

## Catholic Reflections on the Basis of the Pluralist Structure of Society

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*A century that has witnessed the Holocaust and the Gulag  
is not one that can be aptly characterized as paying too  
much heed to basic rights.*

—Loren E. Lomasky

In his paper, “Human Dignity, Personal Liberty,” Michael Novak has clearly pointed out the contribution of a rejuvenated economic science (in the properly understood sense of the term), founded on the person and placed in the historical context of old-world statism, burgeoning socialism, and a relatively sterile economic science modeled on mathematics. While it is true that Leo XIII did point out the major flaws of both socialism and the older authoritarian system, as Schumpeter discussed, there really is no thorough defense of capitalism as a moral economic system.<sup>1</sup> The result has been that discussion of the free market, even by Christians, has been mostly ideological.<sup>2</sup> Novak’s works are a major contribution to the clarification of the truth of the market economy and its compatibility to man’s God-given nature and to Catholic teaching.

The purpose of this paper is to examine a major stumbling block in the acceptance of the freedom required of man, and due to man, in the economic and political spheres. That stumbling block is the inability of many well-meaning Christians, academics included, to deal with the existence of evil in society.

All too often, Christians, who are taught by their faith to be skeptical of “the world,” also tend to be alienated from any notion of material or technical progress that they equate, illogically, with that “world” condemned by Christ. Since the Industrial Revolution, Christians have clung like sloths to thinkers who caricature modern economic systems as dehumanizing slave systems accelerating the impoverishment of the poor so that the factory owner can live more splendidly. Those predisposed to this ideology thrill when Thomas Carlyle writes that the captains of industry are doomed not to chivalry but to “doggery,” or when he equates these same captains of industry with buccaneers and Choctaw Indians, “whose supreme aim in fighting is that they get the scalps, the money, that they may amass scalps and money.” For, “What is it that they have a hundred thousand-pound bills laid up in their strong room, a hundred scalps hung up in the wigwam?”<sup>3</sup> They feel akin to John Ruskin as he portrays success in business competition due to business acumen as a large man pulling himself up to a table where children are being fed, and, reaching over their heads, takes their food just because he can.<sup>4</sup>

While this is not the place to give a detailed explanation of why these views are incorrect, it is important to note that such critics tend to ignore empirical evidence and were ignorant of cause-and-effect relationships in economics and/or were, as were some early economists of the time, hooked on Malthusian doctrine. It was because of Malthus’s famous but misdirected theory of population growth outstripping food production (which influences the writings of so many population control advocates today) that Carlyle termed economics “the dismal science.” Suffice it to say that the work of economic historians such as T. S. Ashton,<sup>5</sup> W. H. Hutt,<sup>6</sup> and W. W. Rostow<sup>7</sup> shows definitively that conditions on the farms were no better than in the factories and that the rising wealth caused by the Industrial Revolution led to a rise in the birth rate, a reduction in the death rate, and the bettering of overall conditions. Truly, increased productivity led to universal wealth, which led to better health.

The many reasons for despising the free-market system of economics were discussed at length by Ludwig von Mises in his little book, *The Anti-Capitalist Mentality*.<sup>8</sup> Certainly, many of the reasons for this attitude ring true. Those persons of inherited wealth are envious of those of the lower classes who have made it big despite lack of pedigree. The unsuccessful person, chided by spouse, other relatives, or friends for not being wealthy, blames the economic success of others on the alleged “unscrupulousness” of the successful. Since this critic of the free market is a person of modest means, it is due, *ipso facto*, to his virtue that he is poor.

Intellectuals are most prone to this resentment. They resent, justly, the other colleagues who make more than they do; they resent the uneducated entrepreneurs who invent and market things that many people are willing to pay for, while believing that they should get the same money for having a number of academic degrees or having written a certain number of poems. Last, intellectuals see business people as Philistines interested only in money and sports.

This leads the discussion into the reasons for the dissatisfaction among many Christians with the free market. While decrying sin and pointing out true social evils are certainly in the Christian tradition stemming from the Old Testament through the popes of the twentieth century, many contemporary Christians have been affected by a certain Christian-Rousseauianism, whereby not only is sin attacked, but sin is placed in the context of everything modern. To these Christians, as to Rousseau, evil is not merely a personal turning away from God and the natural law but seems to be caused by modernity itself. The result of this thinking is multifold. Instead of being leaven in modern society as Christ calls Christians to be, these particular Christians are alienated from modern society, tend to reject networks of like-minded people in favor of geographically delineated communities of these same people. They despise trade, specialization, technology, and some such as Postrel,<sup>9</sup> Olsen,<sup>10</sup> Ante,<sup>11</sup> and Rushdoony<sup>12</sup> even hope for and predict the collapse of the modern world because of Y2K, allowing them to begin from scratch to dominate the end game.

It is in this context that the main topic of this paper begins—the inability of many Christians to deal with the problem of evil in society.

## The Statist Temptation

On a panel at a recent meeting of one of this writer's professional associations, a Catholic colleague was bemoaning the decline of morality in the United States. He kept saying that something has to be done. Requested by the writer to be more specific, he hemmed and hawed, and then replied that we need a "dictator."

Of course, there are obvious problems with this solution, not the least of which is, that if we were to have a dictator, the enforcement of the Judeo-Christian view of morality may not be on his agenda. But the main question is, though, Why would a trained Catholic political scientist, affirm such an obviously dangerous solution? This subject would not be worth delving into except for the fact that this solution to America's moral problems now seems

to be a larger part of the intellectual agenda of conservative religious thinking than in the recent past. A surprising number of Christians, orthodox in doctrine, trumpet the same solution, though none dare to put it in writing. The appeal of the vision of “our man” on a white horse, arriving just in time to rescue society and especially, but not exclusively, the victims of abortion and Jack Kevorkian, appears to be irresistible.<sup>13</sup>

Certainly, the purveyors of dictatorship have a point.<sup>14</sup> A brief list of our social problems and their roots can drive one to despair:

*Crime*—While crime has somewhat declined in recent years, does anyone really believe that we have solved the “crime problem?” Much of the crime we experience is drug-related, and much of that is encouraged by the large financial remuneration to drug dealers. That, in turn, is caused by the refusal of Americans to stop using drugs (constant or even increasing demand), coupled with the high prices caused by interdiction efforts (decreasing supply). The cycle seems endless.

*Family break-up*—In many cases, this very complex problem is a combination of ignorance (people, Christians among them, who have no idea of the purpose of marriage or of its permanent nature) and easy divorce, sending the message that one does not have to try to make a marriage work, that one can just “jump ship.”

*Sexual deviancy*—The prevalence of homosexuality, pornography, strip clubs, and the like, and their effect on the family has been widely discussed.

*Unbelief*—Behind all of the above lurks the nagging idea that for most people the final judgment either does not exist, or, to fail to get a positive verdict, one has to be “really bad” like, say, Hitler.<sup>15</sup> If one denies ultimate justice, the way is clear for one to do whatever one wants, provided that there are no other circumstances that interfere with his or her actions (or thoughts).

From the social scientist’s point of view, the foregoing list is important because of the potential that each has for disintegrating the social bond—the very things that make life in society possible. Bertrand de Jouvenel,<sup>16</sup> distilling what he thinks are the real lessons in Rousseau’s thought, portrays the social bond as follows:

We can consider the whole society as “friend” despite the fact that we know only a few people, if we look on the fictitious person of the “group” like the intermediary of a friend. Through this friend we gain affection for his family whom we have never met, thus through affection for the group—we have affection for each individual we meet or have occasion to contact.<sup>17</sup>

Lacking this feeling of friendship for those we have not met, in Jouvenel's eyes, makes social life difficult, if not impossible. Life in any level of society must be characterized by a "reciprocal trustfulness" among the members of that society, because we base our actions on a certain level of confidence in others. As Jouvenel says,

The condition of a man would be miserable ... if at every moment he had to be on guard against the unforeseeable action of every other man. Our progress in and toward the human condition (in the sense of accomplishing our goals) presupposes that we live within a circle of peace and friendship, in which not only do we not anticipate attacks but we expect to be succored in need.<sup>18</sup>

Robert Nisbet quotes a government report published in 1937, entitled *Our Cities*, that spells out some of the results of this lack of trustfulness:

The urban mode of life ... tends to create solitary souls, to uproot the individual from his customs, to confront him with a social void, and to weaken traditional restraints on personal conduct.... The tenuous relations between men, based for the most part on a pecuniary nexus, make urban existence seem very fragile and capable of being disturbed by a multitude of forces over which the individual has no control. This may lead some to evince the most fruitful ingenuity and heroic courage, while it overpowers others with a paralyzing sense of individual helplessness and despair.<sup>19</sup>

Surely, this lack of regularity in the behavior of others is a cause of some of the above-mentioned problems, especially crime and infidelity. While it is obvious that there will always be some people in society who act in an unforeseeable manner, the question is really one of degree. When does this behavior reach a level such that the society begins to unravel, and for which truly drastic steps are necessary?

While this question is difficult to answer, some Catholics do not want to wait for an answer but propose the "statist solution" now. From countless conversations, the author has distilled the logic of those who propose this solution.

1. While recognizing that all morally evil acts can never be stamped out, some acts (especially the more public ones, even if these acts produce no current, measurable harm to society) should be illegal and prosecuted.

2. This is based on the view of government as a moral authority (cf. Rom. 13:1–7) entrusted with the care of the common good.
3. Actions such as trading in pornography, homosexual activity, adultery, engaging in witchcraft, “gangsta’ rap” are all deleterious to the common good and should be proscribed by law.
4. The amount of government proscription must be commensurate with the danger.
5. In the current state of affairs, a dictatorship is warranted. The form of the dictatorship recommended is usually a Catholic monarch. This is what the king who will reign over you will do. He will take your sons and direct them to his chariotry and cavalry, and they will run in front of his chariot. He will use them as leaders of a thousand and leaders of fifty; he will make them plow his fields and gather in his harvest and make his weapons of war and the gear of his chariots. He will take your daughters as perfumers, cooks, and bakers. He will take the best of your fields, your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his officials. He will take the best of your servants, men and women, of your oxen and your donkeys, and make them work for him. He will tithe your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry aloud because of the king you have chosen for yourselves, but on that day Yahweh will not hear you (1 Sam. 8:1–18).

Saint Thomas Aquinas writes:

For this is the best form of polity, being partly kingdom since there is one at the head of all, partly aristocracy insofar as a number of persons are set in authority, partly democracy, that is, government by the people insofar as the rulers can be chosen from the people, and the people have the right to choose their rulers. Such was the form of government established by divine law.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, Leo XIII declares:

[N]o one of the several forms of government is itself condemned, inasmuch as none of them contains anything contrary to Catholic doctrine, and all of them are capable if wisely and justly managed, to ensure the welfare of the State. Neither is it blameworthy in itself, in any manner, for the people to have a share greater or less, in the government: for at certain times, and under certain laws, such participation may not only be of benefit to the citizens, but may even be of obligation.<sup>21</sup>

All of these authoritative citations do not exclude monarchy as a legitimate government; they do seem to exclude dictatorship of any kind, Catholic or otherwise.

Setting aside the practical aspects of the above, such as whether we have reached that stage, or how we would foist this monarchy on Western societies and then guarantee that the proper laws would be passed, it is helpful to examine the notion of society at the base of such suggestions. There is a tendency on the part of those who appreciate both Plato's and Aristotle's thought to commit a common error. That error is the failure to separate what is true always and everywhere from that which is typically Greek. For our purposes, the typically Greek phenomenon is to see the *polis* as an organic unity and the government as a protector of that unity. This is especially noticeable in Plato's *Republic*. A. E. Zimmern characterizes it as an "imaginary Utopia, half a small Greek provincial town, half an impossible and unendurably regimented Socialist model community, based on a fine-drawn and fallacious comparison between the qualities of the human soul and the class divisions that happened to prevail in the Greek society of the time..."<sup>22</sup> The failure to distinguish the typically Greek from the universal "has led to much misunderstanding and shallow thinking in attempts to apply Greek ideas and maxims too literally to modern life."<sup>23</sup>

The tendency in Plato is to establish the "despotism of an idea," or an "ideocracy," developed when he took the Sophist's idea of the superior man who had been merely a strong man, and make him the vehicle of justice by "moralizing" the strong man:

[T]he strong man could be made wise instead of strong; and justice might still consist in the rule of a single man, not because the strongest thereby gained the advantage but because the wisest was therein discharging his function. Unchecked by law, and unfettered by rules, he will look upon the idea of good, and form the State to its image as nearly as he may.<sup>24</sup>

Aristotle's view is not so different. How many times in conversation, or even in academic texts, is man called a political animal? Many political scientists and others were nurtured on the Jowett translation of the *Politics*, where the relevant section reads as follows, with some important sections italicized:

When several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, *the State* comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake

of a good life. And, therefore, *if the earlier forms of society are natural, so is the State*, for it is the end of them, and the nature of a thing is its end. For what each thing is when fully developed, we call its nature, whether we are speaking of a man, a horse, or a family. Besides, the final cause and end of a thing is the best, and to be self-sufficing is the end and the best.

Hence it is evident that *the State is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal*.<sup>25</sup>

But Ernest Barker translates this section in a somewhat different manner, and maybe more in line with Aristotle's mindset:

When we come to the final and perfect association, formed from a number of villages, we have already reached the polis—an association which may be said to have reached the height of full self-sufficiency; or rather [to speak more exactly] that while it grows for the sake of mere life [and is so far, and at that stage, still short of full self-sufficiency] it exists [sic] [when once it is fully grown] for the sake of a good life [and is therefore fully self-sufficient].

*Because it is the completion of associations existing by nature, every polis exists by nature, having itself the same quality as the earlier associations from which it grew.* It is the end or consummation to which those associations move, and the "nature" of things consists in their end or consummation; for what each thing is when its growth is completed we call the nature of that thing, whether it be a man or a horse or a family. Again [and this is the second reason for regarding the State as natural] the end, or final cause, is the best. Now self-sufficiency [which it is the object of the State to bring about] is the end, and so the best; [and on this it follows that the State brings about the best, and is therefore natural, since nature always aims at bringing about the best.]

From these considerations it is evident that *the polis belongs to the class of things that exist by nature, and that man is by nature an animal intended to live in a polis*.<sup>26</sup>

Note that Jowett uses the term *State* exclusively, but that Barker uses the terms *State* and *polis* interchangeably. In addition, Barker uses *polis* first, and *State* only later, returning to *polis* at the end, conveying the idea that *State* is meant in terms of the more specific *polis* (*State* in the sense of the *polis*)—a point one is incapable of getting out of the Jowett translation.

For Barker, this insight is important. In the third section of his introduction, Barker asserts that Aristotle's use of the term *specifically* refers to the "one hundred sixty or so examples of the *polis*, scattered over the Greek mainland



and the maritime area of the Greek dispersion, which Aristotle had studied.” So,

The assumption of Aristotle, as of Greek thought generally down to the days of Zeno and the Stoic doctrine of the *cosmopolis*, is that of the small State or civic republic whose citizens know one another personally, and which can be addressed by a single herald and persuaded by a single orator when it is assembled in its “town meeting.” It is a small and intimate society: It is a Church as well as a State: It makes no distinction between the province of the State and that of society; it is, in a word, an integrated system of social ethics, which realizes to the full the capacity of its members, and therefore claims their full allegiance.<sup>27</sup>

But while Aristotle attempts to distance himself from Plato, both make the same error.

Costanzo tells us that in avoiding the moral dictatorship of Plato, Aristotle still relies on an organic notion of the State and society; that is, man is an animal intended to live in a small, organic community: “He agrees with Plato in supposing that the individual possesses significance as the “carrier” of a type, and that for the realization of this intrinsic finality he requires the life of the *polis* ... Plato and Aristotle may differ; but for both there is one end—the end of a moral perfection which can be obtained only in the *polis*—and that end is the measure of all things.”<sup>28</sup> The result of this concept, which applies to all those who see the State as a solution to society’s moral problems, is the destruction of the individual:

[N]either Plato nor Aristotle seemed to realize that moral action that is done by instance of State-command destroys moral autonomy. Both insisted that, in the exercise of power, justice should be substituted by force. But in their efforts to define justice they always left the individual wholly subordinate to the State, nor were they able to supply any satisfactory grounds for the authority of government as exercised by men commanding fellow men.<sup>29</sup>

The human personality and the equality of men are desiccated in this arrangement.

Continuing the analysis, Costanzo<sup>30</sup> quotes Charles Norris Cochrane,<sup>31</sup> who demonstrates the dilemma of these classical thinkers. Since humans, so Plato and Aristotle both believe, are known primarily as the embodiment of a “type” and the type does not change but renews itself incessantly through the individual, the individual achieves fulfillment through the renewal of the

type—but when it comes to the relations between individuals, Plato and Aristotle are lost, so they search for a distinctive principle of integration. They find it in the ideal of justice, which Aristotle rightly sees as the common property of all men. But here is the rub:

Since the ideal as it stands, is wholly “formal,” it undertakes to give it content by identifying it with the “justice” of the State ...

It is precisely at this point that the idealist commits the crime of Prometheus in seeking to appropriate what belongs to Zeus or, like Adam in the Garden, eats of the forbidden fruit in order to become “like God.” In other words, what he does is to treat knowledge not as a means to “wisdom” but as a source of “power.” The power to which he thus aspires proves, however, to be quite illusory. For what he has, in fact, accomplished is to substitute his notion of order for the order which exists in the universe; the fictitious for the actual; the dead concept for the living reality. His problem is thus to give currency to this counterfeit of cosmic order by persuading or compelling men to accept it as genuine. The effort to do so constitutes the history of “politics” in classical antiquity.<sup>32</sup>

This tendency to lump together society and its elements with the government continued in the Roman era but was brought to a more well-developed level: “The religious character of the law accentuated its tyranny over the citizen believer and bound him inextricably in a web of duties that left him no freedom of thought or of conscience.”<sup>33</sup> Central to this is a faith that “compels a strong sense of obedience.”<sup>34</sup> This, then, led with time from the “tyranny of the gods to the ill-disguised despotism of the Republic and Empire.”<sup>35</sup>

This uniting of the moral authority with the temporal power carried over into Christian times. Eric Voegelin<sup>36</sup> points out that the Romans, who were more religious than the Greeks, took the civil religion so seriously that when Christianity and philosophy arrived on the scene, “the Emperor had to decide which transcendental truth he would represent now that the myth of Rome had lost its ordering force.”<sup>37</sup> This is what Pope Saint Gelasius I was referring to in the “Letter to the Emperor Anastasius” when he pointed out that prior to the coming of Christ, the ruler assumed the functions of divine worship (and, we might add, was the chief moral authority) but after his coming, “He distinguished between the offices of both [sacred and secular] powers....”<sup>38</sup> Essentially, the coming of Christianity to the Roman Empire caused a change in the symbols of the civil religion but not the reality. “This was no conversion to Christianity but, rather, an inclusion of the Christian God into the imperial system of divinity.”<sup>39</sup> The parallel constructions of the imperial monarchy and

the divine monarchy of the universe espoused by Philo in *De Mundo* were taken over by the Christian emperors. This is exemplified by the demand of the Roman soldiers that the Emperor Constantine IV Pogonatus take his two brothers as co-emperors to mirror the Trinity on earth.<sup>40</sup> By this thinking, the ruler becomes a para-god. He exists to carry out God's will *in the same way* in which God governs the universe. His commands cannot be opposed—How can one stand up to the image of the divinity? Human freedom does not exist in this system because the king rules the State and society in the same way that God rules the cosmos—with absolute control. So, just as a ball falls to the ground when the hand lets it go by God's law, so the subject does exactly what the ruler commands, at all times. Neither is there any limit to the extent of the ruler's authority.

But Voegelin reminds us of a truth that those who wish the government to right the moral wrongs of the world tend to forget: "The spiritual destiny of man in the Christian sense cannot be represented on earth by the power organization of a political society; it can be represented only by the Church." With Christianity, "the sphere of power is radically de-divinized; it has become temporal."<sup>41</sup>

## The Pluralist Dimension

A writer who is much neglected by both political scientists and economists is Emile Durkheim. Durkheim is cognizant of the anomie felt by those, like our colleague mentioned in the beginning, who feel their world slipping away. But Durkheim asserts that this lack of a high level of moral consensus in developing societies is a natural phenomenon. In primitive societies, he says, there is a "mechanical solidarity" that comes from the "collective conscience" of that society and is caused by a high level of shared values. In such a society, law is oppressive and primarily criminal. Its object is vengeance born of the outrage when the shared values are violated. The parallel between this state of affairs and the demand for a forced conformity to Christian morality occasioned by a Catholic dictator is no accident. Such a demand is a result of a person's failure to realize that the mechanical solidarity of the West is slipping away, not due to people's becoming more evil per se (although there is plenty of that), but merely because of a new level of social complexity. The recommended dictator takes vengeance because of the violation of shared values that are no longer widely shared.

Numerous examples are available to illustrate the point, but probably none as simple as the way that illegitimate pregnancy was treated when this writer was a child as compared to today. At least in this writer's neighborhood, a woman pregnant out of wedlock was ostracized along with her paramour. Today, women in the same situation, who do not kill the baby through abortion or put it up for adoption, are no longer ostracized by the society, although some families might still exclude them from their company—which treatment, incidentally, is a remote cause of abortion in many cases.

On the other hand, Durkheim argues, advanced societies, such as the modern West, possess an organic solidarity, a solidarity that is of a higher quality in his view. To explain this, let us call the mechanical solidarity of the more primitive society, "forced solidarity." By contrast, the organic solidarity of the advanced society is a natural one, caused by the necessity of cooperation that is the result of the division of labor,<sup>42</sup> which exists in only a weak sense in a primitive society.

While one may reason that this organic solidarity, based on the division of labor as it is, is nothing more than the "pecuniary nexus" of the *Our Cities* report mentioned above, one must keep in mind that the division of labor is actually a social law. While Adam Smith<sup>43</sup> discussed the productive benefits of the division of labor, the truth of the matter is that as a society ceases to be tribal, with all that that entails from Durkheim's point of view, such as the moving of law away from mere punishment to a focus on restitution, a dividing up and specialization is required in every area. In a tribe, there may be three main occupations: hunting, cooking, and building and maintaining huts. The same animals are hunted year in and year out; the same few types of meals are cooked day after day, and the huts are built and/or repaired in the same way with the same materials. In a modern society the differentiation is staggering, leading to a complexity that no one person or group of persons can picture. As the society differentiates, the people have less and less in common.

Here, a warning is necessary: While it was assumed that having less and less in common would either turn men into "mass men"<sup>44</sup> or isolated individuals,<sup>45</sup> the truth is somewhat different. As the society grows and differentiates, men seek out the company of those who have more in common with them than the "pecuniary nexus." No one truly thinks that modern society can be accurately pictured as people on a train. Obviously, those on the train are going to those relationships that do mean something to them, and very few people associate outside of work with their fellow employees unless such socializing is somehow work related. This is the foundation of a pluralistic society.

There are at least two bases for the fact that pluralism is natural to man, given modern conditions. The first is the theological one, that man is made in the image and likeness of God. This image and likeness, a subject that has not been exhausted,<sup>46</sup> displays itself in many ways, which, in turn, has implications for society. Man is like God in having reason and free will; man is capable of great love, but man is also co-creator with God. Pope John Paul II writes: “Man is the image of God partly through the mandate received from his Creator to subdue, to dominate the earth. In carrying out this mandate, man, every human being, reflects the very action of the Creator of the universe.” The Holy Father feels so strongly about this and emphasizes the point by continuing:

[I]t can be said that none of these phenomena of [technological] “acceleration” exceeds the essential content of what was said in that most ancient of biblical texts. As man, through his work, becomes more and more the master of the earth, and as he confirms his dominion over the visible world, again through his work, he nevertheless remains in every case and at every phase of this process within the Creator’s original ordering. And this ordering remains necessarily and indissolubly linked with the fact that man was created, as male and female, “in the image of God.” This process is at the same time, universal: It embraces all human beings, every generation, every phase of economic and cultural development, and at the same time it is a process that takes place within each human being, in each conscious human subject. Each and every individual is at the same time embraced by it. Each and every individual, to the proper extent and in an incalculable number of ways, takes part in the giant process whereby man “subdues the earth” through his work.<sup>47</sup>

If man, in doing his work “reflects the very action of the Creator of the universe,” then he also requires freedom, as God is also free. Hence, this rules out much governmental supervision beyond certain well-defined limits. If man is going to be free to perform this creative act, what generally happens in society will be the actions of countless men performing this very function in imitation of the Creator. This fact rules out any notion of a monolithic society such as Durkheim’s mechanical solidarity. As John Courtney Murray wrote:

[A]n exigence for immunity from coercion is resident in the human person as such. It is an exigence of his dignity as a moral subject. This exigence is the source of the fundamental rights of the person—those political-civil rights concerning the search for truth, artistic creation, scientific discovery, and the development of man’s political views, moral convictions, and religious beliefs.<sup>48</sup>

It also means that as the number of shared values declines, men's reliance on what we all do have in common comes into play—the natural law. Nevertheless, man's inherent dignity still requires the freedom of which Murray wrote. It is the price for human flourishing. Thomas Aquinas understood this very well, and in opposition to those who would use a redivinized government as a moral savior, he wrote:

Now human law is framed for a number of human beings, the majority of whom are not perfect in virtue. Wherefore, human laws do not forbid all vices from which the virtuous abstain but only the more grievous vices from which it is possible for the majority to abstain and chiefly those that are to the hurt of others, without the prohibition of which, human society could not be maintained; thus, human law prohibits murder, theft, and such like.<sup>49</sup>

The second reason that pluralism is natural to man, given modern conditions, is the very stimulus that causes him to live in tribes in a more primitive society—his natural sociability. Contrary to what so many political philosophers assert today, man does not have to be told to associate with those with whom he has more in common.<sup>50</sup> He has a natural tendency toward family, friends, those who agree with his views, and those who work on projects with him. This gives rise to the pluralism and change that are part of any society where life is not static.<sup>51</sup>

## Notes

1. Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), 137–38.
2. Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), chap. 1.
3. Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1894), 233.
4. John Ruskin, "Morals and Religion," Part 7 of *The True and the Beautiful in Nature, Art, Morals, and Religion Selected from the Works of John Ruskin* (New York: John Wiley and Son, 1875), 409.
5. T. S. Ashton, "The Treatment of Capitalism by Historians," and "The Standard of Life of the Worker in England, 1780–1830," in *Capitalism and the Historians*, ed. F. A. Hayek (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).
6. W. H. Hutt, "The Factory System of the Early Nineteenth Century," in *Capitalism and the Historians*, ed. F. A. Hayek (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).

7. W. W. Rostow, *How It All Began: Origins of the Modern Economy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).
8. Ludwig von Mises, *The Anti-Capitalist Mentality* (Grove City, Pa.: Libertarian Press, 1994).
9. Virginia Postrel, "Power Fantasies: The Strange Appeal of the Y2K Bug," *Reason* (April 1999), 4–6.
10. Walter Olsen, "Invitation to a Stoning: Getting Cozy with Theocrats," *Reason* (April 1998): 62–64.
11. Stephen E. Ante, "Profiteering with Y2K Nervousness Rising: Many Spurious 'Experts' Are Bubbling to the Surface—Watch Out!" *Business 2.0* (March 26, 1999).
12. R. J. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, N.J.: Craig Press, 1973).
13. The parallel with the position taken by the Pharisees and Zealots vis-à-vis the Romans is interesting. See Iginio Giordani, *The Social Message of Jesus* (Boston: Daughters of Saint Paul, 1977), 55ff.
14. The present writer is no stranger to such sentiments. As a college freshman, he once told his mother, a historian and former student of Dr. Bella Dodd, that the best solution to the New York City crime problem was to station National Guard troops on every corner. His mother replied in her usual, low-keyed way, "You're getting a little extreme." A friend of the author stated around the same time that if he ever got elected as mayor of New York, his first words would be: "Clear the Streets!"
15. The movie *Ghost* portrayed this view very well. The bad guys are dragged off to hell by shadowy demons, but the good guy is taken to heaven despite the fact that even up to his murder he was sleeping with the unmarried heroine.
16. Bertrand de Jouvenel, *Sovereignty: An Inquiry into the Political Good*, trans. J. F. Huntington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, 115.
19. Quoted in Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 16.
20. Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 105, a. 1.
21. Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter *Immortale Dei* (November 1, 1885), n. 48.
22. A. E. Zimmern, "Political Thought," in *The Legacy of Greece*, ed. R. W. Livingstone (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), 321. See also Karl R. Popper, "The

- Open Society and Its Enemies,” *The Spell of Plato*, vol. 1 (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).
23. Zimmern, “Political Thought,” 325.
  24. Joseph F. Costanzo, S.J., “Political and Legal Studies,” in *Politeia*, vol. 1 (West Hanover, Mass.: Christopher House, 1982), 18.
  25. Aristotle, *Politica*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 1252b–1253a.
  26. Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, intro. and trans. Ernest Barker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1252b–1253a.
  27. Ibid.
  28. Costanzo, “Political and Legal Studies,” 18.
  29. Ibid.
  30. Ibid.
  31. Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944).
  32. Costanzo, “Political and Legal Studies,” 20.
  33. Ibid., 24.
  34. Ibid., 27.
  35. Ibid.
  36. Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952).
  37. Ibid., 91.
  38. Brian Tierney, ed., *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050–1300* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 14, 494.
  39. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, 100.
  40. Ibid., 105.
  41. Ibid., 106.
  42. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. George Simpson (New York: Free Press, 1933).
  43. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 2 vols., ed. R. H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982 [1776]).



44. Jose Ortega Y. Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: Norton, 1960); and Wilhelm Röpke, *A Humane Economy: The Social Framework of the Free Market* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1960).
45. Dante Germino, "The Crisis in Community: Challenge to Political Theory," in *Community*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1959), 88.
46. For example, the persons of the Trinity are known by their roles in a divine division of labor.
47. John Paul II, *Original Unity of Man and Woman: Catechesis on the Book of Genesis* (Boston: Saint Paul Editions, 1979), 22; and Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (September 14, 1981), nn. 12-13.
48. John Courtney Murray, "The Declaration on Religious Freedom: A Moment in Its Legislative History," in *Religious Liberty: An End and a Beginning*, ed. John Courtney Murray (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 40.
49. *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 96, a. 2.
50. Germino writes: "In Hobbes's thought we recognize the image of the atomized, isolated individual of the present day." "The Crisis in Community," 86. While one may criticize Hobbes's thought, that this is an empirically correct observation is questionable. If man is naturally sociable, he will be sociable. One cannot say that man is naturally sociable, but, for some reason short of coercion, he is not acting like it, so we have to persuade him to exercise his inherent tendencies.
51. This is not to say that such dynamism of life is not without pain, but neither is it without remedies. Sebastian De Grazia, *The Political Community: A Study of Anomie* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948); and Emile Durkheim, *Suicide*, trans. J. A. Spaulding and G. Simpson (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1956).