

ASHRIDGE MANAGEMENT COLLEGE

TOWARDS A NEW PHILOSOPHY  
FOR INDUSTRY AND SOCIETY

by Graham Turner

# TOWARDS A NEW PHILOSOPHY FOR INDUSTRY AND SOCIETY

I note with interest that to-day is the anniversary of both the Battle of Agincourt and the Charge of the Light Brigade. Like every public speaker in history, I hope that at the end of the day I shall feel more like Henry the Fifth than one of the survivors of the gallant 600. My temerity in tackling such a subject before an audience composed largely of businessmen perhaps indicates the latter.

I think I am obliged to say something at the outset about the title of this lecture, for which I take no responsibility whatsoever. It emerged – I think that is the word – in rather a curious fashion. I was recently lunching with the directors of a certain public company and one of them who, although a Scotsman, was not the financial director, began complaining bitterly that the BBC were giving that remarkable character, Mr. Jimmy Reid, far too much air time: Reid was a Communist, Communism was an alien ideology, and more in the same strain.

I still do not know whether my friend was suggesting that there was a Red plot within the BBC. If so, he did not know the BBC very well. The fact is, it is so organised that you do not need a conspiracy to produce any given result.

However that may be, my response to the Scottish director's outburst was that, if Jimmy Reid was being given so much air time because he was a Communist, then it was a sorry reflection not on the BBC but on the way he and I and the rest of us live. In other words, if we had nothing better to offer than a philosophy which has manifestly failed to live up to any of its promises, and which in some respects must be counted the most successful hoax in history, then we were in a very poor way indeed.

After a brief silence, the Scottish director – who, incidentally, knew that I had to deliver this lecture – accepted the point and then suggested my present subject in the very words which you see on your programme. I have not changed a single one. So at least my theme comes from the homeland of Adam Smith and deals with a subject dear to the heart of Karl Marx.

Reading what is currently being written and talking to a wide range

of people, one thing at least is obvious: there is a very profound concern, and in some quarters a real fear, about the way in which our society is developing. A couple of months ago, I dined with a young and able Tory lawyer who is very active and successful in the corporation field. He rather surprised me by saying that we would eventually be forced to have a Maoist society in this country. I asked him why he took that view. He replied that while it was possible to sustain a democratic society when only 5 per cent of the population were acquisitive, it became impossible when 95 per cent were on the grab. You may consider that my friend was going too far, but I offer what he said as some evidence of the concern which is felt in this country in quarters which are very far from revolutionary.

What I want to do this afternoon is, first of all, to take a look at the present state of our society to try to isolate the root causes of our malaise; to analyse the place of industry in that society; and then to suggest the sort of changes which seem necessary to me if we are going to have the sort of industry and society which we want.

May I say that I do this with the reluctance which I think is proper in one who has spent too large a slice of his working life purveying gloom from the small screen. I have ardently searched my conscience to try to discover if this apparent propensity is a character deficiency; or whether it had anything to do with the fact that my period of office at the BBC was coeval with that of the Labour Government. Having observed the trials and tribulations of Mr. Heath, I cannot believe it was the latter.

I think I should preface what I have to say by making clear the position from which I speak. In political terms, I am on the right of centre, though not very far – and I do not speak as one who wants to see the capitalist system destroyed but who does believe that it requires fundamental change.

In my view, our society has two outstanding characteristics. First, it is, to a quite extraordinary degree, acquisitive and indeed money-obsessed – some people would say greed-obsessed. Never have so many wanted so much. Never have the expectations of the majority run so high. Never, quite literally, has so much been owed by so many to so few. We don't want much, is the cry, we just want more. Across the whole range of society, individuals and groups appear determined to squeeze from the community whatever they can get. They want it and they want it now.

Now you may say – and I would agree with you – that greed is not a novel emotion, and that the only difference between the situation now and that of 100 years ago is merely that the disease has spread

because a lot more of us have had the opportunity either to catch it for the first time or to get a stronger dose. That may well be so, but it does not ease our present situation.

This obsession with money is made worse by the growing menace of inflation. I realise that this is not a subject about which one can properly be frivolous, but it is now so serious that I often wonder if it would not be more accurate if job advertisements were reworded to read, for example – “the post carries a salary of £3,000, *falling* to £4,500 in five annual instalments”.

Inflation on the scale which we have it at the moment is not merely a boil in an inconvenient place, as some highly respectable economists imply, but a malignant growth which is attacking the stability of our entire society. It creates fear because people have to struggle to keep up in a race where they feel constantly left behind; it multiplies bitterness at an alarming rate because of the transparent injustice of its effects on different sections of society; and it fosters class war, for the same reason. It also, and inevitably, leads to a growing dissatisfaction with the nature of our entire society – people feel as though they never have enough, even though they regularly get more. By demonstrating the helplessness of elected governments and making the ordinary man feel as if he were merely a puppet in the grip of uncontrollable economic forces, it represents a threat to democracy.

Inflation has a number of other dangerous effects. It encourages short-term thinking: let us take what we can now, because it may be worth less tomorrow. It also promotes a sort of tribalisation, as each individual and group pursue their own self-interest ever more relentlessly. In short, it fosters self-centredness both personal and sectional.

The present situation, I believe, has helped confirm the enthrone-ment in our society of economic man, a grotesquely deformed creature because he neglects the moral, spiritual and intellectual sides of his nature. Virtually all the measuring-rods we use are economic, and so are most of our goals. We live in the era of GNPs, growth rates, norms, PE ratios and percentages. As Dostoevsky's hero in *Crime and Punishment* scathingly remarks: “A percentage! What fine words they use, to be sure! So soothing. Scientific. All you have to do is say ‘percentage’ and all your worries are over”.

Businessmen are measured by the increase in their profits, whatever the human cost – with the result that, as one shop steward in an engineering plant in the Midlands put it, many workers feel they are treated like lavatory chains: “when they want us, they pull, and when they've finished with us, they leave us to swing”. In the same way, trade union leaders are judged by how much they can screw out of

their employers – which often leaves employers wondering how they are expected to survive as competition mounts in every market. Our political leaders, too, are measured not by the vision they give us, but by how far they fill our pockets: elections have become little more than public auctions, in which the public cheerfully allows itself to be knocked down to the highest bidder.

Even our entry into Europe is discussed almost exclusively in terms of its economic benefits – the expansion of a club whose sole apparent purpose is to make fat men fatter. The talk is almost all of a Market, seldom of a Community. This spectacle can give little reassurance in countries like India that the Governments of the West have observed the great struggle taking place in the world between those who say democracy can work and those who believe that only totalitarian rule can bring economic justice.

This belief that material things are what ultimately matter gives the lie to those who have complained that Britain does not have an ideology. We have – and its name is materialism.

The second outstanding characteristic of our society, or so it seems to me, is that it is becoming increasingly violent. The phenomenon can be observed in every area of life, even sport. You may observe it in the open thuggery which various groups of workers have used in recent days: and in the epidemic of what is called mugging. We are not, of course, by any means alone in this. Gang-rape is now apparently a serious problem in Yugoslavia.

Have you ever considered whether there is not a connection between greed and violence? In a society whose purposes are essentially economic and where “stand and deliver” is a familiar feature of public behaviour – whether in the house agent’s office or round the negotiating table – it is not entirely surprising if the same principle is adopted by private individuals. The philosophy of snatch and grab is infectious.

I should add that I am not implying that violence exists only on the Left: on the contrary. Although much of the violence of the far Left is prosecutable, it is in my view no more reprehensible than the callousness of the Right which, indeed, partly provokes it. The throwing of men onto the scrap-heap without any sense of responsibility for their future; the closure of factories without consultation; the making of vast profits from land speculation when hundreds of thousands are poorly housed; the utterances of racist barbarians, who obscure the truth that it is character which matters and not colour; all these may not involve physical blows but their consequences, in the shape of the bitterness which they create, are in a

sense even more damaging. All conflicts require two protagonists; and the class war is no exception, although the Right generally refuses to acknowledge that it, too, is sometimes the aggressor.

Some may argue that greedy acquisitiveness and violence are temporary blemishes on the face of our society – and that they will disappear in due course as we become richer, and (no doubt) wiser. For those who would prefer to hold that view – and I am certainly one of them – the example of the United States, so often a forerunner, is not a hopeful one. My instinct, therefore, tells me that – unless we take fundamental action – these characteristics are likely to become more rather than less pronounced.

If I am right, the consequences for our democracy could be very serious. The essential feature of democracy, I believe, is an act of giving, of surrender: individuals and groups yield up their muscle-power to elected representatives. That is not what we have at the moment. What we have are groups of people, on the Right and on the Left, who will take as much as they can from society, whether large numbers of others suffer or not; and, at the centre, a body of Parliamentarians who must sometimes wonder whether their utterances are any longer relevant, since nobody seems to take any notice of them. This may in part account for the all-but hysterical pursuit of popularity by some politicians in recent days. Taking and talking do not constitute a democracy. To my mind, the present situation is an illustration of the truth that the prime enemy of true democracy is rampant materialism.

Well, you may say, and what has all this to do with managers? My answer is – everything. Even on the level of enlightened self-interest, managers must face the fact that society is the environment in which they operate; and major changes in that environment could well provoke major changes in the structure and control of corporations.

So, where do business and industry stand in the present situation? I take the view that, in strategic terms, they are absolutely central – and that, indeed, the way in which corporations and their managers respond to the challenges before us will have a major influence on the way our society goes. In saying this, I know, I am challenging the assumption, still held in some quarters, that it is the politicians' job to look after society, leaving the businessman free to get on with running his business. It seems to me increasingly apparent, however, that the politicians alone cannot any longer determine the direction in which our society is going and that, for that reason if for no other, it is imperative that businessmen should take a fresh and radical look at their rôle and responsibilities in society.

The influence which business has on our society is obvious enough to all of us. It is, first of all, the prime source of new wealth and, consequently, the major battleground for a division of the spoils. Secondly, it is a major focus of power.

It is inevitable that the external pressures I have been talking about should leave their mark on managers. Their impact, indeed, is clearly very considerable. The resolution of labour problems and the settlement of wage claims loom increasingly large in the lives of many managers; and the battle with inflation demands ceaseless attention to price and employment levels as well as to profit margins.

All of this, I think, inevitably encourages managers to focus their attention on objectives which are exclusively economic – so that industry becomes more and more a natural habitat for economic man. Another pressure in the same direction is the rapid growth and diversification of business. The bigger, more diverse and more geographically spread a corporation becomes; the more remote its top management in distance and in knowledge of the processes in which they are involved; the more reliance do they tend to place on financial criteria in measuring the performance of their subordinates. Figures, they point out, cannot lie. In more senses than one, statistics are a sure-fire way of judging the merit of men you seldom meet.

Multi-national corporations impose an additional strain because of the frequent bouts of foreign travel which they demand of key executives. Manchester, Milan, Madras, Melbourne, Minneapolis – round and round they go, like projectiles in a pinball game at an amusement arcade, sometimes adding to the corporation's score and sometimes rebounding with a dull thud.

The proliferation of organisations sometimes also serves to heighten one of the businessman's traditional preoccupations: that is to say, the protection and improvement of his own position. It is generally accepted that a vital part of every businessman's life is spent on the battle to combat rivals who seek to undermine his authority and reduce his empire. It is also well-known that this internecine warfare sometimes leads to behaviour which makes a management's relationship with the trade unions look idyllic by comparison; and that it can result in a substantial rise in overheads as, say, a divisional managing director provides himself with reinforcements to ward off any further incursion from head office.

From time to time, even senior participants hint at the nature of the struggle. In a recent article in the *Sunday Times*, Lord Melchett described his unhappy experience in the merger between his own bank, Samuel, and Philip Hill, in the rueful words: "I didn't realise

how sophisticated the razor work was going to be". In the motor industry, and others, the same battles are fought, but the instruments used are a good deal blunter.

What I am saying is that the environment in which the businessman at present works does not encourage him to look beyond objectives which are purely economic; the reverse, in fact. He frequently belongs to empires with ever-expanding frontiers, ever more complex communications and ever more demanding financial goals.

In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising if businessmen too often fulfil the warning of that doughty old seer, Samuel Smiles, when he remarked that: "It is one of the defects of business too exclusively followed that it insensibly tends to a mechanism of character. The businessman gets into a rut and does not look beyond it. If he lives for himself only, he becomes apt to regard other human beings only so far as they minister to his ends".

Hence the pallid-faced automata who spend their lives circling the globe, hoping for the sword of honour while inwardly fearing the knife; the merchant bankers who are so busy that rudeness seems to be an essential management tool; the Stalinist thugs whose empires run on terror, men who make gigantic errors of judgment without apology but who nevertheless feel able to castigate their executives in open meeting for falling short of their profit targets; and the 18-hour-a-day men who spend their lives marshalling other men's ambitions and on whom the sun neither sets nor rises.

In other words, as one might expect, industry is a mirror-image of our society, but exaggerated because in the engine-room the pressures are inevitably greatest, the noise most deafening.

Yet I believe that, in the decades ahead, the questions facing businessmen will be just as fundamental as those which confront the rest of our society. I also believe that businessmen are better equipped to tackle these problems than they themselves often realise. In the last century, the business world has been almost exclusively pre-occupied with technology and financial control. So far as *raison d'être* and philosophy have been concerned, businessmen have been quite happy to leave them on the shelf, accepting whatever adjustments of the capitalist canon were forced upon them, but without questioning whether the entire system needed fundamentally rethinking. The years ahead will, I believe, see a massive debate on the purpose of the enterprise which could have the most far-reaching consequences; and which businessmen would do well to prepare for now.

That debate, of course, will be only part of the larger debate about the future of our society as a whole; and, having spent the first part



of this lecture describing the nature of the problems facing industry and society I shall spend the second part suggesting where we ought to go from here and how we ought to set about getting there.

I hope my analysis of the problems offers some useful indicators. We have a variety of material crises, such as inflation, but underlying all of them is a more fundamental moral crisis. Our society is suffering from an advanced case of moral and spiritual malnutrition; and what we urgently need is a massive renaissance of moral and spiritual values. We need to exchange concern with “having” to concern about “being”; from what we’ve got to what we are; from what we can get to what we can give; from a passionate preoccupation with our own needs to a passionate preoccupation with the needs and dignity of other people.

I am not, I assure you, propounding a hair-shirt philosophy. I am *not* against profit, prosperity or growth, far from it. Profit is a necessary measure of efficiency. It is not, however, an end in itself, and I am certainly against those who preach the maximization of profits at the expense of a company’s wider responsibilities. I also believe that an exclusive preoccupation with prosperity will lead to an increasingly sterile society. The fall-out from universal greed is as devastating to the human spirit as nuclear fall-out is to the body.

Politically, we need to establish a new consensus on the basis of honourable change by all the contestants. We need to identify and answer the causes of the bitterness which leads to violence, and of the violence which leads to bitterness. In our business life, we need to discover larger aims than profit, aims which will help managements to manage, and be seen to manage, in the interests of all – of *all*. At present, managers attract difficulties for themselves because they often accept identification with the interests of only one of the partners in a joint enterprise. Shareholders put their money into a business; workers often invest their lives.

Tackling these problems is, without doubt, a massive task, so massive that partial solutions, temporary expedients are clearly not going to be adequate. We are not talking about dealing with pollution, but about creating a non-violent revolution which changes the direction in which our whole society is moving. What I am saying, quite explicitly, is that until we find an ideology greater and more satisfying than materialism, we shall continue to flounder. It seems to me as obvious as it is difficult to achieve.

Bringing to birth a new ideology is infinitely more challenging than launching a new product. It is not a game for part-timers or for that brand of idealist of whom a friend of mine once remarked: “the

trouble with some of you is that you are so idealistic that your hopes never come to pass, even in your own homes". It is a game for realists, and for those who are prepared to put their lives where their mouths are, who are prepared to start with their own motives and behaviour.

In the light of the lessons of history, I am always astonished at the zeal of people for changing institutions, laws and systems – every single thing, in fact, except their own motives and behaviour, which is the thing which really counts at the end of the day. In my view, unless you change the actual behaviour of people, you change nothing that is fundamental – because, as any honest Marxist or Maoist knows, men's motives eventually show through a system, however conceived, just as ink shows through new blotting paper. To answer materialism, you have to change materialists.

At this stage of history, it is deeds and not words which are required; only deeds are going to carry conviction, and only deeds will build the Unselfish Society which I believe most of us, at heart, desire.

Our political leaders clearly have an essential part to play in changing the direction of our society but so, I believe, do businessmen.

Now, if you suggest to the average businessman that he has a responsibility for the direction in which we are going, he may very well reply that his prime responsibility is to his shareholders. He may even extend this Authorised Version of the capitalist creed to include additional responsibility for his employees, his customers and the communities in which he operates – but, so far as having a more general responsibility for society as a whole is concerned, nothing beyond what is sometimes described as being a good corporate citizen. "You in your small corner, and I in mine" is too often, I am afraid, the basic response.

This attitude may be right or wrong: to me, it does seem ridiculously short-sighted. For any businessman merely to observe the direction in which society is moving with the idea of keeping his company abreast of the times – rather the posture managers do tend to adopt when they get involved in what is generally known as long-range planning – may be adequate while that society continues to operate on the same basic ground-rules. When there are signs of fundamental change ahead, on the other hand, managers cannot afford to be bystanders.

In saying this, I am not suggesting for a moment that they should dash out and join a dozen do-gooding institutions or step up their contributions to charity. I am not talking about philanthropy: I am talking about ideology. I am not talking merely about being nicer to your fellow man, though that may be a part of it: I am talking about

an intelligent and practical effort to influence for good the direction in which society is moving. I am arguing that every business needs to have an ideological aim as well as the economic aim which it already has and the social aim which it either has, or claims to have in order to try to keep at bay the critics of the capitalist system. I am asking for a redefinition of the purposes of the enterprise not just as a means of allaying criticism but springing from an honest recognition that radical change is necessary.

Of course, businessmen may well argue that they are extremely ill-fitted to pursue ideological aims. I could not disagree more fundamentally. The fact is, of course, that they have been pursuing ideological aims all their working lives, though only on the most limited of fronts. So far as that goes, all they need is to raise their sights and widen their horizons. The second point is that managers, far from being a conservative force in our society, have in reality been amongst the most radical. It is managers who have created the multi-national corporation, one of the most significant new institutions since the rise of the nation-state. It is managers who have pioneered new techniques, new products, new markets. One of the prime tasks of management, we are constantly being told, is to manage change; why should that not encompass a change of motives as well as a change in techniques?

I am often struck by the similarities between managers and Marxists. Like the rest of us, managers regrettably sometimes operate on the principle that the end justifies the means. But they also have quite as much dedication as the average Marxist. The major difference is that the goals to which the manager is dedicated are so much smaller.

In brief, I am saying that managers are particularly well-fitted to take on ideological goals. Their capacity for innovation is clearly considerable: but they do need a much larger conception of their rôle in the world and of the part they could play in pioneering an ideology which would give us again a viable philosophy for society. That, to my way of thinking, is a task appropriate to their talents. Our problems are so considerable that we simply cannot do without our best minds in solving them – and our best businessmen compare very favourably in that respect with the members of both this and the previous Cabinet.

So, if it is not a matter of giving more to charity, what does the adoption of an ideological aim require of an enterprise? Let me be clear from the beginning that it is *not* a new activity, though it may lead to new forms of action. It *does* require a new level of thinking and a new level of commitment. It requires the Board of a company

first of all, to take a view about the direction in which society as a whole is moving, not merely in terms of a change in markets and tastes but also in terms of the fundamental problems that society is facing; and then actively to seek ways in which it could, by the nature of the company's activities, help to tackle the problems which it had identified. If corporations and their shareholders judge that the peaceful reform of society is in their interest, then they may also feel that such an approach is not wholly quixotic.

Managers may assert that their influence on society is purely a neutral one. I would reply that management, like many other forms of human activity, is either bitterness-creating or bitterness-curing – and that both have their impact on our society. It is worth reflecting that every significant economic decision has ideological implications – that is to say, it affects the fabric of society to a greater or lesser degree. My shop steward friend in the Midlands, at one time an extreme left-winger, put the point very simply when he said that his best recruiting agents were managers, and that the managing director of a large company could, by mishandling one major redundancy, do more to further the aims of Communism than Harry Pollitt achieved in his entire life-time.

So let us get down to practical examples of ideological action by a company. Let us suppose that one of our biggest house-building firms had observed the bitterness created among prospective homeowners by gazumping and the escalation of land prices. The Board might consider whether it could do anything about the situation. They might, as a first step, decide to get together with their colleagues from other large companies – say, under the auspices of the CBI – and then examine whether there was any way in which they might be able to pioneer a fair-price policy, within the law, of course. There would be difficulties and the difficulties might prove insuperable; but, on the other hand, a scheme might emerge which would have widespread repercussions throughout our society, repercussions which would be bitterness-curing and not bitterness-creating. Such a scheme might attract support from unexpected quarters – and certainly from the Government.

Now, I am not naïve enough to suggest that this is a blueprint for building firms who wish to make a contribution to the stability of our society by helping moderate the increase in new house prices. I am simply pointing to the problem, and then saying that I believe any company with an ideological commitment would have already considered what it could do about the problem. I also have enough faith in the men who run these companies to believe that, if they let their minds

room in this new dimension, a really positive initiative might result.

Again, take our joint-stock bankers, who sadly closed their doors to us on Saturday morning but who do, nevertheless, have a real sense of public spirit. The joint-stock banks are one of the residual legatees of inflation; in other words, they collect additional profits which they would be the first to admit they have done little to earn. Well, supposing they decided to do whatever they could to mitigate the effects of that inflation. They might make a modest beginning by, for example, reducing bank charges. As in the case of the building company, that would simply be a first step in a continuing search for positive action and not merely an isolated gesture.

Let us take a third example. Our four largest food retail chains probably attract between them over 10 million customers a week. Every decision they take on prices has a profound ideological significance, in that it bears very directly on the progress of the battle against inflation. If those firms decided they ought to have a continuing part in combating inflation by helping contain the rise of prices, not because a Government asked but out of conviction and as a matter of permanent policy, they would perform a national service which no one else can.

You may think I am whistling in the dark, and you may be right, but I firmly believe that businessmen acting in this spirit could do more for our national morale at this moment than almost any other group. I come back to my original point: deeds, not words, are what is required to change the present direction of our society. Yes, yes, you may say, but what would the shareholders of these building companies and banks have to say about it all. I concede that the idea would have to be sold, but I believe it would be bought; shareholders by and large do not want such a radical change in the structure of society that their shareholdings disappear altogether, and they might take the view that such steps would help us achieve the change we need, but without violence.

It is, of course, also true that a management's willingness to think on an ideological plane might also require change in the way in which it conducted its own internal affairs. Ideology, like charity, must always begin at home if it is to be effective; if it does not work at home, it will certainly not work anywhere else. In other words, the behaviour of management within its own bailiwick is even more crucial than what it tries to achieve outside.

I think it is generally accepted that the greatest problems for managers in the years ahead may well lie in the area of industrial relations. The ability to handle these problems in the years ahead is

going to be a prime management skill.

For myself, I think the managers who tackle these problems most successfully will be those who manage, and are seen to manage, in the interests of all. In some cases, the acceptance of such a policy would mean fundamental changes from present practice. It might mean that, as a beginning, the managing director would look afresh at every part of his operation, not only from the point of view of whether it is achieving the right level of production or profits, but as seen through the eyes of his employees. If he looked from that angle, he might observe a great deal which he had not seen before; and if he decided to act on what he saw, he would have taken a useful first step towards managing in the interests of all.

Such a policy would also quite clearly require a new attitude on the part of many employers to the question of redundancy. At present, far too many reach for redundancy as their first-line weapon in any effort to reduce costs and reach profit targets. Redundancies may sometimes be inevitable, but I am suggesting that they should be a last resort, to be turned to only when the managing director concerned has examined every alternative – and that a management should never make redundant any man who has been pulling his weight without taking full responsibility for his future. In other words, it should do everything in its power to find him another suitable job.

I am not suggesting that this change of approach will produce an atmosphere which is all sweetness and light, or that it will stop trade unions pressing for higher wages. But I have observed that the attitudes of employees often mirror quite closely that of their managers. If a management is in business purely for what it can get out of it, it need not be surprised if its employees take the same stance.

It might also be true that if the motives of a management underwent thorough-going change, it might well find a response from its employees, particularly if the social and ideological aims adopted by the business were such as to recommend themselves to employees. The vital point, again, is whether there has been a radical change in the actual behaviour of managements; statements of high ideals are guaranteed to produce no result whatsoever.

So perhaps I might now briefly sum up what I have been saying. Our society is, in my view, in danger. The perils ahead are very great if we allow the situation to drift. Any meaningful action must be fundamental and it must seek to change the basic motives of our society by giving it a new ideology beyond sectional interest. Only that way can we hope to divert it from its present path. That diversion

will not come by conferences or new laws, by resolutions or pious hopes, but by basic change in the behaviour and motives of people. Anything less is clutching at straws instead of grasping the nettle.

The ideological struggle, as any Marxist will tell you, is fought out in the field of moral values. The struggle in the world is between a money-centred, self-centred ideology and a faith-centred, people-centred ideology; between those who jettison moral values in favour of materialist interests and thus add to the greed, division and bitterness which are the curses of our modern society, and those who are willing to subordinate material gain to moral values.

Just as from a money-centred ideology flows a direction and philosophy for the conduct of business and life which has the effect of deepening materialism in a society, so from a faith-centred ideology comes a direction and philosophy which is a deliberate bid to change society at its roots.

This ideological decision cannot be taken by a Board but it can be taken by individual Board members. In my own small way, it is a decision I have taken for myself.

The acceptance of a new framework of ideas will require change in every part of our society, from politicians as well as from managers and trade unionists. I do, however, believe that managers have an exceptionally important rôle to play. Nothing would have a greater impact in changing the tenor of a materialistic society than capitalists acting beyond self-interest. And why should they not be the unexpected radicals in our midst? If businessmen accepted that challenge, they would be regarded not as soaks but as saviours, not as defenders of an outworn creed but as forerunners and architects of a new society.

## NOTES