

Work as Key to the Social Question

The Great Social and Economic Transformations and the Subjective Dimension of Work



Leadership Excellence: A Response ‘In Waiting’ to the Social Question

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Reading Notes

The observations and arguments expressed in this paper are more fully explored in two Discussion Papers available on request from the Von Hugel Institute: ‘*Knowing What the Right Thing Is*’ and ‘*Qualities of Command*’.

References to the Encyclical *Laborem Exercens* are derived from the English language translation published by Pauline Books & Media, 50 St Paul’s Avenue, Boston, MA 02130-3491, USA.

References to St. Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Theologiae* are in the format most commonly applied. A volume in the Summa is denoted in Roman numerals. A question or article is denoted Arabic numerals.

There are two sets of notes, identified either by a bracketed number or letter.

Part One: Quis Custodiet Custodes?

Time Tryeth Truth

“Your mission as Christian business leaders [is] to make the human and Christian virtues shine forth in the complex world of economic activity, the virtues that make the world respect the dignity of the person and be open to mutual solidarity.” [1]

This exhortation well reflects the contemporary significance of the messages entrenched in the Encyclical *Laborem Exercens*:

“The Church has a particular duty to form a spirituality of work which will help all people to come closer, through work, to God the Creator and Redeemer ... [and to] participate in His salvific plan for man and the world.” [2]

“Work is for man not man for work ... [and] is determined ... by the fact that the worker is a person.” [3]

“Work is fundamental to the formation and maintenance of family life” and, beyond this, to the community – the common good. [4]

It is precisely in the light of these convictions that it is incumbent on the Christian community to respond to Christ’s commands (Mk 4:21-23; 16:15); to encourage the recovery of what a Christological belief in Jesus of Nazareth can intelligibly signify for the people of today [5] and, in so doing, to create “a rational preamble to Faith.” [6]

In respect of this project, *Laborem Exercens* reminds that Scripture provides the initial and unequivocal guidance. Matthew’s Gospel records that most powerful of Christ’s injunctions, that it is impossible to serve two masters and, specifically, that, “You cannot serve God and mammon” (6:24). In relating the parables of the wicked tenants and the use of talents, He both confirms and amplifies the older prophetic conditions concerning social justice in the context of working life. John the Baptist, censuring exploitation of the poor, lays out the ethical parameters for wealth creation and distributive justice in adverting to the bearing of “good fruit” (Lk3: 10-14). To all, the Baptist exhorts the sharing of food and clothing. To the Inland Revenue of the day he urges that taxes be kept to a realistic minimum. To the soldiery he advocates honesty and, interestingly, advises them to be content with their wages.

The Bible recognises that wealth sometimes comes as a God-given gift. “And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundred fold. The Lord blessed him and the man became rich and gained more ... until he became wealthy” (Gen 26: 12-14).

Equally, however, cautions regarding the abuse of wealth are in clear evidence. “Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than a great treasure and trouble with it. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fatted ox and hatred with it” (Prov.15: 16-17). And again, “Come now you rich and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you ...the wages you kept back by fraud cry out and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord” (Jm.5: 1,4). Elijah condemns King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, for plotting murder and theft to acquire Nabath’s vineyard (1K 21: 1-23). Amos similarly condemns those who swindle, exploit and oppress the poor (Am.7: 4-8).

These teachings, with social justice at their heart, have been sustained by a succession of Encyclicals(a) and by much other authoritative work drawn from and promulgating Catholic Social Thought. To exemplify: 1986 witnessed the publication by the US Bishops’ Conference of the influential *Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy*; a project that persuasively advocated moral accountability in business. 1996 saw

the appearance of *The Common Good* and, in the current year, *A Spirituality of Work*; both constructive and carefully balanced products of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

These and the works of many others essentially stress that, "Discipleship is [to be] lived in the action which identifies the agent with the needs of others, neighbour or enemy." [7] "Christianity ... must appeal ... in a manner that encourages a movement away from self-interest towards the transcendent." [8] And, in the words of *The Common Good*, "The good functioning of the market [must involve] the embodiment of certain ethical principles within a regulatory and legal framework [that] reflects the corresponding principle of solidarity." [9]

These are firm but conciliatory counsels. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that, for the majority of people in the world of work – as for society generally – such views tend to engage little more than a transitory interest and, for many, total indifference. 'God's challenge which grounds human freedoms is now denied. The degree of give and take and self-surrender ... is seen as a secondary and obscure mode of the one sovereign subject or else the subjects remain monads, impenetrable to one another.' [10]

As again noted in *Laborem Exercens*, much of the commonly held ethic of previous generations has been consigned to history. Outside the condemnation of more obviously socially destructive behaviour, little is customary. Moral argument is reduced largely to the level of personal opinion. Born of the Reformation and fostered by the Enlightenment, individualism has been unleashed in a post-Enlightenment 'now' generation heedless of any prior narrative order. Indeed, it is suggested that the much vaunted 'information society' might now be considered as no more than a staging post on route to an 'experience society' wherein what gives pleasure and what brings material success dominate society's expectations and assent.

For those committed to the Christian Faith this culture constitutes a seemingly intractable challenge. Nevertheless, in St. Thomas More's timeless commendations,

"You cannot abandon the ship just because you cannot control the winds"

[11]

and, "Time always tryeth owte the Trough." [12]

Such wisdom warrants serious reflection. Some consider that, historically, the Church has been inclined to adopt a somewhat ambivalent approach to the commercial implications of work.

"The Christian apostolate [to the world of work] must not be allowed to remain a 'Cinderella' ... Wealth creation is a vocation, a response to a God-given possibility [even though] what is done with it is a human

responsibility.” [13]

Even if acknowledged, such ambivalence is a disappearing option. This is to argue that Christian representation must more fully don the mantle of co-operative dialogue with the business community than has, perhaps, been the case in times past; the more so given the process of globalisation now in train. Social imperatives demand that the Church must strive more effectively to demonstrate that, in the final event, a metaphysical comprehension of the ‘good’ is a fundamental precursor to any understanding of a moral theory of work. It must reach out tellingly to illustrate that love, in the sense of regard for neighbour *qua* human existent, gives the content to the norms of commercial life. Not least, must it manifestly explain and confirm that adherence to a social ethics, grounded in the virtues, is not only a commercially viable and rationally preferable option but a socially imperative alternative to the secular criteria that currently prevail in contemporary corporate governance. Ultimately it is a matter of offering the world of work, “love, not for what they are but for what they may become.” [14]

In practice this means that those involved in the processes of work in general and, critically, in business leadership, must be encouraged to re-evaluate what constitutes ‘the good’ in commercial behaviour; that wealth creation is, after all, the engine of social / community cohesion; that the maintenance of social capital is vital to the orderly conduct of enterprise; that certain of the criteria determining wealth distribution are unsustainable; that corporate management must account to indirect as well as to directly involved constituents and that goodwill – the concomitant of trust – will require a re-reading as ‘willing-the-good’ if it is to account for its significance beyond its presently admitted arithmetic base.

As *Laborem Exercens* consistently reflects, it must be understood that these challenges and the questions they pose are inescapably religious and, for this reason, constitute the very domain wherein the Church, under God’s guidance, can provide unique and invaluable knowledge, experience and teaching.

But, what are the factors that might enable this to happen?

Reaping the Whirlwind

In Western society, financial self-interest is understood. Its constructive capacities are recognised. Equally, however, there is a clear and growing expectation that capitalism will be restrained without losing its resilience and that it will continue to prosper but in a manner that reconciles its energies and capacities for innovation with a more equitable, sustainable human development – *the common good*.

Similarly, the spirit of enterprise and the rightful ownership of property vested in the market mechanism may be generally accepted. But a Western society – armed with the advantages

of modern education and the ‘instantaneous’ communication heralded by McLuhan’s ‘global village’ [15] - is deeply resentful of a market fundamentalism that gives market ‘players’ an unrestricted, norm-free remit that insulates those players from the human consequences of their actions. In the minds of Third World nations in particular is the companion conviction that if some have a super-abundance greater than is necessary for business purposes then others must be going without. [16] Thus, as the Catholic moral / political philosopher Charles Taylor perceptively observes, the key challenge facing management today is that of getting to grips with,

“A democracy that has ushered in a politics of equal recognition and, more, of equal respect ... requiring new creative solutions as old modes of conduct become stultifying ... [ensuring] that the standards embedded in shared values check out as equal and substantively in agreement.” [17]

Common sense not only confirms the veracity of this view but, crucially, signifies the urgent quest for a re-conceptualisation of free market capitalism’s purpose and behaviour. However, this prospect becomes more complex by the day.

Society’s distrust of commercial conduct is no longer only conditioned by the high-profile evidence of the corporate misdemeanours of past decades.(b) It now shows every sign of moving to embrace new and profoundly disturbing concerns well beyond those previously characterised by more ‘locally’ situated events. These may be said to include (but are not limited to): the distortion of political integrity; undue influence on international agency deliberations; the circumvention of legislative and regulatory controls; the persistent placing of higher priorities on profits rather than on people and, via a complicit media, the corruption of civic culture. These concerns now constitute core global / societal issues. They are also deemed to be of more than sufficient gravity to warrant the increasingly militant reaction to the mechanisms of corporate defence and to confirm opposition to what, it is commonly argued, is a systematic rather than an accidental manipulation of corporate accountability.

It is also suspected that attempts by business to create constituent trust may be in retreat in favour of the less demanding and more readily manageable conception of 'synergy'. [18] By ‘synergy’, as is especially evident in the retail sector, is meant a combination of the lowest possible unit production cost with the highest possible visibility for the ‘exclusive’ branding of goods and services sold at the highest possible price and designed to achieve ever-greater levels of consumer demand. [19]

In the same vein, and typifying environmental group concerns, is the pronounced hostility to oil and gas drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge and to the inexorable growth of mass tourism with its consequential impact on some of the world’s most vulnerable wild life species. (c) A deepening fear is voiced that business encroachment into the world of education is, at the least, a market development too far. Accused of supporting artificial values and of encouraging a down-grading in society’s intellectual order, television, film

and the print media are considered to be, “for the [public] mind what too small slippers were for the women of China.” [20] (d)

Research confirms the depth of society’s disaffection. Every study over the last decade, on both sides of the Atlantic, attests that corporate management remains persistently at or close to the bottom of the league in any comparison of society’s perceptions of ‘trustworthiness’ among the professions. A 1989 Business Week – Harris Poll study in the United States denoted a strong public opinion that, motivated by profit expectations, business will not always be averse to harming the environment, endangering public health, selling inferior products and even putting workers’ safety at risk. [21] This, as was remarked at the time, “clearly reflects society’s contempt for those abusing privilege with aggression, selfishness and brutality.” [22]

Ten years on this perception has deteriorated further. A Leeds University study suggests that society is riddled with a mistrust of business, not believing that it cares about the community, the environment or even about customers as individuals; only as “an abstract mass market.” [23] A MORI / Financial Times study – also in the UK – reveals that business attracts the lowest approval ratings since records began. Asked, ‘Do you agree that the profits of large companies make things better for everyone? Only 25% ‘do’ compared with 52% who ‘do not’. This result is exactly the opposite of that recorded in the first such poll conducted in 1970. [24]

Small wonder that while the commercial community is at pains to portray the nature and contribution of enterprise, it finds itself confronted by an ever-increasing array of institutions with a propensity to protest, to pre-judge and to take recourse either to judicial procedure or to the political process to defend and promote what are held to be inalienable rights and convictions. This protest is not merely demonstrable in the throwing of a brick through a McDonald’s window or a pie in the face of Microsoft’s Bill Gates. Nor is it simply reflected in the still inchoate but fast-emerging ‘grass roots’ antagonisms surrounding World Trade Organisation or World Economic Forum events. Like Demosthenes’ untutored boxer, the corporate entity is, at best, now accused of raising its hands, “a little breathlessly and a little late, not to learn from experience or even to block the adversary’s blow but to cover the spot that has been hit,” [25] unaware or ignoring the

“stark reminder of just how quickly faith in markets and economic open-ness can be overwhelmed by political events [and that] ... rising inequalities pose a serious threat of political backlash against globalisation.” [26]

In summary, an emergent paradigm is taking clear shape to which business either responds or endangers its own best interests. This is hardly the product of Christian inspiration. Nevertheless, society’s fast altering conception of what is ethically good and right and by which the process of wealth creation should be seen to operate is now moved from the margins to centre stage, from the optional to the obligatory, among its key pre-occupations.

A Vexatious Interface

Against this background, it might be argued that leadership in the world of work faces an unprecedented crisis, exacerbated by the demise of deference. But it would be naïve to believe that the leadership in any enterprise of consequence is, as it were, sitting on its hands. Effort and expenditure devoted to ethical issues grows apace. Academic research and professional counsel are in a corresponding period of quantitative (although not necessarily qualitative) expansion. This is hardly a matter for surprise. Governments, pressure groups and the media alike are increasingly applying a microscope to business management conduct; an irreversible condition, destined to become progressively invasive.

In the United States at least twenty-five states have now modified the law determining the primacy of shareholder interests by including 'other constituency' legislation. This requires that profit margins must also be viewed in the light of employee and public interests, notably the most vulnerable. The O.E.C.D. Convention on Combating the Bribery of Foreign Officials, hitherto only affecting American individuals and corporations, is now deemed to apply worldwide. In the same vein, the United Nations has critically observed that while the perfume industry may be worth \$12 billion, the pet food industry \$18 billion and the cigarette industry \$45 billion, 840 million people go hungry each and every day. [27]

The legislative and regulatory processes of Britain and other nations in the Anglo-Saxon tradition are moving in a similar direction. In the UK, the Office of Fair Trading has a powerful combination of instruments at its disposal to avert price fixing and the abuse of market dominance. UK pension fund trustees are now required to declare the extent to which they have considered social, environmental and other ethical factors in their selection and retention of investments. The Financial Times / Stock Exchange organisation (FTSE) has just introduced the 'FTSE4Good' index consisting of companies that demonstrate a socially responsible approach towards commerce and business. While arousing considerable criticism, this initiative recognises that ethical investment is the fastest growing sector in the funds industry; essentials are 'in', investments in armaments, nuclear power and tobacco and in companies with a poor human rights record are 'out'. It is of note in this context that ethical criteria now determine some 10% or more of all US investment decisions and, in Britain, have driven the growth in ethical investment from less than \$490 million ten years ago to over \$5 billion in the current year(e).

What all of these factors indicate is that the business world now has little option but to make provision for a majority belief that diverting corporate responsibility to events – 'the system', 'the structure', 'the situation' – is perceived to be no more than a façade to deflect the prospect of censure. Codes of business conduct [28] are similarly seen merely to propound an ethics of appeasement; rhetoric hiding an admixture of an institutionalised

obsession with profit and market share and, perhaps, worst of all, indifference.

This development is of central significance to senior management. 'The buck stops here'. And 'here' is the corporate boardroom since it is rarely the employee and never the pensioner of whom it is demanded that power is used wisely and well. In fact and in public perception, it is management that bears singular responsibility for the commercial stability of an enterprise and, no less, for the ethical standards, the moral equity, governing strategic and operational direction. [29] It is specifically the top management of an enterprise who, with all else, carry responsibility for the management of meaning and for the maintenance of corporate behaviour consistent with that meaning. And good practice demands that this responsibility can neither be delegated nor permitted to be subverted by improper or inordinate corporate objectives. "The greater the power of men and women, the wider their responsibilities ... [obliging] them more strictly to their tasks." [30]

In so saying, business leadership is clearly on a quest for the 'new solutions' to which Taylor referred in discussing 'the affirmations of ordinary life.' [31] Beyond the three more conventional evaluative steps of business management – strategic decision, choice of direction and execution – a fourth step is now in course of emergence: a growing recognition of responsibility for the social consequences of corporate actions. This development is hardly uniform. Instances of misconduct disfigure and will likely continue to disfigure the corporate landscape. But the pace and extent of this trend are well illustrated by recent findings [32] and, if no more, the commercial imperatives underlying its significance are readily observable as an outcome, inter alia, of a complex of international alliances, the nomadic nature of money, virtually continuous rationalisations and consolidations, a progressive shift in economic power towards the consumer, and a need to understand and operate in diverse cultures.

Accordingly, the more enlightened of today's managements have recognised that additional attributes must be adopted to those traditionally required. It is increasingly understood that strategic awareness has now to be combined with intuitive sensitivities and that decisiveness must be allied to a pronounced capacity to "manage the values of the organisation." [33] Economics and ethics are no longer perceived to be distinct domains but to be interactive and interdependent. In consequence, it may be said that there are signs of a growing awareness by the business community that the market is inseparable from social order and that a new balance of interest is anticipated between business and the society it exists to serve.(f)

This is to observe that while production, marketing, finance and so forth are amenable to and largely contingent on rational, calculative resolution, many of the emergent challenges to business are not so susceptible. Rather are they "well beyond the reach of conscious analysis;" [34] akin to interpreting a difficult text that gives central significance not to the more conventional management skills and abilities but to the need for such demonstrable, if elusive, characteristics in business leadership as insight, courage, prudence, consistency and the capacity to inspire. "Leadership is [no longer] simply an issue of logic but a matter of

feelings and feelings often go where rationality fears to tread.” [35]

As research tends to confirm, it is of particular significance that the most important influences affecting management attitudes to business conduct are considered to be corporate reputation, corporate governance criteria and a value system that guides both a board’s decision processes and the standards of behaviour expected throughout an organisation. It is of similar import that ‘integrity’ and ‘honesty’ now stand alongside ‘ambition, drive and enthusiasm’ among the primary personal attributes now required in the deployment of management authority. Such influences would have been problematic, even unthinkable, to earlier business generations. Today, they mark major points of departure, added-value criteria stemming from personal convictions and intent and demanding that unfailing probity in corporate behaviour on which constituents’ opinions and enduring trade relationships depend.(g)

Perhaps - just perhaps - these are grounds for hope.

The Quest for Excellence

It is no accident that, managements are now apportioning progressively greater importance to such virtues and virtue sub-sets as ‘trust’, ‘open-ness’, ‘accountability’ and ‘transparency’. ‘Objectivity’, ‘truthfulness’ and ‘consistency’ stand in similar regard; [36] virtues that underpin both the commonly held perception of common decency and the obviously critical ‘building blocks’ of operational stability. Given that this is an increasingly pervasive trend, it seems reasonable to accept that, if only in fragmented form, the commercial world now shows signs of grasping and appropriating the more fundamental features of business ethics that, in earlier years, have either been ignored or misunderstood.

Some may continue to maintain that the deployment of such vocabulary is exclusively, in support of competitive positioning and improved profit performance. In part, this is undoubtedly true. Nonetheless, it is also true to say that growing evidence supports a contrary position. For the very reasons that business obligations are inherited and decisions value-laden, it is argued that there is a growing, if still embryonic, recognition that corporate direction is irrevocably indexed to the social ethics that characterises constituents’ domains of reference. If so, it follows that, consciously or otherwise, business leadership is moving towards an ‘ethics of excellence’, grounded in the virtues, that now shows signs of assuming the status of one of the ‘new solutions’ among the practical as well as philosophical comprehensions of business purpose and behaviour. It may not be possible to return to the historically embedded conceptions of social ethics unless those conceptions are reconciled with the modern moral identity. Even so, this development at least appears to signify that something better may be possible or, at least, worthy of the attempt in bridging the work / societal divide.

However, business clearly faces a huge dilemma since, as already observed, effort and expenditure on business ethics may be growing at an almost exponential rate but society's trust in business remains in persistent decline. This is to say that while the business world's endeavours to adopt and apply ethical 'best practice' deserve acclaim, it is all too evident that the trust business so earnestly seeks is, increasingly, a prize beyond attainment. And the reason for this is in plain view.

Business ethics, in its present phase of development, has embraced an 'ethics of rules' that society yet considers to be welcome but incomplete.

“Rules and general procedures can be aids to moral development ... [and] ... if there is no time to formulate a fully concrete decision ... it is better to follow a good summary rule or a standard procedure than to make a hasty and inadequate contextual choice ... Rules give us a particular consistency and stability ... but the point in all these cases is that a rule or algorithm represents a falling off from full practical rationality, not its flourishing or completion.” [37]

MacIntyre further explains. “Detach [rules] from their place in defining and constituting a whole way of life and they become nothing but a set of arbitrary prohibitions.” [38] As he also asserts, an ethics of rules, of effectiveness, is no more than the milieu associated with what is ultimately a self- initiated exploitation of ethics wherein the search for power, status and wealth obsessively direct both corporate vision and its attendant value system.

This is to contend that, in society's perceptions, any account of corporate moral judgement limited to a calculative analysis of the functioning of basic moral notions will remain perennially inadequate unless and until that account is fully and demonstrably founded in relationships of *mutual interest and regard – the common good*. It is perceived that adherence to an ethics of rules continues to embody a potential surrender to trade-off; a 'mechanism' for damage limitation in times of crisis; a reflection of what may yet turn out to be little more than a “creed ... masquerading as common sense or even as empiricism,” [39] wherein the potential for dissonance as between stated corporate intent and practical outcomes - real or imagined - is considered still to exist.

It is this gap, this deficit, between the real purpose and vocation of work and society's deep distrust that commends business leadership's re-evaluation of moral and social capital as productive resources alongside other categories. In turn, this invites a re-assessment of leadership's understanding and application of ethics,

“Not by the superficial consistency purchased by a flight from self-consciousness, nor the illusory consistency obtained by self-deception and rationalisation, nor the inadequate consistency that is content to be no worse than the next fellow, but by the penetrating, honest, complete consistency that alone meets the requirements of the detached, disinterested, unrestricted

desire to know.” [40]

The Grounds of Transformation

It is asserted that this challenge and the very scope and complexity of the issues faced by business have created precisely the environment in which the Church might find an audience attentive to its guidance and to the all-important social learning that fully responds to work's dilemmas. The scale of this challenge is clearly enormous. But, to take just one example, it is evident that the now earnest search by the leadership of many of the world's commercial interests for a rational and acceptable mean between social and commercial extremes is where Catholic Social Teaching might uniquely recover an appreciable influence.

This opportunity must not be lost in the face of other priorities. Rather, as this paper has attempted to show, must it be resourced and developed to engender a credible and immediately engaging support for the forces-for-good, the essentially social concerns, now considered at work in business thinking alongside commercial imperatives. These forces may be deemed to include: an inherent if still unstructured propensity towards authenticity in moral conduct; a re-evaluation of the sense of the worth of others; a re-conception and delineation of 'the good' and the significance of self-worth. After all, these are among the reasons that the entire business world is now so deeply engrossed in the management of change, essentially moving from a transactional to a transformational style of command and consent.(h)

The aim must not be to score points but, as Charles Taylor proposes, to suggest that, “the dominance of proceduralist meta-ethics ... makes us see us see commitments through the prism of moral obligation, thereby making their negative face all the more dominant ... and pushing the moral sources out of sight.” [41] This is to conceive of a Christian communication process in business education and training, capable of integration within the infrastructure of work, of sympathetically differentiating business's 'selective blindness' from the God-aware social / ethical responsibilities that it now confronts and of demonstrating that adherence to Christian values offers both a depth and certitude of moral understanding and a mode of business conduct that makes sound economic sense.

However, to do so, requires an answer to two fundamental. often cynically framed, questions:

'Why should it matter to me?'

and, similarly,

‘Prove the value of Christian over ‘ordinary’ ethics from an economic viewpoint?’

To exemplify the Catholic Social Thought responding to these demands and to encourage debate, the criteria governing any prospective Church / business dialogue are discussed in the following commentary, together with consideration of five aspects of Catholic Social Teaching, each elected for its particular relevance to ownership, management and the terms and conditions of work. These are: the characteristics defining leadership authenticity; the nature and value of leadership insight and its associated attributes, comprehensions of ‘goodwill’, the potential for ‘personalism’ in place of ‘individualism’ and the place of the virtues in the business decision process.

Part Two: Frontiers for Exploration

Conditions of Dialogue

As a starting point it is important to recollect that, whatever the instances – and there are many - indicating a contrary conclusion,(i) opinion must not be allowed to drown fact! Most business people are honest, conscientious, fair dealing and only too aware of their most basic moral obligations. (Not without a certain irony is it worth recording Henry Ford’s view that, “For a long time people believed that the only purpose of industry was to make a profit. They are wrong. Its purpose is to serve the general welfare” [42]). The difficulty arises in knowing what to do about these obligations since they not only occur in complex circumstances but, no less and more frequently, in deliberating on day-to-day puzzles on more mundane work issues of moral perplexity. Hence, business leadership’s problem, as earlier noted, stems less from an adherence to rules, the ‘process ethics’ that necessarily applies co-ordinates to the principles of corporate behaviour, but from failures, “properly to take account of the human expectations including the emotions, sentiments, opinions and attitudes that [constituents] may hold.” [43]

“Only those who combine an ethics of calculation with an ethics of conviction can truly experience their role and function as a vocation.” [44]

But how is the significance of this observation to be advanced?

For Alasdair MacIntyre, the dominant challenge is a recovery of, “the language of morality [now] in a state of grave disorder.” [45] For him, this will involve no less than the adoption of,

“a second first language ... a work of imagination whereby the individual is able to place him or herself imaginatively within the scheme of belief inhabited by those whose allegiance is to a rival tradition [so that they come to understand] the limitations, incoherencies and poverty of resources of their

own beliefs ... in a way not possible within their own tradition.” [46]

Other much respected Catholic theologians / moral philosophers strongly endorse MacIntyre’s view. Teilhard de Chardin envisions, “a new formula, necessarily invested in language, that evinces the view that Christianity should not be seen as a doctrine of impoverishment and diminution but of expansion ... leading to a consciousness of our capacity for growth.” [47] Charles Taylor proposes ‘a new translatable language ... facilitating the grasping of a God-given order but an order inseparably indexed to personal vision.’ [48] Heinz Schumann observes that, “While the words of Jesus may be held to be the ultimate ethical norm yet we must attend to their literary character [if we are to present them] as models of conduct ... as paradigms.” [49] In the same vein, Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi of the Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, is concerned to develop “languages of relationship.”

These exhortations more than confirm the urgency of conceptualising a form of dialogue fully capable of demonstrating the immediate relevance of Christian ethical teaching; a dialogue that both informs the vision and values associated with work and promulgates the just use of authority. This is not to suggest ‘preaching’. As Brownberger observes, “Bible thumping in business is counterproductive.” [50] Rather is it considered that means will have to be established, perhaps well beyond those already in train, that encourage a wholly supportive dialogue between Christian and business ethics; that show with an incontrovertible logic that the values entrenched in a secular humanism can no longer be assumed or deemed to be adequate and that any business decision with an ethical context must balance the empirical and meta-ethical elements involved with due regard to the social factors that impinge on a business’s statutory and other significant obligations and that must coincide with the claims of truth.

Insight: the Process of Discovery

In much of the currently fashionable management literature, such leadership attributes as drive, decisiveness, efficiency and enthusiasm are given special emphasis. These and similar instrumental virtues are rightly valued. However, the fact of the matter is that a millennial business leader’s distinguishing marks are grounded less in functions of persona, charismatic or otherwise, than in cognition; the capacity for insight, for discovery, on which Church teaching has much to offer of immediate interest to any board of management worth the name. By insight is entailed,

“the click, the grasp added to knowledge when you see the ‘must’ in the data ... [that] adds to what is merely presented ... and defines the necessary relation between necessity and impossibility.” [51]

The importance of this teaching in a business context becomes evident in considering the

nature of any decision involving a moral component. Leadership is thrown back on itself, dependent on that complex of knowledge and experience that inform insight and by which relative values are established. Insight is thus among the core attributes of modern business leadership. As a sub-set of the concept of justice and in company with its associated features – impartiality, objectivity and mature judgement - it is among the characteristics increasingly sought and applied in defining leadership excellence, most notably, the right to command.

It might be argued in these regards that the Church has little to say that is not already self-evident. But this is simply not the case. This teaching has intensely personal implications for anyone in a management position: the decisive impact on career development; the ability to gain and retain a job and the capacity to inspire those under command. It also speaks to the fundamental attitudinal shift in Western society that, at once, seeks short-term satisfactions but expects habitual care for schemes that order and sustain long-term security. These are issues business is at pains to explore and understand.

Defining Authenticity

Similarly, is it argued that business leadership is much concerned to promote a ‘good of order’ both within an organisation and in the external relationships without which an enterprise cannot function. This addresses the entire management canon of ‘if ... then’ relationships that guide both vision and operational direction and take account of the significant interest in the nature of management authenticity,

“views and conduct [that] deserve to be taken seriously, reflect practical reasonableness, indicate an integrated character and identify a person who, in the rich sense, is truly virtuous.” [52]

In this context, Catholic Social Teaching has a treasury of understanding at its command of immediate interest to anyone in a position of management authority.

Leadership authenticity means that, whatever the dictates of commerce, business judgements should be no different from those made when deliberating on one’s own life. It entails an unfailing capacity to decide choice of action on the basis of dispassionate logic; [53] an intelligent response to opportunity but which sees the choice of direction as decisive act that combines practicability and fitness for purpose with the social criteria that determine that opportunity’s potential for success. Authenticity invokes the understanding that while expected standards of behaviour can be enforced, the underlying spirit of good corporate conduct is awakened and sustained by the exemplary model that leadership inspires. It includes a determination to build expected standards of behaviour from the top down and sympathetically to answer the question, ‘what ought to be done in regard to others?’ [54]

Cassidy draws out the implications of these conceptions in a manner well suited for management digest. Authentic command, he observes, recognises that structures are perennially emergent and, to this end, designs and sustains structures that are internally non-implosive, self-correcting, open and elastic but which are, no less, morally acceptable. Authentic command ensures that rights are matched by their equivalent obligations, ideally expressed as a covenant, are irreducible and permit no degradation. [55]

Goodwill

The arithmetic treatment of 'goodwill' in business has made considerable advances in recent years. However, it takes no account of an organisation's need to build and sustain internally generated and externally accorded goodwill as 'perpetual' functions of commercial survival. This, it is considered may be, in part, a function of management's refusal to admit the problem or, paradoxically, of over-dependence on secular ethical criteria beyond those embedded in a quasi-legal system. This is not to suggest that such models are without value but that they are, as it were, permeable - susceptible to MacIntyre's 'goods of effect'.

This is most particularly the case when an enterprise deploys such words as 'trust' and 'integrity' but is found to do so simply as a sign of an outward sign of inward avarice. At stake are two of corporate leadership's most persistent pre-occupations: reputation and accountability and a growing realisation that progress in opposition to a right moral order is, in reality, no progress at all and is immediately recognised as such. [56]

Bernard Lonergan is among those elaborating this understanding in a manner capable of engaging contemporary management interest. Goodwill, he says and by which he entails 'willing the good', is driven by the dynamism that is the very structure of man's being. It is a system 'on the move'. "Man's goodwill is consistent with his knowledge and, if its adaptation to spiritual and social advance is slow, at least it tends to endure" as long as the sense of goodwill remains consistent with the knowledge of integrity that underpins that goodwill. In the same vein, he adds that goodwill follows the intellect, not to demand that all is perfect from inception but to expect that all will grow and develop. Thus he concludes that goodwill, in the sense of the possibility of the transcendent, engenders a 'dynamic resilience and expectancy ... ever rising above past achievements to import a compelling genius to the challenges of the day.' [57]

It is Lonergan, too, who cautions managements of the danger in believing that

“... there is an island of safety called 'method'. If you follow the method you will be alright in the sense that there is ... some set of rules, some objective solution, independent of each man's personal authority, honesty, genuineness. And that does not exist.” [58]

Personalism and the Virtues

Deepening interest in insight, in authenticity and in goodwill in the world of work is paralleled by interest in what is increasingly referred to as management's 'emotional intelligence'. [59] This, it is considered, is an outcome of society's fast-maturing conviction that a corporate body is not, in itself, capable of moral actions and that responsibility for social affront properly rests with those who control those actions – senior management.

Three factors emerge from this situation: that Lonergan's 'personal authority, honesty and genuineness' must necessarily assume primacy among the foundational conditions of leadership excellence; that the public acceptance of business conduct is no longer simply a question of 'act' but of 'character' and that what might be called 'corporate statesmanship', alongside and in addition to commercial acumen, must now be considered to be among the key capabilities determining the right to command.

These conceptions are amply reflected or implicit in *Laborem Exercens* [60] but, for management, they are new and currently the subject of intense examination.

In the final analysis, the basic judgements about business ethics are not about impersonal issues. They are about judgements of character; judgements vested in a comprehension that in business, as elsewhere, the possession and exercise of personal qualities and values are now required that are, at once, internal to business but are fully capable of articulation and demonstration throughout a corporate culture.

The Church's teaching on personalism and the virtues precisely responds to this criterion, encouraging a view that corporate ethics may be described as,

'the discipline which defines and promulgates the measures governing business behaviour on the basis that the rightness of actions is a result of judgements determined by those whose decisions control those actions.' [61]

If no more, this definition, derived from Aquinas, [62] attests that personalism and the virtues are properly founded in relationships rather than merely in principles. It is meant to engender understanding that these attributes stem from the necessities of human life, insist on care and respect for the dignity and worth of the individual and, not least, provide an evaluative balance between corporate concerns and concern for all others, despite the fact that, for many,

"the virtues are of so little regard in these costermongers' times that their true value is turned bearherd ... [and like] all the other gifts appertinent to man, as the malice of this age shapes them, are not worth a gooseberry." [63]

Notwithstanding Shakespeare's acerbic observation, a key assertion in this paper is that a social ethics, grounded in the virtues, is fully capable of contributing to commercial success. This is not to say that an appeal to the virtues can serve as an alternative to moral rules. Both are normative and neither can be reduced to the other or eliminated from normal discourse.¹[64] However, rules say nothing about the implications of integrity, a now dominant management requirement and not, of course, a skill but a habit of the heart [65] that endows sensitivity, open-ness and maturity of judgement.

These are the among the very attributes that give the conceptions of personalism and the virtues their central role and function in a corporate context, make the decision process intelligible, assist the appreciable and constant quest for moral certitude and, in these ways, characterise the conception of an 'ethics of excellence'.

Justice

In the world of work, any account of practical reason will only be adequately described if it is 'followable', 'act' orientated, and encourages co-operation. [66] Few in positions of business leadership would dissent from this assessment, reminding that *justice* is the essentially social dimension of every virtue and the guiding principle determining concern for others. But the application of justice is contingent on personal integrity, a sub-set of justice as the virtue properly directing deliberation and choice. Thus, for example, it is justice that should properly provide the decision criteria governing the difference between bulk purchase costs and subsequent retail pricing, between borrowings and interest charges and between senior management and employee remuneration.

This observation stems from an immutable truth but may come as an unpalatable surprise to those who operate on the basis of what the market will bear. However, the simple fact is that only the precepts of justice - on which the Church has so much to teach of value to the business community - ultimately reliably inform a product's or service's inherent value and, critically, preserve the equality between an enterprise and its constituents. Good faith and goodwill are fundamental to any such transaction and the test of the capacity for ethical conduct that has justice at its root. [67]

Prudence

Of all the virtues, it is the Church's teaching on *prudence* that should most immediately engage management attention since its chief act is command. Its components are taking counsel, the establishment and judgement on relevant facts and leadership. [68] Its two forms are 'regnative' and 'political'; the former generating the capacity to create vision and values and the latter designed to encourage participation. So seen, prudence provides the

ability to re-interpret rules when circumstances dictate, how to detect the need for change and when to modify policy in the light of moral experience. In these ways prudence surpasses respect for principles and provides right judgement expressed in terms of equity when ordinary rules and guidelines fail or appear to be in conflict. Prudence also not only denominates the quality of command, vitally it governs the management of risk.

Together with his student, Ptolemy of Lucca, Aquinas further explains the value of prudence in a manner likely to fascinate management. To typify: Whatever else, get the leadership succession right; promote from within when and wherever possible; avoid incompetent middle management; ceaselessly watch the competition; good communications are essential; giving value for money is vital and, withal, personal honesty and integrity are paramount conditions of leadership excellence.[69]

Courage and Moderation

If teaching on prudence might be of particular and immediate interest to the business community, no less should it find Thomist and modern interpretive Thomist teaching on *courage* and *moderation* of importance.

Courage is most closely allied to other virtues of significance to working successfully in a competitive environment: hope, perseverance, endurance, constancy, steadfastness and the discovery of the mean between cowardice and foolhardy daring. Moderation is the similarly prized virtue that most closely applies and sustains common sense and ensures restraint. It fosters the ability for mediation and, importantly, is orientated towards external relationships: the care and disposal of property, the maintenance of corporate reputation in a manner that denies false product or service commitments or advertising claims that cannot be fulfilled in the sense described.

Conclusion

It is commonly argued that the task of establishing any appreciable degree of compatibility between Christian and commercial concepts of morality is merely to enter in to a dialogue of the deaf. If this was true for past generations it is argued that, as a function of this era's unprecedented paradigmatic change, the hearing of those concerned may be in process of a slow and oft-times grudging but ineluctable recovery. Indeed, as this paper has attempted to demonstrate, it is considered that an albeit rudimentary but growing possibility of convergence between Christian ethical teaching and the ethics of corporate governance may be in process of emergence and to which the Church, *pari passu*, must respond.

This is to propose further developments in this field of endeavour, including but well

beyond the Faith communities, wherein to re-capture the credibility and relevance of Catholic Social Thought as fundamental to work. It is further to propose that, pursuant to this endeavour, a pastoral impetus must be engendered to encourage the re-constitution of the criteria governing enterprise. In the ‘language of relationships’, this must address and seek enlightened compliance for the provision of the human-centred benefits that are, after all, work’s natural domain: the creation and equitable distribution of wealth, the production and reliable supply of the necessities of life, the maintenance of social infrastructures, desirable scientific and technological advance and, above all in this context, the terms and conditions of work, “at the very centre of the social question.” [70]

In considering this undertaking, critical directions come into focus. Associated studies must necessarily be designed with the aim of developing joint Church / Work explorations. A re-conceptualisation of business ethics, in the complete understanding of the discipline and vested in Catholic Social Thought, must be promulgated and all in a manner that is sensitive to the dictates of commercial imperatives and in accord with a reasoning that does not reject the sense experience but is attainable by the sheer force of a logical acceptance of the transcendent capacity in human nature.

Above all, is it to be hoped that any such undertaking may serve to inspire in Christian interlocutors and business representatives alike, a shared sense of ‘social grace’, [71] the concrete and wholly practical application of the social character of love. In the final event, this is the mission that *Laborem Exercens* inspires and to which it urgently invites participation.

“While there is work there is hope. The work of individuals contributes to that hope by supporting life and developing prosperity. As a sharing in God’s continuing creation it helps us to look expectantly to the future. Whenever we pray, we can lift up to God hands that are never empty.” [72]

Notes:

[1] John Paul II, 1991, address to business leaders. Cited in Kennedy R, Atkinson G & Naughton M, 1994, *Dignity of Work: John Paul Speaks to Business Management and Workers*, Lanham: University Press of America.

[2] John Paul II, 1981, *Laborem Exercens*, p. 56.

[3] Ibid. p. 17.

[4] Ibid. p. 24.

[5] cf: Schillebeeckx E, 1979, *Jesus – An Experiment in Christology*, London: Collins.

- [6] Merton T, 1951, *The Ascent to Truth*, London: Burns & Oates, p.4.
- [7] Cahill L, 1987, 'Ethical Implications of the Sermon on the Mount' in *Interpretation*, 41 /1, pp. 144
- [8] cf: McDonald J I H, 1995, *Christian Values*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- [9] Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, 1996, *The Common Good*, London: The Catholic Bishops' Conference.
- [10] Von Balthasar, H U, 1986, 'Post-Christian Anthropological Ethics' in *Principles of Christian Morality*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, p. 103.
- [11] More T, 1968 ed., *Utopia*, London: Penguin Books, p.63.
- [12] More T, 1534, *Supplication of Souls*, CW7, 135 / 21-22.
- [13] Preston R, 1991, *Religion and the Ambiguities of Capitalism*, London: SCM Press, p. 152.
- [14] Bernard of Clairvaux, 1987 ed., 'Sermon 50 on the Song of Songs' in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Writings*, New York: Paulist Press.
- [15] cf: McLuhan M, 1967, *Explorations in Communication*, New York: Bantam Books.
- [16] Also refer: Aquinas T, 1967 ed., *Summa Theologiae, 11–11, 118,1*, London: Eyre & Spottiswoode.
- [17] Taylor C, 1991, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, pp. 47, 111.
- [18] cf: Klein N, 2000, *No Logo*, London: Harper Collins, pp. 143n.
- [19] In the United States alone, advertising budgets have spiralled from \$50 billion in 1980 to over \$200 billion in 2000.
- [20] Hix H L, 1995, *Spirits Hovering Over the Ashes*, Albany: State University of New York Press, p. 108.
- [21] Cited in Lloyd T, 1990, *The Nice Company*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, p. 4.
- [22] Smith R C, 1990, *Wall Street Ethics Today*, New York: New York University, Salomon Center, Working Paper Series.
- [23] Leeds University, 1998, 'Life at the End of the Twentieth Century'. Cited in the

London *Times*, 5 September.

[24] MORI / Financial Times Study, February, 1999.

[25] Cited in Lonergan B, 1992, *Insight*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, pp. 755 and 806. (Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, Vol. 3).

[26] UNCTAD, 1997, Press Statement

[27] United Nations, 1998, *Human Development Report*.

[28] More than 500 codes of business conduct may be viewed by reference to the Internet address: <http://www.adslogans.co.uk>.

[29] cf: Institute of Directors, 1995, *Standards for the Board: Good Practice for Directors*, London: IoD.

[30] cf: *Gaudium et Spes*.

[31] cf: Taylor C, *op. cit.*

[32] Arthur Anderson / London Business School, 1999, *Ethical Concerns and Reputation Risk Management*, London: Arthur Anderson.

[33] Peters T & Waterman R H, 1982, *In Search of Excellence*, London: Harpers & Row, p. 245.

[34] cf: Ohmae K, 1990, *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in an Interlinked Economy*, London: Harper Business.

[35] Baruch J A & Eckhart D R, 1998, 'The Paradoxes of Leadership' in *Leading Organisations*, London: Sage, p. 69.

[36] Institute of Directors, 1999, *Sign of the Times*, (A Study of Management's Changing Priorities). London : IoD.

[37] Nussbaum M, 1990, *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 68.

[38] MacIntyre A, 1990, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, London: Duckworth, p. 139.

[39] cf: Gill R, 1997, *Moral Leadership in a Post-Modern Age*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, p. 50.

[40] Lonergan B, 1985, *Insight*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, (Collected Works of

Bernard Lonergan), p. 625.

[41] Taylor C, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

[42] Henry Ford Sr., quoted by Donaldson T, 1982, in *Corporations and Morality*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, p. 57.

[43] cf: Statman D (ed), 1977, *Virtue Ethics*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

[44] Ricoeur P, 2000 ed., *The Problem of the Foundation of Moral Philosophy*. Leuven: Peeters, p. 80.

[45] MacIntyre A, 1981, *After Virtue*, London: Duckworth, p.2.

[46] MacIntyre A, 1988, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* London: Duckworth, pp. 372n, 387-388.

[47] De Chardin T, 1966 ed., *le Milieu Divin*, London: Fontana.

[48] cf; Taylor C, 1988, *Sources of the Self*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 508.

[49] Schumann H, 1975, 'How Normative are the Values and Precepts of the New Testament' in *Principles of Christian Morality*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

[50] Brownberger M L, 1995, 'Christian Faith in Business' in *On Moral Business*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, pp. 671-672.

[51] Lonergan B, *op. cit.*, p. 36-40.

[52] Finnis J, 1998, *Aquinas: Moral, Political and Legal Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 48.

[53] Aquinas, *op. cit.*, 1-11,17,5,2.

[54] cf: Smith A, 1981 ed., *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.

[55] Cassidy J, 1997, Ethics Seminar, University of Southampton. Unpublished.

[56] cf: Fuchs J, 1970, *On the Theology of Human Progress*, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, pp. 179 – 203.

[57] Lonergan, 1952, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, p. 711 – 723.

[58] Lonergan B, 1979, 'The Human Good', in *Humanitas* 15 /1, p. 126.

[59] cf: Goleman D, 1995, *Emotional Intelligence*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing. Also refer: Buzan T, 2001, *The Power of Spiritual Intelligence*, London: Thorsons.

[60] *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

[61] Keen R, 2000, 'Knowing What the Right Thing Is', Discussion Paper 1 in the series *Ethics, Excellence and Leadership*, Cambridge: Von Hugel Institute.

[62] Aquinas, *op. cit.*, 1-11,55,4.

[63] Shakespeare, *King Henry IV, Part Two*.

[64] cf: Porter J, 1997, *Moral Action and Christian Ethics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, esp. p. 137n.

[65] cf: Bellah R N, et.al., 1996 ed., *Habits of the Heart*, Los Angeles: University of California Press. In its up-dated version this work remains among the most widely discussed and scholarly interpretations of the moral crisis American society is considered to face.

[66] cf: O'Neill O, 1996, *Towards Justice and Virtue*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[67] cf: Finnis J, *op. cit.*

[68] Aquinas, *op. cit.*, 11-11,47,6/16.

[69] Ptolemy of Lucca / Aquinas T, 1997 ed., trans: Blythe J M, *On the Government of Rulers (De Regimine Principium)*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania. Also see, 1993, *Medieval Political Theory*, London: Routledge.

[70] John Paul II, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

[71] cf: Bernard of Clairvaux, 1987 ed., 'A Treatise on Love', *op. cit.*, pp. 173-205.

[72] Hume, Cardinal Basil, 1984, 'Work' in *To be a Pilgrim: A Spiritual Notebook*, London: St Paul Publications, p. 208.

(a) Among the relevant Encyclicals (in date order) are: *Rerum Novarum* (1891), *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), *Evangeliium Nuntiandi* (1975), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), *Centessimus Annus* (1991) and *Veritatis Splendor* (1993); all in addition to *Laborem Exercens* (1981).

- (b) If only for purposes of recollection, instances of misconduct have littered the modern corporate landscape from the early 1960s. It was in 1961 that a then young crusading lawyer, Ralph Nader, successfully took General Motors to task for the poor safety record of the vehicles it produced. The early 1970s witnessed the Lockheed aircraft scandal – a major bribery exercise to ensure commercially sufficient sales of the ‘Tristar’. The same decade saw Nestle accused of ‘killing babies’ in certain of its Third World markets. In the 1980s, such high-profile cases occurred as Union Carbide’s involvement in the Bhopal disaster, the Guinness ‘affair’ and Exxon’s environmental catastrophe in Alaska’s Prince Albert Sound as a result of which neighbouring Inuit settlements still claim a shortage of locally available sources of food. The 1990s have seen a succession of other such instances: Shell Oil, and the oil and gas industry generally, remain long-term preoccupied with the least damaging removal of off-shore rigs. Exxon has stood accused of spending not less than \$30 million in lobbying to inhibit international regulation on global warming – a move now given added impetus by the current US Presidency. The tobacco company, Philip Morris, is alleged to have used infiltration techniques to subvert the integrity of scientific information on passive smoking. Scandals have also dogged the financial sector, exemplified in the UK by the Polly Peck and Robert Maxwell debacles, BCCI’s collapse and Baring’s woeful mismanagement of its overseas interests. It is a continuing impression that covert insider dealing remains rife on the money markets and that such as the mis-selling of pension schemes in past years reflects an ever-present propensity to ‘cook the books’. The remuneration packages that certain chief executives and boards of directors have effectively awarded themselves in recent times serves only to exacerbate this perception.
- (c) What is happening to Florida’s Everglades typifies this problem. This area is struggling against overwhelming odds. Robbed of water by the needs of farmers, the residents of Miami and six million visitors a year, these swamps are a world-class site of scientific interest but are dying. Wading birds wade no more. The panther population is reduced to fifty and the water is so polluted that the aquatic life, poisoned by mercury, is in danger of extinction.
- (d) Charles Handy, one of the more prolific British writers on the management of change, cites the phenomenon of what the Japanese call ‘Chindogu’. This is the consumer’s virtual addiction to purchase items, whether needed or not, in response to an unstinting avalanche of advertising and sophisticated merchandising and under pressures engendered by cultural and peer group expectations.
- (e) FTSE4Good tracks public company achievements under three main areas of social responsibility: working towards environmental sustainability; developing positive relationships with ‘stakeholders’ and upholding universal human rights. It has four indices: the UK, Europe, the United States and the ‘rest of the world’. 60% of this organisation’s fees go to UNICEF.
- (f) This is a point strongly reinforced by Abraham Maslow’s research. It was conducted in the 1940s but, if anything, is more relevant today than at the time of its

publication. In addition to publishing his celebrated 'Hierarchy of Needs', Maslow established related data indicating that humans harbour a deeper need than the 'self-actualisation' that stands at the pinnacle of the human motivation pyramid. This, he asserted, "is a need to achieve meaningful participation in human projects that last beyond our selves and, ideally, span the generations to act in ways not dictated by inner impulses or external demands but [which are] responsive to inner and outer worlds in a timely but not time-bound manner". In so saying, Maslow effectively postulated that the 'executive mind', arguably more than many others, is ultimately motivated to action that is contributive and meaningful in ways that are beyond 'the self' and whether or not that motivation is consensual or even, necessarily, the outcome of a conscious decision.

- (g) Transactional forms of business that dictated business conduct in times past are progressively giving way to a transformational style of command and consent, notwithstanding the prevailing dominance of contingency management. The former was based on an exchange process governed by the rules and contract on which such as John Rawls has laid such stress. The latter seeks to engage all of an organisation's constituents – workers, shareholders, customers or otherwise – by an invitation to share in the vision and values entrenched in that organisation's leadership philosophy. This has been among the more notable developments of the last decade. Transformational leadership does not seek to supplant rules. Rather does it invoke an appeal to mutual trust and, potentially, adverts to a compatibility as between business purposes and what, if no more, comprises a humanitarian understanding of the common good.
- (h) All the more reason to work in company with such as the CAUX Round Table and, particularly, to draw from and deploy the experience of the Woodstock Business Conference, inspired by the Society of Jesus and managed through the Jesuit Theological Center, Georgetown University, Washington DC.
- (i) It is a dispiriting matter of fact that multi-national corporations have wrecked havoc in such areas as Indonesia and in much of sub-Saharan Africa and for which they must both accept blame and be required to make redress. It warrants repetition that, to a considerable degree, it is because of their behaviour that countless millions are living in extreme poverty, living alongside a small super-rich elite. While workers are paid a pittance, international corporations remain largely unregulated. In these ways, globalisation is not alleviating debt but contributing to its growth, breeding corruption and perpetuating the hopeless poverty and dispossession that affront the very bases of human dignity and survival.

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