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The Theology of Accountability and Biblical, Historical and Political Implications for Social Justice

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Abstract: The formulation and impact of policies are examined and theological aspects of accountability are analysed insofar as they affect individuals and organizations. The social justice implications are examined through Biblical, historical and political lenses. The acceptance of responsibility by individual church members, leaders, managers and politicians, as well as by organizations, on issues of social justice is implied.

Keywords: Accountability, Altruism, Estrangement, Responsibility, Social Justice, Theology

Introduction

IN EXAMINING THE way policy is formulated and the way some recent significant policy decisions have impacted on society, this paper addresses theological aspects of accountability or responsibility. It shows from an historical perspective how people have responded in different ways to the challenges of administering justice in their communities, and examines various perspectives on justice and the ways in which people have accepted responsibility for their actions. Social justice action resulting in significant changes in government policy is illustrated through the fight to stop the slave trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and to raise the age of consent in Victorian England. In illustrating contemporary international campaigns seeking to end human trafficking and to eliminate other activities that severely and unjustly disadvantage individuals, communities and/or nations, the paper seeks to stimulate policymakers to formulate policies that are altruistic and not driven by any one group's self-interests.

Conflicting values are being faced constantly by individual policymakers and this is sometimes identified as being between altruism and egoism, in other words: between selflessness and selfishness. Such a divergence has a political dimension, as the current Prime Minister of Australia recognizes as a “*battle between free-market fundamentalism and the social democratic belief that individual reward can be balanced with social responsibility*” (Rudd 2006).

Not all market fundamentalists – who are sometimes labelled as ‘economic rationalists’ – see the link between personal responsibility and market freedom. This sometimes necessitates governments to intervene to ensure a more egalitarian distribution of the world's resources.

Policy Formation and Impact

Policy changes and implementation are rarely the result of rational decision-making: following theoretical guidelines, outlining policy options and, after choosing between the alternatives, subjecting implementation of the selected option to an evaluation process. Traditional models for policymaking have similarities with scientific models of decision-making based on concepts of rationality (see Sergiovanni and Carver 1980, p.307). Rather, Porter and Hicks (1995, p.1) claim that policy changes occur “*through a process of interactive interactions among three 'streams' of activity: defining the problem, suggesting solutions, and obtaining political consensus*”. At the convergence of these streams a “*window of opportunity*” is suggested and perhaps an alert policymaker can grasp it as a mechanism for more iterative strategies in the process.

Just as decision-making can be based on the notion of rationality and policymakers can formulate policies that are rational and dispassionate, they nevertheless cannot be divorced from ideology and self interest. Hulme (2005) claims that in organizational contexts rationality implies “*Adopting a scientific rather than a metaphysical approach to problems*”. This is, however, but one side of the equation. Research calls for greater efforts on the effects of political decisions on social policy (Howard 2007, p.109; see also Cortner 1968; Olson 1990; Shipan 2000; Smith 2006; Unah 2003).

Changes in Government Policies

Changes in government policies sometimes significantly impact on the very societies in which the new policies apply. For instance, Fording and Berry



(2007) claim that the ambitious social policy initiative of the 'war' on poverty, in the United States during the 1960s, has had a most controversial impact upon American Society because of "*the dramatic expansion of public assistance programs for the able-bodied poor and their children*" (p.37). Some significant changes to welfare policy occurred during Bill Clinton's Presidential Term. Sosin and Smith (2006) cite the Charitable Choice Amendment of the 1996 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) legislation as an example of more recent policy changes that enable the federal government, despite the constitutional provision for the separation of Church and State, to provide funding so that "*sectarian congregations and agencies*" could access such funds but still retain "*their religious character*" (p.533). Immediately upon taking office President George Bush established the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and this "*generally encourages an enhanced role of religious providers in service delivery*" (p.533). By 2004 at least 10 federal agencies promoted the delivery of services by religious organizations. This new policy suggests, as Cnaan et al (2002) argue, "*care for the neediest members of our society will be encouraged to come from local-based organizations...*" (Cnaan et al. 2002, p.6; see also Cnaan, Wineburg, and Boddie 1999; Cnaan and Boddie 2002; Cnaan, Sinha, and McGrew 2004; Lupu and Tuttle 2004, 2006, 2007; Ragan and Wright 2005). Church Congregations, some for the first time, were now in a financial position to engage in significant welfare activities in their local area.

New government funding procedures bring new responsibilities for Faith-Based agencies (Sosin and Smith 2006). Non-profit agencies, including faith-based agencies have a responsibility to their mission and need to be careful that they don't contract to undertake government funded programmes that conflict with their own mission. For instance, The Salvation Army receives government grants to help pay for food at their summer camps for young people and for some of the costs of running various social service programmes but the contracts do not allow "*it to proselytise as a part of the programme or as a requirement for admittance or continuance in the programme*" (Ward 2007, p.6). They are allowed to undertake the services in accordance with the way they are constituted legally as a Church with no separate entity for social work as there is in Australia or in separate foundations as is the case France (see Duchêne 2007; Howes 2007, pp.109-112) and the Netherlands (see Howes 2007, pp.176-180). Ward (pp.6-7) states that they are careful not to sign contracts that hinder them from fulfilling their mission..

In the example of The Salvation Army again, White (2007, pp.7-8) indicates that, for the fifteen

southern states and the District of Columbia (see Howes 2007, p.271), the Social Services Department reviews about US\$90million worth of government contracts each year comprising "*about fifteen hundred contracts for residential housing or temporary shelter or feeding programs or after school programs – a variety of things from youth to adults to homeless to senior citizens*". White is careful to ensure that even for admission to and participation in these programmes, the contracts do not require that religious symbols be removed from buildings or that clients are prohibited from accessing Church Services. Where such stipulations are included in the contracts the offer of funding for the programme is declined.

Problems with Corporation Policies

Sometimes executives of large business corporations can be perceived as adopting policies that ethicists question as inconsistent with good business practice. For instance writers, such as Eichenwald (2005) and Toffler and Reingold (2003), have written on the Enron collapse in 2002. Vardi and Weitz (2004) claim that the "*Enron Affair was a severe blow to the U.S. energy market: to Enron employees who, at management's behest, invested their retirement funds in Enron stock; to Enron's shareholders who lost billions of dollars; and to financial institutions throughout the world*". Enron's large debt had to be absorbed by banking institutions in the United States and elsewhere (p.214).

Another more recent policy adopted by banks and other financial institutions is to engage in subprime lending (also known as B-paper, near prime or second chance lending). This has had significant impact beyond the financial sector itself. This involves lending people, with a deficient credit history, loans at a greater than the best market interest rates. This type of lending is very risky for lenders and for borrowers alike because of the poor credit history and the high interest rates for purchases involving homes, cars and credit card use. It is also very controversial because of accusations against subprime lenders that they engage in predatory lending because they lend to people with little chance of fulfilling the conditions of their loans culminating in borrower default, the seizure of collateral and foreclosure. An expansion on the controversy surrounding subprime lending occurred as a result of an ongoing financial lending and credit crisis that began in the United States in 2006 and continued into 2007. The subprime crisis erupted in the Northern Hemisphere fall of 2007. The problem in the United States financial markets spread to those of most other countries around the world and the phenomenon of financial contagion is said to have occurred (Wikipedia contributors 2008).

The repercussions of the subprime are continually being reported in the business media around the world. For instance Ryan (2007a) spoke about a deepening of the crisis when Countrywide, America's biggest mortgage provider, released its quarterly profits and warned that the problem had spread to higher quality 'prime home borrowers'. A week later he forecast that Macquarie Bank could be affected by the subprime crisis (Ryan 2007b). About the same time Nason (2007) reported, in the Australian newspaper, that Mark Zandi, Chief Economist and cofounder of Moody's Economy.com, had warned that "*the pre-conditions for global shock were in place and 'one or two Bears Stearns events' could have a profound psychological impact on investor confidence*" (see Zandi 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Corbett 2007; Morici 2007). The fifth-largest securities firm in the US, Bears Stearns had announced prior to this report that there was very little value in two of its mortgage investments funds that had been worth about US\$1.5billion. According to Bonner (2007), Wall Street firms were being affected by the very subprime mortgage crash they started. More recently a Reuters report in the Guardian in the UK indicated that the German finance minister had advised that whilst the full impact of the subprime crisis impact was unknown, coordinated actions by central banks help to ease immediate problems (Sobolewski and Carrel 2008). Despite this Morgan Stanley Merrill, Lehman and Bear Stearns had losses, so far in 2008, of between 3 and 19 percent on the New York Stock Exchange as a result of concerns that they will be forced to take more write-downs (Harper 2008). In the United States, even though the housing crisis hurts people regardless of race or income, minorities are affected disproportionately because coloured people "*are more than three times likely to have subprime loans*". Whilst only 17 percent of loans to whites are subprime, these high-cost loans account for 55 percent of loans to blacks. The not-for-profit organization, United for a Fair Economy, estimates that coloured subprime borrowers stand to lose between US\$164billion and US\$213billion on loans contracted during the last eight years (Singletary 2008).

Such apparent disastrous outcomes from policies formulated and practised by large financial institutions as well as policy changes in funding arrangements for welfare delivery in the United States highlights the need for policy and decision-makers to be held more accountable. This suggests that the provision of clear guidelines would be helpful for many decision and policymakers. As such guidelines are available in theology the next section examines theological aspects of accountability or responsibility.

The Theology of Accountability or Responsibility

The creation story provides the basis for the Judeo-Christian belief of humankind being created in God's image and with it dominion over the world (see Genesis 1:28). With creation, comes the gift and the ability to create wealth, engage in cultivation (Genesis 2:15) and otherwise expand the possibilities of humanity. Thus, mankind is responsible to God for the way these tasks are undertaken (see Mott and Sider 1999, pp.20-21). Maciariello (1999, p.428) claims that humankind has the role of stewardship over God's creation with a mandate to design management and economic systems to make this delegated task more effective and efficient.

It was the theologian Paul Tillich (1968) who claimed that it is not definite when responsibility begins and ends in individual human development even though legally it is considered it to be rather late (p.47). This debate over responsibility and when it emerges is evident in other disciplines, notably psychology and education. The Latin word *responsere* literally means 'to be accountable', and often the term 'responsibility' and 'accountability' are used interchangeably. They imply a developed ability to respond or 'give an account' as exemplified in the Biblical story of the Fall (Genesis 3).

Maciariello (1999) proposes that the Church has a legitimate role in the issues of business as well as society. He advocates that Christians in business and government can apply the Golden Rule in their decision-making and policymaking (p.428). Earlier C.S. Lewis (1952) responded to the claim "*the Church ought to give us a lead*", by saying that this idea is good, if by the Church is meant the whole body of practicing Christians. Lewis thought that if economists, statesmen and others appropriated the principle "*Do as you would be done by*", social problems would be solved quickly (p.79).

Although the philosophical term 'estrangement' is not a biblical term, it can be applied to humankind's separation or 'estrangement' from God and equally applied, symbolically, in "*the expulsion from paradise, in the hostility of brother against brother, in the estrangement of nation from nation through the confusion of language*". Estrangement does appear to be suggested in the many complaints about idol worship the prophets made against the Kings of Israel, Judah and the people, as well as in Paul's writings about man perverting the "*image of God into idols*" (Tillich 1968, p.52).

Although estrangement and 'sin' are not strictly the same, Tillich (1968) employs 'estrangement' as a reinterpretation of sin "*from a religious point of view*". He claims that "*Paul calls everything sin which does not result from faith, from the unity with*

God” (pp.52-53). Furthermore, the Augsburg Confession proclaims that:

Since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, ... without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence, and that this... vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again ... (John et al. 1530, Article II).

Tillich adds a third expression of estrangement, arising from speaking of *hubris* (ὕβρις) that is “the so-called spiritual sin of pride or self-elevation, which according to Augustine and Luther, precedes the so-called sensual sin”. Thus mankind’s estrangement can be symbolized through unbelief, concupiscence and hubris (1968, p.54). This theological link seems to imply that man can be held accountable for such estrangement and would suggest that policy-makers – Christian and otherwise – can be held to account, that is held responsible for decisions made solely out of self interest where basic justice is denied.

There are many scriptural references concerning the need to be accountable and to accept personal responsibility for actions. For instance Jesus taught about the requirement to be accountable for every careless word uttered (Matthew 12:36). Parables such as: the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:21–35); the tenants (Matthew 21:33–43); the rich fool (Luke 12:13–21); the faithful and wise managers (Luke 12:41–48); and the ten minas (Luke 19:11–27) all incorporate the concept of accountability. The Apostles Paul (Romans 14:12) and Peter (1 Peter 4:4–5) also wrote about the need to be accountable. Consequently, the idea that the individual person needs to accept responsibility for their own actions and not to accept blame for the misdeeds of others, receives significant treatment in scripture (see Deuteronomy 24:16, Job 19:4, Proverbs 9:12, Jeremiah 31:30, Romans 14:4 and Galatians 6:5). For example, the prophet Ezekiel wrote:

The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son ... the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him (Ezekiel 18:20 NIV).

In speaking about the obligation for the inescapable necessity (*ἀνάγκη*, *anangke*) of gospel proclamation “*I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!*” (1 Corinthians 9:16 NIV) Paul’s theology reveals an acceptance of responsibility. He also speaks about being in debt (*ὀφειλέτης εἰμι*) to this responsibility in cross-cultural preaching: “*I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to*

the wise and the foolish” (Romans 1:14 NIV). What these passages do is indicate Paul’s accountability or indebtedness to Christ and his mission as he understood it. Possibly this is best exemplified in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 where he speaks of becoming “*all things to all men*” in order to spread the gospel and win people for Christ (see also 2 Corinthians 5:11 and 1 Corinthians 9:27; Bosch 1991; and Douglas 1990). Bosch (1991, pp.135–138) claims that Paul’s writings reveal a sense of accountability that can be extended to all Christian lifestyles. For example, Christians are “*to live quietly*” and to gain the respect of non-Christians through hospitality and supporting mission projects (1 Thessalonians 4:12). This indicates that Christian communities should be a liberating force and not become exclusive sects.

This challenge to be a liberating influence stems from Jesus who proclaimed a message of liberation in the synagogue in Nazareth (see Luke 4:18–19 and Isaiah 61:1–3). In contrast to earlier liberation theologies, Bosch (1991) claims that late twentieth century liberation theologians tended to be very naively religious or even biblical. He cites Frostin (1988) who claims “*liberation theology... is theology 'from below'. It is counter-hegemonic*” (see Bosch, p.439; Frostin). Liberation theologians have often been accused of surrendering to Marxist ideologies, possibly because they reject capitalism (Bosch, p.440). However, in another sense, Liberation theologians have taken the practice of Christianity into a new dimension, as Marx did when calling it “*the opium of the people*”. Nor can Christianity be taken as a mere environment for critique, for “*it has become an active commitment to liberation*” (see Boff and Boff 1992, p.7; O’Malley 1970). All of this indicates that Christianity, generally, has a responsibility for continuing the task Jesus proclaimed in the Synagogue in Nazareth.

Gallhofer and Haslam (2004) consider that “*theology and religion can ... aid the oppressed in their struggles for a better life*” (p.383). Liberation theology provides positive “*inspiration, hope and insight for emancipatory and liberatory struggle*” for those who engage with it (p.384). Thus liberation theologians generally tend to provide a cause-motivated compassion when engaging with the oppressed. Such an emancipatory engagement involves “*emotion and compassion*’ or a ‘*suffering*’ with those” whose emancipation is sought (p.384). How this is manifested in practice is a little different. Historically, people have responded in different ways to the challenges of administering justice in their communities and these suggest ways in which corporate management and organizations might respond to the challenges of the current generation. The next section examines various perspectives on justice and ways in which people have accepted responsibility for their

actions and these could be helpful for managers and policymakers today..

Some Biblical, Historical, Political and Social Perspectives of Justice

The word, 'justice', is not used many times in the Bible. David ruled in a just manner (2 Samuel 8:15 & 1 Chronicles 18:14) and his son Absalom schemed to become a judge (2 Samuel 15: 4). There are other references in Isaiah's forecast of the Messiah's birth (Isaiah 9:7) as well as elsewhere in Isaiah, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. There are three references to retributive justice in the New Testament, two in Acts and one in Jude. Micah entreated people to accept responsibility for their actions by acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with their God (Micah 6:8).

Psalms and Proverbs place justice at God's right hand. Proverbs indicates that the Lord is responsible for the provision of honest scales, balances and weights (Proverbs 16:11) and David wrote: "*The Lord works righteousness and justice to all the oppressed*" (Psalm 103:6 NIV). The Bible sometimes calls upon God's people to adopt right or just practices (Deuteronomy 16:20), advocate and defend the position of the less able and the orphans and safeguard what is due to the poor and the maligned (Psalm 13:7), pay debts including taxes (Romans 13:7), and to treat employees justly (Colossians 4:1).

Overall, a response to these calls would be altruistic if responders disregarded self-interest and sought only to benefit others. The two key themes in these biblical exhortations are: that adherence to some of them incorporates the promise of material and spiritual rewards, and that there is some divergence among proponents of altruism as to what truly constitutes an altruistic act. Oliner and Oliner (1988, p.5) outline a continuum illustrating the wide differences in the degree of selflessness and the types of motivators used by people engaging in acts regarded as altruistic. The types of just and altruistic acts bringing spiritual rewards include removing injustices, freeing the oppressed, feeding the hungry, accommodating wanderers, and clothing the naked without abrogating family responsibilities (Isaiah 58:6-7). Those who undertook these actions were promised similar blessings to those outlined by Job's friend and by the Psalmist (see Isaiah 58:6-7, Job 11:17 as well as Psalms 91 and 121).

Despite Bosch's (1991) claim that, "*the relationship between the evangelistic and the societal dimensions of the Christian mission constitutes one of the thorniest areas in theology and practice of mission*" (pp.400-401), the gospels have inspired some good social reforms, especially in nineteenth century Britain and America (Stott 1990, pp.6-8). This was no

doubt aided by the work of missionaries in Africa and Asia. However, in the early twentieth century, there appeared a reversal trend with the evangelical renunciation of traditional concepts of social responsibility. Bosch attributes this renunciation to a struggle against theological liberalism and the evangelical reaction against a so called "social gospel". Other attributing factors were: widespread pessimism and disillusionment as an aftermath of the First World War; the spread of 'post-millennialism' presenting the world as being progressively more evil and thus irredeemable until the second coming of Jesus that was eagerly awaited in evangelical circles. The result was a compromise with culture in the establishment of His millennial reign on earth and the evangelical appeal to middle-class economic aspirations.

The Early Christian Period

The pre-Constantine Christian Church was unable to challenge authorities such as Old Testament prophets like Amos and Jeremiah, who railed against Yahweh-professing kings about unjust practices in their kingdoms. These early Christians were unable to address authorities on the basis of a shared faith, which resulted in later generations in the incorrect view that the New Testament was superior to the Old because it was more 'spiritual' and less concerned about the 'materiality of justice'. Context is an influence in the history of ideas and values and the inherent Christian value of justice tended to be overlooked because, in this new political environment, it might have been expressed differently than in Old Testament times (Bosch 1991, p.401).

Eventually, Christianity was legally recognized as a religion during the reign of Constantine and it also assumed "*spiritual leadership of the vast and powerful empire*" (Shelley 1995, p.91). Arguably, this new situation could have compromised issues of social justice as Christian leaders were considered either non-discerning for criticizing authorities for unjust practices, or they were otherwise prevented from expressing such criticisms.

The Enlightenment

During 'the Enlightenment' period, the prevailing line of thinking was that human reason could challenge ignorance, superstition, and tyranny and a thorough distinction between the field of facts and the field of ideas came into vogue (Brians 2001, p.1). 'Facts' allocated to the public arena included those referring to politics and the state. Religion and morals became part of the private arena. The breaking of the link between Church and state prevented the Church from appealing "*to the state on the basis of a shared faith commitment*". With the external min-

istry of the Church limited to a restricted form of benevolence or developing its evangelistic and pastoral work, challenges to societal injustices did not receive favourable responses from the political rulers. There were some attempts by bishops from the 'established' Church to 'intervene' in politics but these were considered merely as indicators of the Church's attempts to cross the defined boundaries separating the role of the Church from the role of the state. Much of the close Church-state relationships of the twentieth century resulted from attempts to redefine these boundary lines (Bosch 1991, pp.401-402).

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The 18th century was characterized by both beauty and ugliness. While it was an age of inspiring ideals, art and great Christian heroes; it was also a time of brutish torture of animals in the name of sport, African slavery, savage penal codes and prison systems, political bribery and corruption, "ecclesiastical arrogance and truculence". So much so – in the case of Britain – it was mused the "British people were perhaps as deeply degraded and debauched as any people in Christendom" (Bready 1939; and Stott 1990, pp.2-3). However, during this time Christian heroes, such as, John and Charles Wesley led an evangelical revival that "did more to transfigure the moral character of the general populace, than any other movement British history can record" (see Bready 1939, pp.316,327 and 405; and Stott 1990, pp.2-3).

As well as proclaiming the gospel Wesley accepted some responsibility for the social malaise of his day and, as an inspired predictor of social justice issues, he was regarded as "the man who restored to a nation its soul" (Bready 1939, p.316). John Wesley preached about the love of Christ for a forgiven sinner that "constrains him to love every child of God" (Bosch 1991, p.258; and Berg 1956, p.99). From this time on, things began to change. By the end of the 19th century, slavery was abolished; work conditions in factories and mines improved and the trade union movement commenced; the poor gained access to education and the prison system became more humane (Stott 1990, p.3).

There were some aristocratic Christians in London who combined evangelical leadership with social activism and generous philanthropy. John Venn and William Wilberforce were instrumental in forming a group, called 'the Clapham Sect', that sprang from a concern for the abolition of slavery. They liaised with and were supported by Wesley and were largely responsible for:

The first settlement of freed slaves in Sierra Leone (1787), the abolition of the trade (1807), the registration of slaves in colonies (1820),

which put an end to slave smuggling, and finally their emancipation (1833) (Stott 1990, p.3).

This period reveals many who see social justice as the key motivation to engage in altruistic acts. Advocates like Wilberforce engaged in a long struggle to rectify numerous evils affecting the lives of defenceless people (see Apter 2007).

Darkest England

Late in the nineteenth century, William Booth and his Salvation Army became strong advocates for justice on a number of fronts. In the Preface to his classic 'In Darkest England and the Way Out', William Booth wrote about his 'hope for the permanent deliverance of mankind from misery' (Booth 1984[1890]). He used the metaphor of Stanley's theme of 'Darkest Africa' to characterise what gripped the civilized world in 1890. Booth likened daily occurrences on the streets of London to the situation in Africa, where a 'Darkest England' ruled. He claimed 'urgency' for the lost, the outcast and the disinherited who comprised 'Darkest England' who he characterised as those who would die within a month if they relied solely on their own incomes and those who would not obtain as much food as allocated to 'the worst criminals' in prison (Booth 1984[1890], pp.25-27). It was the influence of Booth's 1890 epic that initiated a revival of the expressions of social justice.

Contemporary Social Justice Concerns

Similar problems exist today and efforts to address them sometimes are opposed by powerful political and business organisations. For instance, a Sydney council called for welfare agencies to refrain from providing blankets and food for homeless people sleeping in parks because this made the parks "unavailable to rate payers". The local MLA claimed that the anti-social behaviour included: "public urination, defecation and copulation, open drug dealing and harassment" (Jacobsen 2001). The council did not appear to have a long-term solution to the problem thus suggesting a modern day Wilberforce or Booth is needed to campaign for justice.

Other modern equivalents of the above situations include large-scale kidnappings of Eastern European women for human trafficking by criminals soliciting victims with street posters promising jobs in Western Europe. After their marketability deteriorates they are relegated to street corners (Mann 2001). It is also a cause of contention in many other countries and regions, for instance in Latin America (see Howes 2007, pp.163-164), and even countries like Australia are not immune from human trafficking. For instance, Thai girls under the threat of prosecution and deport-

ation are contracted to pay for their passports and visas by performing \$35,000 worth of sexual services (Forbes 2001). Another example concerns young children being set to work for extremely low wages particularly in under-developed countries (see Baker 2001; and Murdoch 2001).

Campaigning for Social Justice

Historically these issues were addressed by media campaigns such as one, outlined by Eckley (2007) and others and known as the Maiden Tribute Campaign by William Stead and his *Pall Mall Gazette* (see the first article of the campaign in Stead 1885), that culminated in the eventual raising of the age of consent in Victorian England. Such a result heartens organizations, among mainstream churches and secular NGOs, for example The Salvation Army (see Clifton 2006), who have accepted the challenge and are engaged in contemporary international campaigns against human trafficking and other justice issues.

Conclusion

This paper has explained, briefly, how policies are formulated and through two specific examples of recent government and private sector policy initiatives show how these impact upon society. As these

revealed a need for an expansion of accountability procedures a theology of accountability or responsibility was proposed.

Social justice issues have been traced from biblical times to the present day. Two significant social justice campaigns of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that culminated in a change of government policy have been discussed. Such exploitation of defenceless human beings might not be regarded as fair and just except by the slave traders or by sex trade entrepreneurs. If the market demands these kinds of services then some economic rationalists might consider them to be acceptable practices. Such past practices do not appear to satisfy accountability guidelines as suggested in the benchmark parables of the Good Samaritan and the Sheep and the Goats, or altruistic criteria. However as policymakers may be faced with a conflict of values in their policymaking processes today further research into conflict of values could be beneficial. Government and corporate policymakers of today's generation are urged to accept the challenge and formulate and implement policies designed to mitigate the impact of practices of a social justice nature that are evident in the world today and, in so doing, alleviate the malaise they impart. If 'the market' cannot find solutions for these problems, researchers may be able to determine if government intervention is warranted.

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