

# ***LABOR AND LEISURE:***

## ***A Look at Contemporary Values***

***Dr. Juliet Schor, Harvard Economist***

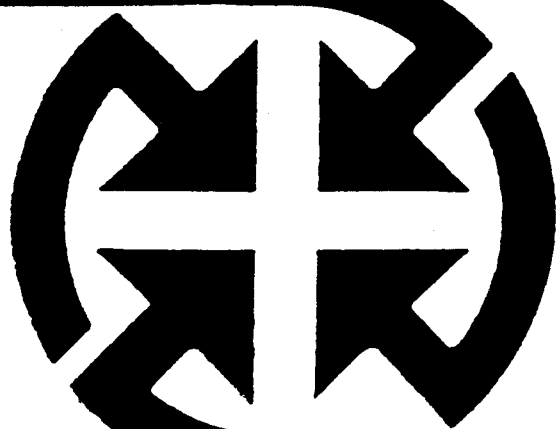
***Rev. Dr. Norman Faramelli, Episcopal Ethicist***

***Dr. Stephen J. Pope, Roman Catholic Theologian***

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"...today's families (whether they're dual earner families or single parent families who have had an even greater increase in work time) are feeling the stresses of increased work: declining free time and tremendous pressure and what we call work-family conflict."

Juliet Schor

"Leisure is defined as time free from work and duties. But it is more than time. Leisure is also a space--a time and space for relaxation and refreshment. Leisure affords us with the opportunity to explore the real meaning and purpose of life--and that does not need to be an intellectual exercise, and it should not be limited to the rich and powerful."

Norman Faramelli

"The moral priority of the family over work needs to be heard in our culture, especially by middle and upper class Christians in business and the professions. In our culture work as an end in itself or as an avenue of self-realization is found most typically in middle class and upper class 'driven' careerists. Yet just as the prevailing instrumentalist rationality of our culture can stand to be moderated by underscoring the importance of intrinsically valuable activities, so the emphasis placed on work should be balanced with a deeper recognition of the value of close friends, marital romance, and familial affection. It might be the case that the ever increasing demands and expectations of the prevailing work culture in corporate America are drowning out our aesthetic sensibilities."

Stephen Pope

"The debate surrounding the Sunday Closing laws is a debate about one vision of the world's meaning over another. It is not about economic benefit--people will buy what they need one way or another. It is not about choosing one religious tradition's holy day over another--Christians happen to be the majority of this society; in the Islamic countries, the observance is Friday; in Israel it is Saturday. It is about whether or not there will be any spiritual center to our society. It is about how we will define ourselves as both individuals and a people. It is a discussion about values, in the largest and broadest meaning of that word. Those who argue against Sunday closing laws are ready to rob life of any spiritual meaning."

Nicholas Apostola

"Some traditions, like a common day of rest, transcend not only the particularity of a given religious orientation, but they transcend the narrow understanding of 'religion' itself; i.e., a common day of rest is a tradition that speaks to a certain way of being human in the world that has appealed to people around the world through millennia. The challenge, then, is clear: are we going to witness to the humanizing intention of the sabbath or will we go-with-the-flow and bow down to the god of this century which demands human breath and sweat seven days a week?"

Ruy Costa

"Needless to say, if the current limits on Sunday work are eroded, teenagers will be able to work even longer hours in retail establishments where most of them are employed. This might make life more convenient for a lot of people, but it conflicts directly with the need to improve our educational system and the skills of our students....The increasing pull of work and the loss of leisure time has had many adverse results, not only on educational achievement for young people and the health of older people. The 'time squeeze' has also damaged the quality of our family life, at a time when families are already stressed by many other problems. Child neglect is a growing problem."

Robert Haynes

Debates about the need for a common day of rest will intensify this fall, as the electorate in Massachusetts almost certainly will have an opportunity to vote in a November referendum about whether or not to abolish completely what remains of Sunday closing laws. Churches have been traditional opponents to changes in these laws. The reasons for our opposition are deeper and more nuanced, however, than may appear at first glance. They are based on a growing awareness that the relationship between labor and leisure has grown dangerously out of balance in American society, with a resulting reduction in the quality of life and confusion about its fundamental meaning. Thus, the November referendum raises issues larger than whether or not stores (and manufacturers?) can be open on Sunday mornings. This vote hones in on a gnawing realization among many that, by changing practices in our laws and our culture, we are losing touch with what matters most. The vote gives us a concrete opportunity to begin, in some small way, to reverse this trend.

To assist the process of public reflection and to stimulate informed public debate on these issues, in the spring of 1994 the Massachusetts Council of Churches held a public forum on "Labor and Leisure: A Look At Contemporary Values." The event was co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Catholic Conference and the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Boston. Its resource leaders were from all three traditions--Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox--as well as from the labor and academic communities. The text of this booklet is the fruit of that day's presentations. We are grateful to all the presenters.

We hope that by sharing the enclosed ideas, religious communities, labor leaders, the public, the media, government officials, and legislators will be helped to gain greater clarity about some of the values at stake as we struggle to reach a public consensus about a common day of rest. The speakers reflect distinct traditions and areas of expertise. They did not agree on all issues, themselves, but some common themes emerged, especially about the pressures on contemporary American families, the value and spiritual necessity of leisure, the need for a common day of rest, and the positive place of such a time in promoting the health of our society.

To assist group discussion, a study guide has been included at the conclusion of the booklet. Readers may feel a special affinity for the presentation which most closely reflects their own religious tradition. At the same time, the ecumenical breadth of the papers provides us all an opportunity to understand different styles of ethical deliberation which lead to roughly the same conclusions.

Other resources also available from the Massachusetts Council of Churches are a 30 minute video, produced (with thanks!) by Boston Catholic Television, called "Notes from the Hill: On a Common Day of Rest," and a booklet, "Sunday Closing Laws Revisited: A Biblical, Ethical, and Sociological Study of a Common Day of Rest." Both may be obtained by contacting the Massachusetts Council of Churches.

Funding for the forum and for the printing of this document was provided by a generous grant from the Lord's Day League of New England, an "ancient and honorable" organization dedicated to promoting respect for Sabbath day observances. We deeply appreciate their support and encouragement for this project.

Thanks, also, go to Dr. Ruy Costa, the Mass. Council of Churches' Associate Director for Public Policy, for planning the forum and editing this document, and to Ms. Helene Anderson, for all the logistics in preparation of these materials.

We have made every effort to accurately reproduce the texts as presented by the authors. Any errors are the fault of the editors, not of the writers, and we ask their indulgence. We hope that these papers will give fresh energy to public dialogue about a topic which affects our common good.

The Rev. Diane C. Kessler, Executive Director  
Massachusetts Council of Churches

## INTRODUCTION

*In the movie "Modern Times" Charles Chaplin has a scene where he plays a factory worker having corn-on-a-cob for lunch; the corn was mechanically rotated in front of him as he worked and ate at the same time. The scene, as well as the whole film, was hilarious to Chaplin's audience. "Modern Times" was, however, a silent outcry against the imposition of the mechanical rhythm of the industrial society over the natural rhythms of the human body. It was a symbolic expression of the protest against the tyranny of the technical mind over human life, a key construct in the criticism of modernity incipient in the socio-political, philosophical and theological debates emerging in Europe and in the United States at the time.*

*Was Chaplin a good clown and perhaps an anonymous philosopher? Or was he an undeclared prophet whose doom is materializing over us as we don't even take time to laugh anymore? Who, today, is articulating a critique of -- or, at least, laughing at -- the ridiculous, hypnotic, stressing, obsessive rhythm of life imposed on people in this affluent, post-modern society?*

*One of the most enduring criticisms of modern civilization is that it is one dimensional.<sup>1</sup> According to this view the central feature of modernity is the market system which reduces all other social systems, even political democracy, to functions of itself. Marcuse argued that, in spite of the political rhetoric which reduces "totalitarianism" to "state coordination of society," the coordination of society by the economic-technical apparatus is also totalitarian; i.e., while in the communist countries society is controlled by the state in capitalist countries society is at the mercy of economic powers.<sup>2</sup>*

*Is this domination of society by the market pushing removal of Sunday Closing Laws from the legal apparatus of the Commonwealth? Are those few remaining closing laws a stumbling block to the one-dimensional agenda of maximizing profits? What about the employees' right to a day of rest? Proponents of the elimination of the Sunday Closing laws argue that "the General Laws will make work on Sundays voluntary," as if good will between employee and employer could be protected by the "General Laws." What about family time together if children have the week end off from school but their mother has Monday off from work, or if teens have to work when their parents are free? What about time to participate in voluntary associations -- such as religious congregations -- which meet every week on a certain day and time?*

*Voluntary associations represent a challenge to the one-dimensional focus on money making: while the value pursued in money making is to do well, the purpose of volunteer action is to do good. The very existence of non-profit activity relativizes the one-dimensional logic of the market. Why should people get together to think, for example, about the common good or the meaning of life if all they need is to make more money? Religion, the voluntary association par excellence, can, should and always will cause aggravation to promoters of any social philosophy dominated by the single minded principle of maximizing money making.*

*Christian theology has an antidote to one-dimensional thinking: the concept of transcendence, that which is distinct from present "reality," the face of the Other, that which is not yet. A contemporary philosopher spoke of horizons which we need to transcend if we hope to move history in a creative and intentional direction.<sup>3</sup> Using the language of the New Testament one could talk about the "resurrection of culture," a moment in history when the old one-dimensional money making paradigm is tossed to the wind while people rebuild a culture of kindness and care and celebration of life.*

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<sup>1</sup>Marcuse, Herbert, One Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964, 1968).

<sup>2</sup>Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Heidegger, Martin, Being and Time, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

*"Labor and Leisure: A Look at Contemporary Values" is an invitation to re-think the meaning of labor and the value of leisure in response to the current attack on the remaining laws that protect Sunday mornings as a common time of rest in this Commonwealth. The agenda of this effort is, therefore, twofold: on the one hand it is to articulate a response to the forces pushing for the elimination of the Massachusetts Blue Laws; on the other hand, given the complexity of the issues at stake, the best rationale in defense of the Sunday Closing Laws ought to be framed in a context broader than the immediate debate at hand. The rationale articulated in these pages emerges from a multi-disciplinary reflection informed by scientific data on economic trends, political concerns of organized labor, and the ongoing theological debate of Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches on issues of labor and leisure.*

*In chapter 1 Juliet Schor, renowned economist and Harvard professor, looks at the growing stress on people's time as the economic forces demand more and more of that time for market activity. She concludes her reflections on the Sunday closing laws suggesting a re-examination of an idea previously promoted by the labor community in the United States and again under consideration in Europe: a four-work-day-week. In chapter 2, Norman Faramelli, Episcopal priest and ethicist, revisits the Protestant work ethic as a key construct that lends legitimation to the seven-work-day-week agenda of powerful business and political interests in the struggle against a common day of rest. In chapter 3, Stephen Pope, Roman Catholic theologian and professor at Boston College, examines three historical formulations of the relationship between labor and leisure (leisure precedes labor, labor precedes leisure, and both are equally important) with special emphasis on John Paul II's articulation of the third position. In chapter 4, Father Nicholas Apostola, a Romanian Orthodox priest in Worcester, deals with the economy of redemption from the perspective of Orthodox theology (a theology that works with a holistic interpretation of life and Scripture, where the most mystical liturgy of the Lord's Supper, for example, points to the cooperation between God and humans in the creation and re-creation of the world: God gives life to the grapes, humans make wine with them). In chapter 5, Ruy Costa, ethicist and Massachusetts Council of Churches staff, writes about the "political importance of the sabbath," exploring the ancient biblical practice as worship, as an economic model, as a celebration of creation, as a cultural paradigm, and as a sign of hope for the future with political implications for the present. In chapter 6, Robert Haynes, Secretary-Treasurer of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, traces the history of organized labor's struggles and conquests for workers' rights to shorter work days and a shorter work week for more than a hundred years. For all these years organized labor has argued for the workers' need for more time to rest, to observe religious practices, to have family time and time to exercise citizenship, and time to get educated and involved in politics.*

*The reader can start at any point. We hope this reading will be both productive (i.e., "labor") and delightful ("leisure"). Enjoy.*

**Dr. Ruy O. Costa, Associate Director for Public Policy  
Massachusetts Council of Churches  
Editor**

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## ***LABOR AND LEISURE: A Changing World***

***Dr. Juliet Schor***

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Women's Studies Program, Harvard University***

Let me take a snapshot of a typical American family in 1969 and compare that to a family at the end of the 1980s. In 1969, a typical middle income, middle American family with two children and a husband-wife couple, would have been working an equivalent of 5,420 hours.

The typical wife at that time would have been a full time homemaker working long hours in the home - 2,465 average hours per year or something in the neighborhood of a 52 hour week. That's quite a substantial work week. One of the interesting things about this is that despite the introduction of lots of labor-saving technology in the household - washing machines, dryers, dishwashers, freezers, refrigerators etc. throughout the 20th century - until the mid 1970s the amount of time the average American housewife worked each week stayed just about the same. She didn't save any labor as a result of all these wonderful technological devices; she merely increased the quality and quantity of services provided for her family. One of the fascinating things about washing machines and dryers is that they have been associated with an increase in the amount of time that women spend doing laundry, because the standards of cleanliness have risen quite dramatically. Today we know that people usually wear their clothes once before having them cleaned, but in the early part of the century - in Colonial America - as you know, people did not wash their clothes very often, perhaps 3 or 4 times a year.

The husband in my 1969 family would have been working about 2,955 hours a year in both the market and the home. That rose to 3,209 hours a year, an increase of 118 hours in the market and 116 hours in the home.

Twenty years later that family is putting in an extra 1,000 hours of work for a total of 6,488 hours. (Actually the rise is precisely 1,068 hours a year.) That comes from a number of things, the most important of which is, of course, the fact that the typical family now contains two wage earners and the full time homemaker is now an even more full time so-called working mother. Her hours in the market increased quite dramatically: she works 2,007 hours in the market. Her hours of homemaking fell, of course. She couldn't keep to the 52 hour week schedule of the full time homemaker. But they did not fall nearly enough to offset the additional hours. In fact what I find is that for every extra hour a woman works in the market place she cuts back only an hour at home. So now she's working about 1,272 hours in the household which gives her a total of 3,279 annual hours - a very hefty schedule! The father on the other hand is also working more hours, an extra 254 hours, comprised of a 118 hour increase in the amount he's doing in his paid job and a 116 hour increase in the amount he's doing at home. That adds up to just over a 1,000 hours a year, or an extra half worker. But there is no extra half worker in the family, which means that today's families (whether they're dual earner families or single parent

families) who have had an even greater increase in work time are feeling the stresses of increased work: declining free time and what we call "work-family conflict."

Over roughly this period, it has been estimated that parental time with children has declined by 40%. I believe this is a very important cause of what we might call the crisis of American youth. America's youth today are suffering a tremendous increase in problems from drug and alcohol related problems, mental problems, problems at school etc. Marital difficulties caused by conflict over household work and inadequate time together are also on the rise. Young parents have very high rates of sequencing their work so that the one who's not at work can take care of children, which means that many of them are working 16 or more hour days: full time jobs and then full time caretaking either in the day or the evening shift depending on which they're working. They don't have time to be together. This causes tremendous stress.

Americans have record levels of sleep deficit today, according to sleep researchers. We have high and rising stress levels. Current estimates are that the American economy each year is now losing two hundred billion dollars as a result of stress in the workplace. And since we are in Framingham, I am going to mention one of the results of the famous Framingham Heart Study. They found that women clerical workers with three children, who have probably the most stressful jobs in the economy (high demands, rapid pace of work, very little control over their work) - these women clerical workers were found to have markedly elevated rates of coronary heart disease. This is a finding consistent with many others.

### *On a Common Day of Rest*

Let me move on to the question of preserving Sunday as a common day of rest in the context of this onslaught of work. I think many of the benefits of preserving Sunday are apparent to us all. We all have memories of the so-called "Golden Age", the '50s and '60s when we had a slower pace of life, more regular church attendance I presume, Sunday dinner, Sunday as a family and rest day. It was a Golden Age in that time for families was much better preserved than it is today, and there was much more stability in many dimensions of family life - certainly lower divorce rates and other kinds of things. And we see the lure of commercialization: retail openings on Sundays jeopardizing the place of Sunday.

Of course, they have already gone very far in that direction. Many families today no longer spend their Sundays together. I believe very strongly in the importance of restraining commercialism in our society. One of the things that we have seen connected with the rise of work time is a rise of commercialism; not only in the commercialization of our culture which can be seen in the rise in television watching, the growth of mass media (a highly commercialized medium), the growth of advertising (the clothes we wear are now often advertisements) and also in the more private culture or family culture and the role in which consuming plays. One of the things that I argued in my book was that part of the rise in work time was connected with what I call a "work and spend cycle" in which people got trapped into longer hours of work in a cycle of rising material expectations. The counterweights to



commercialism, which were very strong or much stronger in the earlier part of the century, have been melting away - especially in the years since the Second World War. There are destructive social consequences arising from this: status consumption made worse by the worsening income distribution. We can see the most horrific effects of this when we look at the urban poor who are just as much caught up in the cycle of consumerism as anyone else, but who don't have the means to consume and for whom violence and crime is a method of getting into the system of consumerism.

On the other hand - and here I will be a little bit provocative - I think the case for Sunday closings is not clear cut. I believe there are arguments to be made in the other direction and arguments that those of us who want to argue for Sunday closings and for Sunday to be preserved as a common day of rest need to grapple with. We need to **expand our vision of how Sunday as a day of rest might fit into a larger context of work and free time.** The first and of course most obvious point is that once women went into the workplace Sunday became necessary as a day in which people would do household work and chores and errands and shopping. Stores are often crowded and people have other activities that also are scheduled on Saturdays. I would make the argument that in a society of dual earner families, families need two days a week in order to take care of chores, errands, and shopping, in addition to the day of rest. To preserve the day of rest does not mean rest just from the paying jobs, but it also means rest from our jobs in the home.

One of the points I tried to stress in my book is that we have to think of the job of homemaking as every bit as much a job as jobs which people get paid for. Now that we don't have full time homemakers - they're not home Monday through Friday 9 to 5 - we have to think about a new system for weekends, because weekends have become the time when people catch up on the household work that they used to do during the week.

We are in an endless cycle of an expanding service economy and a breakdown in regular schedules of work. The fraction of workers who work the regular 9 to 5 Monday through Friday schedule has just broken through the 50% barrier: now it is less than 50% of all workers, and at the lowest fraction in the post war era; in 1991 only 49% worked at a regular schedule; now over a third of all workers work some evenings and Sundays and 14% of workers have no set schedule. So we are experiencing a tremendous growth in the diversity of work schedules which is contributing to the pressure to use Sunday in a different way.

### **The Sunday As the Day of Rest**

The other thing I want to mention is how we got to Sunday as a day of rest, because I think it is very important in terms of thinking about the overall picture of work and leisure. In the Medieval era Sunday was not particularly singled out as a rest day. Holidays or so called holy days were scattered throughout the calendar, an agrarian calendar. Holidays were very much tied to the requirements of agrarian labor, which meant there were many more feasting and holy days during the winter for example or during other periods of slack work in terms of the farming requirements. The extent and prevalence of holy days at that time was staggering from the point of view of what we have today. In

England, which was the hardest working of the European countries, workers had about a third of all days devoted to festival or holy days. In Catholic countries it was greater. Spain is estimated to have had five of the seven months devoted to feasts and holy days. All of these feast days were days which the peasants took by custom. They were important local traditions. Some of these days were common across a society but many of them were local and many of them were personal; if someone was getting married in your family you might take a week to celebrate that, as well as deaths or births or many other things. The ability of people to take leisure was great and the irregularity of work was really tremendous in comparison to today. The Puritans, in alliance with emergent capitalist interests, waged a battle to eliminate this rest time and in exchange for that they offered Sundays a common day of rest. Eventually that model did triumph, workers then worked six days a week with Sundays off and other holidays were telescoped down to the bare minimum: a day or two at Christmas, a day at Easter. It was a tremendous reduction in the amount of free time that people had.

### Conclusion

We have already lost a common day of rest in this society. I think that if we want a strategy for creating or recreating a common day of rest it must be in the context of expanded free time for people. That, I think, argues for a four day week in which people have two days for family labor and have one day for rest together, because the pressures on the American family today are so strong to use Sundays in other ways. That is a profound loss to us as a society because of the spiritual and larger cultural value of having a common day of rest.

### Questions & Answers:

"In your original two family picture '69 to '89, I didn't hear any mention of the possible role of dependents within the household such as adolescent children taking part in that; did you look at that from '69 to '89?"

J. Schor:

"I did look at that a bit in my book, and I actually have a student who is writing a thesis on the rise of work among teens. This has been quite substantial as you may imagine. New England has had a tremendous rise because of the labor shortages of the 1980s; what we are finding, and all the results are not in yet, is that: (a) the pattern of teenage labor was in a long term decline as the country grew wealthier and fewer families needed their youth to contribute to family income. There was a low point roughly in the 1960s or early 70s and then (b) we have had a rather steady and quite dramatic rise in the amount of work that teens are doing. It appears that much of this is for their own consumption rather than for contribution to family income. The increase has been especially dramatic among girls - teenage girls who are now working and spending at very high rates compared to earlier in the century.

One of the things that we are looking at is "what's fueling these children?" We are looking at high school seniors, and trying to see how

much of it is that they are attempting to "keep up with the Joneses," i.e., rising expectations of consumption among teens. That is clearly one of the things we are seeing -- an increase in ownership of cars and other expensive consumer durables. Is access to the media, television, and magazines fueling their desire to have these things? We know that business has targeted youth as a prime market and is putting vast amounts of money into advertising to youth to try and create the cycle of working and spending. Some studies have begun to look at the detrimental impact this is having on school work and long term performance of students. My own view is that the amount of work that teens are doing is excessive, many of them are holding down near full time jobs in addition to going to school. The work that they are doing is not contributing in a very meaningful way to the long term building of skills. They are doing very low skilled service sector work. We as a society are passing on a set of values to our children which are excessively consumerist. They are getting caught up in work and spend at earlier and earlier stages of their lives.

"Do you have any comparison with Europe? I have a daughter-in-law who is a physician in Germany, and they almost start out with six weeks off. Does this affect the structure of society over there? They have a different attitude I think."

J. Schor:

"Yes, I have looked mainly at quantitative differences in work hours; as you see they are quite extreme. The best comparable data we have are in manufacturing, but I think they are pretty representative of the whole economy. France and Germany are working in the neighborhood of 1500-1600 hours a year as compared to American workers who are working over 2,000 hours a year in manufacturing. It is a very substantial difference, both in terms of annual vacation and also the work week. In Germany the work week is now being reduced.

One of the results of economic crisis in Europe has been that corporations, employers and governments are starting to put a lot of pressure to reverse the gains that European workers have made in terms of vacation and time. I think this is a mistake, in that it will not improve their competitiveness but will reduce the quality of life.

America is a more frenzied and harried society as well as a society in which people work longer hours. The configuration of work family stress that I've talked about, what's happening with the American family is not matched anywhere in the world. I did some rough calculations of the amount of time American women are working and the only country that comes close to this is Finland, which is a very small country, but which also has extensive vacations and a European style of work patterns. In Japan, which we think of as the ultimate overworked society - and which is in many ways - the family unit is not working on average much more than the American family unit. The distribution of hours is different because in Japan husbands have very long hours and many more full time housewives. So there is a sense in which we are as overworked a society as the Japanese.

Of course many of the dimensions of this are different: in Japan people are literally working themselves to death, something that is happening here to some extent, but not the same extent. I think the differences in Europe are due to differences in both the goals and the strengths of the trade unions, who have been very important in pushing for shorter hours in Europe. There is also a long-term cultural difference. I think this country became much more consumerist early on, in the early part of this century, and it has taken a more consumerist path and therefore has been a less relaxed and leisurely society than you see in Europe. The other big difference - and this gets into another important topic of current policy - is health care: the impact the health care situation has had on working hours. In Europe far more of people's social benefits are paid through the government, and health care is the major one. One of the impacts that this has had is that it has made employers less resistant to workers reducing their work time. In the United States because employers pay those benefits on a per worker basis, they want each worker working as many hours as possible, because they do not want to hire more workers and pay more benefits. So we are in a crazy situation now in which companies are just trying to squeeze the number of people on the payroll down to the barest minimum, and have them work as many hours as possible. That in turn creates health problems and higher health costs and higher unemployment. That kind of extreme pressure does not exist in Europe. In the U.S., employers are tremendously resistant to the idea of shorter hours; they are like Japanese employers in this sense, who also, by the way, pay private health care benefits. I think that's a big part of why Japan and America are the two really "long hours" countries."

"Could you give us a recommendation of a book or two that deal very specifically with the history of leisure in western society?"

J. Schor:

"My book is actually about work and not too much about leisure. If you are interested in leisure I will suggest a historical book which I think will interest this audience because there is some very good material on the debate over Saturday work and the role of the religious community in the debates over worktime in the 20s and 30s. It is a book called Work Without End, by Benjamin Hunnicutt published by Temple University Press. It's a fascinating book and it's about the struggles over work time in the U.S. in the 20th century."

J. Schor:

..."The other part of the problem today is that people have short amounts of time. Some of the most satisfying kinds of leisure activities are those which mean real involvement - the more you put in the more you get out - but people can't do them because they can't make that time commitment. I'm sure those of you who are looking at the volunteer patterns in your institutions are seeing this. The other side of long working hours is a decline in volunteer hours."

"Most of our Protestant denominations have seen a decrease in

membership and a decrease in church attendance - not all but certainly our denomination has. Are you saying perhaps one of the reasons for a decrease in church attendance is the increase in the amount of work our members or our former members are doing? Do you think that's a possibility?"

J. Schor:

"Yes. I don't have any data on that, I think there is probably a connection to it, although, as you know, there is another important phenomenon going on which is the rise of non traditional spiritual forms - New Age Spirituality and Eastern religions and a whole range of Evangelical Christianity. One of the things that I think is attracting people to these alternate forms (and again this is just a hunch) is that they typically have an anti-consumerist message. Most of these new religious forms that people get involved in are talking about the renunciation of worldly goods or just the fact that the path to spiritual enlightenment or satisfaction does not come through money. I think that this is a message that will have increasing resonance among those populations. I myself am not a Christian so I can't speak to the messages that you are all involved in giving to your congregations; but if there is a sense in which you are missing that message, I think that may also be part of what people are hungry for, because consumerist society is not satisfying our spiritual needs. Another very interesting book which talks about the connection between established Christian Protestantism and commercial activity, is a new book called Land of Desire by William Leach. One of the cases the author is interested in is Wanamaker from Philadelphia, the owner of a leading department store, a visionary, and a devout Christian who merged the messages of Christianity and commercialism. It is fascinating history. I think that there may be something for all of us today to learn in terms of what got lost in that confluence of what was really an unbridled consumerism and deep deep religious faith."

***THE CONTEXT OF LABOR AND LEISURE: A Protestant Perspective***  
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I would like to set this presentation in a broad social context and relate it to the Reformation tradition. This tradition places great emphasis on the biblical roots, and it also recognizes that we are creatures created by God and we possess inherent value. I might add, this means value independent of what we do for a living.

Let me offer five brief points related to the social context:

***The Protestant Work Ethic***

The first point relates to the Protestant Work Ethic. Why is it that the worst elements of a tradition often tend to survive the longest and are adopted and incorporated even by those who do not share that tradition? So it is with the Protestant Work Ethic in American society.

One of the results of the Reformation was the Protestant Work Ethic -- an ethic of thrift and hard work that was most conducive to the rise of industrial capitalism. The Reformation has given us many wonderful things, such as an emphasis on Holy Scriptures, the concept of justification by faith, as well as a doctrine of vocation applied to all people, not just to clerics and those in the religious life. Related to the doctrine of vocation was the rise of the Protestant Work Ethic. That ethic, despite its many values, has exacted a terrible cost. One major cost was that it has resulted in an overemphasis on the value of work in the life of the individual and society. In the worst form of the Protestant Work Ethic, what we do on our jobs becomes close to identifying and defining who we are as human beings. Theologically, if that view is asserted, we fail to see that we are children of God and that our worth in the eyes of God is independent of what we do on the job.

This Protestant Work Ethic has been particularly devastating when we ponder the prospects of or experience the reality of unemployment. The work ethic makes us feel guilty about losing our jobs. In fact, the absence of a job can distort our views of who we are as human beings and unemployment can make us feel less than human.

***The Class-Ridden Nature of Work and Leisure***

The second point relates to the class-ridden nature of our views of both work and leisure. If we are to be true to our biblical roots, as our heritage calls us to be, we must understand the emphasis in the Scriptures upon a God who champions the cause of the poor, the outcast, and the dispossessed.

Although we can laud the Protestant Work Ethic, we seldom apply it uniformly. That is, it does not seem to bother us in the least that some wealthy people live off their parents' fortune, and can live a life of leisure. The life styles of the rich and famous are not scorned, but

are often envied and even emulated. You see -- the work ethic gets more vigorously applied the lower one is on the economic ladder. That is, the lower the income, the more stringent the application. "Workers are lazy" is a frequent chant, especially in some productivity studies paid for by managers.

It is the poor who are viewed as extremely lazy, unmotivated, shiftless, etc. But worst of all are those poor people who are on welfare. How else can one explain the enormous efforts to get welfare mothers into some kind of workfare program, even if \$4 to \$5.00 per hour jobs will hardly pay for adequate day care. Nor is it understood that raising children can be a full-time job. Hence, our application of the Protestant Work Ethic is clearly class-laden and favors the rich, which should be a concern to us if we take social and economic justice seriously.

Similarly, the views of leisure are also class ridden. In the classical tradition, it was the aristocrats, the wealthy, who needed leisure in order for them to expand their intellectual horizons. The slaves in ancient society were not expected to have leisure, because it was their labor that made the leisure of the affluent possible.

Yet leisure should be enjoyed by all people, not just the wealthy. That is why the focus on economic and social justice is so important.

Leisure is defined as time free from work and duties. But it is more than time. Leisure is also a space -- a time and space for relaxation and refreshment. Leisure affords us with the opportunity to explore the real meaning and purpose of life--and that does not need to be an intellectual exercise, and it should not be limited to the rich and powerful.

### *The Attack on Leisure*

The third point is the continuous attack of the new economic system on the possibility of leisure. By this I mean that there are factors in today's economy that clearly work against leisure.

Consider the reality of the unemployed, the underemployed or ill-suited employed, and the new reality of part-time and temporary workers, as well as the yen to "downsize" our economic institutions. All of these conditions are stress producing and anxiety provoking and do little to foster leisure. In fact, they make leisure less and less of a possibility.

Let us consider the unemployed. No job is as intense and stress producing as the job of finding another job. That is, it is much easier to move from job to job than from the ranks of the unemployed to a job. Unemployment is hardly conducive to leisure.

Consider the ill-suited employed. Job dissatisfaction makes people spend their potential leisure hours in the pursuit of new employment possibilities, or in getting a part-time job to supplement income.

Consider also the part-time job and the temporary job. If these positions are taken voluntarily, they could be a boon and a source of

flexibility. But most of these jobs are taken by people who do not have the opportunity for full-time work. It is very difficult to combine a series of part-time jobs, as anyone who ever tried it will know. Two half time jobs usually add up to a lot more than 40 hours per week. Also, when one has a part-time job, there is always the apprehension of finding another part-time job to generate a full-time income. The temporary job, which is also a growing phenomenon in our society, produces stress, because one is always considering what happens after this "temp" assignment. Lastly, the "downsizing" of an institution is stress producing because one always asks: will I survive the next reorganization? Such an anxiety results in working extra hours and taking fewer vacations. Sometimes you are afraid that they will move you out of your office if you stay away for an extended time period. None of these activities are conducive to leisure.

### *New Economy/New Demography*

The fourth point is related to the new economy and the new demography, and how neither is conducive to leisure.

The poor and the working classes, especially the minorities, are most adversely affected by the decline of decent paying jobs in the industrial sector. Many of these jobs are never coming back. It is difficult to exchange an industrial salary with a McDonald's salary, and hence, many displaced from industrial jobs will get extra work to compensate for the loss of income.

There is another growing phenomenon in our society. A large group of baby boomers are expecting to enter the middle management arena right at the time numbers of middle management jobs are fast shrinking due to "downsizing".

The combination of the new economy and the new demography can be pernicious, and create a severe backlash of the middle class against the poor. And that has many racial and ethnic overtones. As we consider our efforts in the context of economic and social justice, we must be aware of the WMPAGE syndrome. WMPAGE is a non-phonetic acronym that means "Women, Minorities and the Poor Are Getting Everything." The fact that there is little empirical evidence to substantiate this claim is irrelevant, because the myth goes on. It is possible to create a severe tension between the middle class and the poor, or between the cities and the suburbs. None of that bodes well for the prospects for either work or leisure.

### *Need For a New Vision*

The fifth point has to do with a new vision for society. As we consider the Protestant Work Ethic in the context of social and economic justice, we need to see the real dangers of a life that is defined exclusively, or even primarily, in terms of work. Such a life is grossly out of balance. That imbalance is made worse when one considers how driven it is by the acquisition of material things or commodities. Consider, for instance, that the so called standard of living, the heart of the American Dream, is usually defined in materialistic terms, or the acquisition of commodities. The acquisition syndrome can even turn our



leisure into work. For instance, I can picture a person (with sufficient money, of course) shopping on a day off to buy a fax machine, a lap top computer, a modem and even a cellular phone. Can you imagine what happens when these things are taken on vacation?

Despite the rumors about the American Dream being dead, it is alive and well. There is, however, an increasing failure to realize that dream. The result is not the abandonment of the dream, but escalating social frustrations expressed by many whose hopes and ambitions are unrealized. And those unrealized ambitions can cause severe social tensions that are manifested in racial and ethnic discrimination and injustice.

We need a new vision of society to replace the American Dream, and since religious institutions are in the business of symbolic exchanges, they should play a key role in defining and shaping that vision. It should be a vision of a new commonwealth, where the common good is highlighted, and where a sharing and caring society replaces the vision of the endless acquisition of commodities. This will be a society where sharing and caring are the norms and not the exceptions. In that vision one will not need to spend every waking hour devoted to either work or commodity acquisition. And here we see the linkage between the broader social context and the issue on the table today--the Sunday closings, because the Blue Laws should not be seen in a myopic framework.

In that vision, the class-laden notions of both work and leisure will be appreciated, and they will always be seen in the context of social and economic justice. As human beings, we are precious in the sight of God, and possess an inherent worth and value regardless of our jobs, or even whether we have a job at all.

All of us will need to find the time and space for both work and leisure. We need to think of leisure not just as a recreational endeavor, but as a time and space to explore the depths of our human experience. A new vision will enable us to see the real meaning and purpose in life and also to view leisure, not just as an opportunity for recreational activity, but also as an opportunity for genuine RE-CREATION.

## ***LABOR AND LEISURE: A Catholic Perspective***

***Dr. Stephen J. Pope***

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What is the relation between "labor" and "leisure" in the Catholic tradition? The term "labor" is often associated with toil, but I mean it as work for pay. Examples include migrant labor, mining, and roofing, but also professional golf, surgery, and commercial flying. "Leisure" is usually connected with lack of exertion but this should not be inferred here. By "leisure" I simply mean meaningful non-instrumental activity. Watching the 49ers and drinking Budweiser on Sunday evening falls short of the full meaning of leisure; indeed, it offers support for labor by allowing the worker to restore and retain energy needed on Monday morning.

Both labor and leisure involve the expenditure of energy; both can be intense forms of activity. Labor, moreover, should not be understood purely in terms of instrumental activity. While the Greek philosophers tended to regard labor as "servile" because it involved merely the production of goods (*techne*), we can recognize that a great deal of labor expresses human excellence and virtue. Labor, in other words, is not homogenous: it includes both instrumental and intrinsically valuable activity; both constitute "labor" in that they are paid. The spot welder engages in instrumental activity performed for wages; the dramatic actor, on the other hand, engages in intrinsically valuable activity that also (sometimes) provides a living wage.

Labor and leisure can be related in at least three ways. Position I regards leisure as prior to labor, that is, activities performed during leisure are valued more highly than those done for pay. Position II regards labor as prior to leisure, that is, work done for pay can be held in more esteem than activities done after or before work. Position III views labor and leisure as equally valuable, with the worth of labor neither greater nor less than that of leisure. This paper sketches the historical development of these three positions and argues for the special relevance of the third position for our own day.

### **Leisure Prior to Labor**

Position I has dominated the Catholic tradition up to the twentieth century. Although generalizations are often hazardous, it seems fair to say that it has been characteristic of most of the history of the Catholic tradition. The priority placed by Greek philosophers on "theoretical reason" over "practical reason" influenced profoundly the early Christian understanding of the status of labor. Even more important was Biblical revelation and especially the first commandment (thou shall have no other gods,...). The powerful image of the "eye of the needle" is only one of many poignant ways in which Jesus warned against the dangers of wealth and possessions. Jesus himself abandoned his trade to take up his mission, the disciples were commanded to drop everything (including their boats and fishing nets) and follow him, the rich young man was asked to sell everything, give it to the poor, and follow Jesus (Mark 10:17-31). There is of course the parable of the

talents (Mt 12:14-30), but this parable must be interpreted in terms of Jesus' message of the need to recognize our radical dependence on God's providence: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your body and what you will eat, or about what you will wear. For life is more than food and the body more than clothing...seek his kingdom, and these other things will be given you besides" (Luke 12:22-23, 29).

The gospel relativizes labor and its proceeds. The early Christian ascetic movement into the desert concentrated on prayer and manual labor as means of mortification and spiritual discipline. Later monasticism valued work as a penitential practice, as a spiritual exercise that promoted humility, equality, and simplicity, and as an activity that counteracted pride and the temptations of the flesh. Monks often worked in agriculture and construction as well as in manuscript copying. Work in this context was valued as a means for the cultivation of certain virtues and contemplation was regarded as the activity that is primary. There was no "work ethic" for a Max Weber to analyze in twelfth century France.

The medieval theologians in the universities believed that they had a Biblical reason for giving priority to leisure over labor. "Leisure" for the scholastic theologians meant primarily prayer, liturgical worship, study, and contemplative experience. Leisure in this context referred not to a period of time in which one could recuperate in order to work more efficiently the next day, but to activities which draw the soul closer to God. Those who took up vowed religious life pursued either the "active life" of apostolic and charitable works or the "contemplative life" of the cloister, solitude, and meditation. Thomas Aquinas, like the great neo-Platonic theologian Origen before him, believed that Martha, who worked and served her guests, "prefigured" the contemplative life. Martha's service was good, Aquinas argued, but Mary "chose the better part (Luke 10,42)"<sup>1</sup>

Leisure was the context for the contemplative life. Both "active" and "contemplative" forms of religious life, of course, included a "contemplative" dimension in that they were sustained by spirituality. And both were regarded as flowing from charity and moving toward its perfection: the contemplative through single minded devotion to prayer and ascetic discipline, the active through selfless love of neighbor and almsdeeds. The life of the monk was thought to more closely reflect the "tenor" of the Sabbath, set aside to appreciate receptivity to truth and goodness, sensitive awareness of the beauty and goodness of creation, etc. Leisure is devoted to things that are valued for their own sakes and for God's sake, not to instrumental activities.

Action was subordinated to contemplation just as matter was regarded as inferior to soul and the body to the mind. Charity, the grace-inspired love for God and neighbor, provided both the warrants for the primacy of leisure -- the direct love for God -- and for the major exception to the priority of leisure -- the "care of souls" and the corporal works of mercy that are generated by what Augustine termed the "compulsion of charity." "The love of truth seeks a holy leisure," he

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<sup>1</sup>St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 3 vols. (New York: Benziger Bros., 1946), 11-11, 182,1.

wrote, and "the demands of charity undertake an honest toil"<sup>2</sup>

Labor was thus conceived as instrumental to pursuing the higher end of contemplation. St. Augustine, the major theological influence on western medieval theology, wrote in the City of God that those who have faith look forward to the blessings of heaven and use earthly and temporal things "like a pilgrim in a foreign land, who does not let himself be taken in by them or distracted from his course towards God, but rather treats them as supports which help him more easily to bear the burdens of the 'corruptible body...'"<sup>3</sup>

It should be noted that neither the "contemplative life" nor the "active life" involved "labor" in the sense used in here, as work for pay, since members of religious orders took vows of poverty and their practical activity was done "for the love of God and neighbor" rather than for remuneration. Labor was inferior to leisure just as practical activity was inferior to contemplation. This position did have its critics, those who argued (in a way that would have an obvious appeal to our own culture) that the practical application of the gospel has a greater value than contemplation. But the majority view was that contemplation is the end of human life, and that leisure, which provides the context for most closely approximating this end in this life, is the highest of all.

### Labor Prior to Leisure

Position II has typically been associated with the Reformation and several of the traditions that it generated. The emergence of the second position -- that labor is prior to leisure -- is found in the writings of the great sixteenth century Protestant theologians Martin Luther and John Calvin. Affirming the "priesthood of all believers," Luther rejected the Catholic notion that only monks, priests, and nuns have "vocations." He insisted that every Christian has a "calling" which serves the common good and is governed by the divine will; each person in his or her calling is a "mask of God."<sup>4</sup>

Those who did not work were regarded with increased suspicion, and accordingly social and legal pressure against idleness and begging escalated in this period. Organized poor relief was developed in local communities to care for the "deserving poor" -- no one should go without basic necessities when they are available. Others were reminded of the Biblical injunction, "He who does not work shall not eat" (2 Thess 3:10).

Through work we apply the injunction of St. Paul to "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). Every

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<sup>2</sup>St. Augustine, City of God, trans. Henry Bettensen (New York: Penguin, 1972), XIX, 19.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, XIX, 17.

<sup>4</sup>Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians, 1535," trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in Luther's Works, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, 55 vols. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1963) vol. 26.

position in society constitutes a "calling," whether one is a sanitation worker or a prince ( or even a hangman), through which the good of others is served and the glory of God manifested. True worship of God is offered not only in the confines of a church but in daily work through which one serves the neighbor. Supporting the theology of callings, especially in Calvin, was a deeper religious vision that all aspects of life are holy and that the role of the Christian is to renew the world.<sup>5</sup>

### *Labor and Leisure Equally Regarded*

Position III emerged in the twentieth century, and includes insights of the previous two positions while going beyond them. Its major exponent is Pope John Paul II but he developed ideas first broached by his predecessors. Pope Leo XIII, the "Pope of the working man," issued Rerum novarum in 1891<sup>6</sup> in order to advocate justice for the workers of Europe suffering under the factory system of nineteenth century industrial capitalism. One of Leo's points of emphasis was on the dignity of the labor and of the worker, a theme picked up and elaborated upon by John Paul II one hundred years later in his encyclical On Human Work.<sup>7</sup>

According to John Paul II, the proper context for interpreting the role of labor in human life is found in Genesis, and specifically in Gen. 1:28 -- "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it."<sup>8</sup> This text, according to the Pope, reveals that human beings have a "mandate" from God "to subdue, to dominate the earth" through work.<sup>9</sup> Work has two meanings. The "objective meaning" refers to the ways in which work is performed on objects whereby the person "subdues the earth." All work has dignity because it expresses the essential "calling" of the person: to subdue the earth. The "subjective meaning" of work concerns the way in which it reflexively shapes and expresses the subjectivity of the worker.

John Paul II regards work as an end in itself, valuable for its own sake because it expresses the personal dignity of the worker. Work dignifies the person and in work, actions "must all serve to realize his [or her] very humanity."<sup>10</sup> Through work, a person not only "makes a living" but also "achieves fulfillment as a human being and indeed, in

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<sup>5</sup>John Calvin, Institutes for the Christian Religion, trans. Lewis Ford Battles, ed. John McNeil (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955).

<sup>6</sup>Pope Leo XIII, On the Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor (Rerum novarum), in The Church Speaks to the Modern World, ed. Etienne Gilson (New York: Doubleday, 1954), pp. 200-245

<sup>7</sup>Pope John Paul II, On Human Work (Laborem exercens) (Boston, MA: Daughters of St. Paul, 1981). (Hereafter LE)

<sup>8</sup>LE, 4.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>LE, 6.

a sense, becomes 'more a human being'."<sup>11</sup> Hence the Pope describes work as a "universal calling" and praises the virtue of "industriousness."<sup>12</sup> In developing this dimension the Pope goes beyond what is found in either Aquinas, for whom work is instrumental, or Luther, for whom it is pure service.

The profound humanitarian significance of the present Pope's view of labor was felt most keenly in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. The Pope's vision leaves no doubt as to the dignity of the laborer as well as the labor and it provides a firm foundation for protecting and advancing the rights of the worker. The message is that "work is 'for man' and not man 'for work'."<sup>13</sup> It demands that the worker be treated as a person, not an object, and thus provides a much needed corrective to the dehumanizing economic powers found in both the Western capitalist countries and in the state bureaucracies of the Eastern communist countries.

John Paul II's view of labor has been criticized on several grounds. First, his elevation of labor has been attacked for naively suggesting that work is always fulfilling and for projecting a Western notion of self-realization onto a domain that is often mechanical, frenetic, and exhausting. Second, critics argue that establishing the dignity of the worker on productivity and claiming that through work one becomes "more a human being" undermines or compromises the dignity of those who, for whatever reason, are unable to work, e.g., handicapped people, children, and the elderly. Third, critics charge that, though the Pope would be the last person to deny the significance of spirituality, the elevation of the moral significance of work tends to downplay the importance of leisure, friendship, and aesthetic appreciation.

In response, it may be true that when the Pope construes worth too strongly in terms of "doing" rather than "being," he plays into the hands of those who rank the worth of human beings in terms of their external achievements. The Pope's emphasis in this encyclical on what people do draws attention away from his Christian belief that people are valuable for who they are as unique persons. Yet the Pope should be given credit for providing a framework for regarding work not simply as a way of earning money but also as activity that, at least in some circumstances, can be intrinsically valuable, i.e., worthwhile regardless of the income produced from it. Certain kinds of activity do enhance a personal sense of well-being and ennoble the human community. Examples include the performing arts, scientific inquiry, philosophical speculation, the exercise of musical and poetic creativity, and athletic activity. It is no mistake that the Pope, unlike Aquinas, refers to "vocation" in a way that is not confined to religious life. John Paul recognizes (like Luther and Calvin) that human beings serve God and the common good through work in the world.

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<sup>11</sup>LE, 9.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>LE, 6.

John Paul II's writings on labor have to be read in the context of his other works, and particularly what he writes in the apostolic exhortation On the Family.<sup>14</sup> Marriage is essentially a communion of persons devoted to mutual self-giving and service of others, not a "lifestyle enclave" which provides a "haven in a heartless world." Far from endorsing careerism, the Pope interprets work as serving the family rather than as the central avenue of individualistic self-realization. And rather than naively blessing the consumerism that so often accompanies careerism, the Pope insists that parents should teach their children a proper attitude toward material goods "by adopting a simple and austere lifestyle," thereby incarnating the Christian truth that "man is more precious for what he is than for what he has."<sup>15</sup>

Family and work do not comprehensively capture the vocation of the Christian, which must always include service to "the other," especially the poor and marginalized. Yet they are domains of the Christian life par excellence. Through the spheres of labor and the family Christians share in the activity of the Creator.<sup>16</sup> Drawing on the famous words of the Second Vatican Council, the Pope depicts the family as "a school of deeper humanity."<sup>17</sup> He thus affirms the nobility of the everyday world of work and family far beyond what one finds in Augustine and Aquinas.

The Pope's understanding of work and family provides a framework for interpreting the moral status of leisure. He recognizes that work can at times be intrinsically valuable, but he also implicitly acknowledges that leisure provides the context for a great deal of what makes life meaningful. In this way the Pope expands the moral and religious significance of leisure far beyond what one finds in Luther and Calvin. In leisure we experience most deeply the meaning of "giving" and "receiving;" for most people, leisure offers the primary context for the essential human experiences of caring and being cared for, appreciating others and being appreciated, and of loving and being loved. In leisure we are free to affirm and enjoy others without being preoccupied with performance and productivity. The love discovered, cultivated, and expressed in periods of leisure gives a deeper human sense to the activities engaged in during labor.

### *The Place of the Family*

John Paul II emphasizes the priority of the family to work in his moral hierarchy. This is a position that continues to resonate with the experience of many working people in our society. Most people who work more than the typical forty to forty-five hours a week do so because of financial demands rather than for careerist ambitions. For the majority of people who have "jobs" rather than "careers," the most intensely

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<sup>14</sup>Pope John Paul II, On the Family (*Familiaris consortio*), Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1982). (Hereafter, FC).

<sup>15</sup>FC, 37 citing Gaudium et Spes: Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Second Vatican Council). (Hereafter GS)

<sup>16</sup>LE, 25; FC, 28).

<sup>17</sup>GS, 52 in FC, 21.

meaningful activities of life are found not in work but in play and leisure, and especially in time spent enjoying family and friends. Work is typically regarded as a means to these ends, and properly so given the toilsome and often "numbing" nature of the work that many people are required to perform.

This is not to deny that activities pursued in labor can at times inspire and instruct, or that some people do find their jobs to be deeply rewarding and a source of energy and inspiration. The moral priority of the family over work needs to be heard in our culture, especially by middle and upper class Christians in business and the professions. In our culture work as an end in itself or as an avenue of self-realization is found most typically in middle class and upper class "driven" careerists. Yet just as the prevailing instrumentalist rationality of our culture can stand to be moderated by underscoring the importance of intrinsically valuable activities, so the emphasis placed on work should be balanced with a deeper recognition of the value of close friends, marital romance, and familial affection. It might be the case that the ever increasing demands and expectations of the prevailing work culture in corporate America are drowning out the voice of our own aesthetic needs. One can extend the Pope's own position by underscoring the importance of leisure and, more strongly, by calling attention to our responsibility to be properly leisured, a responsibility to make room for retrieving the aesthetic along with the social, moral, and affective sensibilities that are the hallmark of our humanity. Underpinning all of these sensibilities is the religious, which generates the most "unproductive" activities of all, but those which ultimately give the deepest meaning, context, and significance to the others. The wisdom of the Pope's position is that it allows us to see that when properly balanced, labor and leisure are mutually complementary because both constitute avenues for the love of God and neighbor.



***LABOR AND REST: A Christian Perspective on the Economy***  
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The critical point in any discussion about the relationship between labor and rest in a given society is to understand that it is, first and foremost, a dialogue between the relative importance of the material and spiritual elements of life. Part of the difficulty in defending Sunday closing laws stems from the difficulty in quantifying the benefits of spiritual elements within our particular social construct. This has become truer as the main values in our society have become more materialist, that is to say, they are expressed in material terms. That is how the 'American Dream,' in so far as it was articulated at all, was expressed. We will leave aside the question that for large sectors of the population this 'Dream' was never a real possibility. Like all myths that define the character of a people, it had, and still has, a reality that transcends empirical substantiation. It is only now, when the possibility that the material promises of this 'Dream' will elude us and our children, that the initial premise can be called into question. However, as the largely economic arguments supporting the abolition of the Blue Laws points out, the materialistic element of the American Dream is not dead.

I have reluctantly introduced into this discussion the material/spiritual bifurcation, given how the understanding of these concepts has developed in Western philosophy and theology. However, I believe that this understanding is at the heart of the matter. The material and spiritual are usually set in opposition to one another. They are not seen as two sides of the same coin, as the basic reality of creation. Rather, one must make the decision to understand and interpret reality, the creation, in either one way or the other. It could be argued that, given this dynamic, the spiritual side has lost. 'Reality' is interpreted in purely materialist terms. Science, the primary means by which we understand and give meaning to our collective existence, has historically been entirely materialist. Even the social sciences have struggled within themselves as it has become clearer that human behavior will never be able to be understood in purely objective (read, mechanical) terms. Only recently has science (for example, in quantum physics and medicine) given some credence to the unquantifiable elements to our existence.

This is not to say that Americans are not spiritual or religious -- every study indicates that Americans are believers, pray regularly, and purport to take their religious values seriously. The problem is that this material and spiritual bifurcation has entered into both individual and social consciousness. The material is 'real,' practical, quantifiable, and consequently objective. The spiritual is ethereal, impractical, by definition non-quantifiable, and consequently entirely subjective. Material values are objective. Spiritual values are subjective. Material values are a matter for societal legislation. Spiritual values are a private matter, left to informal enforcement.

Given this understanding, Sunday closing laws never again will be defensible, unless one of two things occur: either a purely economic defense can be constructed in support of a collective day of rest, or the ethereal spiritual benefits -- benefits, by the way, that I believe have a broad societal support -- can be given the same weight as economic arguments. 'Quality of life' has, heretofore, been expressed in materialist, that is economic terms. The intangibles of reflection, prayer, familial and social intercourse, quiet, and rest must either be expressed as having some economic benefit, or they must be seen as an intrinsic element of the quality of life apart from any quantifiable economic benefit. The first would be to work within the prevailing and accepted social and conceptual framework, the second would begin to challenge the basic premises of our self-understanding, both socially and individually. As a practical matter, both tactics should be employed simultaneously. However, I believe that the first approach will inevitably be seen generally as artificial and self-serving. The second approach begins to address the root causes of the problem.

### *Elements of a Christian Understanding of Economics*

The issue of work and rest -- Sunday closing laws--can not be understood outside of a more comprehensive understanding of economics. The entire argument for the repeal of the Blue Laws is based on its economic benefit. But, for Christians any understanding of the economy begins with the central reality of God's love for creation, not with cost/benefit analysis. It is this love, this communion, that informs any analysis that Christians bring to the economic order. It also helps to explain the place for human beings within creation. We human beings not only form a part of this creation, but also play a pivotal role in its development. God, in his love, has made us his partners in bringing all of creation to perfection.

The creation is whole. Even though we can make an artificial distinction between matter and spirit, the integral wholeness of both matter and spirit, as well as every aspect of creation, is the overriding theme of God's Good News revealed in both the Old and New Covenants.

Human beings are created in the image of God, to be like him in every way. First of all this means that human beings are created good to do good. It is in doing good that we find meaning. Also like God, we are meant to be creative. Work is an expression of our intrinsic creativity. It is meant to be the means by which we transform our environment: for the good of ourselves, our neighbors, and every part of creation.

This work has an end, and that end is the salvation of the world. Salvation is not simply an individual matter, it is not personal in that sense. Rather, salvation, while worked out individually always has as its context a community. Nor is salvation limited to human beings; it involves the whole of creation, both the material and spiritual aspects of creation. Any economic program has to be concerned with the salvation of creation, that is to say, the ordering of the material realm in a manner that is in harmony with the spiritual goals established by God at the creation of the world.

It is from this unique perspective that Christians begin to judge, criticize, shape, and inform the multiplicity of economic systems by which human beings order their material existence.

The word economy comes from two Greek words: 'oikos' that means house or household, and 'nomos' that means rule, law, or custom. Together they mean the management or stewardship of a household. An economist (oikonomos), working from this meaning of economy, is a steward. Economics was the management of the resources of the household, how goods were produced, distributed and consumed, for the well-being of all its members. This was the primary understanding of economy and economist up until the modern period when 'economics' came to be separated out as a "scientific discipline" in the broader sense of "search for the 'laws of nature' that govern the universe."

Significantly, Christian writers of the patristic period expanded and deepened the meaning of economy. In the Christian view the oikos was the household of God, namely the whole of creation, and nomos was God's law. Economy now came to mean the entire Divine plan of salvation, the central feature of which was the incarnation of the second person of the Holy Trinity. So God came to be seen as the supreme Economist, the loving steward who guides creation toward salvation. Seen from this light, God is neither distant nor removed from the creation, but is actively involved. Evidence of this is found in the fact that "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son" (Jn 3:16). This economy, this divine plan, was laid together with the foundation of the world (Acts 2:23; Lk 24:26).

An understanding of economy, then, should take into account this spiritual nuance. For Christians this double meaning of economy is evident throughout the Old and New Covenants. The Torah, in regulating and limiting the buying and selling of goods, the cultivation of land and the raising of animals, placed economic activity within the context of the entire covenantal relationship between God and Israel. There was also concern for the poor (Ex 23:6; Dt 15:7-11), the stranger (Ex 21:21-24), the widow and orphan (Dt 24:19-22). The prescription of the Jubilee Year (Lev 25:8-55) was intended as a protection for the poor, a year of release.

The same theme that joins material and spiritual justice as an expression of God's economy was voiced by prophet after prophet. Amos warns of doom because Israel had sold "the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes," and had "trampled the head of the poor into the dust of the earth" (Am 2:6-7). Isaiah condemned those "who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is not more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land" (Is 5:8). Similarly, Jeremiah condemns "him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice; who make his neighbor serve him for nothing and does not give him his wages" (Jer 22:13).

Standing in the line of both the Torah and the Prophets, our Lord Jesus Christ comes as full expression of God's economy. Born in humble circumstances, making a living as a laborer, the son of God reaches out to the disenfranchised of society. At the beginning of his ministry he announces that: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim

release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk 4:18).

In everything that he did and said, our Lord made it clear that the primary focus of life had to be God and that compartmentalizing spheres of life, one economic and the other religious, was unacceptable. Thus it becomes impossible to serve two masters: God and mammon (Mt 6:24). And the rich young man is admonished to sell all that he had and distribute it to the poor if he wanted to inherit eternal life (Lk 18:18-30). In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man is condemned, not for any overt act of cruelty, but simply because he had ignored Lazarus who sat at his gate (Lk 16:19-31).

God's economy teaches us that love leads to compassion, and compassion to justice. God not only has instructed us in methodology, but invites us to be partners with him. In reading the 'economic' prescriptions of the Old Covenant, we understand that they cannot be practically followed today verbatim. However, the principles that underlie them can be. Each and every economic system, modern or ancient, is replete with *do's* and *don'ts*, otherwise it would be impossible for it to provide for the material needs of the society. The question is which principles will be employed and who will be served?

### Christian Materialism

The economy of God employs matter for spiritual ends, and thus sanctifies it. We are directed to do the same. However, humans, from the time of Adam and Eve were given every blessing in the Garden. They were, in return, called to offer a gift of creation to God. Instead, they were distracted and chose to eat the fruit of the tree, believing that having eaten it they would "be like God" (Gen 3:5). The wholeness of creation is now broken. The intimate relationship between humanity and God is ruptured. In their naive arrogance, they focused on the gift rather than the giver, and lost perspective on the true meaning of life: communion with God.

This theoretical and practical tension between the spiritual and the material has followed human beings throughout history. Ancient philosophy tended to disparage the material. Plato, for example, saw humans as spirits imprisoned in their bodies. This school of thought had many adherents and was even generally accepted in the broader culture. It influenced some elements of Christianity, leading to the condemnation of 'Origenism' in 543 A.D. by the Fifth Ecumenical Council. This condemnation was an affirmation of the human person as a psychosomatic (spirit-body) whole. The Council held to the Biblical view of creation that all that God created was "very good" (Gen 1:31).

In the west this tendency to subordinate and even deprecate matter led, by the Renaissance, to an almost total mind/body split. However, in the secularizing trend of the Enlightenment, the effect was to see matter as autonomous. 'Spirit' was not able to be measured, and therefore was discounted. Science began the search for the 'laws of nature.' Eventually, these 'laws of nature' began to be applied to human behavior as well. Human beings, along with the rest of creation, were gradually being reduced to the products of material forces.

Christian materialism affirms the basic goodness of the entirety of creation, visible and invisible. It also affirms that human beings are created as both spiritual and material beings, in a psychosomatic whole. This is in contrast to those who see us as nothing but spiritual beings, like the philosophers who laughed at St. Paul on the Areopagus (Acts 17:32) when he spoke of the resurrection from the dead. And, it is also in contrast to those who see us as nothing but material beings that end when our bodies die. Both the spiritual and material constitute necessary components of the everyday lives of individual human beings as well as of the entire society. This Christian materialism is captured in the Lord's Prayer, when Jesus taught us to pray that the Father's will be done "on earth as it is in heaven," and to ask him for "our daily bread."

### *Who are we?--A Christian Anthropology and Sociology*

In affirming the fundamental goodness of creation, including human beings, and the unique mix of spirit and matter that constitutes our nature, we also observe that human beings were not created to live as autonomous beings in isolation one from another, but were created to live in community and to be in communion with each other and with God. However, like the tension between matter and spirit, the tension between the individual and the community seems to be permanently a part of our human history. There have been many opinions as to precisely how this interdependence between individuals and the community could be configured. The configuration depends upon the emphasis. If the individual is more highly valued, then society, and all institutions within that society, will be seen as having been constituted and constructed by the collective will of many separate individuals. If the community is more highly valued, then the individual will be seen as an extension and product of the community.

This question is central because much of modern economic theory, even some socialist, postulates an autonomous individual in pursuit of his or her rational self-interest as the fundamental building-block of any economy. This current emphasis on the individual can be traced to Reformation and Renaissance thinkers who wanted to provide a necessary corrective to the over-emphasis on community, prevalent in ancient and traditional societies, and the resulting acute subordination of the individual to the community. Their intention was to ultimately strengthen the community by strengthening the individuals within that community. It has, however, had the opposite atomizing effect of strengthening the individual at the expense of the community.

On the other hand, if one looks closely at traditional societies, it could be said that while the sense of self is broader, located as much in the tribe or clan as in the individual, the same tendency toward self-interest becomes apparent when that tribe or clan encounters another. Simply broadening the boundaries of the self will not eliminate the phenomenon. Many of the factional conflicts we witness in the world today are a result of one community fighting another; one self at war with another. This sense of self must be transcended if people are going to live cooperatively in a society.

But in modern economic theory we are not dealing simply with the fulfillment of self-interest, but of rational self-interest. The evils

of unbridled self-interest have been noted from the beginning of time. The Scriptures are full of warnings against it. The modern twist is that individuals *rationaly* calculate their self-interest and live their lives accordingly. And moreover, that this rational pursuit of one's self-interest is balanced by others in a similar pursuit. But most of life's activity cannot be explained by the rational pursuit of self-interest by the autonomous individual, even in societies that espouse this principle. What is not accounted for are the other dimensions of the human person, not least of which is the need for communion both with God and with other human beings.

In the Garden, Adam and Eve sought an autonomous existence when they tasted the fruit. What they discovered was that by disobeying God they had broken the intimate relationship between God and themselves. True human community that respects both the individual and the individual's need for community can only be found in a restored relationship between God and humanity. It is in Christ, who has created "in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and reconcil[ing] us...to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end," (Eph2:15-16) that we enter into the life of the Holy Trinity. It is in this life, the life of three persons who hold all things in common in total self-effacing love, who have not three wills but one will, that we find the model for all relationships, including economic ones. If one would like to speak of systems, the Trinity is a model for a life-giving system that liberates people from the structures of sin. Because when the principle is self-effacing love, then the worth of the individual is upheld within community, and the community is strengthened as a result. There is neither the exploitation of the individual nor atomization of the community.

### **Labor and Toil**

Human labor and the social relations in which it takes place are central to stewardship. Work should not be viewed as a curse or a necessary evil which allows for, but is separate from, meaningful life. Work is a process of participating in creation. We become co-creators with God in the work of perfecting the creation, toward the salvation of the world (cf. Rm 8:19-21). The working out of our salvation (Phil 2:12) involves more than our spiritual selves; it involves our whole being. Labor, then, is an expression of our creativity and a fulfillment of our being toward our own salvation, the salvation of others, and of the whole world.

Labor becomes toil (Gen 3:17) when it is separated from this purpose. Even menial labor can be rewarding if it is seen to have meaning, is appreciated, and is in harmony with a broader purpose. However, when workers are treated like machines, are denied their basic dignity as an image of God, then work becomes drudgery. When work is seen as only a means to an end, then everything in society suffers as a result. A worker's self-worth suffers. His or her relations with others suffer. The environment suffers. And, production suffers.

Labor is the basis of production, in a sense quite distinct from the value theory of labor. The greatest differences in productivity for all countries, except for a few with extraordinary natural resources, arise from differences in quality and commitment to doing a job. This

fact emphasizes the importance of education, of training, of human relations, and of social structures in work. When human labor is deformed and degraded then productivity inevitably falls.

Work, in a very real sense, is worship. In his letter to Philemon, pleading on behalf of Onesimus, St. Paul said that "formerly he [Onesimus] was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me" (Philem 11). His usefulness was a consequence of his conversion to Christ. In his faith he came to see that doing a good job was to do the will of God (Eph 6:6). And similarly, St. Paul admonished those who were responsible for overseeing production (i.e., masters) to treat their workers with love, "rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to men and women" (Eph 6:7).

The Greek work 'liturgy' comes from two words meaning the work (ergon) of the people (laos). Even in pre-Christian times it had a meaning that was partly religious, but mostly meant something that we would call today 'public-works.' As the Christian Gospel began to transform the consciousness of people, 'liturgy' took on the deeper religious meaning it presently has. Work came to be seen as a means for glorifying God, and people came to be seen, equally, as children of God created in the image and likeness of God. Liturgy became a means for expressing this new reality, this new life in Christ.

When we celebrate the eucharist we take bread and wine and offer it to God. This bread and wine is the product of human labor. It is wheat and grapes grown by human hands and transformed by human labor into uniquely human food. These stand as symbols of the cooperation between us and God for our own sustenance and the transformation of the world. We offer them up as an act of faith and love that grows out of the gratitude we feel for all the blessings that God has bestowed on us. In return God sends his Holy Spirit and changes these products of our labor and our faith into meaning. We find our purpose in this synergy, this cooperation, between God and us.

### *The Economy and Salvation*

In a very real sense, the search for the right economic balance is the search for the right community and the right theology. As the right theology grounds us spiritually, and the right political principle ground us to construct a healthy community, so the right economic system leads, not simply to a fair and just distribution of the material means for life, but more importantly, to the inclusion of all persons and all the elements of creation into the 'accounting system' of society. Salvation belongs to all, and salvation means everyone working together to bring the whole creation into harmony with God's purpose. God "desires all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4).

However, people and societies make choices, and not all choices lead to salvation, lead to life. The Rich Young Man wanted to know the way to eternal life. The Lord told him. The young man said that he had done all of these things. He had followed all the prescriptions of the Law, but he felt that there had to be more. Then the Gospel of Mark records, Jesus "loved him" (10:21) and gave him that life-saving advice. He rejected the advice and walked away sad. Jesus comments, "How hard

it will be for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" (10:23).

The economy is presented to us by some as a system beyond human construct, as part of the natural order of things. But while economic relationships, per se, are certainly part of the human condition, given our psychosomatic reality, the manner in which those relationships is formed belongs, like all of life, to a matter of choice. The economy was made for humans, not humans for the economy. The Son of Man is Lord even of economy (cf. Mk 2:27-28). Whenever we begin to speak of a system as autonomous, or when a system begins to claim autonomous status for itself, then it becomes an object of faith. Only God is autonomous; everything else is finite.

Humans were created as worshipping beings. If they do not worship the true God, then they worship another god. It is either God or mammon (Mt 6:24). It is not accidental that economic (and many political) systems take on religious language and imagery to justify their programs. "They exchange the glory of the immortal God for images" (Rm 1:23). On the less serious side, 'god-language' is often used in advertising campaigns that try to satisfy the longing for the transcendent God through the purchase of some material object. On the much more serious side, those who manage the economy often talk of the 'sacrifices' that must be made for the sake of the economy. Salvation, in the form of universal prosperity, is the promise. The sacrifice usually ends up being the weak, the powerless, the poor. There is no difference, practically speaking, to the sacrifices offered to Ba'al and those offered to the economic system.

But the Lord says: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" (Mt 9:13; Mt 12:7; Hos 6:6). God showed us exactly what was meant not only in word, but especially in deed. In order to extricate us, God's children and creation, from the deadly cycle of sin, the Lord came, became one of us, and took the suffering on himself, to show the way to life. His sacrifice resulted and results in the liberation of humanity and creation. His love lifted up and continues to lift up the poor and the oppressed, those with whom he associated himself. His resurrection from the dead is not only a sign of the promise in store for us who follow, it is also the inauguration of the re-creation. It is the Eighth Day, the First Day of the New Creation. God sends the Holy Spirit to breathe life into us, to guide us and to direct us in our calling to bring this new reality, this new life, to the world that God loves.

### Conclusion

The debate surrounding the Sunday Closing Laws is a debate about one vision of the world's meaning over another. It is not about economic benefit -- people will buy what they need one way or another. It is not about choosing one religious tradition's holy day over another -- Christians happen to be the majority of this society; in the Islamic countries, the observance is Friday; in Israel it is Saturday. It is about whether or not there will be any spiritual center to our society. It is about how we will define ourselves as both individuals and a people. It is a discussion about values, in the largest and broadest meaning of that word. Those who argue against Sunday closing laws are ready to rob life of any spiritual meaning.



In some sense we are asking more of the law, more of legislators, than it or they are capable of giving. Law, all law, requires a broad societal consensus for it to be enforceable. Currently, because of the structure of our society, our economy, and our political life, the consensus is with the expansion of economic activity into every aspect of human existence. It is up to those of us who understand that life is more than bread (cf. Mt 4:4) to lay out the argument for the alternative paradigm and to help people make the choices that will lead to true life.

# **THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SABBATH**

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A common day of rest is a tradition treasured by all three monotheist world religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.<sup>18</sup> The Judeo-Christian scriptures refer to the sabbath as a divine gift intended to celebrate God's goodness in creation and in history. Only a few theological constructs lend themselves to such a consistent net of political metaphors as this one; what follows is theology and politics.

The religious roots of a common day of rest are taken by some as devoid of meaning for modern (and post-modern) society. Religion, however, is also a socio-cultural phenomenon, and religious language is a metaphor for concrete human values. That is why social philosophers and social scientists can speak about things like the "spirit" of capitalism, for example. While the sacred center for most religions is their god, every culture has its untouchable -- i.e., "sacred" -- center as well. The point is that in spite of the post-modern illusion that religion has become irrelevant, from the point of view of the human sciences, even thoroughly secular ways of life produce rituals and beliefs that fulfill functions which in other times and/or places would be recognized as religious.

Some traditions, like a common day of rest, transcend not only the particularity of a given religious orientation, but they transcend the narrow understanding of "religion" itself; i.e., a common day of rest is a tradition that speaks to a certain way of being human in the world that has appealed to people around the world through millennia. The challenge, then, is clear: are we going to witness to the humanizing intention of the sabbath or will we go-with-the-flow and bow down to the god of this century which demands human breath and sweat seven days a week?

Values are the common ground between religion and politics. Advocates on both sides of the issue recognize that this is a struggle for certain values. Opponents of the Sunday closing laws talk about dollars and cents. Defenders of a common day of rest talk about families together, time to celebrate life together, time to be part of a community of faith, and so on. What follows is a reflection on the sabbath in the Bible, how it relates to the core values of the biblical traditions and symbols, etc. This is, obviously, religious language, but it is language that transcends itself as it points to the human implications of the choice at stake.

## **An Act Of Worship**

The "Shema" (i.e., the "call" to listen, the "hear, oh Israel") in

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<sup>18</sup>In fact, up to now all known cultures in the world separate days of work from days of rest, etc.

Deuteronomy 5 establishes the exodus as the paradigm over which the biblical faith is built.<sup>19</sup> In the "Shema" the ten commandments are prefaced by YHWH's self-identification as the God "who brought Israel out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (v.6). The first commandment is against idolatry "you shall have no other gods before me." The first lesson in Hebrew theology, Hebrew theology 101, is that the God who Israel should worship is the God of the exodus, the God who delivers the slaves from their oppressors. The commandment regarding the sabbath is intended to remind Israel of this identity of YHWH:

Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work -- you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day. (v.v. 12-16, NRSV)

The intention of sabbath rest is to cultivate a collective memory, a memory sacred as the center of the biblical culture, a memory of YHWH as the God who delivers the poor and oppressed from their chains. That is why in biblical Israel the sabbath is to be observed by everybody together, at the same time, heads of households, their children, servants, etc. -- "so that your male and your female slave may rest as well as you." Community rest is the only worship acceptable to a God who delivers slaves from slavery; i.e., (a) YHWH wants to be known as the God of rest and (b) YHWH wants to be worshipped by a community of equals. The sabbath celebrates both rest and equality. By observing the sabbath together the community proclaims that YHWH is a God of justice. Observing the sabbath together the community imprints that message in its collective memory. Anywhere people are oppressed by socio-economic and political structures this biblical memory of YHWH as a God who delivers the poor and oppressed is a subversive memory.<sup>20</sup>

### An Economic Model

Besides being a reminder of the identity of God, the biblical sabbath was also a symbol of a concrete economic model. As the weekly day of rest is a day for collective renewal, so the biblical economy

<sup>19</sup>von Rad, Gerhard, "Das theologische Problem des alttestamentlichen Schöpfungsglaubens," in Werden und Wesen des Alten Testaments, Beiheft 66 zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (1936): pp. 138-147

<sup>20</sup>For more on "subversive memories" see Michael Foucault, Language, Counter Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews. Introduction by Donald F. Bouchard. Translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. (Utica: Cornell University Press, 1977).

includes the concepts of a sabbatical year and the year of the jubilee (Lv. 25), the year after a week of sabbatical years, i.e., after 49 years, when prisoners should be set free, creation should rest (including humans and animals) and the economic resources of the nation should be redistributed among its inhabitants:

you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you to your property and to your family. That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces. (v.v. 9-12)

Two things are worth noticing: (a) the year of the jubilee, the crown of sabbatical celebrations, weaves together forgiveness of offenders, rest from labor, rest for the land and redistribution of economic resources; i.e., it is a periodic renewal of the community when everybody has a chance to start anew; and, (b) the celebration of this periodic rest/renewal of society and creation is declared by the sacred text as "holy" -- "it shall be holy to you." (v. 12).

### A Memorial of Creation

The rest granted to the land in the year of the jubilee and in the sabbatical year, and the rest granted to the animals together with humans on the weekly day of rest document the importance of creation in the theology of the sabbath.

The rest with which Israel is to celebrate its liberation from Egypt is intended by YHWH from the beginning of the world. Liberation is incipient in creation. Ex. 20.11 and Gn.2.2 put the memorial in similar terms: the sabbath as the crown of creation; God's intention for the world. It is a way to confess that "there is life before death."<sup>21</sup>

In the Jewish tradition the sabbath is associated with Menuha: "tranquility, serenity, peace and repose."<sup>22</sup> Menuha is

the state wherein man lies still, wherein the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. It is the state in which there is no strife and no fighting, no fear and no

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<sup>21</sup>Soelle, Dorothee and Colyes, Shirley, To Work and to Love - A Theology of Creation (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), pp. 2ff

<sup>22</sup>Heschell, Abraham J., The Sabbath -- Its Meaning for Modern Man (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1951), p.p. 22, 23. See also his end notes 23 & 24, ch.1.

distrust. The essence of good life is Menuha.<sup>23</sup>

The 23th Psalm refers to this essence: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me besides still waters" (i.e., the "waters of menuhot").<sup>24</sup>

The sabbath is the true hallmark of every biblical -- every Jewish and also every Christian -- doctrine of creation. The completion of creation through the peace of the sabbath distinguishes the view of the world as creation from the view of the world as nature; for nature is unremittingly fruitful and, though it has seasons and rhythms, knows no sabbath. It is the sabbath which blesses, sanctifies and reveals the world as God's creation.<sup>25</sup>

### A Cultural Paradigm

The intentional separation of one day in seven for the celebration of life represents cooperation between the human race and God in the realm of culture. God's creation in Genesis includes the human race, made in God's "image and likeness." In the image and likeness of their creator humans are creative creatures, i.e., creatures capable of innovative and purposeful cultivation of nature.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel talks about the "architecture of time," as a cultural structure:

Judaism teaches us to be attached to holiness in time, to be attached to sacred events, to learn how to consecrate sanctuaries that emerge from the magnificent stream of a year. The Sabbaths are our great cathedrals; and our Holy of Holies is a shrine that neither the Romans nor the Germans were able to burn...<sup>26</sup>

In defining days of work and days of rest, seasons to gather and seasons to refrain from gathering, times to move and times to be still, the biblical "architecture of time" represents a cultural paradigm -- a model of human creative interaction with the world; i.e., a paradigm of culture as distinct from nature (even though affirming of nature).

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid, p. 23. See also the Midrash on Genesis, "Senhedrin" (11.8b) in the Babylonian Talmud: "the power of the Sabbath is so great that on the seventh day even the ungodly in Gehenna may rest from their torment." (bSanh., 65; Gn.r., 11 (8b))

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. See also his end note 27, ch.1.

<sup>25</sup>Moltmann, Jurgen, God in Creation -- A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God (San Francisco: Harper and Row), 1985, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup>Heschel, Op. cit., p. 8. (Emphases added.)

Without such a structure culture could be reduced to cultivation -- economic activity for its own sake without any creative center. The sabbath as an intentional stop, a stop which gives nature a break, is a cultural activity; i.e., an activity characterized by creativity in relationship to nature. The sabbath is a celebration that reminds us of creation: God's creation of the world and our creation of culture as God's creatures. The sabbath is a memorial of creation.

### A New Work Ethic

In Ex. 16 Moses instructs the Israelites regarding their need for food on the sabbath. Moses' instructions were simple: (a) each person should gather enough food each day for all those in their own tents (v. 16); (b) they should not gather for more than one day -- those who did, found their left overs spoiled next morning (v. 20); (c) in preparation for the sabbath, however, they should gather enough for the next day -- and it would not spoil! (v.v. 22-26). Some disobeyed that instruction and worked on the sabbath. They were punished. (Nm. 15.32-36) As a freed nation, called to be witnesses of YHWH's grace, Israel had to be liberated also from the spiritual oppression of the Egyptian work ethic. As slaves in Egypt they had to be productive seven days a week. As a people liberated from Egypt, Israel was called to celebrate in the desert of the exodus the fact that their liberation was the result not of their work but of God's. (In fact, in Egypt, the more they worked the stronger their oppressor became.) The sabbath was such a celebration. To stop productive activity is a confession of faith in God's provision. The opposite confession is the confession of faith in work -- "we have to gather mana seven days a week or else it won't be there." Salvation by works. The work ethic of Egypt. Fear. Anxiety. Stress. Exodus 16 condemns excessive accumulation and excessive work. Both are antithetical to the spirit of sabbath. The celebration of the sabbath is an invitation to enjoy life more with less.

### A Pious Conspiracy

A pious conspiracy emerges in the Gospels. Most references to the sabbath in the New Testament are framed by "conflict stories," i.e., stories which tell of Jesus in confrontation with the religious and political authorities of the day.<sup>27</sup> In Mark these stories appear in 2.1-3.6. This section concludes with two such sabbath conflicts. At the end of chapter 2 Jesus is challenged by the Pharisees because his disciples are plucking heads of grain on the sabbath day. Jesus responds in the rabbinical style, with a counter question that sets a broader frame of reference for the discussion of what is or is not lawful. His conclusion is twofold: he said to them that (a) "the sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the sabbath;" and, (b) "the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath." (Mk. 2. 27 and 28. NRSV). "Son of Man" could refer either to the whole humankind (see Ps. 8.5-6) or to the authority of Jesus himself. In either case, the

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<sup>27</sup>These stories are found in Mk. 2.1-3.6 par. Other sabbath texts also document the conflict between Jesus and/or the early Christian community and the Jewish authorities. A selected number of them appear in the argument that follows.

sabbath is an instrument for human fulfillment.<sup>28</sup>

By the time the fourth Gospel was written, at the end of the first century A.D., church and synagogue were already separate from each other by the confession that Jesus is the Lord of the sabbath and the church had made its sabbath the first day of the week in celebration of the resurrection.

The pious conspiracy of the Gospels is to identify the sabbath with resurrection: restoration of body and soul. The conflict between Jesus and the authorities was on the one hand about the healing of the body on the holy day; on the other hand, however, it was also about the healing of the spirit to re-create, re-define, re-imagine a memorial of creation and liberation; a memorial "for humankind" and not the other way around. Evidence of this is the fact that Jesus inaugurated his public ministry by appropriating Isaiah's proclamation of the year of jubilee, the ultimate sabbath, in Luke 4.18-19:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.<sup>29</sup>

### **For Today: The Political Importance of the Sabbath**

Borrowing Rabbi Heschel's image of the "architecture of time" one can say that the structures of our time reveal the structures of our souls; what we do with our time tells who we are, which gods we worship, what our lives (being-in-time) are made of or what we make of our lives. This imagery is susceptible of two distinct interpretations: one can take this to mean an individualistic moralizing on individuals who for one reason or another work seven days a week or one can take this in the socio-political and cultural sense in which the author of the image used it. In the economy of symbolic exchanges, the downgrading of a collective celebration to a private observation undermines the social meaning intended by that celebration. Systemic dismantling of such symbolic exchanges results in anomie, a condition described by social scientists as characterized by lack of social identity, apathy and even anxiety.<sup>30</sup> It is the collective observation of the sabbath that shapes the collective memory of Israel and distinguishes between its sacred and

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<sup>28</sup>Other synoptic confrontations about the sabbath are:

\* Mk 3.1-6 and Mt.12.11: whether or not to heal on a sabbath; Jesus responds by asking whether it is lawful to do good on the sabbath and heals the person in need. The debate seems to be over. The opponents of Jesus now seek "to destroy him" (Mk.3.6 par.).

\* Lk. 13.10-17: the healing of a woman bent over; Jesus heals the woman in spite of the objections of the leader of the synagogue.

\* Lk. 14.1-6: another healing on a sabbath.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. Is. 61.1-2.

<sup>30</sup>See Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966, 67), pp. 102-03.

profane time. It is the collective definition of time-structures that make of our time either a temple, a bank, a garden or a jail.

It is nothing new that the untouchable center of advanced capitalism is profit. In the secular sense, the god of the capitalist society is money. "In God we trust." The sabbath, on the other hand, is a temple to honor the God of justice, liberation and rest. The sabbath is also a symbol of an economy of periodic renewal, an economy of jubilee. The sabbath is a celebration of creation. It is a paradigm of culture. It is a pious memory and a hope for a utopian tomorrow. As a society we need to choose between honoring one or the other of these options.

Ancient wisdom had it "that on the seventh day even the ungodly in Gehenna may rest from their torment." Are we in such a bad shape as a society that working men and women are worse off today than the "ungodly in Gehenna" without rest from their toil?

Let us redefine who we want to be as a community, as a society and as a people and what we want to make of the days of our lives. I submit life can be a sabbath. We need to begin by protecting what is left of our weekly half-a-day of rest.



## **ORGANIZED LABOR & ORGANIZED REST**

**Mr. Robert Haynes**

**Secretary/Treasurer, MA AFL-CIO**

Organized workers in Boston and in Massachusetts led the struggle for the shorter working day in the 1800s, with a General Strike for the 10 hour day in Boston in 1835. The ship carpenters who walked out made a simple plea: they went to work when it was dark and they came home when it was dark. They lived to work and had no time to be fathers or citizens. Next women textile workers led a legislative campaign for ten hours through the Lowell Female Reform Association, but the textile manufacturers had more influence in the State House. Success finally came in 1874 when Massachusetts enacted the first law limiting women and children's work to 10 hours. But then a long fight began to enforce the 1874 law which many employers evaded by forcing employees to work through lunch hours.

The campaign for the eight-hour day originated in Boston where workers in the Charlestown Navy Yard struck for more leisure in 1862. George McNeill, a founder of the Boston Eight Hour League, later became head of the state Bureau of Labor Statistics and documented the fact that most wage earners labored 12-13 hours a day and were deprived of the "great uplifting influences of leisure." A powerful eight-hour movement swept the country and led to a great strike in May of 1886 led by the building trades. The movement's slogan was: "Eight Hours for Work, Eight Hours for Rest, Eight Hours for What We Will." Workers wanted the freedom to choose activities besides work, to "pass" more time at rest and "spend" less time at work.

### **The Role of Organized Labor**

The labor movement, led by the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, formed in 1887, argued that an eight hour day would improve family life, recreational freedom, education, and participation in civic affairs, and beyond this, the reform would provide more work for the many who suffered from unemployment. By 1902 over forty towns and cities in the Commonwealth had adopted eight hours on public works, and in 1906 a watered down eight hour bill for public employees became law in Massachusetts, one of the first in the nation. In 1911 the Legislature mandated a 54 hour work week for women in the state's textile industry. When employers in Lawrence then responded by cutting women's pay, the great Bread and Roses strike of 1912 erupted.

In 1916 Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, reiterated labor's case for the eight hour day emphasizing the ways in which a shorter work day would increase productivity and also the ways in which it would stimulate workers' "intellectual desires and cravings." Many wage earners in this era lived to work and had no time to cultivate themselves as citizens.

During World War I many workers in heavy industry won the eight hour day with federal support, but it was not until the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt that most U.S. workers gained this freedom. Even

at the federal level, Massachusetts played a leading role. In 1933 U.S. Congressman William Connery of Lynn introduced a bill, favored by unions, to reduce the work week to 30 hours and spread out what work remained. However, the 30 hour proposal did not get into the Wagner Act of 1935 which Connery co-sponsored to create the National Labor Relations Board. This law gave workers the right to organize and bargain collectively but did not limit hours.

Rep. Connery died suddenly in 1937, but a year later President Roosevelt signed a law pioneered by Lynn's Congressman, a law to mandate an eight-hour day for employees involved in producing goods for interstate commerce. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 reduced the work week to forty hours by 1940. It was a very popular law with 79% approval in public opinion polls.

The Act also outlawed child labor and finally working class youngsters could devote full time to school and to have a childhood their predecessors never had. This was a struggle for children's leisure that also had origins in our state where the first child labor regulations were promulgated in 1860. Now even child labor laws are violated by some employers. Between 1982 and 1988 the number of children working illegally in the U.S. doubled to 20,154. Some of these violations have taken place right here in our state where we have also seen our child labor law revised by legislators who want to help business extend the work day for school-age youngsters. Of course school performance in Massachusetts suffers as working hours increase.

Needless to say, if the current limits on Sunday work are eroded, teenagers will be able to work even longer hours in retail establishments where most of them are employed. This might make life more convenient for a lot of people, but it conflicts directly with the need to improve our educational system and the skills of our students. Economists have warned that "when younger and younger teenagers sacrifice educational achievement for a paycheck, the economy and the youngsters will suffer in the long run."

The massive unemployment of the Great Depression strengthened the call for the eight hour day and the five day work week. Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religious leaders argued strongly for the five day week to allow workers to honor the Jewish sabbath and Christian Sunday. But beyond this religious concern, said one rabbi, such a reform would "add health and strength to the American people." It would "promote the home and home life" in particular. Once federal law mandated a forty hour week for most private sector workers, those who opposed work on Saturday and Sunday were more successful in enacting local option laws and state laws, requiring weekend closings of business places. These laws were related in the public mind to laws closing saloons and liquor stores on Sundays (the Blue Laws).

The demand for production during World War II and for increased consumption after the War ended the era when shorter hours were a major demand of the labor movement and of the public. Many working people wanted over time. Others felt they could not refuse it. Many began moonlighting on second jobs to pay their bills and send kids to college.

No one complained much about this trend or even noticed it until

recently. And Professor Schor has done a great deal to bring the problem into focus with her important book The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure. Much of what she writes bears on our discussion today.

### Work and Distress

Boston outpaces even New York in the length of working hours and the rate of coronary heart disease. There is now of course a well established connection between work related stress and illness.

At a national level Americans have been steadily spending more time at work in recent years. Professor Schor calculates that since 1967 the average worker is spending an additional 163 hours a year at work--or an extra month! As a result the average worker enjoys only 16 and a half hours of leisure a week. Put another way, free time has fallen 40 percent since 1973, according to a Harris poll.

The increasing pull of work and the loss of leisure time has had many adverse results, not only on educational achievement for young people and the health of older people. The time squeeze has also damaged the quality of our family life, at a time when families are already stressed by many other problems. Child neglect is a growing problem.

As Professor Schor shows, the impact is greatest on working mothers who now spend an average of 65 hours working at home and on the job. But, she writes, "many do far more than the average -- such as mothers with young children, women in professional positions, or those whose wages are so low that they must hold down two jobs just to scrape by." A Boston study showed that employed mothers average over 80 hours of work including housework, child care and employment! We would guess that some of these women would welcome a Sunday off when the store is closed and they can perhaps find a little free time for themselves.

The "time squeeze" also puts fathers in a bind. Dr. Schor presents this case of a Massachusetts factory worker who says: "Either I can spend time with my family, or support them -- not both. If I don't work overtime my wife would have to work much longer hours to make up the difference, and our day care bill would double... The trouble is, the little time I am home I'm too tired to have any fun with them or be any real help around the house."

### The Ballot Debate

This November corporate interests representing the retail and food industry will be mounting a campaign to rescind the last vestiges of the Commonwealth's Blue Laws.

The Massachusetts AFL-CIO will be working in conjunction with the United Food & Commercial Workers Union to defeat the retailers' ballot question.

Frustrated by their lack of success in the Legislature, the retail industry will attempt to foist upon the public the same lame arguments

that were rejected by the members of the Massachusetts General Court after careful deliberation.

They'll speak of economic growth that Sunday morning and holiday openings will provide. You will certainly see a series of alleged independent studies that tout economic growth and increased tax revenues for the Commonwealth.

In spite of these arguments, simple logic dictates that the average consumer has only so much to spend in a week. Stores are currently open 156 out of the 168 hours in a week. Which brings us to their next argument in favor of so called consumer convenience.

Corporate convenience - not consumer convenience - is the real issue at stake. Corporate retailers are attempting to create a need rather than fulfill a market demand. Their intention is to drive small convenience stores and family owned businesses out of the market.

You will also hear about job creation. The reality is that when compromise legislation was passed in 1983, the retail industry saw no job growth. Retailers simply shifted their existing employees' schedules to cover the expanded hours.

They will also contend that employee protection on voluntary work and time and a half pay will be respected.

Does anybody really believe that workers in the retail trades will be empowered to tell their boss "No thanks, I'm not coming in"? Life in the workplace just isn't like that. You know it and I know it.

Retail workers can currently plan their lives around five holidays and Sunday morning closings.

Whatever happened to the concept of time to spend with family, friends and to worship on Sunday morning? We hope the religious community can join us in opposing the repeal of the Blue Laws.

The increase of work time is not necessary to increase our national productivity. It seems to be strictly a matter of generating greater profits for those who own businesses. What can we do? We might return to the thinking of Representative Connery of Lynn who called for a 30 hour work week and more vacation time, like the German metal workers who now have a 35 hour week and a 5-6 week vacation. German industry has been far more productive than our own until recently.

We have a long tradition in this Commonwealth and in this country of legislating our right to free time. The labor movement has always sought laws regulating work time and the state has established many legal holidays including, most recently, Martin Luther King Day. And as Professor Schor reminds us, Social Security is based on the principle that elderly people have a right to leisure at the end of their working lives. There are lots of pressures in the business world to increase the time we work, including the move against the Blue Laws. I think we should resist those pressures and reaffirm our right to free time.

## ***STUDY GUIDE***

The preceding essays deal with issues related to the sabbath from various theoretical perspectives. A common day of rest, however, is a very concrete experience for those who enjoy it and a treasured memory for many who at some point experienced it and may no longer be able to. The questions below are intended to foster conversations and reflection on the importance of a common day of rest as a personal experience in the context of a larger community.

1. Do you consider a common day of rest important or would you be happy with any time off regardless of whether or not others, family or friends, have time off at other times?

2. How much time off from your job is dedicated to household chores (i.e., shopping, paying bills, taking care of your car, fixing the house, etc.)? How much of it is dedicated to a personal hobby or interest? How much is dedicated to your spiritual life?

3. Do you have time to volunteer (i.e., as a "big sister" or "big brother," at church, at the local public school or public library, at political campaigns, etc.)? Do you like to volunteer? If not, why not? If so, do you do it?

4. Do you think it is possible to put a price tag on something like the tradition to keep a common day of rest? How much money is needed to allure you from a quiet Sunday morning at home to work? As a society, what is more important: to protect a rhythm of life which allows for common times of rest or to push for full time productivity in competition for economic leadership?

5. Rabbi Heschel talks about the "architecture of time." What does the architecture of your time say about you? What are the priorities in your schedule? Do you feel cheated out of time for things you consider important?

6. Do you miss the sabbath rituals of your childhood? What were those rituals? Religious observances in the morning? A sit-down meal for mid-day dinner?

## ON THE BLUE LAWS

February 1, 1977

The repeal of the Sunday Closing or Blue Laws portends a negative impact on the quality of life in Massachusetts. We, therefore, urge the preservation of these ancient but valuable restrictions to protect a common day of rest.

Proponents of repeal argue that an end to the Blue Laws will have substantial economic benefits, including an increase in sales, profits, employment, payrolls, consumer convenience, revenues, the state's competitive advantage in relation to its neighbors, plus a reduction in prices. These extensive claims invite skepticism. In fact, all of these claims have been strongly refuted by opponents of repeal, some of whom maintain that exactly the opposite effects will occur. For example, the claim of increased sales is offset by the alternative position that only a certain number of dollars for retail purposes exists and they will be expanded over seven rather than six days. Moreover, the alleged competitive advantage for Massachusetts will not materialize, it is argued, because shoppers travel to border states not merely to take advantage of Sunday openings but to save money on sales taxes.

The issue of economic benefits is immensely complex and strongly debated. It deserves lengthy and careful study, not exaggerated advocacy on either side.

Moreover, proponents of repeal argue that the option of opening or remaining closed will be preserved. Cities or towns can choose to maintain Sunday and holiday closings; commercial establishments can choose not to open; and laborers will be free to work or not to work. It seems more likely, however, that the practical dynamics of competition will force openings. When one city permits openings, others will follow suit, to maintain competitive parity. Businesses will do likewise, and workers, receiving income incentives and fearing reprisals, will feel compelled to work. The likely result will be generalized commercial openings, making the seventh day nearly indistinguishable from the other six in terms of consumer and commercial activity.

Whatever conclusions are ultimately reached about the economic gains or losses from the Sunday closing laws, some fundamental human values could be lost if these laws are repealed. Society needs a regular period of rest, relaxation, and renewal, a shift in pace from our pervasive consumerism and commercialism. A common day of rest makes it more likely that families and friends can experience this relaxation and renewal together. The present exceptions in the law mean that many citizens must work on Sunday, but the repeal of the closing laws probably would magnify that factor many-fold, making a qualitative change out of a quantitative one. Sunday closing laws are a device to protect the quality of human life in a complex, intense, and almost constantly gyrating society. The rest from labor, the relief from the clamor of perpetual motion, is such a fundamental human need as to be a sacred duty. To brand these laws as archaic is to pretend that these needs are outmoded.

The original religious rationale for the Blue Laws is unfair in a pluralistic society. The sanctity of Sabbath worship, of course, is one of our commitments, but it cannot be one, in the midst of cultural diversity, for which we seek the sanctions of civil law. Though the present common day of rest obviously coincides with the primary day of worship in the churches, it is unclear that Sunday openings will have any more adverse effects on participation in Sunday worship than recreational opportunities now have. Our intent, therefore, in supporting the principle of these laws is not to protect the Christian Sabbath, but to preserve the benefits for human well-being in a uniform time for rest and renewal. Until such occasion, if ever, as changes in cultural patterns and traditions allow for another day, it seems reasonable that the time of common rest should be Sunday.

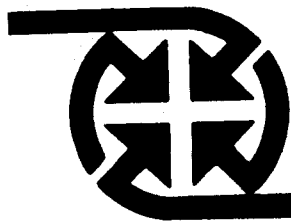
The very complexity of our society, of course, requires some exceptions to Sunday closings. An examination of the laws might reveal, in fact, the need for further amendments to insure that exceptions are rational rather than random. All such exceptions, we hope, will be based upon necessity and equitability, to maintain the day of rest as a time to benefit, not hurt, people.

We believe that the Sunday closing laws deserve continuation. We recognize that the effects of these statutes are complex and ambivalent. We, however, urge citizens and legislators to consider not only the alleged economic benefits of repeal, which may, in fact, be mythical or minimal, but also the quality of life in this Commonwealth.

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The above statement was signed on February 1, 1977 by six denominational executives of member-bodies in the Massachusetts Council of Churches. Representing the viewpoint of the Council, it also was endorsed by the Massachusetts Commission on Christian Unity.

The position was reaffirmed by the Massachusetts Council of Churches Board of Directors as official policy in 1982, 1985, and 1990.



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