

Features

of the

Thatcher Legacy:

A Theological Critique

Ian M. Fraser

For much of its life theology has been a wasted asset. It has been privatised before privatisation. It is as if, in the course of history, the virtue of fire for giving personal warmth were discovered - without the realisation that, by developing cooking and baking skills, whole communities could use it to sustain life and give it savour.

Thoughts of this kind were in my mind when I approached the end of training in New College, Edinburgh, in 1942. Instead of taking the road which led to a parish or theological teaching, I went into industry as a labourer and chaplain. It seemed eccentric at the time - French worker priests had not even arrived on the scene. Concerned people worried at my discarding of both the training and the opportunities to which it led.

After a year, Dr. Joe Oldham of the Christian Newsletter asked me to provide a supplement. In the text I tried to express what moved me, thus: "This is not the abandonment of ministry but the search for authentic ministry. This is not the abandonment of theology but a search for a relevant theology. This is not the abandonment of the academic but its completion". These three belong together.

The struggle to put theology to work in the public sphere lies behind this effort and has preoccupied me over a substantial part of my life.

The main work for this manuscript was guillotined at 1st June 1992 when I was abroad. When I returned in September it proved possible to make some further observations on events up till November 1st - see especially under the heading "Market Forces etc." This allowed for some evaluation of the continuation of the Thatcher legacy into the Major premiership.

I.M.F.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

CONTENTS

	Page
1. Theology's Relevance	3
2. Wealth Creation	5
(including Ownership and Inheritance and Acquisitive Individualism)	
3. Privatisation - Concealed Factors	14
4. Market Forces, Deregulation and Social Engineering	19
5. Freedom and Dependency	25
6. Advantaging and Disadvantaging	29
7. The Legacy in Essence	35

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Additional Copies available from:-
Ian Fraser, c/o The Iona Community,
Community House, Pearce Institute,
840 Govan Road, Glasgow G51 3UU
(041 445 4561)

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A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

1. Theology's Relevance

Theology is the appropriate discipline for the task of evaluating major features of the Thatcher legacy. Stemming as it does from the Hebrew/Christian tradition which insists that word and practice make a seamless robe of life, it takes seriously and together a) what life is given to be and b) what human beings have made of it at any given point; and keeps them in vivid interplay.

a) It looks beyond human life to determine what validates human life. 'Flat-earth' approaches, which assume that there is nothing beyond the human, keep being left flat-footed by events - for this leaves powers-that-be to define the human, and eliminate those who do not fit their prescriptions. In the 50s and 60s Marxists in Central Europe and the USSR struggled to establish a category of transcendence which they found wanting in Marxist theory. Once Karl Marx had given up all thought of reassessing his rejection of his own early religious thinking, he left his followers no resource to combat the rise of Stalinism with its own definition of the human, 'the worthy-of-survival'. Theology affirms a transcendent view from the start. It does not allow 'the human' to be the plaything of circumstances but gives it enduring value. It does this by rooting human life in the reality behind all realities, God.

b) Theology insists that we deal, not with some imagined, unreal existence, but with life as it is. It insists that we face the truth. The word for truth '*aletheia*' is a word of exposure, a word for blowing the cover on reality so that we reckon with what is actually there. It is the record of the Thatcher government, as against propaganda for and against it, which we are called to address. Take an instance. Senator Salonga of the Philippines (the one entrusted with the task of tracing the Marcos millions, stashed away in secret accounts) once spoke to me of "the evangelical necessity of research into multinational corporations, lest the world get into a powerful grip which is other than God's." Research, analysis, attention to actuality and detail are an evangelical requirement. In the assessment which follows, independent sources of research and analysis alone have been tapped to eliminate bias as much as possible.

Theology is essentially a discipline to be exercised in community. Skills for doing and suffering, learned in life, have to play their part alongside scholarly skills. What

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

is set out here can, I hope, be taken as an incentive to group work.

Theology forbids the practice, common in civil religion, of keeping belief in one and practical politics in another pocket - to be dipped into alternately and not allowed to mix. It forbids attempts to "plunder the bible" to justify policies (Tom Condon's phrase for a habit of Reagan and Thatcher.)¹ This manuscript must be equally critically examined for any misleading use of biblical material.

It forbids that people treat it as an in-house activity. Christians need the testimony of atheists identifying gods they find incredible - to check whether they may have been worshipping idols under guise of the living God. They need the testimony of agnostics to keep them travelling instead of resting on assumed certainties. They need the testimony of people of other faiths in whom insights into the true nature and purpose of God may be found. To be consistent with its nature Christian theology must draw upon the perceptions of and provide resources for the whole of humanity. Just as a test of true worship is whether it makes sense to the enquiring unbeliever (1 Corinth 14:24,25) so a test of authentic theology is whether it meets enquiring unbelievers where they are, and makes sense to them.

Theology is never just a matter of finding telling words and putting them in order. Life must be invested in beliefs to give the words dynamic substance. It does not provide pat answers but involves people in struggles for light. Theology provides the faith-basis for evaluating and changing history. No other discipline can match it for the task in hand.

¹ E.g. The former standing the parable of the Good Samaritan on its head to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; the latter using the language of Revelation, speaking of the USA as 'a shining city on a hill' - while developing policies which plunged millions into a slough of despond.

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

2. Wealth Creation

Thatcherites took to task churches which raised concerns about wealth distribution alleging that they failed to give equally serious attention to wealth creation. The latter point was taken up by the Lord High Commissioner of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1992. He warned of the “severe consequences of ignoring the wealth creation process”; spoke of “businesses, the only wealth creators”; highlighted industrial entrepreneurs as examples to appreciate: and referred to two companies whose contribution “for the consequent well-being of our society is almost beyond measure”. The speech was short, and simply aimed to restore a balance - one must not be too critical. But it drew on assumptions which were not examined far less substantiated.

What is wealth? Who are the wealth-creators? What is the actual record of Thatcherism with regard to wealth creation?

In the Christian tradition the fundamental character of true wealth lies in the capacity to face life and death trusting in God. Remove from people everything else which ministers to their wellbeing and leave that - you still have “poor, rich in faith” (James 2:5).

But Jesus came that people might have “life abundant”, not a scrimped and marginal existence. Translate that into concrete terms. You will find the biblical understanding and that of ordinary folk are very close to one another. What makes life truly rich? Family and children (though those unmarried or childless ‘for the kingdom of heaven’s sake’ will not lose their reward); enough food for each day; adequate clothing and shelter; friendships and caring communities; health and full enjoyment of the senses; worthwhile work; means for fulfilling religious and cultural practices; space to be yourself and have a voice; ability to pay your way and give to those in need . . . Money plays just one part among these things which contribute to life’s enlargement.

Biblically neither ‘wealth’ or ‘poverty’ are words which refer only to adequacy of financial resources. An adjective such as ‘material’ has to be added if money and other possessions is what is being referred to. Those have very limited vision who would restrict the whole notion of wealth to moneymaking.

So wealth-creators include parents and children, neighbours, butchers, bakers

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

and candlestick makers, musicians and painters, social workers (as Terry Waite pointed out at a later stage of the same General Assembly), nurses, pastors - to name but a few of those whose work has to be given its true weight alongside that of industrial entrepreneurs. If the contribution of two companies to society can be called "almost beyond measure", the contribution of society to the companies should be recognised to be equally almost beyond measure. Even where the concept of wealth creation is reduced to the idea of money-making, the part played by those who "sustain the fabric of the world" (Ecclesiasticus 38:39) must be recognised and appreciated. Entrepreneurs live in a state of constant dependency. Had they to build their own houses, grow and cook their own food, develop skills without teachers, create their means of transport and communication, even write their own letters and service their own cars, they would be paralysed. Indebtedness is mutual, not one-sided.

Right! How are we to live managing the earth and its resources, establishing true relationships in the process? Hand-to-mouth policies for social, political and economic decisions have cried out for such a fundamental perspective.

Nothing has ever matched the insights of the first chapters of Genesis. A people gathered into profound stories centuries of experience which illuminated the way the world was meant to work. The rest of the biblical testimony does not contradict the insights, but builds on them.

- a) The earth and its resources are God's creation. Ownership is God's (this relativises all earthly ownerships).
- b) Women and men together are made in the image or likeness of God - have God's breath breathed into them to bring them alive; and are entrusted with the task of developing the earth together and sharing its fruits. They are to do this as trustees and stewards - to fulfil God's purposes, not to advance their own interests. The latter way would go against the grain of the universe.
- c) Means to develop the earth (the words for 'replenish and subdue' suggest the calling to hammer into shape, for 'tend and keep' suggest the calling to love into shape) are distributed among the people as gifts for serving God's purposes. In the New Testament, when the church is brought into being it is depicted as a body (1 Cor. 12). The limbs, organs and different parts all have honoured place. They need one another. In this the church is to be a sign,

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

instrument and foretaste² of the communal way in which the whole human family is meant to live and work.

- d) An abundance is provided. But there is also a constraint to remind human beings that it is God who knows how the earth should be managed, and that disaster follows self-serving uses of power (See Genesis 3 and the tower of Babel - Genesis 11). Jesus did not condemn money-making as such. He looked on the handling of the process as a test of fitness to be trusted with 'the true riches', of life abundant (note Luke 16: in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the beggar is held in Abraham's bosom - and Abraham never seemed to be short of a penny or two!). Jesus saw the fine line between accumulation of possessions and the tendency to trust in riches hence: "Woe to you who are rich", "you cannot serve God and Mammon". In the tough commitment one may make to God's purpose for all life, a very disciplined use of the finance between one's fingers is called for. Those involved in money-making need sustained understanding, prayer, support and instructed criticism and challenge, if their work is to belong to Christian discipleship.

Examine the Record:

Take the concept of wealth-creation in its full sense first. Does not the legacy of Thatcherism include family break-up under the severe stresses and strains imposed by government measures; communities disrupted and destroyed; hundreds begging on the streets and sleeping rough; worklessness on an unprecedented scale; the undermining of public services; the condemnation of millions to struggle for bare survival. A way of life abundant for all? Mrs. Thatcher herself let the true picture emerge when she said there was no such thing as society.

Now take the concept of wealth creation in its narrow, commercial sense. What is the record? Indicators we may adopt are the use of a) natural resources b) plant and machinery c) human skills; and the levels of d) investment e) training f) research and development g) innovation and h) output.

- a) Natural resources Over £100 bn. bonus oil money has been used up, without even a fresh base being laid for manufacturing industry.
- b) In 1980/81 25% of industrial capacity was destroyed, which left the country import-prone. (While the trickle-down theory does not work, the trickle up one

²The word 'arabon' (foretaste) expresses a concrete token of fullness to come. I think of it as the colour of the money God puts on the table for a new world.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

does. Had money been directed to poorer members of society, it would have been spent on home-produced necessities, not luxury imports). This situation has been exacerbated since, not alleviated. We are left with one of the smallest industrial bases in the world. There are now fewer jobs in manufacturing than at any other time since records began in 1959. In 1977-82 imports rose by 3%, in 1987 by almost 8% per annum. The trend continued. In September 1992 it was noted with satisfaction that exports were rising. What was not highlighted was that imports far outstripped them.

- c) Human skills If unemployment were calculated as in 1979 the total would now be at least around 3.5 million. The Employment Institute report of March 1992 examined the "jobs miracle" and concluded that it was a myth. There was no expansion of employment in the Thatcher years.
- d) The Economic Outlook 1991 produced statistics to show that Britain was the worst of all G7, EC and the entire OECD in its record of investment. This was an area of failure throughout the Thatcher years.
- e) A European Commission survey at the end of her period in office revealed that Britain had the worst training record in Europe. Only 38% of industrial workers were classified as skilled, compared with 80% in France, 79% in Italy, 76 % in Holland etc.
- f) Research and development has been cut back severely, leading to
- g) a decline in innovation. The Science Policy Support Group has traced this to the reduction in R & D funding, poor education and the short-termism of the private sector.
- h) Output: Britain in 1991 was at the bottom of the league tables of both the G7 and the EC. The record could have been worse but for the foreign firms which set up business attracted by cheap labour and low taxes. (These factors were the things which counted in debates on the Social Charter. What was resisted was not the trumpeted loss of sovereignty, but basic human rights of protection for those with low wages and poor conditions of employment):

Under cover of the word "enterprise" what was effected was a shift of the nation's resources from the badly-off to the already well-off, and of the tax burden from the well-off to the poorly-off. The rich did not need to produce a thimbleful of enterprise to get richer still. All they needed to do was to accept tax handouts, sit on their money while high interest rates multiplied it and ask for more.

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

So, while churches were blamed for concentrating on the distribution of financial resources, that was, in fact, a focal point of Thatcherism. When it came to wealth creation the regime was marked by a time of severe deterioration both with regard to the diminishing of true wealth and also to the misdirecting and squandering of financial resources - to which the massive trade gap is but one testimony: all the while covering this up with 'false happy talk'(Ralph Nader's phrase about Reagan).³

With this there went an arrogance which the temptation to be 'as God' in Genesis 3 and to build a tower "whose top would reach the heavens" and to "make a name for ourselves" (Genesis 11) warn against. This is far from trusteeship of the earth which women and men are to take in hand together, far from acknowledgement that all people - not just those who are "one of ours", - are made in God's image with the right to dignity and voice. Catastrophe awaits such arrogance.

Ownership and Inheritance

As has been observed, the affirmation that "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" relativises all earthly ownerships. What human beings may have is at best only temporarily theirs - death will see to that (Luke 12:16-21). While they hold possessions they are to show thankfulness for what is genuinely their portion, a readiness to share what is above basic need, a recognition that all that they possess may be required of them - so they are to sit lightly to their possessions. The big question - and one which calls for minds other than their own to be critically brought to bear - is whether they are serving God's purposes by the way they are using possessions (absentee owners of Highland estates in Scotland today take note - as also non-absentees who exploit these estates financially without regard to the will and needs of the local inhabitants).

In the Old Testament, accumulation of possessions by some which led to deprivation and even the enslavement of others was countered by Jubilee regulations: at prescribed times land which had been alienated had to be restored and those who had sold themselves into slavery released.

During the Thatcher years those who owned were treated as if by that very fact

³ On 31st October, in an interview with David Dimbleby on BBC2 Nigel Lawson admitted there had been no economic miracle during the Thatcher years. He had used the phrase unguardedly during a late night after-dinner debate in the House of Commons.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

they had a right to own. The extent of their ownership may have been determined by inheritance, by chance, by exploitation of others, by paying themselves "what the market will stand" regardless of performance, by patronage, by taking advantage of unfair legislation or taxes - there is no necessary coincidence between ownership and the right to own. The word 'envy' is at times used of those who jib at accumulation of goods in the hands of certain sections of society and their want in others. But the basis for anger and protest is not envy but justice where it is recognised that God gave the earth's resources to be shared.

Accquisitive Individualism

Adopt the Flat Earth approach: there is then no reason why people should not get on for themselves and devil take the hindmost. Each of us has different qualities, abilities, skills, privileged or disprivileged backgrounds. Different values will be attached to these by society. If what is yours is valued, you can get on for yourself. A hierarchical order can develop, the top animals getting the best fare and lording it over the others, the runts finding it difficult to survive. If there is nothing beyond the human there is no reason why society should not order itself that way.

Adopt, instead a theological starting point. Begin with the enterprise God undertakes to establish a world of justice, truth and peace and the invitation to all human beings to join in that enterprise. Abilities, talents and privileges then find significant expression not when they serve personal advancement but when they serve that world-concerned initiative. The angle of judgment changes fundamentally. To use a gifted life for personal advancement is as if a man, faced with someone sinking in a bog, got a ladder - and then broke it up and made a fire to warm himself instead of attempting a rescue.

All people are made in the image of God. A transcendent affirmation gives them dignity and status. All - not just "our kind", "those who think our way". In the Genesis stories the word 'Adam' is a collective word for humankind - Adam and Eve stand for the human race entrusted with the job of managing the earth together. In God's sight and by God's endowment there are no top animals and no runts.

Jesus affirmed God's original intention by his way of life. As the son of a carpenter, he might be categorised in our day as lower middle class. He practised downward mobility, getting alongside the marginalised and excluded. Those given low status

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

by society - women, the handicapped, the poor - were treated as children of God, made in the likeness of God. Mary saw by his coming the poor 'lifted high', given the place God intended for them. Jesus told his disciples that looking on him as their master made them all brothers and sisters (Matthew 23:8). The company of his followers knew they were meant to be a sign for the world - however much they fell down on the calling - of the kind of sharing community to whose hands the management of the earth could be entrusted, a community in which a range of particular gifts could be exercised in mutual interdependence. As has been observed, a dominant picture to describe the church is that of a body in which the different limbs and organs have their own part to play but can only fulfil their role as they contribute to and draw strength from the others. Other images - of a family or household, of a building constructed of lively stones, of a vine and branches, of a bride and bridegroom - also emphasise interdependence.

No person can come to fullness of life on his or her own. It is in interplay with other personalities that a particular personality develops. An Irish proverb has it: "It is in the shelter of each other that the people live." By God's choice we are made that way. There is no word for individual in the bible, meaning the self-sufficient, self-subsistent human being. The nearest approximation, in 1 Corinthians 12:27, contradicts the whole notion: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."

People contribute to one another out of a particular identity. That identity lies in discovering a place and role in God's whole purpose. Such a calling can go clean against the valuations made by any society in which conspicuous consumption and a grand style of living carry clout. But when it is rooted in God's enterprise, that identity has lasting significance - whereas with a turn of the wheel of fortune, what depends on circumstance will be lost; and death will in any case put it into different perspective.

To seek a fair recompense for energy and imagination expended in work is natural and right - personal ambition can be good as well as bad. But there is a context. Energy and skills are gifts of God. Any achievement is secured through God's gifting and results from mutually interdependent service. Rewards may be inflated. There is no extant standard of measurement, such as contribution to society, which can be used to argue that a stockbroker should get anything like as high a wage as a landworker.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

In September 1991, at a meeting in Brno of East European Christians who had gathered for over a decade once a year as circumstances allowed to review their faith-commitment under Communism, I was the only West European present. So the question of a participant was addressed to me: "Why do you in the West want to make us feel guilty about the industrial pollution we have generated but seem to have no guilt about the greed pollution you have generated and are trying to force on us?" On Sunday 1st November 1992 in the TV programme "Greed and Glory" on Channel 4, a former Lloyd's underwriter commented thus on the City: ". . . if you are making a good living and if you have self-regulation and you are outside exchange controls, it is human nature to get greedier and greedier." Private greed allied to sanctioned rule-making was examined as the fruit of self-regulation in the City.

We have before us the scandal of highly inflated executive salaries, in privatised industries, which are not regulated according to the country's or the industry's economic performance - and are accompanied by demands that the low paid get little or no increment in their wages.

In the Thatcher inheritance the idea has been promoted that everyone will benefit from acquisitive individualism. This idea flies in the face of history and of the contemporary division into the world's rich north and poor south. Internationally and within countries the "trickle-down" theory does not work. The theory favours the already privileged and disprivileges others further. Tears came to Mrs Thatcher's eyes when Indira Gandhi spoke to her of people in India who had no feet. In the enterprising individualism she advocated, some start within sight of the tape and some without feet.

In the European Values Survey, a major international research project, the following quotation is given from A. Loades' book "Vision and Prophecy" 1991: "We need individualism as a defence against those who would treat us as expendable, against those who fail to do us justice. Others need individualism as a defence against us. Individuals matter, they are their own point of view." The concern to give value to every human being is an element in the contemporary emphasis on the individual. With it comes abhorrence of the collective in which human beings get swamped and lost. But one's valid identity is not found over against others but in community with them.

The danger the emphasis brings with it, when related to acquisitive instincts is noted by Professor Elliot Currie of the University of California. He envisages a

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

world where "the pursuit of private gain increasingly becomes the organising principle for all areas of social life not merely the mechanism which we use to accomplish certain circumscribed economic ends". This distortion lies deep in the Thatcher legacy.

Those who adopt a Thatcherite viewpoint argue that we have to choose between the individual and the collective. The biblical testimony is that no such choice faces us. We are persons-in-community.

Does not the calling to love God and our neighbour as ourselves flatly contradict all the tenets of acquisitive individualism and show it to be a corrupting influence on society? To bear fruit the individual grain has to die to itself (John 12:24,25). Then there can be a harvest.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

3. Privatisation - Concealed Factors

Privatisation as an instrument used sensitively and appropriately can be beneficial. Where privatising is treated as a good itself, whatever the evidence, human communities become victims of an ideology. In mid-January 1992 a report from the P.A. Consulting Group, appointed by the Department of the Environment to examine the projected extension of competitive tendering in local government services, was leaked. It had been suppressed because it failed to give the results which the Department was looking for. It found that, in legal services, private firms' charges were four times higher than the cost of council lawyers and twice as much in advocacy; and that councils manage more cheaply than the private sector public relations, secretarial and clerical services and purchasing. That just left engineering, commercial estate management and personnel training as possible subjects for cost-effective privatising (and, of course, non-commercial factors could eliminate these also). Yet - Ideology Rules, O.K.?

To recap: what is declared in Genesis, enlarged on in the rest of the bible and confirmed in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ is that human beings are made in God's image and women and men together are put in charge of the world's development. It is neither those obscure commanding forces called "Principalities and Powers" nor "Those Who Know Best" or "Who Have The Correct Ideology" but the human community who are to be in charge - not as owners but as trustees of creation. When they fall down on that trust, God does not abandon them or go back to the drawing board to produce more perfect partners. In the covenant with Noah the whole creation is reaffirmed, as is the central role of human beings just as they are. God is committed to humanity in the struggle for a new world. Christ came as Immanuel "God with us" in that struggle.

That being so, people must be the makers of political and industrial policies, not victims. It is for them to see that the policies serve the purposes of God and the needs of humanity and of the whole created order.

In light of the above, examine the case for the transfer of ownership of major enterprises from public to private hands.

- a) Capital assets which belonged to the people, built up by taxpayers over many years, are taken away by the fiat of a parliamentary majority. Is this other than an

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

act of robbery? It may be within the law. The Poll Tax was within the law! But is it legitimate?

- b) There is a loss of public control. Privatised British Steel and the future of Ravenscraig can be decided on narrowly commercial interests though the future of whole communities is affected. Privatise electricity and the whole coal industry is put under terminal threat (in spite of a steady improvement in productivity, since the coal strike, of 12% per annum). There can be no rational use of energy resources once overall control is lost. Watchdogs, supposedly the public's means to restrain sin, are toothless: and John Major's citizen's charter which promised to remedy this, is likely to leave them still toothless, thanks to the blocking efforts of ministers and bureaucrats.
- c) There has been a transfer of wealth from a population of 56 million to shareholders numbering about 6 million - almost a ratio of 1 who benefits to 9 losers. But even that 1 in 9 will have little clout in company decisions. Shareholding power gravitates to the large institutions (over the past 15 years the level of private shareholders has almost halved and of these only 5% have a portfolio of more than 10 shares). Does this not contradict common responsibility for the earth entrusted to all by God?

Actuality and Propaganda A huge and expensive propaganda machine promoted privatisation. What is accurate, what is covered up?

Look more carefully at biblical words for 'truth'. *Emeth*, *aletheia* refer in the first instance to God's reliability. That is then taken as the measure for testing human honesty and trustworthiness. As has been noted the words are dynamic - requiring the blowing of any cover to show up the actual underlying state of affairs. Truth must mark both the 'inward parts' (Ps 51:6) and our way of living in the world (truth is to be done: see John 3:21, 1 John 1:6 and Gal 5:7 & 1 Pet 1:22).

Regarding privatisation how does truth compare with propaganda?

- a) The claim is that nationalised industries were inefficient because they did not need to respond to market pressures. The tax-payer would always cough up. The reality is that the most attractive industries were sold off first - not only with write-offs and incentives which were not on offer to the nationalised industries but with 'fat' to live off provided by previous public investment. Even at that, the remaining nationalised industries outperformed the private sector. In the decade

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

1979/80 to 1990/91 they increased output per person by 4.2% as against 3.5% in the private sector and in the period from 1984/5, increased annual productivity by 6.5% as against 3.7%. This difference was seen in total operations as well as individual output. The Post Office's productivity growth was 3.7% during most of the 1980s compared with British Telecom's 2.4%

In the electricity sell-off the Government refused to include measures for energy efficiency and environmental protection. The October 1991 report of the National Rivers Authority admitted that rivers, canals and estuaries were more polluted than 5 years ago because standards had been relaxed to push through privatisation. Market pressures were cocooned.

- b) It is claimed that privatisation released enterprise. Compare claim and reality. The report of the Science Policy Support Group, an independent research body, gives evidence of a decline in technical innovation due to the short-termism of the private sector. The long-term risks of the Airbus project, only now in profit, would not have been taken by the private sector. Government intervention can identify real needs and direct resources to them. It can thus produce new industries and encourage environmentally friendly features.
- c) Claims stress the merit of competition in a free market. In reality electricity, telephone, water and gas industries have become privatised near-monopolies in a captive and regulated market where risks are anything but excessive. An example of competition as a veneer: out of 23 million phones, Mercury accounts for only 150,000. Edward Heath observed in his "Profile", Sunday Observer, July 7th 1991: "Not even Adam Smith believed that natural monopolies should be transferred to private hands, with chairmen piling up great salaries." In stark contrast, in a competitive market, is the success of the Coop. It secures profitability but refuses to aim at maximisation of profit. It develops community involvement and social and corporate responsibility. It promotes a consultation process to share with customers difficult ethical decisions. It treats competition as one factor, and takes many others into account.
- d) Only private enterprise can meet the country's needs and at the same time protect the environment. David Marquand, Professor of Politics at Sheffield University, gave this view of the reality: "Now, as much as in Marx's day, market forces cannot by themselves meet social costs or ensure distributive justice. Left to itself the capitalist free market still despoils the environment both social and

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

natural and rewards the strong while punishing the weak. It is a marvellous servant but a disastrous master.”

The Science and Technology Committee of the House of Lords, comprising leading industrialist who draw on the knowledge of 100 experts, has stated that, in the light of the City's short-termism and the Government's lack of a strategy, trust in market forces could result in the complete loss of significant, home owned industry. Making an unfavourable comparison with approaches in Italy, France and Germany, it pointed to the marginalisation of the Department of Trade and Industry, the refusal of public funds to support innovation, and the ignoring of the importance of certain industries to the nation. The CBI has made a U-turn, calling for more government intervention.

e) It is claimed that only privatised operations will give customers what they want.

Reality comes in the form of the July '91 report of International Communications and Marketing Research. Asked whether privatisation had made things better or worse in the water industry 3% interviewed said better, 30% said worse; in electricity 4% better, 24% worse; in the telephone service 11% better, 35% worse. Conservatives voted in the same way as others, though proportionate voting was on a smaller scale.

We are called, “no longer to be children, tossed about by every gust of propaganda” (Eph 4:14) - especially where privatisation means i) loss of control over the direction and quality of life as well as ii) higher prices.

Other factors:

- a) The tax-payer has not been let into the real costs of privatisation e.g. privatisation of Harland and Wolff cost £100m more than estimated and a prime site at a quarter of its true price was thrown in. There were the Rover Group sweeteners. Costs also will be passed on to the consumer: Michael Howard, minister at the time of water privatisation, estimated the rise in bills to be no more than 11p per week; they have now gone up 25%. Privatisation favours the party in power, speculators, board executives, shareholders - at the expense of consumers. That was not what the propaganda promised.
- b) True costs were concealed from Parliament in the cases above. Parliamentary authority is the loser.
- c) The reduction of top pay tax to 40% (providing an extra £43,000 for every £100,000 of salary increase) might have been taken to lead to acceptance of

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

lower top salaries. In fact, the Financial Times Survey at the end of June '91 revealed that top industrialists' pay rises averaged 35%. Executives of privatised industries led in the scramble for loot.

- d) When the cost of primary fuels is falling proportionally, where profits have soared beyond those anticipated before privatisation, the bills are going up far above the inflation rate.

Look at the question: how may the human community take charge of life in the way God purposes?

The Morrisonian form of nationalisation produced a more efficient management of resources than propaganda for privatisation admits: but decisions were made for, not in dialogue with, the human community. Privatisation stresses consumer choice: but the policy of maximising profit ignores and devalues a whole range of community needs. The move should have been made to put more control in people's hands.

Public service and public institutions have been devalued. The Epilogue to the Claim of Right for Scotland observes: ". . . representative bodies and their activities, the life-blood of government by consent, can be systematically closed down by a minority Westminster Government without there being any constitutional means of even giving them pause for thought . . ." ". . . Government can be carried on with consent only through a series of checks and balances capable of restraining those who lack a sense of restraint." ". . . Whether Government interferes unnecessarily or fails to interfere where it should, political institutions answerable alike to consumers and producers, rich and poor, provide the means of correcting it. If these institutions are removed, restricted or censored, Governments do not get accurate messages - or can ignore messages they do not like."⁴

Privatisation puts money in the Government coffers. That is a ruling factor. Watchdogs must have teeth to ensure that the mind of the human community challenges and, where need be, changes established practice.

Late Note: (20th November). The panic caused by the requirement to incorporate a European directive into the current Employment Bill to ensure that workers moving to privatised jobs have the same pay as when in state employment confirms that the savings in privatising public services come not from improved efficiency but from lower pay, longer hours and reduced pension rights.

⁴ Presented to the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly - Edinburgh, July 1988.

4. Market Forces, Deregulation and Social Engineering

Genesis 3 makes an affirmation which is confirmed in the rest of the Bible. To work hand-in-glove with God is not a servile thing. It is rather a recognition that human life can come to its fullness when it takes account of the way the world is made and the way it works - which God knows and wants to share with us so that we may be partners in the enterprise of history. We may reject this invitation to partnership - and go the length of deciding in our own terms what is to be good and what is to be evil, what is for us as human beings and what is not. We may want to step clear of the power of God, believing that that way lies freedom. But human experience shows that we may step into forms of servitude in which we lose control over our lives and submit our wills to obscure commanding forces. That is the state called 'idolatry'. We allow these forces to shape us and rule us, we who were created to cooperate with God in taking charge of the earth. One of the forces which can get persons and societies in its grip is Mammon - the yen to go on accumulating material possessions. Though this may make no sense in the final run because death strips us of these, though it may yield neither true satisfaction nor peace, and though it may distort life and damage relationships, the idol may saddle and master us and direct us where it will.

We are not to be subject to idols to the destruction of human life, but to the living God to the fulfilment of life - that is a consistent biblical testimony. God has taken the risk of putting us in charge of the earth. We are to take charge! It is we who are to be in the saddle and direct life. When sun, moon and stars were declared in the bible to be servants of God, set in the sky to serve also humankind - not gods ruling over human destiny but creatures offering service - human beings were made free to cast off the grip of fate and come to their true stature.

Among forces which can seek to govern life is 'The Market', understood as an 'invisible hand' outside our control, determining human destiny beneficially. As such it is an idol. It is sin to bow down and submit to it. As with sun, moon and stars 'The Market' must be given its true place and status - as servant, not master.

'The Market' gives value to whatever produces profit and accumulates capital. That is a significant service. Profit and capital are motors of financial development. Yet careful judgments must be made on the consequences of their deployment.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

Who wins and who loses? What are the effects on the human community where market forces are left to sort things out? These forces are not self-correcting, they are short on stability, they are plagued by pursuit of short-term objectives. They are not geared to meet social ends; they minister to those in power and do not secure distributive justice; left to themselves, they offer no environmental protection. As with drugs which can be used medicinally to promote health or criminally to destroy health, market forces need to be tightly disciplined to secure human ends.

When the concept of "The Market" slips into being understood as the "Social Market" one must be particularly wary. On what basis are the measurements of the commercial market applicable to health care and education? The need is for careful appraisal and rigorous evaluation of likely consequences. William Waldegrave has gone on record confessing that N.H.S. changes which Mrs Thatcher forced through might have benefited from "more preparatory work" - a euphemism for recognition of the shoddy. The comprehensive social insurance and education and health provisions of E.C. countries - which stress equity, opportunity and access - illustrate the benefits of regulation to ensure that basic needs for the enhancement of life for all people are met.

The Market can in any case be rigged. In subsidies and grants especially for rent and rate holidays for those prepared to relocate, £2bn of taxpayers' money has been committed to the Canary Wharf project and more is in the pipeline. The privatisations of gas, electricity and water had the dice loaded in their favour - by massive advertising and underpricing (the Audit committee has drawn attention to the loss to the nation's coffers through the underpricing of electricity - valued at £5.1bn when put on offer and by the Stock Exchange at £6.3bn). The nuclear industry gets a subsidy which some experts put at £1.2bn per annum and some at £1.4bn; and 18% of the base load is reserved for nuclear power. What is called a free market has great measures of protectionism built into it to give the ideology the appearance of success.

A feature of financial deregulation has been the accelerating number of fraud probes. At the end of the Thatcher era these were at a record level and the Institute for Public Policy and Research report, "Good Housekeeping", observed "Financial deregulation has placed British monetary and credit policy in crisis". The want of policing which produced the Maxwell and Guinness and Lloyds and BCCI debacles are seen to be at work in Britain in what amounts to gambling and institutionalised

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

fleeing, “. . . private morality and sanctioned rule-breaking” the “Greed and Glory” programme called it. Comparison can be made with French and German regulatory devices which allow more effective policing. Yet, under Thatcherism, self-regulation was considered to be all that the City needed, while Trade Unions needed tight regulation by legislation. Flagrant sin got off with it, thanks to ideology.

When the in-built mechanisms controlling the growth of credit were removed, indebtedness mounted. By the end of the 1988 boom, household debt stood at £343bn and that of commercial and industrial companies at £745bn (now up to £1,021bn). A legacy of bad housekeeping surely.

Deregulation can threaten standards of health and safety. As has been noted, the November 1991 report of the national Rivers Authority quotes as a feature of the increased pollution of rivers, estuaries and canals registered in 1985-90, the relaxing of standards to push through privatisation. The report on head-on rail crashes at Bellgrove (1990) and Newton (1991) has been traced to a cost-cutting drive reducing safety standards to the minimum, with profit and privatisation in mind. An odd memory of Mrs Thatcher's time is seeing the lady at the bedside of a rail crash victim, seemingly genuinely sympathetic, but quite unable or unwilling to make the connection between the under-funding of railways and the erosion of safety standards. (Recently, in England and Wales, Fire Safety regulations for shops, offices and homes have been reduced 'to reduce the burden on business').

At the same time there are signals that deregulation as an ideology is recognised to have had its day. The Cadbury Committee was appointed to go into the 'financial aspects of corporate governance'. It produced a "Code of Best Practice". Some critics considered it to be without teeth. But even as it stands non-cooperation with the Code's guidelines can lead to public exposure by the Stock Exchange; and this in turn could lead to a company's shares being suspended. The Institute for Internal Auditing insists that, for the code to be effective, new statutory powers are needed. At present the possibility of further action remains open should existing powers prove inadequate. The main emphasis is on more open and clear company disclosure and provision of a counterpoise to the power of executive directors. More discipline is advocated to counter executive greed and provide restraint with regard to golden handshakes. Responses to these draft proposals are being considered now and very soon a finalised Code of Best Practice should be ready. Sir Adrian Cadbury promises that this is but the start of a revolution.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

Sir John Bonham, as outgoing Director General of The CBI, observed that 1) regulation of newly privatised utilities is quite inadequate 2) there is no coherent national transport policy and one is needed - he referred to plans for connections to the Channel Tunnel as a "shambles". He urged a more vigorous role for the Department of Trade and Industry to replace its weakened state. The need to be in control of the nation's destiny through adequate instruments for oversight and intervention is at last being more and more recognised.

It is by changes such as those above that the reality of sin's pervasiveness in human society can be acknowledged and steps taken to contain it. The Market can then be treated as servant, not as master; deregulation as a device to be used discriminately, not as a cure-all. It is a theological/technical calling to refine means whereby human beings exercise control over the development of the creation, appreciating concrete examples such as those quoted and building into life other means to ensure that we "replenish and subdue," "tend and keep" responsibility.

Mrs Thatcher judged the alternative to the play of the market forces and deregulation to be social engineering, of which she spoke with abhorrence. Ask this - since the Attlee government's time has there been any example of a scale of social engineering to match her own?

Deregulation itself was an engineered change with vast consequences in loss of control. The engineered transfer of resources from the poor to the rich has changed the face of Britain. The transfer of power from Cabinet to cabals, the erosion of local democracy and centralising of power in No. 10, the change to a presidential style of government . . . no social engineering there? "The question is" said Alice "whether you can make words mean so many different things". "The question is" said Humpty Dumpty "which is to be master - that's all".

November 1st Comment. Recent developments mainly affect concepts of The Market and deregulation, so will be noted here.

The fruit of the abolition of exchange controls and exposure to market forces was seen in the September collapse of the £ and withdrawal from the ERM. Keynes had warned: "Loose funds may sweep around the world disorganising any steady business. Nothing is more certain than that the movement of capital funds must be regulated." The rip-off brigade's field day, the loss of billions to the nation was a direct product of Thatcherism. It renews arguments for the reimposition of exchange

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

and capital controls, lest we be at the mercy of 'obscure, commanding forces'.

Fresh attention is now being given to the work of Professor Robert Reich of the John F. Kennedy school of Government in Harvard who prophesied that the Reaganite/Thatcherite experiment would end in a speculative bubble. He foresaw that financial deregulation and "paper entrepreneurship" would result in de-industrialisation and an increase in poverty. He had asserted that over-confident dependence on market forces debilitates economies. He saw how the demand for short-term profits leads to a breed of entrepreneurs who give higher value to paper assets gained through Stock Market deals than to real assets.

The crisis in British Coal has exploded. The privatising of electricity has taken decisions about the discriminate use of energy resources out of the Government's hands - it is hoist by its own petard. British Coal has had no subsidy in the last 2 years, yet has broken productivity records. Commenting on the existing situation, Malcolm Edwards, its former commercial director, pointed out "If British Coal were paid the same subsidy per unit as Nuclear Electric, British mines could supply their coal for the generators free, deliver it free, give the generators £10 a tonne to burn it and leave themselves with another £10 profit." A comment on putting trust in the Market is the planning of 43 natural gas power stations, which will produce 50% generating overcapacity by the mid-1990s. Michael Heseltine did not intervene, as his rhetoric promised "before breakfast, before lunch, before tea, before dinner" (maybe he mistook coal for an after-dinner mint?). The whole approach is in contrast to that adopted in Germany in its "Coal Concept 2005", where coal producers, unions and the Economics Ministry agreed to a phased reduction of deep-mined coal from 70 million tonnes to 50 million tonnes per annum. Matthias Hassling an executive of Germany's biggest coal producer commented "The difference between Germany's and Britain's energy strategy is that ours is socially acceptable and is also cheaper in the long run."

On October 19th 1992 Howard Davies, director-general of the CBI launched a fierce attack on the the Government, saying that a positive industrial strategy was long overdue and calling for "longer-term priorities for public spending to correct our competitive weaknesses in infrastructure and skills." John Major has announced such a change. Norman Lamont in his Mansion House speech committed the Government to more open policy making and greater accountability on that basis. But he called the change a "rebalancing", described the Conservatives as still the

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

party of sound money and low inflation, and refused to admit a U-turn. Since the need for the economy to take a new direction requires a conversion, not an expedient readjustment, one must question how strongly the new line will be followed through.

The City is still jibbing at responsible oversight implying outside regulation of its affairs. In the criminal Justice Bill of October 24th 1992 it put enough pressure on to have the insider dealing section watered down.

Before the Thatcher era British banking had a good reputation. Senator Kerry's report on the BCCI fiasco followed by Lord Justice Bingham's report has shown the regulatory framework for banking to be quite inadequate. Comparison with Japan's success in banking shows how the weakening of the industrial base seriously affects banking performance.

There are growth industries - house repossessions, running at 70,000 per annum, and recovery of bad debts.

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

5. Freedom and Dependency

'Freedom' as a word can, like a hat, be knocked into different shapes to suit different heads and hairstyles. If we look for biblical understanding of the word we find that the main emphasis is on getting rid of the trammels which tie us up, and being thus released for full cooperation with God in management of the world and development of personal life. It is 'from' and 'for'. Getting rid of trammels in itself is not freedom. It can be licence. Others can be put to the wall. But others also have their place in God's purpose. Our own freedom should be constrained so as not to impede theirs. The images of the church already quoted as signs to guide true relationships in the world e.g. the church as body, speak of parts which have their own identity and role but also are mutually dependent. We are both to be in charge of our own lives, and to recognise that we are beholden to one another. That brings valid restrictions.

To ensure that we are fair to others, freedom needs to be partnered by justice. A cluster of words in the bible, justice, judgment and righteousness round out the concept. Justice is the public face of love (you can go to an old, ill neighbour, light the fire, take in meals - that is love; but if there are hundreds in such need, you need public institutions, Meals on Wheels, Old Age pensions - there lies justice). The word judgment emphasises the need to compare life 'as is' with life as it is 'given to be' - and to act to establish the latter in the former. The word righteousness speaks of equal rights for all, of right relationships and practices, of life put right side up - as the demand of a righteous God. The original Hebrew flavour stresses especially God's siding with the helpless to liberate them.

The idea of freedom was much touted in the Thatcher era. But it was freedom for the strong, for those who had the ball at their feet, for those who were 'one of us'.

Thatcher governments produced executive acts, made law through an elective dictatorship, which ignored the expressed mind of the people (as with the Poll Tax and Devolution) leaving them no freedom to influence government decisions. Local Authorities were more and more fettered, advantage being taken of the fact that their power is without constitutional entitlement.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Research 'A New Accord' gave evidence which characterises the Thatcher years as years of constrictive legislation reducing local

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

democracy. The excuse - that local authorities are high spenders - has been trumpeted without supporting evidence (the proportion of expenditure to national output has remained constant). Local freedom and accountability are eroded when 85% of local government finance is based on a needs assessment made centrally, which inevitably fails to take local factors into account. Poll tax capping illustrated how little freedom and accountability remained in local hands. Central funding amounted to only 51% when Mrs Thatcher took over. She added 34%.

A major study of the human rights international body Human Rights Watch, "Restricted Subjects", has recorded "a marked change for the worse in the climate of liberty in the United Kingdom"; and it pinpoints in evidence the 1988 expansion of police power to prevent and control public assembly, government interference in TV interviews and documentaries, political vetting of Northern Ireland community organisations, Prevention of Terrorism Acts and section 28 of the Local Government Act. It concludes that Britain falls far short of compliance with international recognised standards for freedom of expression. (Note that Virginia Bottomly recently reaffirmed gagging clauses in health workers' contracts).

Eight Acts of Parliament removed employees' basic rights till they stand in contrast with almost every other EC country, guaranteeing less pay, fewer holidays, longer hours, less job security, fewer trade union freedoms. That is why the Social Charter is being resisted. It is a modest Freedom Charter. Is Britain to be 'The Sweatshop of Europe' (Heath's phrase)? The diminishing of freedom is a notable part of the Thatcher legacy.

Who are experiencing greater freedom and choice? Who but the already privileged. Those locked in cycles of deprivation with low incomes, poor housing, bad health, minimal education are denied the freedom to be full human beings. The dice loaded in favour of others is deliberately loaded against them. The freedom homeless 16 and 17 year olds have is to decide which doorway to sleep in and whether it is crime or prostitution they turn to in order to get enough to eat.

The Thatcher years, with policies which reduced employment opportunities and inflated the numbers on benefit (and over a million are entitled to benefit who are not receiving it) greatly increased the dependency of millions. Was the use of the word 'dependency' in a pejorative way and of the phrase 'the nanny state' other than a device to draw attention from the switch of the nation's resources from the badly off to the already well off?

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

“We are members one of another”. That applies not only to the Christian community but to the human community. We are interdependent, in mutual need of one another. “Dependents” are those who have a natural right to look to another or to others for support. There is no harm in the word unless harm is introduced. The idea of the “welfare state” should communicate a sense of the proper responsibility a state should exercise for the wellbeing of its members. But it was so twisted as to relate the idea of receiving welfare to the idea of scrounging. In fact the rich were the real scroungers. With taxation reduced and interest rates high they could live on the fat of the land without showing a grain of enterprise. Boardroom executives who pocket tax windfalls and still claim inflated salaries at a time of recession and poor returns are the super-scroungers. It is they who are the pampered cadgers in the “Something for Nothing Society” of Peter Lilley, did he but recognise it. (But then his aim was applause, not truth). A TV investigation has shown that Peter Lilley’s department cannot control its own administrative costs. It spent five times on consultancy services what it would take to train its own staff to cope with new measures. 47% of money for the Social Fund goes in administration because means-testing is so costly compared with a flat rate of provision. Ideology and red tape rob the needy! This system is not designed simply to impoverish but also to degrade.

The word “targeting” was used for an attack on the poor. The word purported to imply directing resources to meet genuine need. The effect, as the poor well know, has been inevitably a reduction of what they get to live on. Why should the well-off not be targeted regarding benefits - if a genuine concern for fairness is at the root of the use of the word? The provision of mortgages could be limited to families in genuine need. The provision of special rates for private health care for pensioners could be restricted to those who otherwise could not afford it. Eton could be taken off the charity list!

Ask yourselves about these words: freedom, choice, dependency, targeting - are they used to encourage debate on genuine responsibilities which fall to the state, or designed to mislead? If the latter, what is being covered up? Ask whether it is not a switch in the concept of responsible relationships from justice to charity. Charity does not challenge the right of the wealthy to own and accumulate more, as long as some of the pickings are peeled off for “those in need”. Charity leaves the power of the powerful unquestioned. Jesus had rough words for “benefactors” see Luke

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

22:24-27 - those who had accumulated much and gave away a small portion, expecting to be applauded for their action. "Not the way for you" said Jesus to his disciples.

The drumbeat which throbs through the bible is the call to establish justice on earth. Jim Wallis of the Sojourners' Community tells of a man who went through the bible cutting out references to justice. The bible practically floated. If God is the giver of life, of energy, of gifts and abilities needed to sustain creation's existence; if privileges and opportunities fall unequally on different people's paths - then justice demands that those who gain from the situation serve those who lose from it by sharing what God has given for all. Is this not the clear biblical message which is being dodged? With the concept of justice people are seen to be due the portion which should fall to them - it is theirs not by grace and favour of others but by grace and favour of God. The attack on the Church and Nation Committee in the General Assembly of 1992 revealed a tragic twisting of words and mentalities: where justice concerns were treated as being left-wing, right winger and centrist were denied part of their inheritance. Justice is God's requirement, not a party requirement.

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

6. Advantaging and Disadvantaging

The shift in mentality attempted by the use of the words and concepts which tried to replace the claims of justice with the claim on charity was accompanied by and backed up by forms of advantaging and disadvantaging.

Promotion of a new class structure Peregrine Worsthorpe, in a Sunday magazine early in the Thatcher period, said that the idea of class struggle would be played down "because we mean to win it".

J.K. Galbraith in his book "The Culture of Contentment" to which reference has already been made, notes the making of a class destined for domination (somewhat after the manner of the entrepreneurial class which, in the industrial revolution, replaced or absorbed the landed gentry). A transfer of resources is made from the disadvantaged (by age, opportunity, health, education, material resources) to an advantaged class. The latter can retain its advantages only by regularly voting into office those who provide these privileges. By increasing the number of unemployed and widening the resources gap between the workless and the employed, the establishment can win and retain support, eventually enlarging the advantaged to produce a voting majority. The disadvantaged can be depended on to lose heart, even to despair - to become apathetic and to give in to the injustice perpetrated on them, either voting in favour of the status quo or not bothering to vote at all. There is produced a privileged constituency of contentment which does not take seriously what others suffer and does not look too carefully at the reality behind the seeming prosperity from which they benefit. The industrial base and other infrastructures are allowed to deteriorate in favour of private wellbeing. The Rotterdam University Press research which examined the impact of recession in 1980-82 in richer countries, in its publication "Did the Crisis really Hurt?" notes thus early "new differences between a majority of economically active citizens and a minority of welfare dependent rejects". People are made rejects not in consequence of personal inadequacies and failures but in consequence of state policies. They are discards of an ideology.

With oil money coming on stream, privatisation loot filling the coffers and a great development of the use of patronage which produced financial returns, it was

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

possible for Mrs Thatcher to develop a client constituency which would toe the line at elections.

Do the Galbraith and other analyses of the kind ring true? If they do are we not dealing with robbery on a grand scale to produce political advantage? The Prophets did not hesitate to declare the widening of income disparities and the "treading on the poor" to be forms of robbery.

John Major said that he wanted to see a nation at ease with itself. John Newton was at ease with himself and his God above the slave holds - till his eyes were opened. Amos' words in chapter 6 are apt "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion . . . who revel in the good life . . . neglecting justice . . . and trusting in their own strength". If John Major longs for a classless society, a sign of seriousness would be to reverse the privileging of the already well off, restoring resources to those deprived of them and reestablishing progressive taxation.

Biblically, poverty is more than just material want. It includes the lack of opportunity for creative living, for sharing in giving life shape and substance, for contributing work to ensure life's sustaining - everything which 'likeness to God' implies, everything which the 'life abundant' which Christ came to bring includes.

Among the nuances of the biblical words for poverty are: being made 'answering people'. The poor are those who have to answer to other people's requirements, fit in with other people's decisions - who are denied their own voice and place in society, and have to bear the brunt of others' choices. As has been noted if 'material want' is intended by the word 'poor', an adjective to say so has to be added. Material want nonetheless remains a form of poverty - if you don't get enough to sustain you day after day, your voice and place in human community go by default. Every form of poverty is a rejection of God's intention for humanity. Poverty is, on this understanding, a blasphemy. The promotion of poverty is sin.

The antonym of poverty is not 'riches' but 'violence'. That there are poor is the result of violence. Biblically the poor are the made-poor. Were the provision of God properly and thankfully shared, there would be enough for all - of voice, of place, of creative contribution, of shelter, of food. That this is not so must be put down to the violating of life which some inflict on others.

Those who impoverish others are also losers. They live by violence which is most often unacknowledged. They live in an unreal world sheltered from seeing the consequences of their actions. It is a way of death which Jesus exposed in the

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

parable of the Last Judgment. (Matthew 25:31-46)

The poor are not righteous just by being poor. Poverty may brutalise and criminalise them. They may give way to despair. But they can also show courage and develop initiatives against all the odds, their creation in God's image showing through. Moreover their view of reality, as seen from the underside is likely to be much more trustworthy than that of those who invent a picture of reality designed to justify the retention of their own privileges.

Consider the Thatcherite promotion of poverty

a) People denied a voice and place:

- * the bypassing of the Cabinet in favour of cabals of the like-minded;
- * the production of policies and legislation without adequate consultation beforehand, with consultation-with-a-closed mind, with consultation which included the knowledgeable but disregarded them in favour of doctrinaire objectives;
- * the rejection of anything approaching consensus ('a want of principle' to Mrs Thatcher's way of thinking which elevated her judgment above all others);
- * the packing of official bodies with those who would see things her way, stifling open debate;
- * the venom against Local Authorities and muffling of the local democratic voice;
- * the indulgence in radical social engineering using propaganda to divert serious questioning of it;
- * attacks on the communication media;
- * the neglect of regional and national voices - treating them as if they provided only empty, windy utterances;
- * the production of a class of the contented who could be counted on not to raise deep questions as long as their privileges were secured;
- * the production of a class of the disadvantaged, made too apathetic to question policies or even vote;
- * the authoritarian style.

Many were impoverished who had additional money in their pockets!

b) People denied resources:

The report of the Institute of Fiscal Studies of April 1992 showed that tax and benefit changes since 1979 had given, on average, an extra £87 per week to the richer 10% of the population and taken £1.00 per week from the poorest. In the decade from 1979 the income of the poorest fifth fell by 4.6% while that of the richest grew

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

by 40%. In a written answer on March 6, 1991, in Parliament (Col 146 HC Deb) it was admitted that the richest 1% of taxpayers with over £70,000 p.a. had gained an extra £700.57; while a parliamentary answer of July 23, 1991 (Col. 534 HC Deb) confirmed that the poorest 10% were significantly worse off than in 1979, the lowest 1% being 22.6% worse off in real terms.

The European Commission on Poverty examining the years 1975-1985 concluded that the increase of poverty in Britain was greater than that in any other EC country. Adults who had gone below the decency threshold amounted to 2.3 million more than in 1979. Child poverty was the worst in the E.C.: the proportion of children living in poverty more than doubled between 1979 and 1986, and even among the children of full time workers, the extent of poverty doubled (The Government Statistical Service examination of Households Below Average Income 1979-89). In its end of September 1992 report the Low Pay Unit recorded that nearly 10 million British workers earn less than the European decency threshold; and Department of Employment statistics shows the wage gap between the lowest and average earners to be greatest in history since records began in 1886.

When, in 1986, the Social Fund replaced the single payments for basic items such as cookers and beds it was to "encourage responsibility and more effective budgeting - to reduce dependency on benefits", if the words of the statement on the reduction in clothing grants can be more generally applied. Except for cases of severe hardship, loans replaced grants - and, if need be, had to be paid back out of income support i.e. taken from food, clothes and heat provision. Even at that the Social Fund money often ran out long before essential needs were met. Aware of the distress being caused, the Social Services Advisory Committee, in March 1992, urged that automatic grants be given for specified circumstances. The cruel hardship imposed by the 1986 measure is incalculable, shameful.

At a recent conference in York, Peter Lilley rejected the idea of harmonising our benefits system with the rest of the EC. This is a case where we protect our sovereignty against the invasion of these human rights which the EC acknowledges.

People are going hungry. The National Childrens Homes Study, 1992, showed that 1 in 5 parents from low income families go without enough to eat. The Citizen's Advice Bureau's contribution to the Social Security Advisory Committee of 1992 gave evidence of 16 and 17 year olds hungry on the streets because of a broken government promise. Benefit for them had been abolished on the understanding

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

that each one would be guaranteed a place on youth training. The government's pledge was not kept. (A citizen's charter should include the right to eat!)

People are going homeless. The last annual report of the Institute of Environmental Health Officers of England and Wales made the following points. Government money for council house building and repairs has halved in real terms since 1979, and renovation grants are down 75%. In 1979 there were 79,600 housing starts, in 1991 11,800. To deal with the homeless, the Institute declared, would take at least 100,000 houses per annum over 10 years. The Audit Commission reported that homelessness was due to failure to provide resources to build new homes; and that we are to expect 12,000 families per year to join the inadequately housed. The selling off of the better council houses brought despair to those trapped in run-down council estates as well as to the homeless.

People are being made ill and dying. The most recent tables issued by the Registrar General of Scotland reveal that people in the lowest social class are 9 times more likely to die of infections and 11 times more likely to die of mental disease. Poor, damp housing produces chest complaints, malnourishment leads to a variety of illnesses, unemployment brings with it a much higher rate of suicides. The British Medical Journal of 26th October 1991 refers to recent research of Quick and Wilkinson (publications: "Income and Health" and "Income Distribution and Life Expectancy") which notes that "overall health standards in developed countries are more dependent on distribution of income within a population than with its average level. The most effective way of improving health is therefore to make incomes more equal". David Donnison, Glasgow University, put it succinctly: "Inequality damages you health".

People are trapped in debt. To produce the appearance of an economic miracle, the strings of credit were loosened in the '80s. This produced one of the greatest unfreedoms - the captivity of a present life and a future placed in hock.

People made poor. B. Rowthorn commented "The main factor in the increased numbers of people living in relative poverty was the government's decision in 1980 to index social security benefits to prices rather than to earnings. Since 1989 the relative value of retirement pensions, unemployment benefit and disability benefit has fallen by a 1/5th compared with average earnings" (in his contribution to "The Economic Legacy: 1979-1992, London Academic Press).

It was no accident that a great proportion of the British population became poor in

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

the Thatcher era. Deliberate policies brought this about through changes in tax, benefit, housing and health provisions. It is a clear example of the poor being made poor - an act of violence.

An awareness that the poor are the made-poor also on a world scale has been revealed in an opinion poll of The World Development Movement, undertaken by Gallup in association with the 'Guardian'. Almost 80% of the British people said that some or all of the money saved on national defence should go to ease Third World Poverty. Almost 90% strongly opposed barriers to Third World goods. 35% advocated the cancellation of Third World debts.

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

7. The Legacy in Essence

Has Thatcherism been at root a challenge to new enterprise or a reversion to ancient wrong? Is its influence polluting or creatively stimulating?

Examine this possible conclusion: by subverting an unwritten constitution it got an ideology in place which established not an enterprise culture but a culture of violence and deceit.

In Britain executive, legislative and judiciary powers are in de facto union. In a democracy this calls for restraint. For instance in pre-Thatcher times, market forces were given a place in balance with bodies, such as the NHS and Wages Councils, which served the common good and protected human rights. Those who held power were trusted to observe restraints which were taken to be understood, since there is no written constitution. When parliamentary majorities were modest and/or when parties alternated in office, Parliament could help to make these understood features an effective part of government. Comes a Pharaoh who knows not Joseph. She uses overall majorities to bulldoze through policies, packs official bodies with the like-minded, gets her way. It was a matter of honour that unwritten understandings be observed. She does not honour them. There are no mechanisms for expressions of common purpose to stand in her path. She does it her way. Note:

- 1) The abolition of the Think Tank which had provided an analytical base for decision-making; and reliance on the Prime Minister's Policy Unit (which advised her, not the Cabinet), the Centre for Policy Studies, the Institute for Economic Affairs and the Adam Smith Institute. Conviction about market-based policies had to become the accepted wisdom and replace objective analysis.
- 2) The politicising of policing especially in the case of confrontation with the miners but also with poll-tax protesters and others - and dangerous allusions to the "enemy within", using the phrase to identify resisters to her regime, as if, by that fact, they were Fifth Columnists.
- 3) The politicising of the collection and dissemination of statistics to ensure that they produced results in line with Government policies - of which the Royal Statistical Society complained, urging the need for a written constitution to protect the integrity of analytical and statistical research.

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

What has been called "conviction politics" is politics governed by dogma, not evidence or reason.

Mrs Thatcher did violence to the unwritten constitution, and violence was a fundamental feature of her reign. Since it ended, Tory M.P.s among themselves refer to her time as "The Occupation". In embracing the word "Thatcherism" she seems to have taken little account of the fact that, as with Naziism etc, it denotes a philosophy of life which has a fanatical edge.

How can the massive impoverishment of so many people be other than an act of violence?

A culture of violence need not be marked by riots and open conflict. Over the centuries those who were originally subdued by the Conquistadors in Latin America so internalised their oppression that they counted themselves to be of no worth, only "the poor and humble of the earth". It is worse if people give in to oppression than if they riot - it points to the effacing of the image of God in them. The Centre for Criminology at Middlesex Polytechnic has issued the results of its survey "The Rise of Crime in England and Wales 1979-1990". It shows that over these years, the crime rate has risen twice as fast under Thatcherism as under any previous government in the last 40 years. Sir Peter Imbert from a police point of view, observed that the map of violence and the map of social deprivation were too close to one another for comfort.

When we are dealing with Thatcherism are we dealing with a culture of violence, initiated and fuelled by government measures? That would make it a form of moral pollution. It's influence has been insidious. What are discerned to be destructive emphases have to be combated not in one party but in all parties and in the texture of society's priorities and choices.

A second feature of the Thatcher era was the development of a culture of deceit and concealment of reality. As with Ronald Reagan, so Mrs Thatcher's followers had to learn the art of 'false happy talk' to applaud the regime's achievements - including non-existent ones. Since she took office, more than 100 laws have made disclosure of information a crime. When Nigel Lawson admitted that, in the Thatcher era, there was no economic miracle, he said of his unguarded statement: "I made it because everybody else was saying it and the words tripped off the tongue". An atmosphere of approval of policies was created. By the use of hype, appearance was made to substitute for reality. What passed for achievements were the

A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE

bolstering effects of over £100bn bonus money from oil, billions from privatisations, and credit booms which encouraged people to sell future bread for jam today.

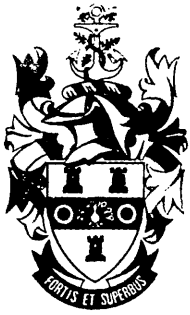
The churches cannot be evenhanded in making their judgment. They have the resources to be prophetic. The only time Jesus was evenhanded was when both hands were nailed.

Ian M. Fraser

November 1st 1992

FEATURES OF THE THATCHER LEGACY

Personal Notes



Stellenbosch

KWARTAAL / QUARTER
DESEMBER / DECEMBER 1993

MUNISIPALE NUUSBRIEF
MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

BURGEMEESTERS KERSBOODSKAP MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Die afgelope jaar is gekenmerk deur verskeie hoogtepunte. Dit was ook 'n jaar waarin besonder hoë eise aan die Stadsraad en sy werknemers gestel is. Retrospektief het ons baie om voor dankbaar te wees. Tewel onrus en geweld in baie dele van ons land voorgekom het, het ons op Stellenbosch vrede ervaar.

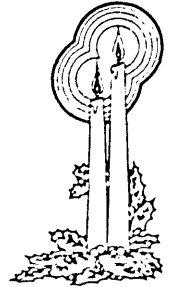
The negotiating process is still on track and has borne fruit, when recently all participating parties committed themselves to a code of conduct which will further enhance peaceful co-existence in our beautiful town.

I wish to thank all members of the Town Council and Management Committee, as well as the Town Clerk and every employee of the Council for their loyal support as well as their endeavours to make our town an even better place to live in.

Mag u in die komende kerstyd die geluk van saamwees en die vrede van die Christuskind ervaar.

My wife and I wish you joy and peace during the Festive Season and courage to face the challenges of 1994!

COUNCILLOR JAM & J VAN SCHOOR
BURGEMEESTERSPAAR/MAYORAL COUPLE



'N HALFMILJOEN RAND BESPARING!

'n Vulliskompakteervoertuig, 'n Leyland Super Eland, is op 1981-02-01 deur die Stadsraad van Stellenbosch aangekoop teen R54 080,00. In 1993 moes die Stadsraad egter besluit om die voertuig te vervang óf om dit te laat herbou. Die vervangingskoste sou R660 000,00 beloop teenoor die herbouingskoste van R200 000,00. Weens die geweldige besparing deur 'n herbouing het die Stadsraad op aanbeveling van die Departement Gesondheid besluit om die voertuig liewer te laat herbou.

Tenders is gevra en toegeken aan Eskom Transport Services, Brackenfell. Die voertuig is totaal herbou en alle

komponente is vervang met nuwes. Alle instrumente is vervang sodat die voertuig soos enige nuwe voertuig van nuuts af moet registreer. Die voertuig dra selfs dieselfde waarborg as 'n nuwe voertuig en kan ook geregistreer word as 'n 1993 model. Nie net is die voertuig in sy geheel herbou nie maar alle spesifikasies moes nagekom word soos aangedui in die handboek van die vervaardigers, die destydse "Leyland". Die voertuig is ook toegerus met 'n nuwe laairuim en nuwe Merk 4 kompakteereenheid. Hierdie toevoeging is gedoen deur Transtech; spesialiste van die "Heil" kompakteereenheid. Hierdie aanbouing is die eerste vir die Stadsraad van

Stellenbosch wat vulliskompakteerders betref asook 'n eerste vir Eskom Brackenfell. Alhoewel die "nuwe" voertuig homself nog moet bewys blyk die prys baie kompetender te wees en die uitgawe beslis geregverdig.

Hierdie herbouings kan egter nooit die aankoop van nuwe voertuie vervang nie aangesien 'n voertuig slegs twee keer herbou kan word. Daarna moet die voertuig vervang word. Met hierdie aksie het die Stadsraad die belastingbetalers van Stellenbosch ongeveer R500 000,00 bespaar wat vir ander noodsaaklike dienste aangewend kan word.

TOERISME

Die Toerisme Werksgroep van die Stadsraad is tans besig met die formulering van 'n Toerisme Ontwikkelingstrategie vir Stellenbosch. Die Toerismenavorsingseenheid van die Kaapse Technikon is as konsultante die werksgroep behulpsaam.

Voortspruitend uit 'n situasie-analise is daar reeds 'n aantal strategiese opsies geïdentifiseer wat verder ondersoek sal word. Dit sal saam met die insette van die inwoners van Stellenbosch gedoen word om sodoende te verseker dat die regte opsies oorweeg word en dat die optimale strategie ontwikkel word vir hierdie opsies.

Die volgende opsies en kwessies rondom toerisme word tans ondersoek:

- 1 **OMVATTENDE OMGEWINGSBESTUUR**
Die beklemtoning van kwalitatiewe eerder as kwantitatiewe ontwikkeling blyk voor die handliggend te wees. Die omgewingshulpbronne wat grootliks bydra tot Stellenbosch se unieke karakter sal noodwendig baie oordeelkundig bestuur moet word, so byvoorbeeld vereis die Eersterivier en die berge om Stellenbosch spesiale aandag.
- 2 **BESKERMING VAN KULTUURHISTORIESE BATES**
Die behoud van die historiese karakter van Stellenbosch is van deurslaggewende belang en sake wat voortdurend aandag sal moet geniet, sluit in : die restourasie van historiese geboue, argitektoniese en estetiese beheer oor nuwe ontwikkelings, opgradering van dorpspleine en die behoud en ontwikkeling van ons water-elemente.
Die ontwikkeling van toeriste-inkopie kerne en die skep van voetganger-vriendelike gebiede kan bydra tot die beskerming van hierdie bates.
- 3 **TOEPASLIKE VERKEERSPLAN**
Die ontwikkeling van 'n toepaslike toeristeverkeerstelsel is noodsaaklik. Parkeergebiede vir toeristebusse, wandelpaaië, fietspaaië en 'n unieke alternatiewe vervoermiddel sal aangespreek moet word.
- 4 **LEWENSKWALITEIT EN VEILIGHEID**
Die behoud van Stellenbosch se landelike en rustige karakter is uiters noodsaaklik. Dit is ook nodig dat toeriste veilig moet voel en dat hulle die geleentheid het om te deel in die lewenskwalityte wat Stellenbosch bied. Die inwoners van Stellenbosch kan ook deur hulle bydraes groter deelname verkry in die voordele wat toerisme-ontwikkeling gaan teweegbring.
- 5 **BEMARKING-INLIGTINGSTRATEGIE**
Daar is 'n bepaalde behoefte aan 'n omvattende bemarkingsplan. Terwyl daar eensyds gefokus moet word op bepaalde marksegmente, moet dit andersyds ook eksterne attraksies integreer om sodoende werklik die Stellenbosch-ondervinding bekend te stel.
Die ontwikkeling van toepaslike gidse, kaarte en inligtingspunte sal bydra tot die bevordering van toerisme.
- 6 **TOERISTEBEWUSTHEID**
Die bevordering van toerisme sal vir al Stellenbosch se inwoners groot voordele inhou, maar dit is eers nodig om die inwoners se oriëntasie ten opsigte van toerisme positief te verander. Inwoners se gedrag teenoor toerisme kan of 'n sterk positiewe of negatiewe invloed hê op die besoeker se belewenis van Stellenbosch.
- 7 **GELEENTHEIDSATTRAKSIE**
Die reël van feeste, sportgeleenthede en kultuurgeleenthede kan 'n positiewe bydrae tot toerisme-ontwikkeling lewer.
- 8 **AKKOMMODASIE**
Die verhoging van oornagbesoeke is sekerlik een van die noodsaaklike strategieë, terwyl bekostigbare akkommodasie en selfs moontlik 'n jeugherberg, oorweeg moet word.

ELECTRICITY : DID YOU KNOW ?

The first street light system for Stellenbosch was planned in 1893. But it is not known when this project became a reality. Today, 100 years later, there are 4 600 street lights in Stellenbosch.

The most recent addition is the street light installation along the Strand Road between Dorp Street and Van Reede Street. In the near future Vredenburg Street will also be provided with street lights. Any complaints with regard to the street lights in your neighbourhood can be addressed to the Department of Electrotechnical Services.

The Town Council is installing prepaid electricity meters at the ex-Station premises at Cloeteville. At the end of October 1993, 41 of these meters had been installed. Consumers can now budget for their electricity and pay at their convenience. The meter has a display window on which the amount of electricity still available is shown and the rate of electricity consumption is also indicated.

It is now possible to replace unsightly overhead electricity supply lines by an underground cable. The Town Council will provide the cable free of charge if you are prepared to dig a trench on your property and to move the meter box to the outside of your house.

If you have problems with an abnormally high electricity account or do not understand how the electricity charges work, phone the Department of Electrotechnical Services for help.

Do you want the electrical installation of your house tested or have concern about the safety of your family? The Town Council offers this service at a minimal cost

Enquire at the Department of Electrotechnical Services.

VULLISVERWYDERING

Met die naderende skoolvakansie en die meeste inwoners van die dorp weg met 'n welverdiende ruskans bly die vraag steeds "Wat word van ons vullis?"

Die afdeling Reinigingsdienste sal normaalweg funksioneer soos deur die jaar met die uitsondering van 1993-12-16. Op hierdie dag sou Cloeteville se vullis versamel word maar as gevolg van die vakansiedag verskuif die versameldag na **1993-12-17**. Daar word 'n beroep op alle inwoners gedoen om nie hulle swart vullisakke uit te plaas indien dit nie die normale dag van verwydering is nie. Indien vullis vir dae op die sypaadjie staan in afwagting om opgetel te word, word dit deur honde geskeur en laat dit die woonbuurt baie onnet. Sulke los vullis word nie deur die Reinigingsafdeling se personeel opgetel nie, omdat te veel tyd hierdeur verlore gaan en personeel dan gevolglik nie die hele wyk kan afhandel nie.

'n Beroep word daarom op alle inwoners en nuwe intrekkers gedoen om hulle te vergewis van die dag waarop hul vullis verwyder word en om hul vullis uit te plaas op die sypaadjie teen nie later as 07:15 nie. Vullis wat te laat uitgeplaas word sal deur die bewoner teruggeneem moet word en dan weer die volgende week uitgeplaas word. Indien u enige probleme ondervind kan u gerus mnr JA Kotze, Departement Gesondheidsdienste by telefoon 808 8484 skakel.

MIDDEDORPBEPLANNING

Gedurende Februarie 1992 is 'n Werkskomitee in die lewe geroep om die Stadsraad behulpsaam te wees met die beplanning van die middedorp en 'n aantal vergaderings en werksinkels het sedert die totstandkoming van die werkskomitee plaasgevind. 'n Aantal beplanningsverslae is voorberei, naamlik:

- ♦ 'n Beplanningsraamwerk vir die Middedorp
- ♦ Stellenbosch Sentrale Kern - Voorbereidende Studie
- ♦ Konsepverslag insake die Dorpsplein
- ♦ Stellenbosch Middedorpbeplanning : Konsep Ontwerpsraamwerk

Gedurende die afgelope jaar het die Stadsraad klem daarop gelê dat die fokus van beplanning projekgerig moet wees met die doel om praktiese vordering te maak. Die skepping van samewerkingseleenthede tussen die privaatsektor en die Stadsraad is as onderliggende doelwit gestel met betrekking tot die implementering van projekte. Die Ontwerpsraamwerk is op 1993-09-01 aan die Werkskomitee voorgeleë vir kennisname en bespreking en op hierdie vergadering is klem gelê op die noodsaaklikheid om praktiese vordering te maak met die implementering van ontwikkelingsvoorstelle vir die middedorp. Gevolglik is besluit om 'n aantal prioriteite

te identifiseer en dit by 'n volgende vergadering te bespreek met die doel om aanbevelings aan die Stadsraad te maak vir verdere beplanning en aksie. Die Hoof: Beplanning en Ontwikkeling en die Hoofstadsbeplanner is gevolglik deur die Stadsraad na Europa op 'n drie weke studietoer gestuur om eerstehandse ervaring op te doen. Baie inligting in die vorm van skyfies, boeke, pamflette en ander dokumentasie is in die verband ingesamel. Tydens 'n vergadering van 1993-11-17 is oor die studietoer terugrapporteer en is die volgende prioriteitsprojekte geïdentifiseer:

1 Die Braak-omgewing en Bergzicht-markplein:

2 Toetrede vanaf Strandpad deur Dorpstraat

Daar is besluit dat hoë prioriteit gegee moet word aan die estetiese opgradering van die Federated Timbers bouerswerf op die hoek van Dorp- en Markstraat, asook die verfraaiing deur die aanplanting van nuwe bome op 'n gedeelte van die straatverbreëing op die westelike grens van Federated Timbers. Voorts is besluit dat prioriteitsaandag gegee moet word aan die opgradering van die straatlandskap voor Port Delta en Johan Behm Motors.

3 Die gebied agter die Stadsaal

Daar is besluit dat die aansoek vir die ontwikkeling van die area rondom die huidige Van der Stel Drankwinkel met die doel om die drankwinkel na 'n nuwe gebou te verskuif, die bestaande gebou in toeristewinkels te omskep, asook om 'n piazza op die oostelike rand van die voorgestelde nuwe gebou te skep en die toetrede tot die Stadsaal op te gradeer, ondersteun word.

4 Die Bloemhofperseel

Die ontwikkeling van die perseel word as 'n baie hoë prioriteit beskou en geniet die nooieooreenkomstig die aandag van die Bloemhofkomitee.

5 Ontwikkeling van die Landbousaal

Daar is besluit dat die voorstelle in die Ontwerpsraamwerk verder ondersoek word en met die belanghebbendes bespreek word met die oog daarop om te bepaal of die voorstelle haalbaar is al dan nie.

6 Die Transvalia-terrein

Die ondersoek met betrekking tot die ontwikkeling van hierdie terrein word as 'n prioriteit beskou op 'n beplanningsvlak.

7 Die Verkeer-/Voetgangersstroom

Daar is besluit dat die verkeersaangeleentheid en parkering verder ondersoek word. Verder is besluit dat die sluiting en herontwikkeling van Beyersstraat as 'n wandellaan ondersteun word.

Die voorneme van die Stadsraad om Beyersstraat te sluit, is reeds geadverteer en geen besware is ontvang nie.

PROVISION OF MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE TO KAYA MANDI

Since 1993-10-01 the Stellenbosch Town Council has made available the expertise of its staff to the residents of Kaya Mandi. In the past year the situation in Kaya Mandi had deteriorated so much that it was hardly bearable for man or beast. Very few of the essential services operated and there was evidence that the infrastructure - which was installed for millions of rands - was deteriorating. The decisions taken by the community leaders and town councils provided the opportunity to play an active part in changing the living conditions of our fellow-residents. By administering available funds, manpower and other resources more effectively, the new management team (the heads of departments of Stellenbosch Town Council) together with the community leaders of Kaya Mandi (the ANC/SANCO alliance, PAC/Kaya Mandi Development Forum and the Kaya Mandi Town Council) decided to give priority to the following:

1. Cleaning the township and introducing an efficient refuse removal service. Through the years the existing refuse removal service was neglected so much that Kaya Mandi practically became one huge rubbish dump.
2. Creating a hygienic and decent environment by providing toilet and washing facilities. Approximately 70 % of the residents of Kaya Mandi are without any toilet or washing facilities and had to make use of the surrounding woods for biological needs. As a result of the development of Kaya Mandi the woods have been removed, and this unacceptable situation has deteriorated even more.

3. The effective functioning of the existing infrastructure, namely sewerage, storm water, water and electricity. Both the sewerage and storm water systems are completely blocked, and the result is that all the surface waste go downhill, through plots and into houses, and then into the Plankenburg River.
4. Significant long-term planning for the township as a whole, in accordance with the Vision of Stellenbosch and the Declaration of Intent.

Although few residents of Stellenbosch realised how bad the situation in Kaya Mandi really was, the agreement between the Town Council and Kaya Mandi gave the residents of Kaya Mandi new hope. The public and businesses of Stellenbosch are encouraged to become involved in organisations that help to build the community and give people the opportunity to live happily and with dignity.

PARKING COUPONS

After the first parking coupons were introduced in Stellenbosch which was also a first in South Africa there were various instances of negative reporting on the system. Due to the positive reaction that has also been received one can safely say that there are indeed many people who prefer this system to the use of parking meters.

There is, however, uncertainty and therefore questions about the system have to be answered.

At the moment there are in operation two meter systems, namely the parking meter and the pay and display (behind the Town Hall) as well as the parking coupon system. The motorist is therefore obliged to use one of the meter systems or the parking coupon system.

Coins are available at most businesses. Parking coupons can be bought at any businesses and refuelling stations displaying the parking coupon sign, and also at the Department of Traffic Services and the Department of the City Treasurer.

A few instructions to motorists for future reference:

- * The coupons are available in 30 and 60 minute periods. The motorist can buy just one coupon, or more, as preferred;
- * The time of commencement of parking is indicated on the coupon by removing a sector of each of the four colour zones. The coupon will indicate the date, day of month, day of week, hour and minutes at which parking commences;
- * If more than one coupon is shown at the same time, the times indicated as time of commencement of parking must be identical;
- * Where traffic signs indicate that the maximum parking time is one hour, only a one hour coupon, or not more than two 30 minute coupons, may be used;
- * The colour sectors must be removed entirely. Any part that is folded or not properly removed may invalidate the coupon. It is in motorists' interest to ensure that all four colour sectors have been removed; and
- * Any unused parking time remain valid for use on any other parking bay inside Stellenbosch.

Parking coupons are the parking control system for the future. They have been in use for many years in Europe and the United Kingdom. This system will be to the benefit of Stellenbosch and other Local Authorities.

KUNSVLYTMARK : JAN MARAIS NATUURRESERVAAT

Die Stadsraad het gedurende November 1993 besluit om 'n perseel in die Jan Marais Natuurreservaat, in die omgewing van die substasie langs Maraisstraat, op 'n proefbasis vir doeleindes van 'n kunsvlytmark, te verhuur.

Die verhuur sal tot einde April 1994, of tot begin van die reënseisoen 1994 geskied waarna die aangeleentheid weer hersien sal word. Die kunsvlytmark sal slegs op 'n Saterdag, een keer per maand tussen 09:00 en 15:00 plaasvind.

Verder sal 'n maksimum van drie voedselkarretjies, volgens voorskrifte van die Hoof: Gesondheidsdienste, toegelaat word om in die park handel te draf.



NEW PARKING COUPON

The Automobile Association congratulates the Stellenbosch Town Council on their initiative in introducing a revolutionary type of parking coupon that will overcome the frustrations experienced by motorists with the old and new parking meters either accepting or not accepting the new coins. Not all parking meters have been converted to accept the new coins and consequently do not register any time on the meter, nor reject the coins, according to Mr Robin Scholtz General Manager : Public Affairs of the AA. The replacement of the old type meters with sophisticated new meters have cost the Local Authority considerable sums of money which have to be financed by the ratepayers. This has not overcome the problems of the emptying of meters, tariff changes, vandalism and repairs and maintenance. The revolutionary parking coupon which has been launched addresses all these problems and has been based on tried and tested methods used overseas, but have been significantly improved upon. The use of advertising to minimize production costs is also a new concept. Mr Scholtz said that the saving to ratepayers and the ease with which the system could be introduced by other Local Authorities are indeed big plus factors.

STELLENBOSCH DISCUSSION FORUM

The Stellenbosch Discussion Forum has been a regular meeting place for local statutory and non-statutory organizations, with an interest in local government affairs, for a period of at least 18 months and has been a focus point for addressing a wide range of local issues.

Besides the main meetings of the Forum, two working groups, i.e. for Constitutional and Development matters, have been created. At a meeting of the Forum on 7th October 1993 a number of important decisions were made, some of which had been die subject of long periods of intense negotiating.

These decisions can be summarized as follows:

1 A Declaration of Intent

The Stellenbosch Declaration has been debated over a number of months and sets out the intentions of the Forum.

Much more specific than similar statements by other local government negotiating forums, it attempts to place its intentions firmly within the realities of the present and to move forward with a clear agenda and commitment to a shared responsibility for the future of Stellenbosch.

2 The press

All meetings of the Forum are as from 12 October 1993 open to the public and the press.

It was felt that the need to pursue issues within an environment of confidentiality must now make way for the widest possible public access to the discussions of the Forum.

3 Membership of the Forum

Originally the Forum consisted of participants and observers defined on an ad hoc basis.

An ad hoc committee of the Constitutional Working Group have set criteria for members and observers which are in line with the national guidelines for Local Government Negotiating Forums. These were accepted at the meeting of the 7th October 1993.

This has led to the necessity for a change in the status of a number of the participants.

4 Provision of- and payment for services in Kaya Mandi

As from 1st October 1993, the SANCO/ANC alliance as well as other None Governmental Organizations (NGO's) within Kaya Mandi have undertaken to work with their constituencies so as to achieve payment for services rendered.

Some of the conditions which led to the SANCO/ANC-alliance Council have been addressed and services will be rendered under the control of the Stellenbosch Municipality, who will also issue accounts and receive payments for such services.

The issue of arrears payments for services will be addressed by the same ad hoc committee that addressed the payment of services and they will also take into consideration the policy relating to this matter that is agreed upon at the National Local Government Negotiating Forum.

5 Structuring of Local Government in the pre-interim period (i.e. the period leading up to the first democratic municipal elections) as well as the formal Status and Modus Operandi of the Stellenbosch Discussion Forum

These are issues that are still to be addressed within the Forum. Where necessary this will take place within the broader context of national discussions related to local government.

NUWE BEGRAAFPARK

Die ontwikkeling van die begraafpark aanliggend die Somerset-Wes-pad het tot so 'n mate gevorder dat die beskikking van menslike as met ingang vanaf 1994-01-01 hanteer kan word. Naasbestaendes kan die besonderhede van afgestorwenes op die muur van herinnering laat aanbring onderworpe aan die volgende voorwaardes:

- die betaling van 'n fooi van R80,00 per spasie van 20 cm x 10 cm; en
- die besonderhede aangebring word op 'n plaat waarvan die materiaal deur die Hoof : Gesondheidsdienste goedgekeur is en op 'n wyse soos voorgeskryf is.

Nisse sal in die tuin van herinnering beskikbaar wees indien naasbestaendes verkies om die as in 'n nis weg te lê. Die nis kan van die Stadsraad aangekoop word teen 'n voorgestelde bedrag van R600,00. Nisse sal ook agter die muur van herinnering voorsien word waarin houers met menslike as teen 'n koste van R200,00 per nis geberg kan word. Buiten die voormelde fasiliteite kan menslike as ook in die begraafplaas op bestaande grafte of op bespreekte grafte begrawe word.

VERTONING VAN PLAKKATE : POLITIEKE PARTYE

Die aanloop na die algemene verkiesing in 1994 is stadig maar seker besig om momentum te kry.

Die Stadsraad het reeds ondervind dat veral die partye wat in die verlede nie die geleentheid gehad het om plakkate van vergaderings of kandidate te vertoon nie, die plakkate nie volgens neergelegde voorwaardes en voorskrifte vertoon nie.

Slegs lampalle mag gebruik word en dan wel op so 'n wyse dat dit nie 'n gevaar of obstruksie vir voetgangers of motoriste inhou nie. Plakkate was al op padverkeerstekens, verkeersligpale en bome gevind en wanneer dit verwyder is of die betrokkenes aangespreek is, was die betrokkenes onder die indruk dat die vertoning van hul plakkate nie toegelaat word nie, wat uiteraard 'n wanopvatting is. Plakkate van alle politieke partye of partye wat by die staatkundige onderhandelingsforum betrokke is, sal toegelaat word onder die volgende voorwaardes:

- 'n deposito van R500,00;
- Plakkate sal beperk word tot die sakekern en die ingange na die dorp;
- plakkate sal slegs op elke tweede lampaal aangebring mag word; en
- slegs plakkate ten opsigte van vergaderings wat in 'n lokaal binne die Munisipale gebied gehou word, sal toegelaat word.

Alle partye word daarom versoek om tydens die verkiesingsveldtog met die vertoning van plakkate van hierdie voorwaardes bewus te wees en daarvolgens te handel.

TEGNOPARK ONTWIKKELINGSPLAN

Die Direkteur : Tegnopark het op die afgelope Raadsvergadering van November 1993 goedkeuring ontvang om met 'n argitek te onderhandel ten einde 'n ontwikkelingsplan vir klein geboue by Tegnopark op te stel. Daar is ook bepaal dat die koste van R25 000,00 uit die kapitaalbegroting finansier word.

Perseel 15 sal in vier erwe van onderskeidelik ongeveer 500 m², 400 m², 350 m² en 320 m² onderverdeel word terwyl 630 m² as parkering en gemeenskaplike tuine ontwikkel gaan word.

Op aanbeveling van die Direkteur is besluit dat die parkeerarea deur die Stadsraad ontwikkel word en die koste van die kopers verhaal word, sodat die ontwikkeling daardeur aansienlik vergemaklik word.

Die beraamde koste van die parkering is R80 000,00, terwyl die grondkoste R139 830,00 beloop.

'n Gedeelte van die projek koste kan gedra word om sodoende die prys te verlaag en ontwikkeling van veral kleiner maatskappye te stimuleer.



OTHER RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

COOPERATION versus EXPLOITATION

by Walter Fyfe

A consideration of the principles of co-operation in money, personal needs and production written by the former Iona Community Urban Worker who was involved in advising on the establishment of Credit Unions and Food Cooperatives.

FALLEN TO MEDIOCRITY: CALLED TO EXCELLENCE

by Erik Cramb

This, the first of a series of occasional papers to be published by Wild Goose Publications, is an affirmation of the spirit of community in Britain. It considers Thatcherite principles and practices in the light of the values of the kingdom of God.

THE IONA COMMUNITY TODAY

This short pamphlet which is available free gives a brief but enlightening overview of the Iona Community as it presently exists and works, seeking to continue its tradition of breaking down barriers and finding 'new ways to touch the hearts of all'.

*These publications mentioned above can be obtained from
The Iona Community, Pearce Institute,
840 Govan Road, Glasgow G51 3UU*

BRIDGING THE GAP?

The 1987 Kerr Lectures - Has the Church Failed the Poor?

by John Harvey, Leader, Iona Community.

A critical look at a church and its failure to undertake a consistent, demanding and detailed analysis of the reasons why the poor are not anywhere near the church today. Printed by the St. Andrews Press.

Copies still available from The Abbey Bookshop, The Abbey, Iona, Argyll

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