

## THE ABUSE OF WOMEN & ATHEISM

Former Australian senator, Natasha Stott Despoja, chairwoman of the *Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children*, records that the abuse of women in Australia has become epidemic : “Stopping the violence—because of its prevalence and its consequences—should be a national concern and priority.”<sup>1</sup> Self centred individuals, those dominated by pride and self regard, exist in any society but they flourish in a society where atheism rules, as study of the French and Russian revolutions makes plain.

Modern atheism is grounded in a denial of nature as anything but a material reality, the result of nothing but a series of happy accidents.<sup>2</sup> It refuses to accept that the things of nature are created by an intellectual being, refuses the evidence of the senses that they exist in immutable formal categories owing nothing to matter.

If a man regards himself as responsible to no superior—no being who created him, who conserves him in existence, on whom he is utterly dependent ; no one to whom ultimately he will have to give an account of his actions—the moral imperative is reduced to a species of feeling, its authority nothing but the laws posited by the parliament and enforced through listed penalties. He has no standard apart from himself and his fellows to restrain him from violence. This mindset derives from Rousseau and Voltaire and, ultimately, from Martin Luther’s decision to reject the authority of God in favour of his own. It underlies the constitutions of countries such as France and America whose peoples are indoctrinated to think that parliament, government, get their authority from ‘the people’—as if society could somehow be responsible (even before its members come into existence) for its force.

“The sovereignty of the people... without any reference to God... lacks all reasonable proof, and all power of ensuring public safety and preserving order... [T]he opinion prevails that princes are nothing more than delegates chosen to carry out the will of the people ; whence it necessarily follows that all things are as changeable as the will of the people, so that risk of public disturbance is ever with us.”<sup>3</sup>

If there is no superior to whom a man is responsible for his actions, he is a law unto himself, his abiding by the posited laws of the society in which he lives limited, not by the bonds of the moral law impressed upon his being by nature, only by his consent. The obligation is reduced from a natural one to a voluntary one. There is no absolute authority.

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned...<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Australian*, 26 11. 2013 ; cf. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/opinion/towards-an-end-to-violence/story-e6frgd0x-1226768187585>

<sup>2</sup> The imperative of the Darwinian theory of macro evolution. Why those accidents should have been ‘happy’ ones, the atheist never bothers to consider.

<sup>3</sup> Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum*, 20. 6. 1888, n. 31.

<sup>4</sup> W B Yeats, *The Second Coming*

To address the obvious objections to this summary of reality in respect of religions whose attitude to women is demeaning, let it be understood that belief in God is not represented by Mohammedanism which is an ideology masquerading as religion. Its tenets—grounded in alleged private revelation—as its proselytising, are based not on the love of God but on fear. The violence that characterises Muslim societies betrays the frequent claims of that ‘religion’ to be one of peace. Nor is belief in God represented by sects such as Seventh Day Adventism, Jehovah’s Witness-ism or Mormonism whose tenets, also grounded in alleged private revelations, are either faintly connected to, or disconnected from, Christ’s teachings. Protestantism is closer to the truth but limited by its alteration of God’s revelation, in particular the strange view that the Old and New Testaments somehow selected themselves as Divinely inspired with belated editorial assistance from Martin Luther and his acolytes.

Belief in God is only truly manifest in that religion which God Himself established on earth, Catholicism, whose character—

“men can easily recognize by certain exterior notes, whereby Divine Providence has willed that it should be distinguished...”<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, it is precisely because Australians have largely abandoned belief in God that the evils of which Stott Despoja rightly complains are flourishing.

“[C]ivil society must acknowledge God as its Founder and Parent, and must obey and reverence His power and authority. Justice therefore forbids, as reason itself forbids, the State to be godless ; or to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness... For public authority exists for the welfare of those whom it governs ; and, although its proximate end is to lead men to the prosperity found in this life, yet, in so doing, it ought not to diminish, but rather to increase, man’s capability of attaining to the supreme good in which his everlasting happiness consists : which never can be attained if religion be disregarded.”<sup>6</sup>

In countries where true belief in God is still practised by the majority there occur the lowest levels of abuse of women, as the statistics cited by Stott Despoja demonstrate.<sup>7</sup>

This truth in respect of religion is not diminished by the intellectual vices, driven by the same philosophies as have given rise to the atheistic tendency, that have afflicted the hierarchy of the Catholic Church for some 50 years. The deference to the secular which marked the Second Vatican Council brought with it unforeseen consequences, among them the abandonment of the candour and assertiveness that had ever characterised Church teaching in favour of a negativity and defensiveness. One case illustrates the problem well. Faithful and unfaithful alike have been in need of sound teaching exposing the folly of atheism from a pope for more than 40 years. Nothing has appeared. Indeed, popes and bishops alike have demonstrated a rooted inability to address the philosophical issues at stake throughout the period.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Pope Leo XIII, *ibidem*, n. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Leo XIII, *ibidem*, n. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Poland and the Philippines. Mozambique, whose appalling record she also cites, still suffers the effects of the Marxist atheism that marked its journey to independence from Catholic Portugal. That the figures for the Catholic countries are still beyond expectation may be put down to secular influence.

<sup>8</sup> A function of their own appalling philosophical formation, itself a consequence of the disobedient actions of *their* bishops and seminary teachers in abandoning the Church’s philosophical heritage from about 1940. See, for a summary of the problems involved, Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, 12.8.1950.

Another of the consequences of the deference to the secular endorsed by the bishops of Vatican II is the lamentable departure by many clergy and religious from the Church's moral standards, particularly in respect of the virtue of chastity. It is not their religion which has led them in this scandalous path but dalliance with the worldly, with the secular and incipiently atheistic. As George Weigel has noted—

“What the Council [bishops] did not anticipate was that the priesthood would become somewhat ‘laicised’... Clerical lifestyles, seminary discipline, and the interaction of priests and lay Catholics all changed dramatically... [I]n dress, lifestyle, and habits of association and recreation, it became difficult to ‘see’ the uniqueness of the priestly vocation in the Church.”<sup>9</sup>

The failure of priests and religious in matters of chastity was not unknown before Vatican II but it was always exceptional, an aberration. With the flourishing of the ethos promoted in the Council's documents, however, priests and religious sought to justify their behaviour through analogy with the secular. The Council bishops' abandonment of the Church's infallible teaching against religious freedom had the scandalous effect of encouraging the uncommitted to embrace atheism for, if it means anything, ‘religious freedom’ means that one is equally free to believe in God or in *no* God !

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The moral law is, whether he likes it or not, imprinted on the atheist's psyche by nature, but he is free to ignore its demands precisely because the faculty of free will is a part of *his* nature.

Natasha Stott Despoja is an avowed feminist and promoter of ‘gender equality’, ideologies rooted in atheism because they deny the reality of human nature as something created by an intellectual being unto some end. Contrary to assertion, these ideologies do not *free* men and women, they *bind and degrade* them. Consistent with the thinking behind them, it is licit for young men and women to indulge in random sexual activity ; to use contraception, and, if it be necessary, to kill any child conceived in the process through abortion. These activities are *eo ipso* violent, in breach of human nature. That is, they tend to the destruction of society, as of those who participate in them. They lead its members to violence, and expose women and children, even those innocent of such evils, to violence.

What a great irony that Stott Despoja should head an organization dedicated to the prevention of violence against women and children for she, and her ideas, are major contributors to the problem !

Michael Baker

4<sup>th</sup> December 2013—*Memorial of St John Damascene, Doctor of the Church*

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<sup>9</sup> George Weigel, *The Courage to be Catholic*, New York, 2002, pp. 24-5.