

King Charles the Martyr & The Secular Terrorist

King Charles I went to his execution rather than countenance that his beloved Church be turned into a mere sect. The great peril in his day was rampant sectarianism and the desire of the puritanical sects to disincarnate the sacramental Church and put in its place a narrow, opinionated, moralising institution based on their own whim – or what the Prayer Book calls *their own private fancies and interests*. We inherit the logical development of this privation today and it is even worse than it was in King Charles' day: it is rampant secularism and public atheism.

Three out of four firms refused to put up Christmas decorations last year. The majority of Christmas cards no longer featured the Nativity scene. More shops and stores than ever opened for business on Christmas Day. These are just the outward signs of an increasingly militant secularism, for the fact is that the progressive elite in Britain today detests Christianity and wishes to destroy it. The country is not being destroyed by alien terrorists but our traditional way of life and self-understanding is being undermined by aggressive secularisation.

Chain bookshops marketed the atheist Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* as their "Christmas Book". Liberal newspapers, and especially the BBC, have established a pattern of debunking and sneering at traditional Christian doctrine. TV and radio documentaries repeatedly dismiss as rubbish the belief that the world was created by God. That is, they explicitly deny the Christmas Gospel where St John states emphatically *All things were made by Him*. And, in case we are too dim to understand that, repeats *And without Him was not anything made that was made*.

St John was writing at a time when the biblical doctrine of God's creation was being attacked by fashionable Gnostic philosophers who claimed that the world was not made by God but by a lesser process called the Demiurge. We have our own Gnostics today and their Demiurge is a facile doctrine of evolution. These crass materialists like to claim that the argument for natural selection and blind chance has disproved intelligent design. It has not.

Modern physics reveals to us a world which does not look at all as if it's made of bits and pieces of matter, but is really rather ethereal. Less as if it's material stuff. More as if it's mind stuff. Moreover, it looks overwhelmingly as if the universe was made with us in mind, for, if it had been ever so minutely different, we wouldn't be here. The odds against the universe happening by accident to be so accommodating to us are so astronomical as to be virtually impossible. And, note, it is not theologians who are making this point, but scientists.

They have even coined a phrase to refer to the hospitableness of the universe: they call it *The Anthropic Principle* – because the world seems to have been constructed with man in mind. Dawkins and his school might reflect on the fact that we are able to understand at least a little of the universe only because the universe is intelligible. It is the innate intelligibility of the universe which makes science possible. That intelligibility was not created by man or imposed on the universe – at least that much must be conceded if science itself is to be regarded as a way of discovering truth, and not merely a game.

In a vivid sentence, the great astrophysicist Professor Fred Hoyle said, “Life evolving by chance has the same likelihood as a tornado blowing through a scrap yard and leaving behind it a fully-formed jumbo jet”.

And once God and intellectual rigour have been discarded, there is bound to follow the collapse of morality. And this is just what has happened. Promiscuity to the extent of casual sexual relationships among any number of people, regardless of their sexual orientation; drinking and shopping 24/7; vicious hedonism pursuing all that is merely trivial; an infantile and narcissistic cult of celebrities – and all built on a mountain of government and personal debt and an amnesiac culture of designer drugs and oblivion. What used to be a mortal sin is now only a lifestyle choice

The moral and social consequences of the crass materialist ideology are predictably horrific. Since human beings – so called – are nothing but bits of genetic material, they can be experimented upon, have their parts transplanted, their embryos and DNA manipulated and frozen as if by the machinations of a latter day Frankenstein. Their very existence may be terminated when this existence is discovered to be inconvenient to the hedonistic careers of those who make up our society of utilitarian materialists – what F.R. Leavis called our “technological-Benthamite culture”. The most disgraceful example of this nihilistic amorality is of course abortion on demand, abortion used as a form of contraception, resulting in 200,000 embryos being ripped untimely from the womb every year in Britain alone.

It may surprise you to learn that teaching Christianity in state schools is now illegal. It is permitted only to teach *about* religions. Absolute relativism rules OK. All religions must be taught as equal. The only perspective from which you can teach such equality is atheism. Christianity used to be at the centre of public life and it was strongly represented in the mass media, particularly in broadcasting. What we have now on the BBC is only a veneer of religion glossing over a soft left political agenda – secular social conscience as if there could be such a thing - a whiff of Third-worldism; the aroma of Fair Trade coffee and the infallible dogma of global warming.

At the centre of the secular atheistic project is the destruction of the historic basis of our way of life: marriage and the family. This has been achieved by the secular doctrines of rights and egalitarianism according to which childbearing and adoption procedures are extended to homosexual couples. Government economic and social policy consistently discriminates against marriage and in favour of any alternative cohabiting arrangement. It is getting to the stage when the Vicar will have to watch out for the politically-correct commissar before he ventures to preach against adultery.

The Christian era which held sway in this country for 2000 years was not oppressive – unlike the totalitarian secularism which threatens to replace it. After the Restoration in 1660, various Acts of Toleration allowed dissenters leeway provided they kept the peace. But it was always tacitly understood that you belonged to the Church, to Christian civilisation unless you opted out. All that has changed.

What can be done? The antidote to the destruction of our society by rampant secularism is for the church to recover its wits and its confidence. The philosopher and President of the Italian Senate, Marcello Pera spells it out: “Christianity is so consubstantial to the West that any surrender on its part would have devastating

consequences. Will the Church and the clergy and the faithful be able to be purified of the relativism that has almost erased their identity and weakened their message and witness?"

We need to pray that God will give us a large helping of King Charles' devotion and courage.