Memorial, a gift from the American Bar Association to mark the signing of the charter which eventually formed the base of the United States Constitution.

Midway along the slope is the John F. Kennedy memorial, erected upon an acre of rich pastures and presented to the American people in memory of the assassinated President. However, of all three, it is the Air Force Memorial at Runnymede which is the most impressive, dedicated by Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 in memory of Commonwealth airmen with no known grave. As you approach the pristine white building, you become immersed in surveying the entire scene, the immaculate lawns and pathways, the shrubs and flower gardens, a prelude of repose and respect that awaits within its hallowed precincts.

Upon entering the Memorial, – a visitor is confronted immediately with columns of granite marble cloisters which serve to record the names of the airmen, with brief details of their rank and year of death.

Of the 20,004 Commonwealth airmen listed, 15,500 were members of the Royal Air Force, 500 were from this country with corresponding personnel from

Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and India.

On one operation involving the medieval city of Nuremburg, on March 31, 1944, 97 Lancaster bombers failed to return to base, the most costly loss of the entire war.

Although only representing a fraction of the total number of lives sacrificed in World War II, the metre upon metre of recorded names is a sobering reminder of the horror and futility of a conflict that swept across Europe less than a lifetime ago.

Moving from the cloisters into the central tower section, you

enter the Shrine of Remembrance with its expansive stained glass window, looking down upon the River Thames. Inscribed upon the windows are the words from Psalm 139, often referred to as the Airmen's Psalm, which, upon reading, has caused many an eye to dim and a tear to fall:

*If I climb into Heaven, Thou art there.
If I fall into Hell, Thou art also there.
If I take the wings of the morning
and fall into the depths of the ocean,
there also shall thy Hand lead me;
And thy Right Hand thus,
shall hold me for evermore.*

Rarely does a stanza of words appear so meaningful and compelling.

One of the rewarding moments of any visit to Runnymede is the view of the surrounds from the elevated roof gardens, with six counties visible on a clear day, and aircraft ascending from Heathrow Airport – a fitting reminder of the Memorial's evident purpose.

The diversity of views also embraces a spectacular view of Windsor Castle in the east and London's skyline in the west, a silent reminder of the fruits of the lost airmen's gallantry and their sacrifice.

Visiting Runnymede I found to be a sad and moving occasion; and as I sat pondering the fate of so many young lives, my thoughts turned to their grieving parents, wives, relatives and friends, realising at the time the cruel loss of a devoted father and well-loved son, never to be reunited, never to be seen again – the price of freedom, liberty and love of country.

Lest we forget.



LANCE HOBAN was born in Young NSW and joined the Police Force in 1940. He retired as an Inspector First Clas in 1978. He is a regular contributor to Annals.



Stumbling blocks

TRUE, no one can be argued into faith, but the act of faith may be impossible for those whose way to the Church is strewn with stumbling blocks. The apologist's task is to remove the stumbling blocks or, at least, to help inquirers see around them. Are popes sinners? Indeed, as are we all, but the inquirer needs to learn that the absence of papal impeccability tells us nothing about the existence of papal infallibility. Do Catholics worship Mary? Of course not, but it is not enough to wave one's hand dismissively, as though the question is beneath consideration. The charge must be answered as forthrightly as it is made. To do less is to show little respect for the non-Catholic, who, understandably enough, will go away thinking that an unanswered question is an unanswerable question.

– Karl Keating, *Nothing But the Truth*, Catholic Answers, San Diego, 1999

Signs of Hope in the Australian Church

CATHOLICS WELCOME APPOINTMENT OF NEW BISHOPS

Pope John Paul II has appointed two very different characters as Auxiliary Bishops to Archbishop George Pell in Sydney. TESS LIVINGSTONE profiles bishops Anthony Fisher and Julian Porteous.



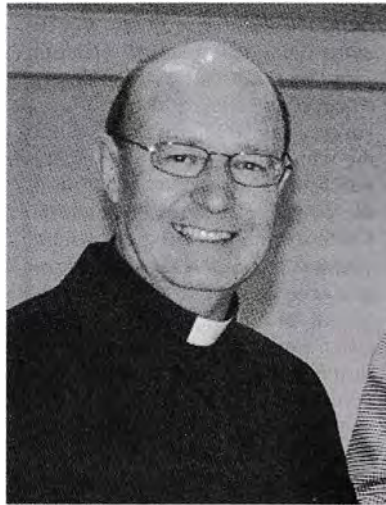
NE was an honours Arts/Law graduate from Sydney University who worked for a high-flying law firm and had a serious girlfriend or two. The other felt a strong call to the priesthood in primary school and never wavered in his intention to enter the seminary straight from school.

One turned his back on his worldly success to join a religious order founded early in the 13th century and wears his medieval habit with pride. The other has close ties to several of the Church's 'new ecclesial movements', founded in the past three decades and which have flourished during the present Pontificate.

One shops at the markets and whips up gourmet lunches for 20, plays tennis 'rather badly' and loves surfing. The other, by his own admission, is a 'hopeless cook'. He also plays tennis and swims, follows the Wallabies and is such a keen bush walker that a few years ago he spent 30 days trekking 800km across Spain.

One holds an Oxford Doctorate in bioethics, the other turned down the chance to study liturgy in Rome because he loved Parish work too much to leave it for academia.

Both grew up in suburban Sydney, both are the eldest of five children and both were due to be ordained as auxiliary bishops to Sydney's Archbishop



Bishop Julian Porteous.

George Pell at St Mary's Cathedral on September 3rd.

The contrasting lives and interests of Bishops Anthony Fisher OP, 43, and Bishop Julian Porteous, 54, bring to mind Christ's revelation in St John's Gospel that His Father's house – a very broad Church – has many mansions and many different personalities within them. Both are very different to Archbishop Pell, so much so that those familiar with both men and their work could only react with wry amusement at bizarre media reports quoting un-named sources suggesting the appointments were made in an atmosphere of tyranny, with the Archbishop appointing two mini-clones in his supposed right wing image and likeness.

What the two men have in common is the respect they've earned in leading two vital life-giving Catholic institutions



Bishop Anthony Fisher OP.

training future Church leaders.

Bishop Fisher was the foundation Director of the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family in Melbourne, and its first Professor of Moral Theology and Bioethics. In less than three years, he has built up the Institute to 150 students, outstripping even its Washington counterpart.

Bishop Porteous has been Rector of Sydney's Good Seminary for less than two years and has led a major transformation of the institution's program and a rebuilding of its chapel. To date, his efforts have helped lift new vocations to their strongest level in any Australian seminary for decades. As a Bishop, he will continue in his role as Rector.

In agreement with Dr Pell, he overhauled the Seminary program to include morning Mass, the Divine Office, afternoon and night prayers.

Many students also attend evening rosary, which is optional.

He also oversaw the refurbishment of the chapel, which previously was bare in the extreme, with no sanctuary, fixed altar, fixed Crucifix, statues or Stations of the Cross. These basic features were all built in, with a central Tabernacle given pride of place in the centre of the Sanctuary. A statue of Our Lady and four stained glass windows depicting Saints Peter, and John, Mother Mary MacKillop and Mother Teresa helped transform the atmosphere.

Before his appointment to the Seminary, Bishop Porteous was Parish Priest of Dulwich Hill in suburban Sydney. For more than 20 years, he has been engaged deeply in what he calls 'the work of the new evangelization', helping with the faith formation of younger members of the Disciples of Jesus Community and also with the Emmanuel Community. Encouraged by Pope John Paul II, these communities of lay faithful, which grew out of the charismatic renewal, come together for prayers, devotions and spiritual development and are grounded firmly in Catholic spirituality.

Bishop Porteous decided to become a priest when he was still in Primary School at St Patrick's Parramatta. 'I had a clear sense in my mind that I wanted to be a priest that strengthened through secondary school,' he said. He says his parents, Pam and John, a Staff Officer in the Australian Army who retired as a Lieutenant Colonel to pursue a career in private enterprise, were 'active Catholics but not overly religious.'

He studied at Springwood and Manly, obtained his Bachelor of Theology and was ordained in 1974, but eschewed further study in Rome in favour of pastoral work in Sydney. Bishop Porteous admits he's not interested in reading fiction or even non-fiction works on many



Christianity or chaos

IT seems to me that in the present phase of European history the essential issue is no longer between Catholicism, on one side, and Protestantism, on the other, but between Christianity and Chaos.

Today we can see it on all sides as the active negation of all that western culture has stood for. Civilisation – and by this I do not mean talking cinemas and tinned food, nor even surgery and hygienic houses, but the whole moral and artistic organization of Europe – has not in itself the power of survival. It came into being through Christianity, and without it has no significance or power to command allegiance. The loss of faith in Christianity and the consequential lack of confidence in moral and social standards have become embodied in the ideal of a materialistic, mechanised state . . . It is no longer possible . . . to accept the benefits of civilisation and at the same time deny the supernatural basis upon which it rests.

– Evelyn Waugh, 'Converted to Rome: Why it happened to me', in the *Daily Express*, London, Oct 20, 1930.

secular subjects, but regularly delves into the works about the lives and times of Saints like Bonaventure and Anslem. He has also visited many religious shrines abroad, including Lisieux, St Boniface's shrine at Fulda in Germany, and those of Saints Ambrose and Charles Borromeo in Italy.

He finds walking treks of several hundred kilometres in Spain, France and the Northern Territory, as well as ordinary bush walking, both enjoyable and calming. 'It's a chance to be able to reflect and ponder, it does have a spiritual dimension, yes,' he said.

Unlike Bishop Fisher, Father Porteous is a 'hopeless cook' but is looking forward to enjoying the hospitality and home

cooking expertise of his brother Bishop.

On important religious holidays, Bishop Fisher regularly shopped and cooked for 20 at the Dominican Monastery at Camberwell in Melbourne, rising early to snap up the freshest produce at the markets.

At 43, Bishop Fisher O.P., B.A. (HONS.), LL.B., B.THEOL. (HONS.), D.PHIL. is Australia's youngest bishop, and has been a priest for only 12 years.

He was born in Sydney, the son of Gloria Maguregui, a Spanish Basque who had migrated with her family to Australia from China and the Philippines in the 1950s and Colin Fisher, a pharmacist. Anthony grew up in Sydney and was dux of St Ignatius College, Riverview, in 1977 then spent six years at Sydney University studying history and law.

It was during his time, and afterwards at solicitors Clayton Utz, that he and his girlfriend were drawn to the pro-life cause. That interest led him to a deeper interest in theology and faith, and after travelling overseas to take time to discern his true vocation, Bishop Fisher entered the Dominicans, a religious order dedicated to preaching the Catholic faith in the context of a life of study, prayer and community.

Bishop Fisher studied for the priesthood in Melbourne, received an honours degree in theology and worked for a time at Uniya, a centre for social research in Kings Cross, on immigration and refugee issues, and at Holy Name Parish in Wahroonga, Sydney and was ordained a priest in Sydney on 14 September 1991.

'I love preaching and I love being a Dominican,' he says. 'A good sermon rarely seems too long, a poor sermon of even a minute is too long.'

Bishop Fisher speaks with an interesting mix of passion, humour, sensitivity underpinned by an almost photographic recall of details he pulls together to

form a persuasive, rational argument.

Sydney has already had a taste of his style when he and euthanasia advocate Dr Philip Nitzsche debated each other in the great hall of Sydney University last month. Professor Fisher argued that the euthanasia debate has moved on. It used to be about a last resort for terminal patients for whom there was no other relief. Now the euthanasia crusaders want death on demand – cancer patients who don't even have cancer, sick people who aren't terminally sick, people who aren't even sick, depressed people, lonely people, young people,' Bishop Fisher said. 'It used to be about compassion and dignity.

'Lately it's been more about media stunts. It used to be about voluntary death for people who have made an autonomous choice.

'Now the euthanasia fanatics want to foist it on those too young to make a decision, the unconscious, the disabled.

'Euthanasia endangers the lives of vulnerable, elderly, sick, disabled, low self-esteem people. They deserve our best care and the protection of our laws. Surely Australians can find better, more creative, more compassionate ways of dealing with suffering than lethal injections and gas bags.'

Bishop Fisher completed his Doctorate of Philosophy in bioethics at Oxford University in 1995, and has been adviser to both the Australian and British bishops on life issues.

Like Bishop Porteous, his efforts in recent years have centred on the rising generation of young Catholics, encouraging and inspiring them to explore and understand their faith tradition, and preparing them to make its positive, life-giving energy felt both in the Church and the wider community.



TESS LIVINGSTONE is a senior News Ltd journalist and author of *George Pell*, published by Duffy and Snellgrove.

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— Editor, *Annals*

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Has the Australian High Court failed the Community?

THE VALUE OF A CHILD

Recently the High Court of Australia decided not to overrule a judgement of the Supreme Court of Queensland awarding compensation to parents for the cost of rearing an unwanted child.

PETER ROACH examines the arguments that underly the judgement.



THE decision of the High Court of Australia in favour of Mr & Mrs Melchior not to overrule a judgment of the Supreme Court of Queensland awarding compensation to them as parents for the cost of rearing an unwanted child, born only because of the failings of a surgeon, caused widespread dismay in the community. For many, if they did not already believe the law to be an ass, any doubt was now removed. The Acting Prime Minister, John Anderson, expressed a widely held view when he said that 'children are a gift from above, not an economic burden that can be enumerated and tabulated'. Most Australians, whether Christian or not, would agree. Life is precious; and a basic objective of the law is to recognise that, to protect the lives of all members of society and promote their well-being.

For my own part I have long believed that the 'common law' which characterises our legal system was a matter of commonsense. A wise judge once said that when the law was working well it accorded with commonsense, such that the soundness of it could be perceived by any reasonably minded person, provided that person was not personally involved. It was a sound observation.

The public, limited to reliance on media reports, might have thought that the liability of the surgeon in the Melchior case was for negligence in performing the surgical procedure of sterilisation. It was not so. When her husband kept postponing a contemplated vasectomy, Mrs Melchior arranged to have her left fallopian tube sterilised. She told the surgeon that her right fallopian tube had

been removed at the time of an appendectomy many years earlier. After the birth of a further child, a medical examination showed that she had conceived through the right tube: a possibility which was not obvious at the time the sterilisation procedure was carried out. At trial, the Supreme Court had held that there was no negligence in carrying out the requested procedure but that the surgeon had been negligent in not advising the mother that the surgery, even though properly

carried out, would not necessarily prevent her from conceiving again. The surgery which had been undertaken only sterilised her left fallopian tube, but did so effectively. Whether in those circumstances the finding of negligence was appropriate may be doubted.

At the original trial, damages had been awarded to the mother to compensate her in respect of the pregnancy and childbirth; and damages had also been awarded to the father for the loss he had suffered by reason of her pregnancy. Neither award, nor the finding at trial that the failure to advise constituted negligence, was open for review before the High Court. The only issue before the Court related to an award of damages to both parents in respect of financial losses likely to be incurred in rearing to the age of 18 years the originally unwanted but, once born, much loved child. Mrs Melchior was later reported in the Press as saying: 'We wouldn't trade a billion dollars for (Jordan) ... I'll tell him that it (the pregnancy) wasn't planned but he is very much loved and wanted'. One can only hope that that works out well for Jordan when he comes to understand that not only was his birth unplanned but that efforts had been taken to prevent him being conceived. My understanding is that children born in similar circumstances, but whose mothers have failed to establish negligence in their claims for damages, have not always been so understanding despite the declarations of love and the child's experience of parental care.

For the appellants it was argued that the High Court of Australia should follow the lead of the House of Lords sitting as the ultimate court



Sadness

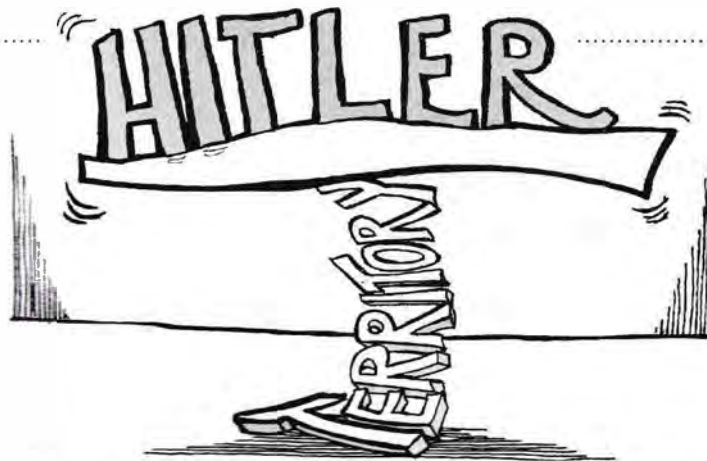
IF a leader allows weariness to so grip the mind that its strength is sapped and reason gives up the reins, if a [leader] is so overcome by heavy-hearted sleep that he neglects to do what the duty of his office requires... like a cowardly ship's captain who is so disheartened by the furious din of a storm that he deserts the helm, hides away cowering in some cranny, and abandons the ship to the waves - if a [leader] does this, I would certainly not hesitate to juxtapose and compare his sadness with the sadness that leads as [Paul] says, to hell.

- St Thomas More, *Sadness of Christ*, Scepter Press, p. 47.

of appeal for the United Kingdom. Until 1963 with the dependent colonial mentality of earlier years the High Court had considered itself obliged to follow decisions of the House of Lords. The Privy Council continued as the ultimate appellate Court for Australia until 1986 when appeals to the Privy Council were abolished. Once that sense of obligation to the Mother Country was put aside, it became the responsibility of the High Court to make its own decision. Proceeding independently as they did, the judges faced a further question. Were they to simply apply established principles of law? Or were they free to make 'new law'? Decisions such as that in *Mabo* (affirming continuing ownership of some lands by the aboriginal peoples of Australia) were said by some to be making 'new law' and subjected the Court to the criticism that the Court, comprising unelected judges not directly responsible to the community, assumed to itself powers only properly exercisable by an elected Parliament.

All seven judges sat and heard the appeal and presented detailed and closely argued reasons for the decisions they reached. In doing so they reviewed how the Courts of many countries had grappled with the issue and presented many different answers to the problem. The outcome was that by a majority of four to three the Court determined that the appeal was unsuccessful.

The minority judges argued that the application of existing principles required that no compensation be awarded in respect of the costs of rearing a healthy child. The majority thought otherwise. They contended that existing principles decreed that there was a right to be awarded compensation for losses occasioned by negligent failure; that those losses extended to the costs of rearing a healthy child; and that it was not for the Court to create a category of exemption from the application of those general principles. If the general principle was not to be applied, that would be a matter for legislation by Parliaments.



Land grabbing by any other name

KEYNES famously asserted that 'the most serious problems in Europe were not political or territorial but financial or economic, and that the perils of the future lay not in frontiers and sovereignty, but in food, coal and transport'. The 1930s did not bear this out. It was loss of confidence in politics, the flawed constitution of Weimar and the clash of warring ideologies, more than economic conditions, which enabled Hitler to indulge in his destructive power-play. The first world war was fought in the name of nation, state and Kaiser, the second in the name of nation, territory and dictator. Economics were a backdrop which Hitler shifted and manipulated at will. In *Mein Kampf* (1925), he had already stated that Germany must consider the territory 'not merely as the basis of welfare, but as the platform of power politics ... we National Socialists must ... inaugurate the territorial policy of the future'. So much for the primacy of food, coal and transport.

— Anne McElvoy, *The Spectator*, Feb 15, 1997.

Justice Kirby said that 'Judges have the responsibility of expressing, refining and applying the common law in new circumstances in ways that are logically reasoned and shown to be consistent with past decisional law'; but they are not entitled to give effect to their personal values as if they expressed legal principle. I doubt that anyone disagreed with that view.

On all sides it was acknowledged that if there was an entitlement to recovery, those costs need not be limited to the costs incurred during the infancy of the child, but no account was made of the circumstance that in the lifetime of the child there might be financial benefits to parents as they aged. Nor was any consideration given to the problem

which would arise for parents if the child, although healthy both physically and mentally, might to the great distress of parents prove to be morally delinquent. They might come to be problems in the future. Justice Heydon, in his first judgment as a judge of the Court, pointed to the pressures which would come on parents to exaggerate their proposed expenditures and to overstate the needs of the child and the difficulties of rearing the individual. For an only daughter the parents might contend that their plans for her included proposals for a most elaborate and very expensive wedding celebration.

All judges recognised that in 2003 Australian society is a complex of diverse cultures. There is much in that diversity which is commend-



Disinclined to argue?

MANY people harbor a fear of controversy. Dialogue is fine, they say, so long as there is little focus on differences. Nothing good can come from argument, no matter how civilly it may be conducted. But such an attitude strips dialogue of its usefulness. A disinclination to argue about differences implies a lack of respect for the other person, an unwillingness to consider his views important. As Rabbi Jacob Neusner has written, '[W]e can argue only if we take one another seriously ... [W]e can enter into dialogue only if we honor both ourselves and the other'. If we are unwilling to deal with Fundamentalists and others on their own terms, we should not be surprised if we see little ecumenical progress being made with them. However necessary it is for scholars to work in remote acreages of the mind – and undoubtedly that is necessary – we avoid an authentically ecumenical engagement if we decline to fashion an apologetic that approaches people on a popular level and treats their concerns seriously. It is likely that no one has ever been brought from atheism to theism merely by an application of Aquinas's five proofs, and it is equally likely that no one has ever been brought from nominal Christianity to fervent Christianity by a deconstruction of biblical texts.

– Karl Keating, *Nothing But the Truth*, Catholic Answers, San Diego, 1999.

able but there is also a danger that it has caused the community to lose its way. We now live in a society which not only provides a system for the adoption of unwanted offspring but even provides subsidies for those who wish to destroy the lives of the unborn. It is also a community which expends vast sums of public money in helping infertile couples overcome the misfortune of their infertility. And now the High Court proposes that the common law stipulates that parents of a loved child, once unwanted but since born unwanted no longer, should be able to impose on someone whose 'negligence' made that life possible the cost of the child's upbringing without bringing any advantage to account.

No one suggested that the parents should have resorted to

either abortion or adoption to achieve their declared end of not having the burden of rearing a further child. Nor was reference made to the prospect that someone who caused the death of an infant child in circumstances entitling the parents to compensation for their loss would ask a court to bring to account in mitigation of that claim the savings to the parents brought about by not having to bear in future any further costs of rearing the deceased child.

But it is fair to say that none of



the judges analysed carefully the significance of the change of mind which came to the parents when the pregnancy which was once so unwanted produced a child who from birth came to be much loved. What those parents experienced was something which has been experienced throughout history by many couples. Despite the surprise, and even dismay, which comes with realisation of an unplanned, let alone unwanted, pregnancy, it is the common experience of mankind that, once the burden of pregnancy and childbirth has passed, the child, even if disabled, is much loved. I suggest that it is the failure of the judges to recognise the significance of that change which has led to such an unfortunate result. To compensate for the pain and discomfort of pregnancy sought to be avoided is one thing. To propose compensation for the cost of rearing a loved child which is the product of an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy is quite another. There are many in the community who suffer from infertility who would willingly have relieved the parents of the financial burden of rearing the previously unwanted, but no longer unwanted, child.

Having read the judgments nowhere was there a close consideration of the significance of that the change of heart. Once the child was born, the parents had an unfettered choice. They could offer the child for adoption to parents who would delight in loving and caring for the child and who would more than willingly bear the expense of rearing a child and assume all the risks associated with the upbringing of children. Alternatively the parents could delight in loving and caring for the child themselves and accept, albeit reluctantly, the expense of rearing the child and assuming all the risks associated with the upbringing of children. They opted for the latter course at a point of time when they could only have had a remote hope that their financial burden in doing so might be relieved by being cast on others. To say in those circumstances that the costs of rearing a child should be forced on to any

person whose negligence made possible the pregnancy, but whose negligence did not cause it, is contrary to common sense.

In so saying I take heart in the words of Justice Hayden who said 'a duty lies on parents to preserve and nurture their children whether or not they actually experience joy from the existence of those children. ... A child is not an object for the gratification of its parents, like a pet or an antique car or a new dress. ... The child has a value which must be fostered whether it pleases its parents or repels them. It is contrary to human dignity to reduce the existence of a particular human being to the status of an animal or inanimate chattel ... or an interest in land. It is wrong to attempt to place a value on human life or a value on the expense of human life because human life is invaluable – incapable of effective or useful valuation. It is thus the policy of the law that the birth of the child is not to be discounted or devalued, even if many actual children are not blessings. The child is itself valuable not because it confers blessings or economic advantages or other advantages, but because it is life'.

Moreover bringing new lives into existence is essential to the continuance of the community as we know it. Unless a community reproduces itself, it dies.

In these circumstances it is regrettable that in this instance the High Court of Australia has badly failed the community. The decision the Court made as to a matter of law fails the commonsense test.

And so until such time as a differently constituted High Court reverses this decision it will be a matter for the eight Parliaments of the States and Territories to legislate to affirm the unique, but non-commercial, value of each human life. Some Governments have already declared their intention to do so.



PETER ROACH is a Barrister, with a special interest in justice issues. He has a special rapport with the MSC priests and brothers because he was a member of the first class to matriculate from Chevalier College Bowral in 1950. He resides in Hobart.



The politics of poverty

THERE is a genuine social justice which proceeds not from the principle of equality, but from the principle: *Suum cuique* – to each his own. It is true that to deprive the workman of just his wage is not only a sin, but a sin that cries to heaven for vengeance. When one hinders social advance by putting artificial barriers in the way of the diligent and the talented, one not only commits a personal injustice, but damages the common good of the whole nation, which always requires a genuine elite of ability, and the contribution of extraordinary brainpower in every walk of life. And it would be socially unjust if a few individuals or certain groups had so much material wealth that, in consequence of this concentration of property and income, other classes had to live not only in poverty, but in misery. Whoever lives in real abundance has a Christian duty to assist those living in wretchedness. Before we proceed, however, let us affirm that the notion of *misery* is different from that of *poverty*. Péguy has already drawn the distinction between *pauvreté* and *misère*. To live in misery means to suffer genuine physical privation: to know cold and hunger, to have no proper dwelling, to be dressed in rags, to be unable to procure medical attention. The poor, by contrast, have the necessities of life, but scarcely any more. They can borrow books, no doubt, but cannot afford a ticket to a concert; they cannot indulge in little extras of food or drink, but should, by self-discipline, be able to save a little. The poor have, therefore, the normal material preconditions for happiness – unless plagued by acquisitiveness or even envy, which has become a political force in the same measure as people have lost their faith. The fact that there are happy poor people (alongside unhappy rich people) is beside the point. Demagogues know how to stir up terrible and murderous unrest even among the happy poor, as has been demonstrated clearly by the history of the left from Marat to Marx to Lenin to Hitler.

– *The Timeless Christian*, by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, 1969.



Queen Matilda and her son

QUEEN Matilda (wife of William the Conqueror) compassionating her son Robert's distresses with a mother's tenderness, often sent him, without the knowledge of her husband, large sums of gold and silver, and other things of value. The king, discovering this, forbade her with terrible threats from continuing to do so; but finding shortly afterwards that she contumaciously repeated the offence, he said to her, in great wrath,

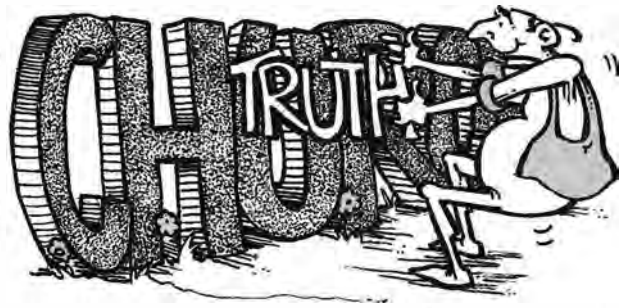
"A wise man remarked truly, as I myself have reason to find, that—

"A faithless woman is her husband's bane."

Who in the world can henceforth reckon on finding a mistress who will be faithful and devoted to him? Behold my own wife, whom I love as my very soul, and who is entrusted by me with my treasures and jurisdiction through my whole dominions, succours my enemies who are plotting against my life, enriches them with my wealth, carefully supplies them with arms to attack me, and abets and strengthens them in every way.' To this Matilda replied: 'Do not wonder, I pray you, my lord, that I have a tender affection for my first-born son. By the power of the Most High, if my Robert was dead, and buried seven feet in the earth out of the sight of living men, and I could bring him to life at the expense of my own blood, I would freely shed it for him, and I would undergo sufferings greater than can be expected from female weakness. How can you suppose that I can take any delight in the abundance of wealth, while I suffer my son to be crushed by the extremity of want and distress? Far from me be such hardness of heart, nor should you, in the fullness of your power, lay such an injunction upon me.'

At hearing this the stern prince turned pale, and he became so enraged that he ordered one of the queen's messengers, whose name was Samson, a Breton by birth, to be apprehended, and to have his eyes forthwith put out. However, learning the king's animosity by intelligence from those the queen trusted, he made his escape to avoid the barbarous command, and took refuge in all haste at the abbey of St. Evroult. He was admitted, at the queen's request, by Abbot Mainier, and entered on the monastic life for the safety equally of his soul and body.

— Ordericus Vitalis [1075-1150] *Ecclesiastical History of England and Normandy.*



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In training for the Heavenly Olympics

THE 8.05 NEWS, READ BY JOSEPH MEAGHER

Every day more than 1 million passengers travel in 1458 carriages over the 2,060 kms of railway tracks around New South Wales. This is the eighth in our series of articles by FATHER MAX BARRETT CSSR on commuter extraordinaire Joseph Meagher.



IN early days of Joe's attachment to the 8.05, one morning a naive commuter thought of a way to silence the prophet. Very urbanely he leant over from the seat behind and dropped the morning newspaper on Joe's lap, saying – in a tone between pleasant and patronising – 'You might like to catch up on the latest.'

Joe Meagher looked over his shoulder, then turned a full 180 degrees. He bestowed on the would-be donor an expression of such gratitude as might have stemmed from an offer of paradise.

'Look, that is exceptionally kind of you. Your gesture makes up for the day a brusque gentleman offered me lozenges which, he assured me, brought on instant laryngitis. However, I must pass up your kind offer. This stuff (Joe indicated the tabloid) is corrosive. It rots the mind. Look,' Joe said, moving back into the spare seat beside the Distributor of Good Reading, 'I'll show you what I mean.'

Joe proceeded to smooth out the paper, the while quoting a couple of lines from William Cowper:

*Thou god of our idolatry, the press ...
Thou ever-bubbling spring of
endless lies ...*

'Now. Here we are. I wonder how many trees had to be cut down to keep us ignorant today? Headline: *Blatant Violation Of Human Rights*. Well, no one can quarrel with that sort of emphasis. Where are we directing our moral indignation today? Ah, Indonesia. Last week it was Zimbabwe. Some time back, South Africa. Until recently we made concerted efforts to keep Tiananmen Square in the public mind, but a subsequent good trade balance with China has shown up the impropriety of that particular focus.

'Have you noticed,' Joe stroked the air gracefully, and commuters in seeing positions followed his finger as though it were the baton of a conductor, 'have you ever noticed that our press is a mite selective as regards recipients of our censure? Freedom of religion in a country like Saudi Arabia is stifled to zilch, zero. But I doubt whether there have been editorials decrying the deprivation of this particular human right for the migrant workers in that particular country. When we find a substitute for oil it might change, but at present ... I am simply echoing a point Lord Northcliffe made a hundred years ago when

he said the power of the Press is very great – but not so great as its power to suppress.

'Civil liberties ... Exhilarating, isn't it, this good sensation that comes over us when we can sink the boot into some other nation. We march on parliament house or some country's embassy. We end up feeling flustered and good – like a hen with a warm vent after laying an egg.'

At this, some passengers registered a shocked intake of breath, of disapproval. From others – especially from those who supposedly had not been listening – muffled guffaws.

'Actually, we have to take a more honest look at our own record on human liberties. Our Aboriginal brothers and sisters would have some reservations as regards our track record.

'Let's take a glance at what else is on the front page. Da-dum, da-dum, ... Hmmm. Mainly politically correct statements. *Gay Couple Claim Right To Adopt Aboriginal Child*. And – aha! – here's a well-chewed chestnut: *Leading Theologian Defies The Pope*. You notice the theologian is not named. And it's always a leading theologian! I've always found it absorbing that all dissenting theologians are invariably 'leading' theologians. Theologians running off the pace are never sighted.



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Absence of religion

REFUTING the supposed opposition between religion and science, however, will have no noticeable effect in reinvigorating religion. We have gotten used to its effective absence. Many people go through life with no particular beliefs, and appear untroubled by it. Others have substituted some political movement as their religion – environmentalism, animal rights, feminism, incremental socialism. The churches themselves have turned left. This has been blamed on the Sixties: The New Left also affected religious life in the West. The Protestant mainline churches turned to the left: the World Council of Churches



'Over the page... Yes! Of course: the regulatory offering of a well-endowed lady who has thrown on a negligee which has very nearly missed.' Almost imperceptibly, Joe Meagher's tone of voice changed. There was suppressed fire as he went on. 'Why don't the militant feminists rage against this cheap exploitation of their sex? And wouldn't you think that this sort of exposure was over-exposed by now?'

The train slid smoothly into Hurstville Station. 'What's that?' Joe looked at his reading companion with some consternation. 'You get off here? Disappointing. However, if you buy another paper – though I advise against it – we still have 61 pages to work through.'

With his old-world charm, Joseph Meagher stood, stepped aside, and watched the receding figure of his literary friend as the latter walked stiffly down the aisle. On resuming his seat Joe was silent a while, then nodded to himself: Yes, King Alfred was right: we meet a violent enemy with courage; but we meet a slinky or a sophisticated enemy with criminal forbearance.

*I have a vision, and I know
The heathen shall return.
They shall not come with warships,
They shall not waste with brands,
But books be all their eating,
And ink be on their hands ...
Yea, this shall be the sign of them,
The sign of the dying fire;
And Man made like a half-wit,
That knows not of his sire ...*

Joe gave a sigh that carried from Sydenham to Sutherland, and said: 'From daily-dosed dim-wittedness, deliver us, dear Lord.'



identified itself with the Third World as against the West ... Liberation theology affected young Catholic priests and nuns who became soldiers in the antiwar, anticapitalist, and anti-American empire movements of the late 1960s and 1970s. While they condemned 'cutthroat capitalism', they seldom criticised 'cutthroat socialism'. All quite true; the Sixties jump-started the leftist politicisation of the churches, but the process was under way before that.

– Judge Robert H. Bork, *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, Regan Books, 1996.



Speaking of the Past

IT is sometimes thought to be a very wise and a very safe thing to say that, though it may be true that political controversy in America is today crude, yet the country is a young country and has still to grow up. To argue by metaphors is dangerous, and this metaphorical argument facts will easily disprove.

It is not true that American political thought has, like M. Coué's pupils, been getting every day and in every way better and better. On the contrary, the evidence shows that the level of political controversy from the War of Independence to the Civil War was intellectually extraordinarily high – probably higher than in any country of the world. Hamilton and Jefferson, Hayne and Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Lincoln and Douglas – all were men who knew when a proposition was proved and when it was not proved, and who were accustomed to speak before audiences which demanded that propositions should be proved. I do not say that these men might not tell a lie – I speak, not of their morals, but of their intellects – but they would not tell the sort of lie that is told today. Hamilton was quite capable of asserting that Jefferson had taken bribes which he probably knew that he had not taken. He was quite incapable of telling an audience of middle-western women that 'our American womanhood is the noblest that human civilisation has yet produced.' For he spoke to audiences that demanded to be convinced. The modern politician speaks only to those who demand to be flattered.

– Christopher Hollis, *The American Heresy*, 1927



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How modern Imperial Court Jesters treat Jesus

JESUS AND THE CINEMA

Up until the early 60s no director dared to make a movie that depicted Jesus 'face-on'. KING OF KINGS may have been the first movie that used an actor to represent the Christian Messiah, but it wasn't the time. PETER MALONE MSC takes a look at the way Jesus has been portrayed on film.



FROM the beginnings of cinema, stories from the Scriptures, especially Gospel stories, have been very popular, a new way of evangelisation and catechesis. Looking over 100 years of images of Jesus on screen, we can see how they reflect what was going on in society during the 20th century and something of the differences in devotion and piety.

This is one means of making credible to today's media generation, Jesus and the Gospel message.

Soon after the Lumiere Brothers screened their first short films in Paris on December 28th 1895, the movie phenomenon spread quickly right around the globe. And, one of the earliest focuses of screen presenta-

tions was the Bible, especially the New Testament and the Gospels.

For more than twenty years, passion play movies and dramas of the life of Jesus or derived from the Gospel were made with great frequency and were very popular.

In 1991, Channel 4, in conjunction with an Anglican group, produced a documentary for television: Jesus Christ Moviestar. It is well worth seeing and studying.

It traces the history of the 'Jesus-movie' with a generous selection of clips and interviews, showing scenes from the 1912 *From the Manger to the Cross*, filmed on location in Egypt. It also quotes from the actor who portrayed Jesus, 'an upper-class Englishman called Henderson Bland' whose memoirs

on his playing Jesus were 'in prose which aspired to the biblical'. The movies, of course, were silent.

This means that the early appeal of Jesus on screen was limited to action and a theatrical style of acting, exaggerating by sweeping gesture. Subtitle captions presented the words as well as some description of the action. The interpretation of Jesus was reverent, often over-reverent, like holy cards or plaster statues coming to life.

The best presentation of Jesus at this time was in D.W.Griffith's *Intolerance*, the Gospel narrative being one of four stories of intolerance over the ages that were intercut throughout the film. While Griffith's film is extraordinarily sophisticated in terms of a three-hour epic made only twenty years after the Lumiere Brothers' screenings, its picture of Jesus is more thematic rather than the depiction of a rounded character, showing him in episodes like the wedding feast at Cana, encountering the woman taken in adultery or the crucifixion.

Jesus was often piously observed rather than there being any invitation to identify with him.

It was somewhat similar with Cecil B. De Mille's treatment of Jesus in *The King of Kings* (1927), a huge-budget extravaganza.

However, De Mille offered what was to be the last full movie portrait of Jesus for almost thirty five years. Gospel films were few and the presence of Jesus was suggested rather than shown.

During the late 40s and early 50s some American church organisations did make feature films of Jesus, showing him fully in person. But by the late 50s, a decade in which biblical movies became popular again, Jesus was becoming more visible, for



Don't overdose on TV

ABOUT 15 per cent of the population think; about 25 per cent of the population think they think, and about 60 per cent look at picture books. When all standards have been sacrificed, all norms abandoned, and right reason ignored, then the emotions are given primacy in life. This danger can be very grave in those who are given to excessive or almost exclusive reading of novels and looking at television dramas. Here we speak not of those who do it normally for recreation and because very often abstract principles are often better explained in dramas. Rather, our emphasis is on the exclusivity of this kind of life.

— Bishop Fulton Sheen, *Thinking Life Through*, London, 1956.

instance his feet in the crucifixion in *The Robe*. The most striking is Ben Hur, *A Story of the Christ*.

When Ben Hur is arrested and sent to Rome, the chained prisoners march through desert landscapes, arriving at Nazareth. We see them through the open workshop window, noticing the arm of Jesus with a carpenter's tool. But it is when the captain refuses water to the parched Ben Hur that Jesus appears, first as a shadow cast on Ben Hur when he has sunk to the ground and groans, 'God help me'.

Jesus gives him water and, then, with a close up of his hand, he pours water on Ben Hur's head and brow and gently and soothingly strokes his hair with the water. During Jesus walk to Calvary, he falls under the cross and in need of water. He is comforted by Ben Hur who offers him the water and recognises him as the stranger who once comforted him.

The two movies which begin and end the thirty five year gap between full portrayals of Jesus on screen are the two versions of *The King of Kings*. In retrospect it is not so surprising that the change came with the 60s, the decade that saw more social change, especially in western culture, than any other decade of the 20th century.

In 1961 most audiences were not used to seeing an actor portray Jesus 'face-on'. With *King of Kings*, it was now possible to identify with the Jesus portrayed by Jeffrey Hunter, a fairly straightforward Jesus, a Jesus of the masses, who preaches his good news, goes about speaking and doing good and is crucified for it. *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965) was not so popular. Why would a director want a thirty five year old, tall, somewhat dour blond Swede, Max Von Sydow, to portray a first century Jewish man? And, once again the treatment was dignified, at times stately.

In the meantime, in Italy, Marxist novelist and director, Pier Paolo Pasolini made *Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo*, *The Gospel according to Matthew*. This Jesus appears as strong, intense, thirsty for truth and justice, willing to confront on principles, a man of authority and conviction.



What to do when experiments disprove your theory

THE layman, taught to revere scientists for their absolute respect for the observed facts, and for the judiciously detached and purely provisional manner in which they hold scientific theories (always ready to abandon a theory at the sight of any contradictory evidence), might well have thought that, at Miller's announcement of this overwhelming evidence of a 'positive effect' in his presidential address to the American Physical Society on December 29th, 1925, his audience would have instantly abandoned the theory of relativity. Or, at the very least, that scientists - wont to look down from the pinnacle of their intellectual humility upon the rest of dogmatic mankind - might suspend judgement in this matter until Miller's results could be accounted for without impairing the theory of relativity. But no: by that time they had so well closed their minds to any suggestion which threatened the new rationality achieved by Einstein's world-picture, that it was almost impossible for them to think again in different terms. Little attention was paid to the experiments, the evidence being set aside in the hope that it would one day turn out to be wrong.

- M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, London, Rutledge and Kelgan Lane, pp12-13. [Miller devoted his life to disproving relativity 'and on face value, so far as experimental data and are concerned, he succeeded'. Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation*, London, Pan Books, 1964, p.245.]

During the 1960s and its movements for freedom - especially in the United States - some philosophers and theologians wanted a moratorium on the use of the word, 'God', and some asked, 'Is God dead?'. However, it was also the

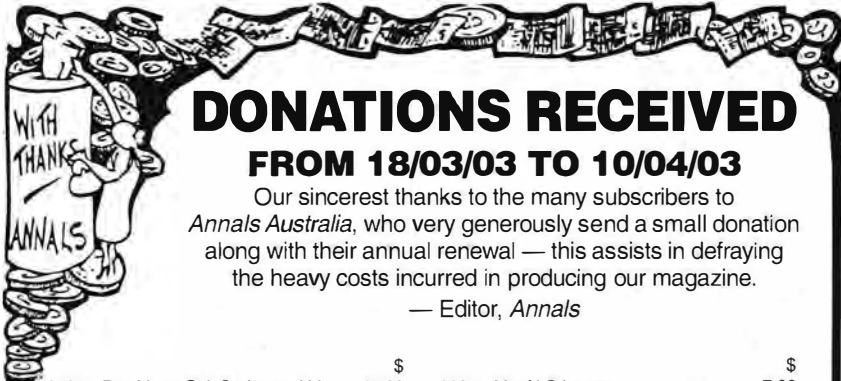
era of a charismatic spirituality and a renewal of charismatic prayer in the mainstream churches. It was also the era of 'Jesus Movements'.

The new portrayal of Jesus was less 'naturalistic'. For one thing, Jesus sang. He sang rock-opera music, even uttered rock-screams. He sang vaudeville tunes and did some burlesque. The stage versions and the records of Jesus Christ Superstar and *Godspell* were enormously popular in the late 60s and early 70s.

The 70s produced two Italian Jesus-movies. The first was *The Messiah*, directed by Roberto Rossellini. It also produced an outstandingly successful portrait of Jesus, Franco Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977). The screenplay did not use the Gospel texts merely as screenplay but incorporated explanatory material and rearranged Gospel incidents much as the early Christian communities assembled the Gospels as we now have them? The screenplay and direction, with a blend of 'realism' and 'naturalism', meant that any audience would not feel that the material was too much 'above them'. They could identify with the events and with Jesus himself, played so strikingly by Robert Powell.

In 1979, a movie, simply called *Jesus*, was released, backed financially by some evangelical religious groups. It uses Luke's Gospel and some of John as screenplay, thus often offering the bare bones of the incidents and hurrying from one to another. Jesus is personal and personable but is caught in the narrow framework of the Gospel text. The result is very straightforward, often literal, sometimes fundamentalist. An edited version was given to pilgrims to Rome during the Jubilee year. Jesus has also been dubbed into many languages, over fourteen in India alone.

The hostile reaction to *Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) came before the film's release. Many conservative groups in the United States claimed that the film was blasphemous because it showed Jesus marrying and some sexual activity. This missed the point of



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— Editor, *Annals*

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the novel on which the film was based. Kazantzakis said that he was writing a novel based on the Gospels, not a Gospel. This allowed him the literary permission to speculate on Jesus' character, the events of his life and death and his motivation and the 'last temptation' which was nothing to do with sexuality but was the temptation to 'ordinariness', to give up his mission in life. This 'human' Jesus is portrayed as 'everyman'.

The Canadian *Jesus of Montreal* (1988) takes us back to the earliest Jesus movies, theatrical re-creations of the Gospel, a play within a play. Daniel, the director of the play, is a Christ-figure, closely resembling the Jesus he enacts in the play. The film is complex, using the obvious references to the Gospels as well as more subtle allegorical references and comparisons.

Films of the 90s have used the Gospel story, especially the passion, for special pleading and comparisons for marginalised groups: prisoners in *Dead Man Walking*, African American slaves in *Amistad*, gay men in *The Garden*, *The Long Day Closes*.

1999 and 2000 saw two English-language Jesus movies. Firstly, the puppet-character and animated, *The Miracle Maker*, offers a fresh way of dramatising the Gospels, not only for children for whom it is a wonderful way of introducing the person of Jesus, but also for adults. Ralph Fiennes provides the voice of Jesus. The other movie is in the more familiar style of American telemovie, *Jesus*, with Jeremy Sisto as Jesus. Finally, due for screening on American television on Good Friday, 2002, *Jesus and Judas* which its producer, Fr Frank Desiderio of the Paulists, describes as a midrash, a meditative story about Judas, his becoming a disciple and his betrayal and ultimate fate.

The Jesus-movies provide us with many images for reflection on our understanding of the Gospels and our devotional response in faith to Jesus.



PETER MALONE MSC reviewed the movies for *Annals Australasia* from 1968-1998. He now heads the Church's World Association for Communication, SIGNIS, and is a member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

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Arriving at the truth about Australia's Past

HISTORIANS TRIP ON FOOT-NOTES

The history of Australia's Aborigines continues to be argued about in academic and media circles.

ANDREW BOLT looks at reactions to Keith Windschuttle's *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, and examines the credibility of some of Windschuttle's critics.

KEITH Windschuttle's problem is that it's now more moral to seem good than be right. Even when you write about our history.

Ask Windschuttle, who has been savaged by our leading historians for six months since he pointed out they had told falsehoods about the 'genocide' of Tasmania's Aborigines.

His book, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, challenges the claims of a generation of modish historians that Tasmanian Aborigines were deliberately wiped out by racist whites, or were at least victims of a slaughter.

What makes Windschuttle's rebuttal so explosive is that he's checked their claims against their sources, and found that historians as admired as Professor Henry (Why Weren't We Told?) Reynolds had misquoted some of them, and in a way that exaggerated the tragedy, or made it seem deliberate. Reynolds, to his credit, admits to an honest error.

But no historian was so devastatingly analysed as Professor Lyndall Ryan, a university dean and author of *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, the most influential book on what she calls Tasmania's 'genocide'.

Ryan claims, for instance, that police roving parties killed 60 Tasmanian Aborigines from 1828 to 1830.

In fact, the sources she cites mention no such figure and Windschuttle says the real death toll was just two.

Ryan claims settlers killed 10 Aborigines at Moulting Lagoon. In fact, none of the sources she cites mention any killings there.

Ryan says between 1827 and 1830, shootings by whites and other conflict cut the number of 'North people' from 200 to 60.

In fact, says Windschuttle, there was no census or any other way of knowing how many Aborigines were in this area around this time.

Ryan claims Aborigines were offered poisoned flour.

But Windschuttle says Ryan's only source for this does not say anyone actually gave Aborigines the flour, but only that one boss worried his stockmen might.

Ryan lists the diary of the colonial chaplain, Robert Knopwood, as her source for saying 100 Aborigines were killed by whites from 1804 to 1808. In fact, his diary lists just four killed.

Ryan claims 280 Tasmanian Aborigines were 'recorded shot' in various records. In fact, Windschuttle says, the records list only 119 Aborigines shot by whites, in murder or self-defence. And on and on.

I have asked Ryan three times to respond to Windschuttle's allegations that she got these things wrong, exaggerated facts or worse.

Months ago she promised me an answer, which never came, and then told me to wait until the University of Tasmania published a paper she recently gave in which she said she'd found sources to support some of her claims – although not the ones I've listed here.

Others haven't had much luck, either, in getting her to explain her scholarship, which seems to me incredibly unprofessional. Ryan has admitted only that some of her footnotes are missing, but the errors are 'minor' and 'easily rectified'. She denies lying and says, 'I can't believe I would have made it up'. She has asked: 'Is only one 'truth' correct?'

But on Channel 9's *Sunday* program, reporter Helen Dalley asked her to explain why she'd said Knopwood was her source for claiming 100 Aborigines had been murdered, when he'd actually recorded only four such deaths.



Books Inspired By War

RICHARD of Bury, bishop of Durham in the fourteenth century, wrote in his *Philobiblon* a lament for the ancient books that have not come down to us because of war. How many more interesting books by Aristotle and Seneca we could have read, he suggested, if they had not been destroyed by war. Aristotle would have transmitted to us the quadrature of the circle and would not have left the problem of the eternity of the world an open question. Furthermore, the grammar of Cadmus, the geometry of Joshua, the riddles of Samson, the antidotes of Aesculapius, the stratagems of Palamedes and countless other secrets of science are believed to have perished when the library of the Ptolemies was burned in the Alexandrian war, as we know from Aulus Gellius. 'Quis tam infaustum holocaustum, ubi loco cruoris incaustum offertur, non exhorreat?' 'A lesser crime than this is the sacrifice of Jephthah or Agamemnon where a pious daughter is slain by a father's sword.'

If Richard of Bury were living today he would of course have even better reasons to lament the books destroyed by war. But perhaps he would have learnt that there is an even greater calamity than books destroyed by war: it is the calamity of books and papers inspired by war, books and papers on causes of war, war psychology, war guilt, future wars.

– Arnaldo Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography*, Harper Torchbooks, 1966.

RYAN: Right. I certainly agree that the Knopwood diaries say that, but I also had another reference referring to a report by John Oxley who was a surveyor who'd been sent down to Tasmania in 1809. He said too many Aborigines were being killed.

DALLEY: OK, but how did you extrapolate from his words saying 'too many Aborigines had been killed', to 'about 100 lost their lives'? Is that just made up?

RYAN: Well, I think by the way in which Oxley wrote that he seemed to think there had been a great loss of life from the Aborigines.

DALLEY: So, in a sense, is it fair enough for [Windschuttle] to say that you did make up figures? You're telling me you made an estimate, a guess.

RYAN: Historians are always making up figures.

Let me now tell you how our historians have responded to all this. The person they've attacked for bad scholarship, inventing things and making facts fit an ideological prejudice is . . . Keith Windschuttle.

It's been a circus. 'There is no room in his court for historical imagination,' raged Professor Stephen Foster, who edited *Frontier Conflict*, a book of essays by historians attacking Windschuttle. Truly! 'Windschuttle aims to take the discipline of history back to some golden age when it was all about facts,' complained Professor Alan Atkinson. Well, yes, professors. That's his point. 'Malicious' and 'cultural chauvinist', spat author Mark McKenna. 'Replete with misconceptions, distortions, character assassinations,' added lecturer Shayne Bree. Pot. Kettle.

Professor Robert Manne even accused Windschuttle - falsely - of plagiarism.

And Professors Stephen Mueke and Marcia Langton claimed he had a 'twisted view of history', and were 'deeply concerned' that a newspaper would give him 'space to attack the credibility of major historians'.

Excuse me, dear historians, but what credibility?



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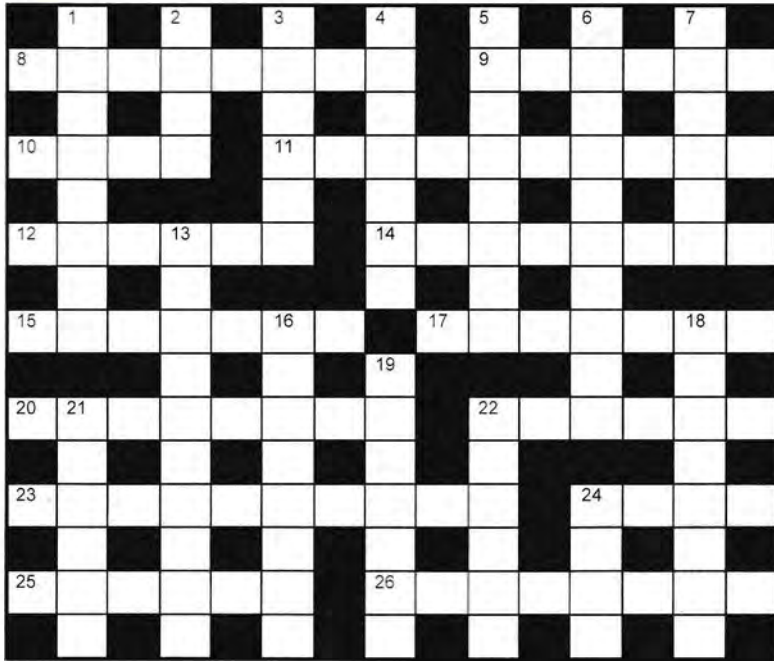
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ACROSS CLUES

- 8. Headcloth imprinted with a representation of Jesus' face (8)
- 9. A helper of Elijah (1 Kings:19-216) (6)
- 10. A religious splinter group (4)
- 11. Ornamental cupboard used for storing Consecrated Hosts (10)
- 12. Part of the habit worn by some nuns (6)
- 14. "Mad monk" of Russia (8)
- 15. Part of a church (7)
- 17. Another name for the Koran (7)
- 20. Homeland of official converted by Philip (Acts 8:26-40) (8)
- 22. A series of prayers counted on a string of beads (6)
- 23. The washing of the Apostles' feet by Jesus (10)
- 24. What God's approval creates (Rom 5: 4) (4)
- 25. Slander (6)
- 26. Made void (8)

DOWN CLUES

- 1. The 16th Book of the Old Testament (8)
- 2. Baptismal bowl (4)
- 3. Moral excellence (6)
- 4. Legendary Saint beheaded by her father; patron of architects (7)

- 5. Retaliatory action against an enemy in wartime (8)
- 6. Thaumaturgic, marvellous (10)
- 7. Beehive-shaped tombs associated with the Mycenaean culture of ancient Greece (6)
- 13. Of, relating to, or characteristic of a Pope (10)
- 16. Atoned for sins or wrongdoings (8)
- 18. A king of Babylonia (Gen 14:18) (8)
- 19. Papal residence (7)
- 21. City captured by Abimelech (Judg 9: 50) (6)
- 22. 6th Book of the New Testament (6)
- 24. Perdition (4)

SOLUTION TO NO. 15



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Respect for the cross

I FRIAR Marchesino of Bassano of the order of Minorites, desire to say that I heard the preceding relation from the aforesaid Friar Oderic (Archbishop John of Monte Corvino) when he was still living; and I heard a good deal more, which he has not set down. Among other stories which he told, this was one. He related that once upon a time, when the Great Khan was on his journey from Sandu to Cambalech, he with four other Minor friars was sitting under the shade of a tree by the side of the road, along which the Khan was about to pass, and one of the brethren was a bishop. So when the Khan began to draw near, the bishop put on his episcopal robes and took a cross and fastened it to the end of a staff, so as to raise it aloft; and then those four began to chant with a loud voice the hymn 'Veni Creator Spiritus!' And then the Great Khan, hearing the sound thereof, asked what it meant, and those four barons who go beside him replied that it was four of the Frank Rabbans. So the Khan called them to him and the Bishop thereupon, taking the cross from the staff, presented it to the Khan to kiss. Now, at the time he was lying down, but as soon as he saw the cross he sat up, and doffing the cap that he wore, kissed the cross in most reverent and humble manner. Now, the rule and custom of that court is that no one shall venture to come into the Khan's presence empty-handed; so Friar Oderic, having with him a small dish full of apples, presented that as his offering to the Great Khan, and he took two of the apples and ate a piece of one of them, whilst he kept the other in his hand, and so he went his way. Now, it is clear enough from this that the Khan himself had some savour of the Catholic faith, as he well might, through the Minor friars who dwelt at his court continually. And as for the cap which he doffed so reverently before the cross, I have heard Friar Oderic say that it was a mass of pearl and gems and was worth more than the whole march of Treviso.

- Quoted in *Travel and Travellers of the Middle Ages*, by A.P. Newton.

Eight only to be attempted

MY own view of the Ten Commandments is very like that of an Anglican Bishop who once said, and I think it's very typical of the whole Anglican church, that they are like an examination paper - eight only to be attempted.

- *Muggeridge through the Microphone*, Malcolm Muggeridge, 1967



MEDIA MATTERS

By James Murray

Abnormal Norms

Mass communications can promote new, and false, norms. They then become eligible for knee-jerk defence by zealots of the instant. Example: reaction to the Vatican statement on homosexual, quasi-marital unions, and the duty of Catholic politicians to oppose their legalisation. The statement was greeted as if it were criticising a practice not only long-established but socially positive and essential to civil liberties.

The reaction of some Catholic MPs to the re-iteration of age-old norms was amnesiac, not only of morality but of the greatest of parliamentarians, Edmund Burke, who told his Bristol constituents that he betrayed them instead of serving them if he sacrificed his judgement to their opinion. The former, Burke being Burke, was conscience based.

Separation of Church and State got the odd mention. Odd because in its classic, modern location, the United States, constitutional restriction on a state-established religion was not secularist. It

came about in an historical context where religions abounded: Puritans in Massachussetts, Catholics in Maryland, Quakers in Pennsylvania and later Mormons in Utah. California? It has a macropedia of religions and cults, the latter including secularism.

Nor was separation cited when Congress, as a pre-condition of Statehood for Utah, enforced abolition of Mormon polygamy, deeming it incompatible with traditional, monogamous marriage even though polygamy (unlike homosexual unions) had qualified, biblical accept-

ance, and the authority of Mormon founder Joseph Smith. Nor is separation cited vis-a-vis America's current Defence of Marriage Act.

Abbott's Primacy

Cabinet minister Tony Abbott has made the most timely and cogent speech of his career. Timely because as John Howard loses more of his timing (See last issue) in a haze of ethanol.

Abbott demonstrates prime ministerial heft and that he has come some way from the hack-flack who gave the aspirant John Hewson his daffy line about rented houses and unmown lawns. This, if it doesn't prove Hewson's belief that Abbott was planted on him by John Howard, does provide a possible reason for Hewson's reported snifters of something stronger than aqua pura.

Cogent because central to Abbott's speech is his thesis that the war on terrorism is not one that weapons can win, a point amplified by: 'The West's wealth and openness is an irresistible magnet.

Its narcissism, materialism and and arrogance offend billions of people who might otherwise find its traditional virtues resonate with their deepest instincts. In a culture conditioned to be in two minds about everything, Western leaders need to match their adversaries' conviction and Western citizens need to be more dedicated to enhancing civilised life than suicide bomber are in taking it.'

By comparison Abbott's mate/rival Peter Costello's recent speech, designed to differentiate him from Howard, was gruel so luke-warm he ought to consider asking his brother



Separation of Church and State

HERE lies Robert Peckham, Englishman and Catholic, who, after England's break with the Church, left England not being able to live without the Faith and who, coming to Rome, died not being able to live without his country.

- Inscription on a tomb in the Venerable English College, Rome.



the Rev Tim Costello for pointers on matters of hot substance.

But why did Abbott make his speech at a closed conference, presumably in Canberra, from which a copy seems to have flitted to Dennis Shanahan (*The Australian*, August 11)? Great speeches deserve public forums. The closed forum and the Sunday-for-Monday leak are redolent of the old hack-flack, that is, too clever by half.

Rich Pain

Solomon might have been baffled by the High Court case involving Kerry Melchior and her son Jordan, born in 1997 after a tubal ligation (effective, she thought, but her doctor missed a damaged, still viable tube). The close decision awarding her \$105,000 to rear her son derives from the modern notion that a poultice of money can cure any pain, any grief, any loss. Or indeed any career catastrophe as shown by the \$338 million claim from former Queensland Premier Joh Bjelke Petersen, a claim based on the damage suffered, he says, as a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry into police corruption. If only this were the reduction to absurdity of poultice claims. But with contingency-fee lawyers flying them, it may be onward and upward until they crash on the dark side of the moon.

Rosen Reform

Film makers are concerned at the potential, negative impact of any Austral-American free-trade agreement, given that American negotiators may take a purist view and attack the local industry as subsidised or – horror beyond Frankenstein – as socialistic rather than cultural. Here the Australian Film Finance Corporation inadvertently sharpens the purist view. Almost invariably, the corporation takes the main production credit on movies.

But this kind of main credit smacks of those once seen on Soviet and Soviet-bloc movies. The corporation's newish boss Brian Rosen has considerable track-record as a film-maker, including Hollywood time. He should institute a policy of giving the main credit to the principal production house involved. Thus he strengthens them and does a Hopalong Cassidy by cutting the purists off at the pass, just north of Sunset Boulevard.

Alston's Epic

The Minister for Communications Senator Richard Alston's battle about the ABC of bias has taken on an epic quality. To elaborate on previous comments, ABC reporters can share aspects of Snow White – Snow White's Dopey,

that is. But what Alston must bear in mind is that a quantum of what he sees as bias is the counter-spin of reporters, reacting to political news management or the old mushroom treatment.

Ironically, hacks did push-start the Gough Whitlam, Labor band-wagon and then boarded it when it reached Canberra in 1972, singing their variation of the Abba hit, *Money! Money! Money!* It's a rich scribe's world. Later, Malcolm Fraser's Liberal government set up a more elaborate system, staffed by other ex-hacks.

But possibly it is unfair to target only ex-hacks. Public servants, eyes on performance bonuses, can also spin for their masters. Result: adulteration of the democratic process.

Uncle Joe Balding

The ABC's response to Richard Alston may well confirm his impression of its left-wing culture. Its boss Russell Balding's cuts, including children's programmes and the \$500,000 cadet training scheme, smack of Stalin's scorched-earth strategy after Hitler broke the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact, and unleashed his panzer divisions.

The other part of Stalin's strategy was, of course, to switch propaganda emphasis from defending Soviet Communism to saving Mother Russia. How can Balding match this? *Play School* round-the-clock?

More seriously, in its governmental rows, the ABC is less solidly placed than its elder sister the BBC, source of so many of its programmes. The reason? The BBC retains its direct, licence-fee system and thus is not totally reliant on government funding when push comes to shove or, indeed, wink to nudge. Ironic, also, that a user-pays, Liberal-led Government does not restore the licence fee abolished by a Labor Government. There again both the main parties have a vested interested in trying to keep the ABC in beggars can't be choosers mode.

The ABC does need more self-criticism. Okay, Indira Naidoo does *Feedback*. Who couldn't love the work of such a lustrous charmer? But it is difficult to display Dorothy Parker wit when reading tele-prompter.

More effective self-criticism might come by altering *Media Watch*. Rather than a single anchor, it should have a squad with varied views, each member appearing once a week. And giving the ABC itself heaps when necessary. Praise, too, of course.

Changeless Changes

Nice (unprecedented?) to see the US House of Representatives chiming with the Australian Senate in putting the kybosh on immediate



changes to media deregulation which, as contemplated, are inevitably about further collectivisation of print, radio and television.

Why is collectivisation, when viewed as left-wing, wrong but when viewed as right-wing, beneficial? Either way, surely, the result is a restriction on free-speech outlets? And for hacks, less horses on the merry-go-round.

This is not to say that changes should not occur. The problem is designing them to ensure new players and fresh productions. British examples of change have already been canvassed in this column, including Maggie Thatcher's seismic decision to put commercial TV licences up for auction, impossible here apparently; though the government controls the licences it doesn't own the commercial hardware.

Needed is an approach that takes account of reality. Telstra, still government-controlled, could be the key. It has cataracts of mobile-phone gold beyond the fabled Fairfax, small-ad rivers and is already involved in pay-TV. Why not a separate joint venture in which it funds ABC productions, second rights going to local pay-TV (plus a split on world rights)?

Marsupial Medicine

The cure for whatever ails the Wallabies is simple: Re-Union Rugby, that is, the bringing together of the XIII and XV-a-side codes. No nation, except possibly England, where the Great Split originated in 1908, suffers as grievously for it as Australia.

As to countering the New Zealand All Blacks haka (worth a point per potent syllable), there are the words that made the Anzac legend: 'Dig. Dig. Dig.' Except, of course, the legend and the words are shared with New Zealand.

Given the distinction Aborigines, such as the Ella brothers and current coach Eddie Jones have brought to the code, what about

approaching the Bangarra Dance Theatre for a variation on an Aboriginal war dance (woomeras and spears optional)?

Hairy View

Former colonial powers tend to get a bad press. And the earlier they were into colonisation the heavier the criticism seems to be. Occasionally, coverage runs the gamut from the sublime to the gorbimey (Greg Sheridan, *The Australian*, July 31). His piece was pegged on the abortive coup by a group of service personnel in Manila.

After a superb, backhander description of the coup leader, Lieutenant Antonio Trillanes, as 'ridiculously good-looking', the magnificently hirsute Sheridan went on: 'The Phillippines were colonised for 400 years by the Spanish. Not to put too fine a point on it, the Spaniards were rotten colonialists. They imposed among other things, a landowning system totally dominated by a mestizo, or mixed race, estate-owning elite. This land system has never been effectively reformed ...'

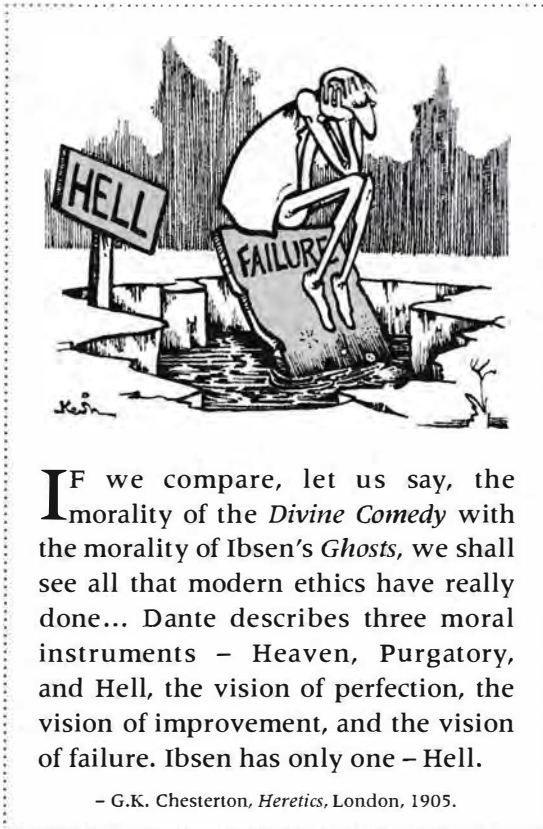
Australia has metizo equivalents who might wish the British Government had been able to impose such a system of land tenure on them. As to reform of the land system, it began too late for Ned Kelly but hopefully

just in time for the original owners.

Bob Each Way

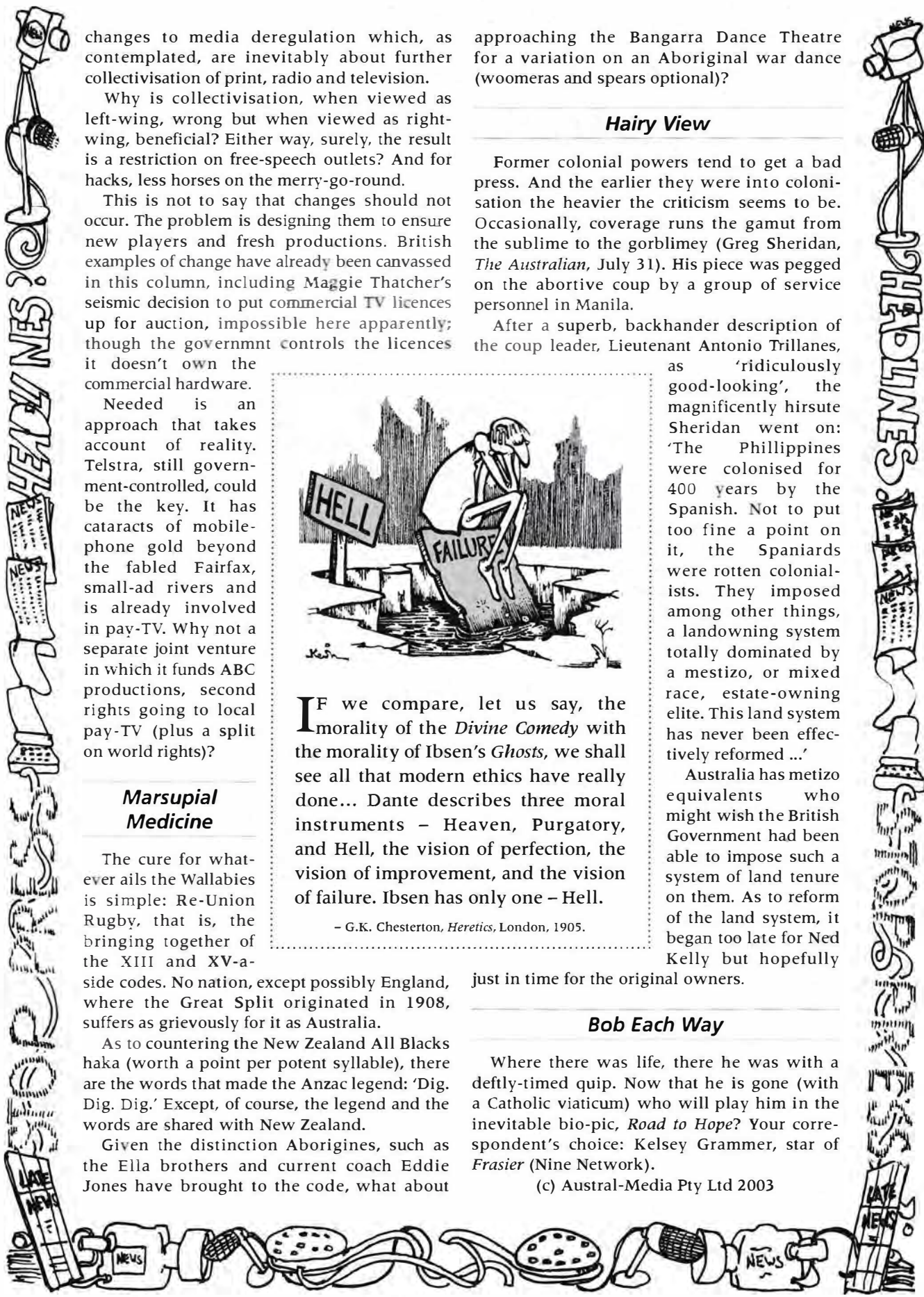
Where there was life, there he was with a deftly-timed quip. Now that he is gone (with a Catholic viaticum) who will play him in the inevitable bio-pic, *Road to Hope?* Your correspondent's choice: Kelsey Grammer, star of *Frasier* (Nine Network).

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IF we compare, let us say, the morality of the *Divine Comedy* with the morality of Ibsen's *Ghosts*, we shall see all that modern ethics have really done... Dante describes three moral instruments - Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell, the vision of perfection, the vision of improvement, and the vision of failure. Ibsen has only one - Hell.

- G.K. Chesterton, *Heretics*, London, 1905.



Plug into the Angelic Choirs who sing God's praises

GREGORIAN CHANT

The haunting beauty of the Catholic Church's traditional Chant is heard at Mass or in the singing of the Divine Office in cathedrals, churches and monasteries throughout the world.

It has a place in the parish churches of Catholics in fad-driven Anglo-Saxon countries as

JANET KOVESI WATT points out in this article.



HERE is a pleasing irony in the fact that plainchant, almost universally discarded from liturgical use thirty years ago despite the stipulations of Vatican II, should now be making a comeback in a secular context, appreciated for its own merits, albeit mostly as "relaxation music" (I can vouch for its remarkably soothing effect on a fractious baby) by a generation untouched by the musical iconoclasm of the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century.

Your local C.D. shop is likely to stock a variety of recordings by monastic and other choirs, including groups of women singers, who cheerfully defy a commonly-held assumption that plainchant is gender-specific and should be sung only by men. I have golden memories of Sunday Mass at the Oxford Catholic Chaplaincy in the 1950's when the entire congregation sang the plainchant Ordinary of the Mass and the mixed voice choir sang the Proper.

Although it remains more likely that you will hear, as I once did, the melody of the *Missa Cum Jubilo* floating out from your local music shop rather than your parish church, plainchant is at last regaining a foothold in its rightful home and its rightful context of the sung Latin liturgy.

The great antiquity of the chant is one of its most potent attractions. The psalm tones at least must surely have been used in Jewish worship from ancient times, since their musical shape is so perfectly adapted to the unique patterning of

Hebrew poetry. Certainly the chant was already old by the end of the fourth century, old enough for many variants to have crept in, so that St. Ambrose thought it necessary to carry out a revision and establish which melodies were to be regarded as authentic among the different ones handed down by oral tradition. He wrote hymns of his own as well, one of which St. Augustine recited to console himself after the death of his mother at Ostia, in 387, (Confessions, IX,12) but we do not know whether Ambrose composed

the melodies as well as the words.

Two centuries later Pope Gregory the Great (Pope from 590-604), in whose honour the chant is often termed "Gregorian", ordered another revision and established a Schola Cantorum which not only determined which melodies were to be regarded as definitive, but sent representatives widely afield, as far as Gaul and distant Britain, so that there should be uniformity of the chant throughout Christian Europe. The Venerable Bede, who was himself in charge of "the daily care of singing" in his Monastery of Jarrow, in the far north of England, tells in his *Ecclesiastical History of Britain* how this worked in practice. He writes (for the year 669) of a certain bishop of Rochester named Putta who was "extraordinarily skilful in the Roman style of Church music, which he had learned from the disciples of the holy Pope Gregory." When Rochester was destroyed by an invading Mercian army he took refuge with the bishop of the conquering Mercians and made himself available "wherever he was desired, to teach church music". Thus his musical knowledge travelled from Kent to the Midlands of England.

Bede also tells us of "the venerable John, archchanter of the Church of the holy apostle Peter" who was brought from Rome in the year 680 by abbot Benedict Biscop, the founder of Bede's monastery, "that he might teach in his monastery the method of singing throughout the year, as it was practised at St. Peter's in Rome". Those who "had skills in singing resorted from all the monasteries of the same province to hear him, and many invited

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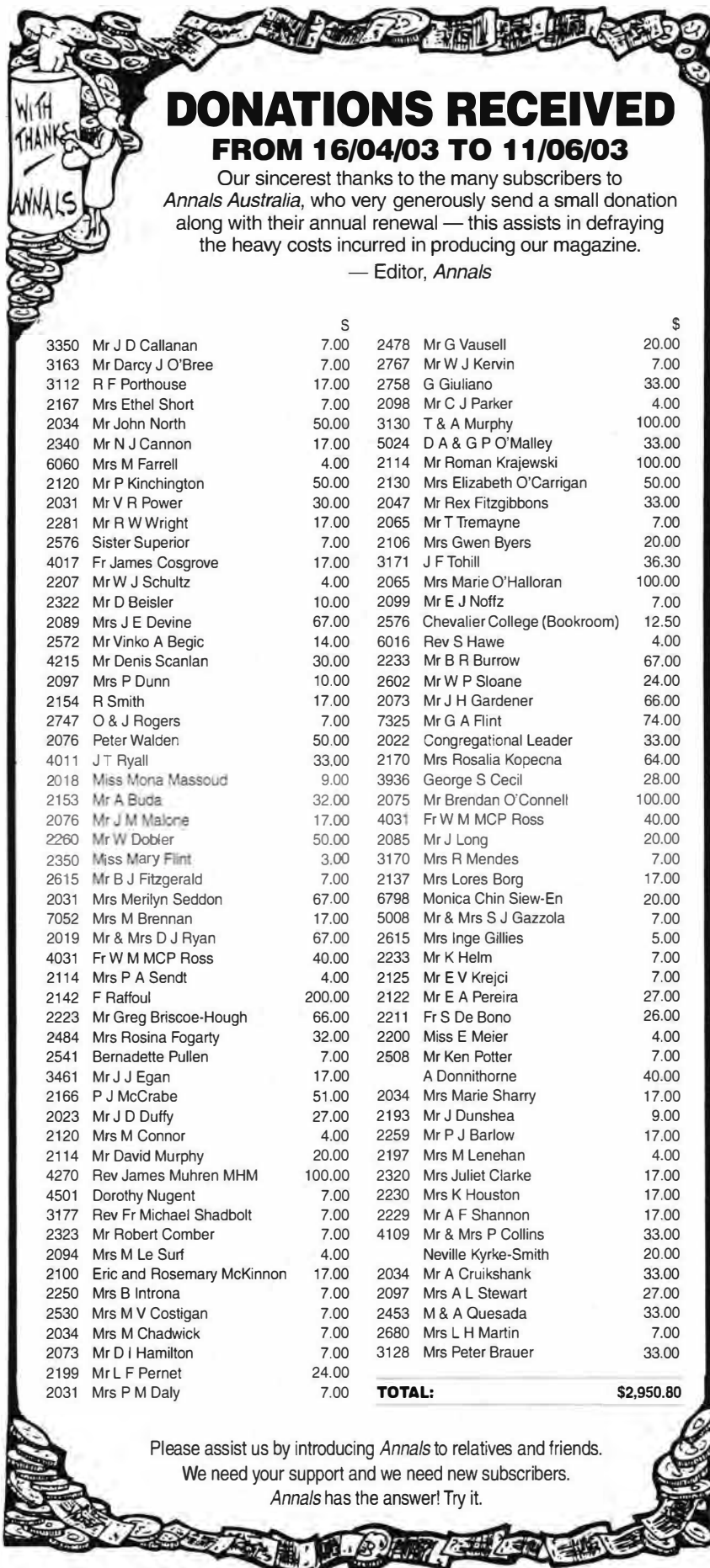
him to teach in other places". In Bede's entry for the year 709, more than a century after Pope Gregory's death, we are told of Bishop Acca of Hexham, himself "a most expert singer", inviting a musician called Maban "who had been taught to sing by the disciples of the blessed Gregory in Kent, for him to instruct himself and his clergy, and kept him for twelve years, to teach such ecclesiastical songs as were not known, and to restore those to their former state which were corrupted either by want of use or by neglect."

In this way the chant was carried from Rome itself to the northern boundary of the ancient Roman empire. St. Wilfrid's 7th century crypt of Hexham Abbey is built of stones taken from Hadrian's wall nearby.

About a hundred years after this the Emperor Charlemagne ordered yet another revision of the chant, establishing it as we have finally inherited it. The remarkable thing is that all these revisions were carried out without the help of a standard written notation, relying on trained memories and the kind of personal tuition described by Bede. Nothing has been preserved of the music of Greece and Rome, and yet the chant, parts of which are probably older still, remains. This must be due not only to the quality of the music itself but to its role in worship and liturgy, where it was sung regularly, by people who could reinforce each other's memories when needed, and who would do their best, as a religious duty, to reproduce faithfully what they had learned.

However successful this was, some kind of standardised written notation would obviously have been enormously helpful, and various marks and groups of dots called *neumes* were devised and written above the text to indicate the shape of a melody. These could certainly reinforce the memory of a singer who was already reasonably familiar with a tune, but without some kind of fixed reference point and standardised layout they were of only limited use to anyone else.

Guido of Arezzo, in the early 11th century, is credited with developing the musical staff, beginning with a



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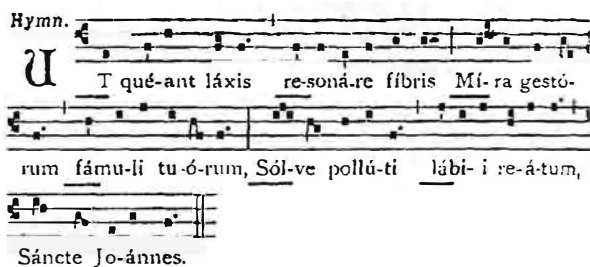


Figure 2

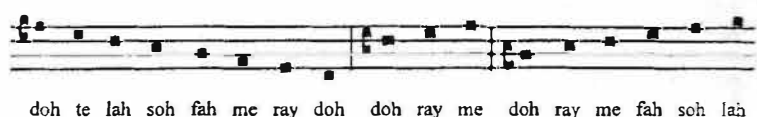


Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



red line above the text for the note F, followed by a yellow line some way above it for C, and then completed by two black lines on either side of the F line, thus giving a framework of four lines which was quite sufficient to accommodate the notes of the traditional melodies. Since these were composed to be sung by the average human voice their range is seldom more than an octave.

Guido also devised the sol-fa system as an aid to teaching his choristers to sight-read music. (There must have been a reasonable number of copies available for

them to sight-read from, or else a very large copy which they could all see). Guido's system was based on the first syllables of the ascending phrases of the Vespers hymn in honour of St. John the Baptist which had been composed by Paul the Deacon some time in the 8th century, perhaps while he was a sort of ecclesiastical poet-in-residence at the court of Charlemagne: Fig. 1.

"That your servants may be able with open throats to sound forth the wonders of your deeds, set free from sin their unclean lips, O holy John."

It is interesting to observe that the notes of Guido's sol-fa system are the first six notes of the Ionian mode, our major scale, which at the time was considered unsuitably frivolous and jolly for Church music.

Singers of the present day who are familiar with modern musical notation and would like to sing plainchant rather than just listen to it are often perplexed by its notation. Once one is accustomed to its conventions, reading plainchant is surprisingly simple; indeed many people who have never learned to read modern musical notation find that they can follow plainchant quite easily. The first problem is to work out how to play these melodies with their unfamiliar notation on a piano, and the key is, literally, the clef sign, which is written at the beginning of the staff where a modern key-signature would be. Two kinds of clef sign are used in plainchant notation: the doh or C clef which indicates the position of doh on the scale for a particular melody, and the fah clef which (obviously) indicates the position of the fourth note of the scale. The doh clef can be positioned on any of the top three lines of the staff, depending on the range of notes of the melody and their position relative to the doh: Fig. 2.

If a modern fifth line is imagined, or drawn, above the plainchant staff, a doh clef enclosing the fourth line up will look as though it indicates D in the treble clef: Fig. 3.

Accordingly the melody can be played as though the clef sign was equivalent to the key-signature of the D major scale. Similarly, if the clef is on the third line up, which to modern eyes looks like the B above middle C, the melody can be played in the key of B major, and if it is on the second line, in the key of G major. Probably the majority of plainchant melodies are set out with the doh clef enclosing the top (fourth) line, which represented the note C on Guido's staff. Another convenient way of reading and playing such a melody is to follow his lead and read that top line as the C above middle C. There is then no need to put in accidentals except for those which are explicitly marked: Fig. 4.

It is easy to read the fah or F clef, which is always on the third line up, as though it was the B flat key signature for the key of F major, and play the notes as what they look like: Fig. 5.

These suggested procedures will enable one to get the tones and semi-tones in the right places, and play and learn the melody. Once this is familiar the pitch for performance can be adjusted as necessary to suit the vocal range of a particular group of singers.

Those who are at the greatest disadvantage in reading plainchant are those with perfect pitch, since the pitch of plainchant is relative, not absolute, and the notes which are actually sung on any given occasion will not necessarily correspond to what they look as though they should be on the page.

The notes

These are not difficult for anyone, with or without modern musical training, to make sense of. To start with, the shape of the melody is easy to see, since it is not cluttered up with the distinctive stems of crotchets and quavers which are generally used when plainchant is transcribed into modern notation. Some plainchant notes do have slender stems, but these are more like visual signposts marking out groups of notes, and do not indicate any difference in the length of the notes themselves.

In plainchant there is basically just one sort of note, with a few variations. This is a simple square, formed by making a short horizontal stroke with a broad-nibbed pen. The plain square is called a *punctum* and the stemmed square a *virga* (the Latin for "twig"). For a descending phrase the square notes are given a half turn and become diamonds, for elegance and economy of space. If a note is to be doubled in length it is followed by a dot; if on the other hand it is to be sung quickly and lightly it is written smaller, rather like a grace note, and is called a *liquescens*: Fig. 6.

If a note is to be slightly lengthened a small line called an *episema* (which just means "mark") is written above it, or below, if that is

Figure 6

Figure 7

Figure 8

where there is more space: Fig. 7.

These marks are editorial, and editions vary, some being more lavishly supplied with episemata than others. They must not be allowed to make the music drag. I think myself that intelligent singers would instinctively stress significant words in the text and notes in the melody, and that many episemata could well be omitted altogether, after careful preliminary agreement between singers. There are two practical considerations besides the musical aim of maintaining the flow of the melody: first that a phrase with several slight pauses may well be difficult to sing on one breath, and second that singers are likely to vary somewhat in their interpretation of what constitutes a "slight" pause, and thus risk producing a blurred and untidy sound.

One final curious variation on the basic square note is a jagged note called a *quilisma*: Fig. 8.

The note before the jagged note is slightly lengthened. Some choir masters lengthen the jagged note as well.

The notes in plainchant are grouped together in ways which economize on space - an important consideration for scribes working on costly vellum. The various standard groups of notes are still called neumes, and the compact layout is obvious when compared with modern notation: Fig. 9.

Barring

The bar-lines in the chant are guides for breathing and marking out sections of the text, rather than divisions of the melody into rhythmic units, as in modern music: Fig. 10.

The whole bar can be single or double, the double bar being used at the end of a section. There is a pause of the length of one note at the whole bar, which allows for a good breath. A breath may be taken at the half bars, but without interrupting the flow of the music, and a very quick breath at the quarter bars if necessary, but again without holding up the flow.

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Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

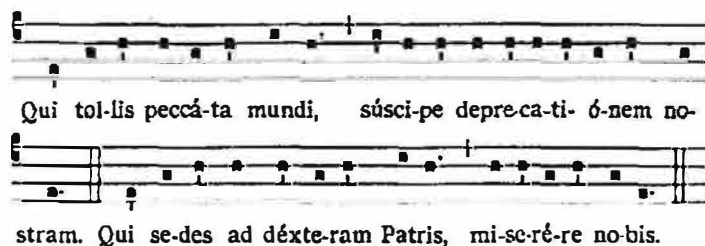


Figure 12

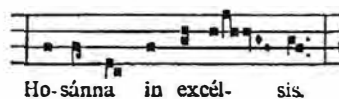
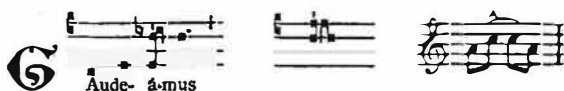


Figure 13



Just a Minute

IT should not be accepted that a Christmas present for the postman, milkman, refuse collector or for that matter godchild should go unacknowledged and unthanked.'

— Nigel Nicholson, *The Spectator*, Jan 14, 1995.

Rhythm

The rhythm of plainchant is free, but it is there, and singers need to be aware of it. The notes are grouped in twos or threes, i.e. every second or third note carries the rhythmic *ictus* or beat. A dotted note counts for two beats. Where the rhythm might be in doubt, as when a melody consists largely of single notes, a small vertical line is written under the relevant notes to mark the ictus. Fr Ian Falconer SJ has reminded me that these too are editorial, the work of the monks of Solesmes in the 19th century, and that the stress of the words should always be made clear even if it is at variance with the musical ictus as it is in the following example: Fig. 11.

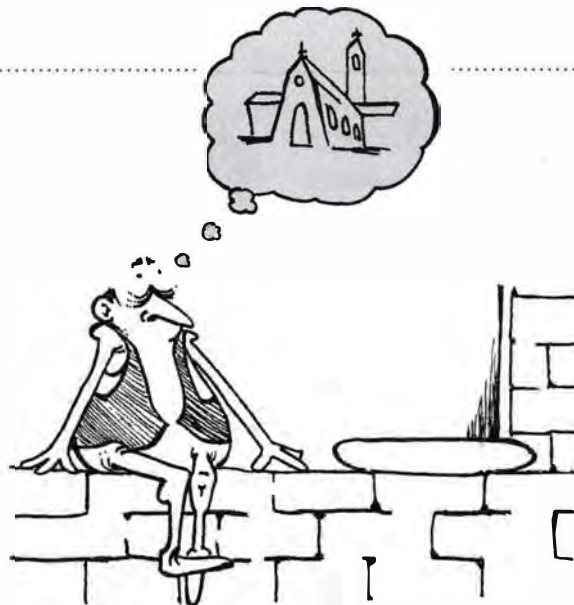
Since no Latin word is stressed on the last syllable it is important to sing those last syllables lightly, however strong the musical temptation to do otherwise. If singers can simultaneously be aware of the musical stress and the stresses of the words a kind of springing tension is created within the music. The traditional notation brings out this internal springiness in a phrase like the following from the popular *Missa de Angelis*: Fig. 12.

The adjoining notes in the middle of "excelsis" need to be felt not just as tied notes but as the end of one group of notes and the beginning of another.

Sometimes a small vertical line is written over or under a note to indicate a musical accent rather than a rhythmic ictus. These vertical lines tend to be used to emphasise an ascending phrase or to give an inner liveliness to one of a pair or group of tied notes: Fig. 13.

Style of singing

The tempo of plainchant should always be brisk, like that of clear speech, even for the solemn music of the Requiem Mass. If it is sung too slowly, with pedantic attention to the fact that the notes are of one value, the springing rhythm will be lost. On the



Joining the Broken Thread

It is decidedly not flattering for Western civilization that the ambition to create a great work has seldom persisted long enough to see that work completed. I am not speaking now of enterprises which had to be finished to cover expenses. If anyone wants to know exactly what I mean, let him go and look at Cologne Cathedral. Let him consider the grand design of that building in the soul of the architect... the faith in the hearts of the people, which enabled him to begin and continue that labour... the influence of the ideas which required such a Colossus to serve as visible image of invisible religious feeling... and let him compare this tremendous tension with the movement which, a few centuries after, gave birth to the moment in which the work was suspended...

A deep gulf lies between Erwin von Steinbach [died 1318] and our builders! I know, of course, that for years people have been trying to obliterate this gulf. And in Cologne they are again working on the cathedral. But will they be able to join the broken thread? Will it be possible to find again in our day what then constituted the power of the prelate and the patron of architects? I do not think so. Money will no doubt be obtainable; and money will buy bricks and mortar. The artist who makes the plans, and the mason who lays the stones, can be paid. But no money will buy the lost yet admirable sentiment that saw in a building a poem, a poem in granite that spoke loudly to the people, a poem in marble that stood there as an immovable eternal prayer...

— Max Havaalar, or the *Coffee Auctions of a Dutch Trading Company*, by Multatuli, pen-name of Eduard Douwes Dekker. First published 1860.

other hand, excessive flexibility and over-long lingering on notes marked with an episema can lead to sloppiness and sentimentality. If several words are set to a single reciting note, as in a psalm, singers will instinctively move on a little faster, but must be careful not to sacrifice the underlying regularity. The most haunting of plainchant melodies are all the more haunting if sung strictly and austerely, with every syllable given full value so

that the words speak for themselves. It follows that singers should know, or find out, what the words mean, in order to sing them effectively. The new generation that is discovering the beauty of the melodies of the chant is also ready to discover the beauty of the poetry that is set to those melodies.



JANET KOVESI WATT'S practical experience of singing Plainchant goes back to the 1950s. She now leads a small schola in Perth, and is preparing an anthology of Plainchant.

Bad Eggs

For his feature comedy-drama debut, writer/director Tony Martin creates a pre-title sequence of sustained brilliance, somewhere between a latterday car insurance commercial and a Keystone Cops chase. Trouble is Martin has difficulty in topping the sequence. And he becomes so wrapped in the shady intricacies of his plot that he leaves little room for laughter.

What little there is Mick Molloy and Bob Franklin use to great effect as a pair of cops, graduates *summa cum laude* in haplessness from Hollywood's *Police Academy*. Molloy is an actor of Belushi-like comedic girth, wit and timing. Franklin is the leaner, meaner second banana who, as all such bananas should, threatens to dominate. But too often, the writer Martin, himself a talented comedian, demonstrates a wit at the end of its tether by giving them merely the expletive non-deleted rather than the quips they need.

Judith Lucy (as she did in Molloy's *Crackerjack*) comes on as his love interest. She should lighten her stand-up comic persona. Her pale glower triggers memories of the late, great Elsa Lanchester in *Bride of Frankenstein*. There again she may be aiming for this.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★☆☆

The Honourable Wally Norman

Another countrytown comedy with all the charm of an arm-chair lashed together from mulga-wood. Not surprisingly it owes something to the more polished Hollywood antique *Mr Smith Goes to Washington*.

Kevin Harrington makes an amiable fist of Wally, the meat-worker, who despite an inability to make speeches, finds himself running for federal parliament against Shaun Micaleff, the sitting and shifty member. Director Ted Emery supplies some memorable

By James Murray

sight gags. Alan Cassell steals the picture as the double-dealing member for Beercan and Bottle.

Does Wally get to Canberra? Isn't he already there?

M 15+ SFFV ★★★☆☆

Take Away

Enough already with the fast food and slow gags, you might think. But this one opens with a witty spoof about the invention of take-away and is garnished with a few chuckles. Vince Colosimo and Stephen Curry play the rival greasy spooners faced with the challenge of bigger burger chain. This bears some resemblance to a certain globe-girdling chain and there are definite Big Mock moments. The chain is bossed by John Howard in a manner that makes clear what happened to Bob Jelly when he left the real estate business. Rose Byrne appears, as Colosimo's cousin. Nathan Phillips is her love uninterested.

As with *Bag Eggs* and *The Honourable Wally*, you get the impression this kind of comedy is a way of subsidising the television industry.

M15+ SFFV ★★★☆☆

Man on the Train

Jules Dassin's *Rififi* (1954) set the gold standard for heist movies. Director Patrice Leconte and his writer Claude Klotz give the genre a twist in this finely balanced thriller about a veteran crook Milan (Johnny Halliday) who travels to country town to meet his gang. But first he encounters Manesquier (Jean Rochefort) an ex-schoolteacher with a penchant for poetry and an elegant house.

Initially they seem to have nothing in common except separate Saturday deadlines. Halliday (France's more durable equivalent of Johnny O'Keefe) gives a performance of diamond hardness and polish. Rocheford underplays

and in the end the two achieve a startling transference.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★☆☆

Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life

The title may almost have as many words as the script but the opening sequence on the island of Santorini out-Bonds James of that ilk: marriage feast, earthquake and an undersea spear-gun skirmish in an ancient temple over the plot McGuffin (Pandora's Box, no less).

This is the ripping yarn taken to new heights of hi-tech nonsense and blue-screen acting. Angelina Jolie is Lara. Irish actor Ciaran Hinds does fiendishly well with the mad scientist villain. Noah Taylor, reprises his super-nerd role but in cursory fashion, possibly because he has better things to do like play Hitler,

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★☆☆

Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl

Pirate Captain Barbosa (Geoffrey Rush) swashes a mean buckle as he sails the Spanish Main with a crew of cut-throats in a ragged-sailed ship. Rush, ever inventive, tries for an Irish brogue which seems to start in Bantry Bay but travel back to Bondi by way of Southend-on-Sea.

Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) easily out-swashes him with a sly, feyness as they contend for hidden treasure. Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley) is the obligatory damsel in distress. Orlando Bloom is the swordsmith who saves her. And Jonathan Pryce, a considerable actor, comes on not as a spear-carrier but as wig carrier, his magnificent peruke seemingly the only reason he is there.

All in all this would be a wonderful adventure for kids of all ages, except for over-horrific special effects and producer Jerry Bruckheimer's trademark industrial-strength sound levels.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★☆☆

Confidence

Tough? This one's so tough you could use it to re-sole a pair of Blundstone boots. And if the expletives were deleted it would be largely silent. Added to which Dustin Hoffman, playing The King, a sleazy gang boss, does enough acting for three Oscars or five Golden Globes.

Ed Burns is Jake Vig, leader of a bunch of conmen, aiming to take The King to the cleaners. The plot triple crosses are effective with Andy Garcia, as a scruffy federal agent, providing the scam's final torque.

M 15+ NFFV ★★☆☆☆

Dark Blue

The hard-bitten cop is a standard from the Hollywood spare-parts stores. But not Eldon Perry of the Los Angeles Special Investigations Squad as played by Kurt Russell who gives him new dimensions of intensity as he rages behind a mask of rough humour.

The movie based on a novel by James (*LA Confidential*) Ellroy. Director Ron Shelton cleverly frames it between the notorious police assault on Rodney King in Los Angeles, and the riots that followed the acquittal of the police.

Brendan Gleason plays SIS boss Jack Van Meter, who for a time persuades Perry to do what a cop's gotta do, meanwhile cultivating a crop of crooks to his own profit. Can he keep both Perry and his crooks in play? He tries but Ving Rhames, as an ambitious, honest black cop tries harder.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Travelling Light

Is a period piece, circa 1971. Possibly too little time has passed for its writer/director Kathryn Millard to have sufficient perspective on her characters. Certainly her Adelaide suburbia is a lot stiffer and drearier than this reviewer remembers it in 1973 after spending 10 years in suppos-

Official

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In This World

Director Michael Winterbottom's drama documentary is straight from today's headlines. He depicts two Afghani brothers, Udin Torabi and Enayatullah, on their smuggler-route journey from a refugee camp in Pakistan to London.

Winterbottom's take is unrelenting and unsentimental. He takes no sides, grinds no axes. Along their way through Iran, Turkey and Italy, the brothers are given a welcome but always there is the rustle of money. At the end, in the survival of the younger brother, we face the question: was his journey truly beneficial?

TBA NFFV ★★★★★

Down With Love

Who'd have thought it? Doris Day and Rock Hudson revived in the persons of Renee Zellweger and Ewan McGregor. The result a romantic comedy bursting with pizzazz as Zellweger, playing a best-selling author with a secret, meets McGregor as a flash journo.

Tony Randall (first movie in 25 years) does a cameo as a publisher to remind us of his parts in the Day-Hudson comedies. David Hyde-Pierce plays a magazine editor with Randallesque timing and tailored wit.

One fault: a spirited song and dance sequence is relegated to the end credits, although it shows Zellweger and McGregor as hoofers with Astaire-Rogers aspirations. Old Hollywood star-power would not have put up with such a talent downgrade.

M 15+ SFFV ★★★★★

Identity

The opening sequence could be run as a horrific road-safety commercial. Lightning flashes, thunder rolls and rain lashes down. And the characters, introduced in the opening, assemble in a run-down motel. We have been in this movie situation many times. But this one is being played on split levels of horror. And the

edly Swinging London.

Pia Miranda and Sacha Horler play sisters Leanne and Bronwyn, pining away in red-brick splendour, Tim Draxi their next door neighbour. Into their lives comes Lou (Brett Siller) a faux-beat poet.

Romance? Natch. But it is between the lads. Daring stuff. One compensation is an acerbic take on NWS 9, Adelaide, Rupert Murdoch's original hand-cranked goldmine, lightly disguised as Channel 8 where Simon Burke is a chat-show host with more hair than Bert Newton but some of his mannerisms. The movie ends with the characters cavorting amid the Adelaide Parkland sprinklers while an unheavenly choir sings: 'Do what you wanna do! Be what you wanna be!'

MA 15+ NFFV ★★☆☆☆



talented cast exploit these to the extreme of tension. John Cusack and Ray Liotta are oddly assorted cops seeking to solve a sequence of murders.

Despite the familiar elements, you will find it difficult to pick the ending which twists, turns and then twists back on itself and involves Amanda Peet as a harlot with heart.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Wilbur Wants to Kill Himself

No wonder. This is a Danish tragi-comedy transposed to Glasgow. Well, not so much Glasgow as a kind of limbo, created by director Lone Scherfig who tends to eschew panormaic shots and shoot tight, the exception being the view from the city's magnificent Necropolis which in Glasgow films has the iconic status of the Sydney Opera House.

The title character is played by newcomer Jamie Sives (who looks like a Celtic sibling of Colin Farrell). His brother Harbour (not exactly a clan name) is played by Adrian Rawlins. The brothers, who run a bookshop, both fall in love with Anne (Shirley Henderson).

The movie scores high on quirkiness (not quite a Billy Connolly 10, say seven). But this is not enough to offset Scherfig's being half in love with the modern, uneasy culture of death which sees doctors devising lethal machines and groups testing the carbon monoxide out-put of motor vehicles.

Hence a fearsome symmetry: As love revives Wilbur, his brother is stricken with a mortal illness for which he takes a Wilbur cure: an overdose.

If Hamlet, the gloomy Dane, had offspring, on this showing Lone Scherfig is one of them.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

A Song for Martin

Time was when movie characters, who for plot reasons become

ill, did so in an aesthetic fashion: a delicate cough, a fainting spell. Now Alzheimer's seem to be frailty of the month. Following *Iris* (Iris Murdoch's descent into mental illness) comes Swedish director Bille August's drama of a great composer/conductor's similar descent (though being Scandinavian he avoids the *Iris* squalor).

The cityscapes and landscapes are beautiful. Martin is played by Sven Wollter in a subtle glissando from towering, creative authority to childlike rage and dependence. As his second wife/first violinist Barbara Hartmann (Viveka Seldhal) is all caring charm.

August, like his mentor Igmarm Bergman, is a director of original vision but he fails to avoid what is now a movie matrimony cliché: for passion to be valid, the marriage must be a second one. Marital betrayal, it seems, is the pre-requisite to true romance.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Rug Rats Go Wild

The Rug Rats, last seen in Paris, are on the loose again. This time in the wilds. And who who they meet there but those other children's favourites the Wild Thornberrys. The meeting triggers laughter the way tickling does.

G SFFV ★★★★★

Lost in La Mancha

Many creative people are addicted to adrenaline, particularly deadline adrenaline involving an immovable time and a seemingly unattainable ambition. Film maker Terry (Monty Python) Gilliam is such an addict in his ambition to film the Cervantes classic *Don Quixote*.

The late, wayward Orson Welles also cherished the ambition. Gilliam is still trying to put his version together. But he has not increased his chances by allowing documentarists Keith Fulton and Louis Pepe to film his first, abortive attempt, involving Johnny Depp, Jean Rocheford and \$US32 million.

First, Rocheford's back gives out, making it impossible for him to stay in the saddle of Rosinante, much less tilt at windmills. Second, the weather breaks, transforming the arid Spanish landscape to a location for Noah's Ark. And overall is the sense that Gilliam is winging it, hoping that spontaneous creativity will solve all problems. As a record of the travails of film-making, this is invaluable.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Terminator 3: The Rise of the Machines

The question is will Arnold Swarzenegger win more votes in his campaign for the Californian governorship if he promises to stop making these movies or if he keeps making them? Undoubtedly he is in fine monosyllabic form as a super-robot from the future sent into the present to aid John Connor (Nick Stahl) and Catherine Brewster (Claire Danes).

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Extreme Ops

On a shoestring plot, director Christian Duguay balances stunts exciting enough to raise hair on the late Yul Brynner's skull: a team of snowboarders, skiers and parachutist set off to make a commercial only to find themselves doing battle with a dastardly war-criminal and his henchmen amid the peaks and valleys of Austria's Karawanken Ranges.

Rufus Sewell and Rupert Graves, as a director and producer, get some witty in-jokes from their rival priorities. Predictably, however, these cannot compete with the stunts. Or the tremendous scenery.

M 15+ SFFV ★★★★★

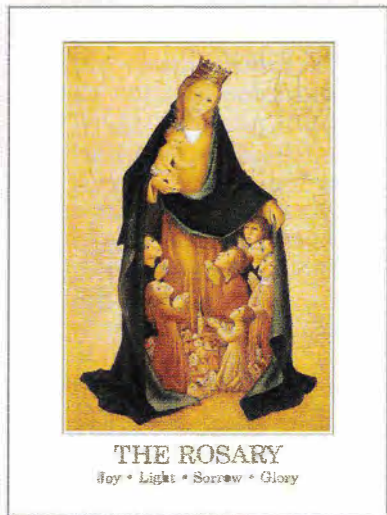
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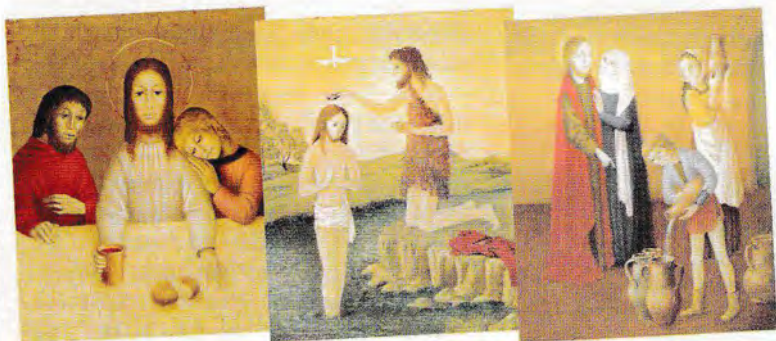
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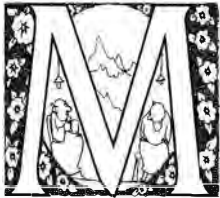
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Calling a halt to dehumanising recordings and sales-pitches

THE 'TRICKLE-UP EFFECT'

By SAM SIMMONDS



ANY are the social experiments inflicted on the average taxpayer by State and Federal Treasurers

and Ministers of Finance who have something to prove to Reserve Bank Governors. Dreamed up by 'expert consultants', obviously with nothing better to do during the long winter of post-Keynesian economic rationalism, such devices usually demand that our promised reward must await the mysterious workings of 'market forces'. (Just giving the money directly to us, rather than to the 'consultant', is apparently too easy.) That so many of these schemes result in utter disaster for all concerned seems not even to slow these 'experts' down.

One favourite – retaining its popularity among Milton Friedman's followers, despite regular spectacular and comprehensive failures – is an amusing device known as the 'trickle-down effect'. Broadly speaking, this relies on a fantasy world scenario in which huge monetary incentives are force-fed to corporate giants, captains of industry and other shady entrepreneurs, in the expectation that the vast wealth generated by their obscenely well rewarded efforts will trickle down to the hoi polloi. (That's Greek for you and me, and is not to be confused with the schemes' fiscal mechanics, which are intended to be Greek to you and me.)

The idea, as commonly understood, is that capital, when invested in the right places (that means anywhere except your pocket or mine, apparently), will miraculously 'stimulate the economy', so that corporations

– and certain nominated beneficiaries – will become immensely rich and, like Lady Bountiful, will cause a measured percentage of those riches to trickle down through the food chain to us. Of course, unlike the shareholders, we still have to pay top dollar for their products and services, so the largesse often effectively amounts only to a paltry 2% or so discount on old stock.

As too many of us know – to our personal cost – corporate whiz kids tend to take a more subjective view of this economic theory. The aforesaid vast wealth frequently gets unaccountably sidetracked – in mid-trickle, as it were – into

vital, but hitherto unforeseen, necessities like 'needs analysis overseas fact-finding' junkets, steering committees and the like, 'golden parachutes' for the inevitable failed CEO (very popular nowadays) – even sometimes a new lounge room carpet for the Chairman's wife. These familiar sections of Parkinson's (unofficial) Law of capitalisation dictate that opportunities for disbursement of corporate monies for entirely frivolous purposes expand in direct proportion to levels of external funding. No matter what, precious little justice percolates therefrom to the long suffering consumer and taxpayer.

Now, while acknowledging this inequity, you might tell yourself with a sigh that it's 'the way of the world'; 'the almighty dollar' will fix everyone's proper place in the 'grand unified' or 'global' plan; and nothing can be done about it. However, you may be mistaken: there is a tiny window of opportunity where your individual opinion will certainly be registered and may even help to effect a change to the status quo. And if enough opinions were to be expressed, the 'butterfly effect' would be enormous. It is fair to say that you will definitely need a little extra time at your disposal but, if you can afford it, the rewards will be worth it. Because opening that window leads to what might be called 'the trickle-up effect'.

We know that some institutions, who have the effrontery to describe us elsewhere as their 'valued clients', regard us with contempt, their disdain often manifested by the ordeal by telephone to which they regularly submit us as we pursue our lawful enquiries. Having frequently

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introduced this torture with the words, 'Your call is important to us,' they then delegate the responsibility for dealing with it to a stupid machine! When – if! – you eventually get connected to something resembling a human being in a department similar in concept to that which you seek, you will often be electronically informed that, 'Your call may be monitored for training purposes.' This is where your tiny window opens just a tiny chink.

When a human (or android) actually addresses you, first establish if English is to be the language of your discourse. (That always gets them on the back foot.) Next, request definite confirmation that the call is indeed being 'monitored for training purposes'. Explain that you don't really care about that *yourself* but that your *solicitor* insisted on it. Then reveal that you have already started *your* recording device.

This puts the call on a proper business footing. And it may even produce a hastily summoned supervisor – not to help you, of course, but to ensure that the organization's interests are protected. (*From you, obviously.*) If you are technically minded and equipped, it is a nice touch at this point to play a short recorded sequence of a synthesized voice enunciating how much time has so far elapsed during their client telephone policy process. Any vaguely believable script will do: after all, unless they really are monitoring it for training purposes, they're not actually listening to you at all.

Don't worry about time-wasting. Remember, it has already cost you much precious time to get this far. It is now *your* turn.

If asked to quote a number – normally from a huge list of possibilities – simply explain that the documents you have received are several pages long and absolutely *filled* with numbers: how on earth are you supposed to know which? Should you detect in the respondent the minutest scintilla of impatience with your enquiry, do not hesitate to invoke, wher-



Sound advice for atheists

THE atheists, of whom some few stalwarts remain strong against the pantheist flood; those who despise mankind when they are healthy and when they are unhealthy despair of it; the men who make nothing of life and think it immaterial whether man be or no – these are, in my judgement, of a clumsy habit in argument. For they talk in mere negations. But if they would breed (as is their intention) a proper contempt for the supposed Divine in man, a proper negligence of our fellow-beings and a right of view of the whole insignificant human affair, they ought not to confine themselves to negatives, they ought to present vivid images, concrete and striking and say: 'Look there and judge mankind!' I suggest to them Clovelly on a holiday; also the sands of Weston-super-Mare; also St. Lazare Station in Paris; the Frederick Street Station in Berlin, or Liverpool Street in London, just after office hours on a week-day. Or again, a crowd in Catalonia, outside the ring, when by some accident the bull gets loose.

There are other brilliant images all ready to the atheist's hand: a dining table of the rich, with some thirty guests, men and women, exactly alternate, like the red and the black cards in a patience, the wretched couples turning ten minutes to the left and ten minutes to the right, like jacks; the wine of only one kind – yellow and acid with bubbles in it. Or again, they might give the same effect with the vision of any public vehicle, designed to hold twenty-four but packed with forty. Or again, they might do no more than distribute snapshots, judiciously snapped, of the men who are most talked about in this our day.

The truth is the atheists do not know their job; for it has been clearly proved upon the thumb and the four fingers of the left hand that men cut off from the Divine are also cut off from reason.

– Hilaire Belloc, *The Cruise of the Nona*, London, 1925.

ever possible, the full majesty of 'your call is important to us' and the sacred principle of 'user pays'. Remember, these are the mantras of your persecutors and it may prove a salutary lesson for them to hear it re-echoing, as it were, around their own counter-productive client machinery.

At the end of your encounter with arm's length officialdom, whether it has been successful for either of you or not, don't forget to tell them to 'have a nice day'. (Look, it's written on the idiot card in front of them: somebody's got to say it. It might as well be you.)

Granted, actions such as these (and we have hardly started) do place a burden upon the innocent clerical humanoid, who is not responsible for the organization's

policy. But that is just the point: neither are you, yet it is you who are paying for it. And you and the humanoid are both slaves to it. If this stratagem proves unbearable (and if we all persist with it, you may be sure it will), supervisors will be alerted, *they* will have to alert *their* superiors, who must then alert *their* Heads of Department ...

Yes – it trickles up! Gandhi successfully overcame the entire administrative policy apparatus of imperial Britain using gentler means than these. What hope for ... [insert name of your chosen organization/government ministry, etc. here?]



SAM SIMMONDS is a writer, broadcaster and film and video producer. Sam has worked in all aspects of media in the UK and Australia and runs a media consultancy, Simmonds Media (Australia).



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