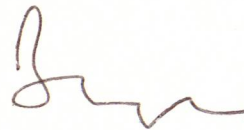


2

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Simon Dugdale has got together (attached) a full set of cuttings on your speech, its coverage and comment. It is a most impressive return on capital.



BERNARD INGHAM

27 May 1988



Thatcher in Edinburgh yesterday

Thatcher bares her soul

by David Hughes
Political Correspondent

MARGARET THATCHER yesterday gave the fullest insight into her religious convictions since she became prime minister.

Facing some of her sternest critics as she addressed the opening session of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh, she spelt out what she sees as the spiritual underpinning of the Thatcher revolution.

The creation of wealth was not greed, she said. Emphasis on individual responsibility was not selfishness. Maintaining one's national identity was not intolerance.

Quoting St Paul, she said: "If a man will not work he shall not eat."

"A politician's role is a humble one," she said in an address that was more a closely argued sermon.

"There is little hope for democracy if the hearts of men and women in democratic societies cannot be touched by a call to something greater than themselves.

Text of speech, page 13

"Political structures, state institutions, collective ideals are not enough. We parliamentarians can legislate for the rule of law. You, the church, can teach the life of faith."

Thatcher's government has been the target of fierce criticism from the gen-

eral assembly and five Church of Scotland ministers tried to prevent her delivering yesterday's address.

But she was determined to use the opportunity to tackle the criticism she has received from churchmen both north and south of the border over the way her governments have used their power.

She set out a personal religious credo and sought to relate it to political life. She said that by taking key elements from the Old and New Testaments — the Ten Commandments, observing a strict code of law and the belief that you should "do as you would be done by" — we gained "a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life".

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Political Correspondent**

"If a man will not work he shall not eat."

"A politician's role is a humble one," she said in an address that was more a closely argued sermon than a political speech.

"There is little hope for democracy if the hearts of men and women in democratic societies cannot be touched by a call to something greater than themselves.

"Political structures, state institutions, collective ideals are not enough. We parliamentarians can legislate for

the rule of law. You, the church, can teach the life of faith."

Thatcher's government has been the target of fierce criticism from the general assembly and five Church of Scotland ministers tried un-

**Inside Scotland page B3
Rifkind on Scottish Tory
history Books:page G10**

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the way her governments have used their power.

She set out a personal religious credo and sought to relate it to political life. She said that by taking key elements from the Old and New Testaments - the 10 commandments, the injunction to love one's neighbour as oneself, the importance of observing a strict code of law and the belief that you should "do as you would be done by" - we gained "a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life".

● Roy Hattersley, the Labour deputy leader, said yesterday that "the problem with



Thatcher in Edinburgh yesterday

Conservative philosophy as demonstrated by the budget is that wealth where it exists is not being used for the common good. It's been used to stoke the individual's greed".

Thatcher's speech, page 13

Sunday Times pg 1

22/5/88



GLASGOW HERALD

ESTABLISHED 1783

SCOTLAND'S NEWSPAPER

Church and State

CHURCH and State attachments are never more vivid and in evidence than on the opening day of the General Assembly. The panoply of the State surrounds the Lord High Commissioner as he enters the Assembly Hall on the Mound at the start of a week during which he holds a rank equivalent to that of the Sovereign. His presence is both respected and craved by the ministers and elders of the Kirk, since he represents both the Sovereign whose coronation oath includes a promise to maintain the Presbyterian government of the national church of Scotland and also the status which the Assembly still enjoys in the eyes of the State.

At this year's opening another figure of State will be spied alongside the Long High Commissioner in the gallery. It is inevitable that the Prime Minister will upstage him considerably. The novelty of seeing Mrs Thatcher at ceremonial occasions in Scotland will be further heightened by curiosity as to what she will say to the Kirk. Her relations with the General Synod of the Church of England have been far from cordial and even this week another bout of hostilities was opened by the rejection by a parliamentary committee of a measure which had the complete backing of the Synod, allowing divorcees to become vicars. There is no such parliamentary bond between Church and State in Scotland but several of the

reports to this year's Assembly contain direct criticism of Government policies. The community charge, educational policy, the Aids campaign, the steel industry are all issues on which the Government is receiving the disapproval of the Kirk's committees. In facing the Assembly, Mrs Thatcher has become the lion in a den of Daniels.

What should she say? Should she lecture them on their moral responsibilities as moral guardians, then it is likely the Kirk will take the huff. It is unlikely she will congratulate them on their independent spirit. Nor is the Prime Minister likely to pretend that differences do not exist. That is not her style. Rather she should take the chance to hold out for a reassessment of Church-State relations and to end the destructive preaching over the parapet by both parties in recent years. There are plenty of opportunities present in Government privatisation and community programmes for the Church to regain an influential role in local communities in running caring agencies. There is also plenty for the Government to take to heart in the Kirk's criticisms about the need to show it care if people are to trust their leadership. To seek such reconciliation is not a political compromise. It is the stuff which lies at the heart of the Gospel which reconciles humanity to God and underpins any Christian assembly.

Premier may face Kirk protest

By DAVID ROSS

THE PRIME MINISTER will be ready and willing to address the opening session of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh later this morning, but whether she will be allowed to do so will depend on the Assembly itself.

Her attendance at the Kirk's supreme court was only confirmed yesterday afternoon when the Rev. William Macmillan, the convener of the Assembly's business committee (the Kirk's equivalent to Leader of the House of Commons), met the press for the normal pre-Assembly briefing. Mrs Thatcher did subsequently arrive at Holyrood Palace in the late afternoon in time for the traditional Ceremony of the Keys.

Mr Macmillan said yesterday: "Tomorrow, we understand the Prime Minister may be present. I just heard this half-an-hour ago. Normally when someone of that rank and public interest is present, they may be recognised by the Assembly. From time to time, they may be allowed to speak if it is the will of the General Assembly."

He said that it was "probable" that when he, as business manager, saw Mrs Thatcher, he would stand up, draw the attention of the Moderator and the General Assembly to her presence and ask the Moderator to invite her to speak. "If it is the will of the Assembly, that is how it will be. We are not obliged to do so," he added.

Mr Macmillan said that he could not anticipate whether there would be any move to block the Prime Ministerial address, but admitted "one has heard a few rumblings, of course. With



Mrs Thatcher is welcomed to Holyrood Palace by Purse Bearer Mr Charles Fraser.

1200 commissioners, it is conceivable that someone will do so".

All that it would take would be for one member of the Assembly to stand up and move that Mrs Thatcher not be heard. A vote would then be taken in public to establish the will of the Assembly, which the Prime Minister would witness.

Apparently, Mrs Thatcher confirmed some time ago to her hosts that she would be willing to address the Assembly. But Mr Macmillan emphasised that she would be present as a guest of the Lord High Commissioner, who in turn was representing the Queen, and only the Assembly could decide whether she would be heard.

There is an Assembly

precedent for opposition to a Prime Minister speaking. In 1946, Mr Clement Attlee addressed the Assembly, but not before there was a move against him doing so. Mrs Thatcher herself visited the Assembly in 1981 without speaking and the now ennobled Harold Wilson and James Callaghan also attended.

Mr Macmillan was asked whether the Assembly would expect a political speech from the Prime Minister. "You can't separate politics from religion," he replied. "If you say 'love your neighbour' you are being political." He did say that he would be surprised if a Prime Ministerial address turned into a party political one.

Editorial comment.....Page 6

Picture: DUNCAN DINGSDALE

Bid to stop Thatcher's Assembly speech fails

FIVE churchmen today attempted to prevent Mrs Thatcher from addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The ministers' objections at the meeting in Edinburgh were ruled out by Moderator, the Rev Prof James White.

One minister tried to put a motion objecting to the Prime Minister's speech, but his speech was drowned out by protests from the audience.

The Moderator said the will of the assembly, attended by 1200 ministers and elders, had been declared clearly by its applause.

Welcoming Mrs Thatcher, Prof White said to much laughter: "I suppose you have never been in the company of so many people who pray regularly for you."

Quoting St Paul, Mrs Thatcher said: "If a man will not work he shall not eat."

The Moderator presented Mrs Thatcher with two Church of Scotland reports, both highly critical of Government policies. The reports are on housing and the Christian approach to the distribution of income and benefits.

Success is not a sin says Maggie

MRS Thatcher yesterday told Scottish church leaders that it is no sin to be making money in her booming Britain.

In an address to 1,200 ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh, she said it was not the creation of wealth that was wrong, but love of money for its own sake.

'If a man will not work, he shall not eat,' she said, quoting St Paul.

Mrs Thatcher said abundance rather than poverty had a legitimacy which derived from the very nature of creation.

By PETER DAY

The spiritual side came in deciding what one did with the wealth.

How could we respond to calls for help, or invest in the future or support artists who glorified God unless we had first worked hard to create the necessary wealth, she asked.

Reforms

Mrs Thatcher, aware that the Church had produced two highly critical reports on Government policy on housing and the distribution of income and benefits, went on to advise that Christianity was about more than politics.

'We must not profess the Christian faith and go to church simply because we want social

reforms and benefits or a better standard of living,' she said.

'Instead, it should be because we accept the sanctity of life, the responsibility which comes with freedom and the supreme sacrifice of Christ.'

Earlier, five clergymen who tried to stop Mrs Thatcher giving her speech were howled down.

When one of the five tried to give their reasons he was drowned out by angry protests and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Rev James White, immediately overruled his objections.

He said the audience at the General Assembly had declared its wishes by its applause. And he told Mrs Thatcher: 'We are not shy in the Church of Scotland of

speaking to those in authority when we feel they need a word or so.'

'But we also listen with attention to those who speak to us.'

He added: 'I suppose you have never been in the company of so many people who pray regularly for you.'

Campaign

Afterwards, one of the ministers involved in the protest, the Rev Stewart McQuarrie, of Toryglen, Glasgow, said: 'Rather than lecture and sermonise us, she should listen to what we have to say.'

Another, the Rev Alan Sorenson, a minister from Provan, Glasgow, described Mrs Thatcher's speech as 'part of a clear publicity campaign to raise the Prime Minister's profile in Scotland.'

PROTEST FROM CHURCHMEN IS OVER-RULED

Ministers can't silence Maggie

FIVE clergymen who tried to stop Mrs Thatcher giving a speech were howled down yesterday.

They did not want the Prime Minister to address the meeting of 1,200 ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh.

But when one of the five tried to give their reasons he was drowned out by angry protests.

The Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Rev James White, immediately overruled their protest.

He said the audience at the general assembly had declared its wishes by its applause. And he told Mrs Thatcher: 'We

By PETER DOBBIE

are not shy in the Church of Scotland of speaking to those in authority when we feel they need a word or so.

'But we also listen with attention to those who speak to us.'

He added: 'I suppose you have never been in the company of so many people who pray regularly for you.'

Quotation

Mrs Thatcher responded with a quotation from St Paul to reinforce her message that it was not the creation of wealth which was wrong, but the love of money for its own sake.

'If a man will not work, he shall not eat,' she said.

Mrs Thatcher, aware that the Church had produced two highly critical reports on Government policy on housing and the distribution of income and benefits, went on to advise that Christianity was about more than politics.

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Afterwards, one of the ministers involved in the protest, the Rev Stewart McQuarrie, of Toryglen, Glasgow, said: 'Rather than lecture and sermonise us, she

should listen to what we have to say.'

Another of the five, the Rev Alan Sorenson, a minister from Provan, also in Glasgow, described Mrs Thatcher's speech to the assembly as 'part of a clear publicity campaign to raise the Prime Minister's profile in Scotland.'

Dismayed

Referring to Mrs Thatcher's visit to Glasgow last week when she watched the Scottish Cup Final, he said: 'I was dismayed at the Church being locked in the same bag as a football game and a visit to the Glasgow Garden Festival.'

Mr Sorenson said her speech guaranteed excellent coverage, which was her purpose in visiting the assembly.

Mail on Sunday pg 6

22/5/88

CHURCHMEN TRY TO STOP MAGGIE'S SERMON!



MAGGIE: Sermonising

By IAIN MACASKILL

FIVE clergymen tried to stop Premier Margaret Thatcher making a speech at a church conference yesterday.

They were shouted down at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh.

One minister tried to put a motion banning Mrs Thatcher from making her address.

But his speech was drowned out by protests from the 1,200 delegates.

Professor James Whyte, Moderator of the Assembly, ruled out the churchmen's objections.

Welcoming the Prime Minister, he said: "I suppose you have never been in the company of so many people who pray regularly for you."

In her speech Mrs Thatcher lectured the

*It's all just
publicity,
they claim*

Assembly on morality and wealth.

She said: "Any set of social and economic arrangements which is not founded on the acceptance of individual responsibility will do nothing but harm."

"We are all responsible for our own actions."

"We cannot delegate the exercise of mercy or generosity to others."

She told delegates it was not the creation of wealth that was wrong, but the love of money for its own sake.

Quoting St Paul, she said: "If a man will not work he shall not eat."

LECTURE

One of the protesting clergymen, the Rev Stewart McQuarrie, said afterwards: "Rather than lecture and sermonise us, she should listen to what we have to say."

Another of the five, the Rev Alan Sorenson, said Mrs Thatcher's speech was "part of a clearly-stated publicity campaign to raise her profile in Scotland".

●**TORIES** are to use the rebuilt Grand Hotel, Brighton—scene of the IRA bomb outrage nearly four years ago—as one of the principal centres for this year's party conference.

Scores of rooms have been booked. But party officials would not say who will be staying there.

Premier beats protests

THREATS by Left-wingers to stop Mrs Thatcher addressing to General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh petered out yesterday.

More than 1,300 Kirk members gave her a rousing welcome.

Only five ministers recorded their dissent as the Prime Minister came down from the guest gallery to the podium to a chorus of approval from commissioners who gave her traditional greetings of stamping their feet.

Although she had been invited by the Queen's representative to the Assembly the

by **GEORGE BIRREL**

Lord High Commissioner Iain Tennant, it was touch and go as to whether she would be allowed to speak to the commissioners.

But when the new moderator, the Right Rev Dr James Whyte, raised the matter there was widespread applause and only a handful of voices dissenting.

The Prime Minister had been told that the General Assembly in the coming week would be criticising a great deal of Government policy and she lost no time in spelling out

just how she saw Christianity.

She said that to her Christianity was about choice and personal responsibility.

"We are all responsible for our own actions.

"We cannot blame society if we disobey the law.

Measures

"We simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others.

"The politicians and other secular powers should strive by their measures to bring out the good in people and to fight down the bad—but they can't create the one or abolish the other."

Applause for Maggie drowns the protests

by Sunday Express Reporter

THREATS by Left wing ministers to block Mrs Thatcher addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh yesterday petered out when more than 1,300 Kirk members gave her a rousing welcome.

Only five ministers recorded their dissent as the Prime Minister came down from the guest gallery to a chorus of approval from commissioners.

When the new moderator, the Right Rev Dr James Whyte, raised the matter there was widespread applause and only a handful of voices dissenting.

Welcoming Mrs Thatcher, Prof Whyte said: "We are not shy in the Church of Scotland of speaking to those in authority when we feel they need a word or so.

He assured Mrs Thatcher

that her interest in the church was reciprocated. "I suppose you have never been in the company of so many people who pray regularly for you," he said to much laughter.

Mrs Thatcher lost no time in spelling out to the Assembly how she saw Christianity. It was not the creation of wealth that was wrong but love of money for its own sake, she said.

Wealth

Quoting St Paul, she said: "If a man will not work he shall not eat."

Mrs Thatcher said abundance rather than poverty had a legitimacy which derived from the very nature of creation. The spiritual side came in deciding what one did with the wealth.

How could we respond to calls for help, or invest in the future or support artists whose work glorified God unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth, she asked.

Mrs Thatcher said the

debate on the nature of Christianity was too often polarised on the lines that it was about spiritual redemption, not social reform. But most Christians would regard it as their duty to help their fellow men and women.

"We must not profess the Christian faith and go to church simply because we want social reforms and benefits or a better standard of behaviour—but because we accept the sanctity of life, the responsibility that comes with freedom and the supreme sacrifice of Christ."

The Old and New Testaments told us that we must work and use our talents to create work. The commandment 'Thou shall not covet' recognised that making money and owning things could become selfish activities, she said.

Mrs Thatcher said that everyone was responsible for their own actions and could not blame society if they disobeyed the law. Nor could they ask someone else to

Turn to Page Two

Maggie's message

From Page One

exercise mercy and generosity.

"The politicians and other secular powers should strive by their measures to bring out the good in people and to fight down the bad. But they can't create the one or abolish the other."

She said that intervention by the state must never become so great that it removed personal responsibility. The same applied to taxation. "While you and I would work extremely hard whatever the circumstances, there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was there. And we need their efforts too."

Religion

The Moderator presented Mrs Thatcher with two Church of Scotland reports, both highly critical of Government policies. The reports deal with housing and the Christian approach to the distribution of income and benefits. Mrs Thatcher was accompanied by her husband Denis. The assembly, the supreme court of the Church of Scotland, continues all week.

Professor Whyte told her that Church and State had often cooperated and had



Mrs Thatcher yesterday

often disagreed. "Your coming among us had witnessed this continuing relationship and given the lie that religion and politics have nothing in common."

There were around 30 anti-poll tax demonstrators out with the Hall and Mrs Thatcher left to attend a garden party in the grounds of Holyrood House.

Among the five ministers who dissented were the Rev Peter Reamonn from Cockburnspath in Berwickshire, Rev Alan Sorenson from Glasgow, Rev Stuart MacQuarrie from Toryglen in Glasgow, Rev John Ainslie from Easterhouse and Rev Hugh Drummond from Pitsligo, Fire.

Sunday Express

22/5/88

pg 1+2

PM's credo brings mixed blessings

ROBERT HARRIS ■ Political Editor

THE PRIME Minister yesterday made one of the most revealing speeches of her nine years in office as she set out to explain the spiritual beliefs which underpin her political philosophy.

Mrs Thatcher's address to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (the text of which is below) touched off an immediate controversy, with the Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, accusing her of 'a selective interpretation of the Bible' and Scottish clergymen denouncing what one called a 'disgraceful travesty of the gospel'.

Spending her second successive Saturday in Scotland — last weekend she attended the Scottish FA Cup

Final — Mrs Thatcher was invited to address 1,200 ministers and elders of the Kirk gathered in Edinburgh. An attempt by five churchmen to stop her speaking was drowned out by protests from the audience.

Mrs Thatcher said she was 'speaking personally as a Christian, as well as a politician', and in the course of her half-hour address went on to quote, among others, the Old and New Testaments, several hymns, C. S. Lewis and Abraham Lincoln.

The gospel according to Mrs Thatcher laid particular emphasis on self-reliance and personal responsibility. She quoted St Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians: 'If a man will not work he shall not eat.'

In one passage in her speech, the

Prime Minister said that she had 'always had difficulty with interpreting the Biblical precept to love our neighbours "as ourselves" until she read the Christian philosopher, C. S. Lewis: "He pointed out that we don't exactly love ourselves when we fall below the standards and beliefs we have accepted. Indeed we might even hate ourselves for some unworthy deed."

Commenting on the Prime Minister's speech, Mr Kinnock said last night: 'Her difficulty in understanding the "love thy neighbour" philosophy might have something to do with the occupant of 11 Downing Street.'

The Labour leader went on: 'His-

tory is littered with rulers who sought to justify their excesses and deficiencies on the grounds of a selective interpretation of the Bible. Mrs Thatcher is joining a long and less than glorious line.

'It might of course be some pangs of conscience as she realises the consequences of her actions and attitudes which have deliberately encouraged a society in which the poor get poorer and the rich get richer, and social responsibility takes second place to the "loadsamoney" mentality.'

One of the ministers who attempted to stop Mrs Thatcher speaking, the Rev Paraic Reamonn, said that had it

not been for the record of the Government over the past nine years 'you would think it was simply the speech of a theologically ill-educated lay woman'. 'What this Government has been doing to the country and particularly to the poor since 1979 makes the speech a disgraceful travesty of the gospel.'

The Rev Alan Sorenson, from Provan, Glasgow, described Mrs Thatcher's visit to the assembly as 'part of a clearly-stated publicity campaign to raise the Prime Minister's profile in Scotland'.

The Rev Maxwell Craig, the convener of the Church of Scotland's Church and Nation Committee, said after hearing her speech: 'I don't think anyone is in any doubt that she came

for political reasons.

'The Prime Minister was given a courteous opportunity, and she used it with care but without hectoring. She quoted scripture and hymns with confidence, clearly stating her position as a Christian. She made no reference to the needs of Scotland, nor to the injustice of the divisions between the well-off and the poor, between those in well-paid work and the one-third of our people who are in poverty.'

The Prime Minister was left in no doubt about the feelings of the Scottish Church. The Moderator gave her copies of two reports published in recent weeks which are sharply critical of Government policy on housing in Scotland and the distribution of national wealth.

We are rich, free, selfish and unhappy

MRS THATCHER has created a society which is richer and freer, but also unhappier and more selfish, according to a survey for *The Observer* by the Harris Research Centre, writes Robert Harris.

The poll, which comes when Mrs Thatcher has chosen to discuss her spiritual values, gives some statistical support to her opponents, who have long argued that the country is becoming increasingly divided between rich and poor, north and south, and young and old.

The survey also shows a slight narrowing in the Conservatives' lead over Labour. Asked how they would vote if there were a general election tomorrow, the result was: Conservative 44, Labour 41, Democrats 10, SDP 2. This compares with last month's figures of Conservative 44, Labour 39, Democrats 10 and SDP 5.

The respondents were then asked how they thought Britain had changed over the past 10 years: 48 per cent thought people were richer, compared with 36 per cent who thought people were poorer.

Asked about freedom, 44 per cent thought people now had more freedom, compared with 24 per cent who believed they had less. But these positive findings about Mrs Thatcher's 'enterprise culture' were offset by other results: 48 per cent thought people were 'more unhappy' today than 10 years ago, 21 per cent believed people were 'happier'.



HOW HAS BRITAIN CHANGED OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS?

Richer	%48
Poorer	36
More freedom	44
Less freedom	24
More unhappy	48
Happier	21
More selfish	61
More generous	19

According to the poll, 61 per cent of the population believe people are more selfish, compared with 19 per cent who think they are more generous.

A slight majority feels that the quality of life in Britain has deteriorated over the past 10 years: 42 per cent said it was worse, 39 per cent better and 14 per cent unchanged.

Answers revealed marked differences between various sections of society. Women feel the deterioration in the quality of life much more strongly than men (47 per cent, compared with 37 per cent) so, too, do the elderly (49 per cent) and those living in the north of England (47 per cent).

Results were based on a representative quota sample of 1,074 adults interviewed face-to-face on 18 and 19 May.

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PROTEST AS MAGGIE PREACHES TO THE KIRK

FIVE churchmen yesterday tried to prevent Mrs Thatcher from addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The ministers recorded their dissent at the meeting in Edinburgh but their objection was ruled out by the Moderator, the Rev Professor James Whyte.

One minister tried to put a motion objecting to the Prime Minister's speech, but his own speech was drowned out by a protest from the audience.

The Moderator said the will of the assembly, attended by 1200 ministers and elders of the Kirk, had been declared clearly by its applause and it was extremely difficult to go back.

"Not Shy"

Welcoming Mrs Thatcher on her second Scottish visit in a week, Professor Whyte said, "We are not shy in the Church of Scotland of speaking to those in authority when we feel they need a word or so.

"But we also listen with attention to those who speak to us. In the name of the Assembly I welcome you and invite you to address us."

He assured Mrs Thatcher that her interest in the church was reciprocated.

"I suppose you have never been in the company of so many people who pray regularly for you," he said to much laughter.

Saying she was speaking "personally, as a Christian," Mrs Thatcher told the Assembly it was not the creation of wealth that was wrong, but love of money for its own sake.

The Moderator presented Mrs Thatcher with two Church of Scotland reports, both highly critical of Government policies.

The reports deal with housing and the Christian approach to the distribution of income and benefits. Mrs Thatcher was accompanied by her husband Denis.

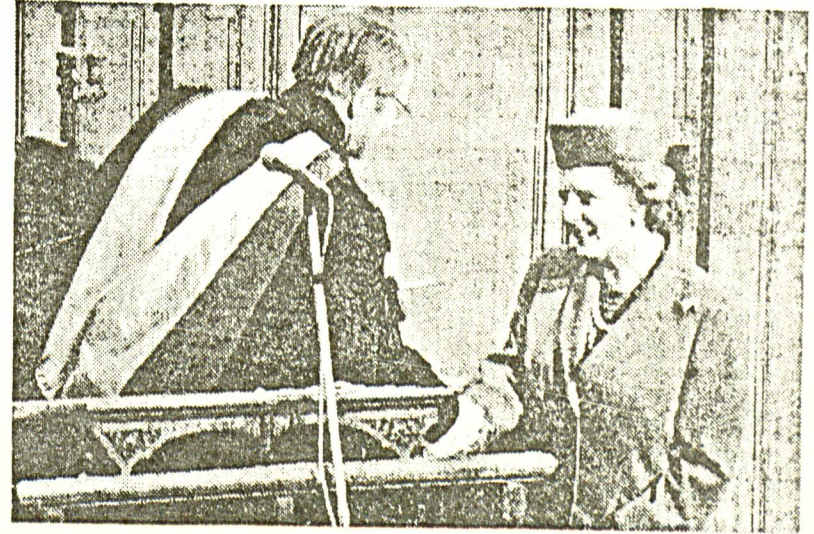
The ministers who protested were Reverends Paraic Reamonn, Cockburnspath; John Ainslie, Easterhouse; Stuart MacQuarrie, Toryglen; Alan Sorensen, Househillwood and Hugh Drummond, Pitsligo.

Rev McQuarrie said, "Rather than lecture and sermonise, she should listen to what we have to say.

"We were allowed to record our dissent but we were prevented from articulating our dissent."

He did not listen to what the Prime Minister had said because he was so annoyed.

■ There was a strong police presence when Mrs Thatcher attended the Lord High Commissioner's Garden Party at Holyrood House in the afternoon. The Queen's Park was closed with only Garden Party traffic allowed in.



● Mrs Thatcher is welcomed to the podium by the Moderator.

WEATHER 2 BINGO 12 TV & RADIO 21

Sunday Post
22/5/88

Prime Minister sets a new spiritual agenda to take Britain into the 1990s

Moral ground is mine, says Mrs Thatcher

by Donald Macintyre Political Editor

THE PRIME MINISTER yesterday claimed the moral high ground of British politics as her own, with an unequivocal declaration that Thatcherism and the goal of wealth creation were underpinned by religious faith.

In the most ringing defence of the moral basis of Thatcherism she has made since coming to power, she invoked "key elements" of the Old and New Testaments to justify the ideology underlying her government's economic and social policy.

The Churches last night responded with a sharp retort that she had addressed only one side of the theological question.

The Archbishop of Wales, the Rev George Noakes, said: "While we are concerned with the creation of wealth, it is very important how that wealth is distributed and whether everyone has a fair share of the cake."

In a speech peppered with biblical quotations, Mrs Thatcher told the Church of Scotland Assembly in Edinburgh that the Bible taught that "we must work and use our talents to create wealth".

She quoted St Paul's dictum "if a man will not work he shall not eat", adding: "Abundance rather than poverty has a legitimacy which derives from the very nature of creation."

Mrs Thatcher easily survived the objection of five ministers of the Church—out of the audience of more than 1,200 clerics and lay elders—to the invitation to her to address the assembly for the first time. Ironically, the last Prime Minister to suffer such a protest was Clement Attlee in 1946.

Mrs Thatcher's remarks came as an *Observer* Harris poll found that 61 per cent thought that

Britons had become more selfish in the last 10 years. Only 19 per cent thought that people had become more generous.

Explicitly referring to her own Christian faith, Mrs Thatcher answered critics of her Chancellor's tax-cutting Budget with reaffirmation of the importance of individual responsibility.

"While you and I would work extremely hard whatever the circumstances," she added, "there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was there. And we need their efforts too."

The speech will be seen partly as a direct response to senior churchmen in England as well as Scotland and to politicians who have attacked Thatcherism as fostering individual greed. Mr Kinnock said last night that "history is littered with rulers who seek to justify their excesses and deficiencies on the grounds of a selective interpretation of the Bible."

At Easter, the Bishop of Durham claimed that Mrs Thatcher's policies were wicked. Days before, the Archbishop of Canterbury had questioned a tax system which, he said, rewarded success rather than met "social needs which are urgent and crying".

The Prime Minister acknowledged that Christians often "genuinely disagree" about political and social issues. But she added: "What is certain is that any set of social and economic arrangements which is not founded on the acceptance of individual responsibility will do nothing but harm."

She acknowledged that the Tenth Commandment—Thou shall not covet—recognises that "making money and owning things could become selfish activities".

But she added: "It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but love of money for its own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth."

"How could we respond to the many calls for help, or invest for the future or support the wonderful artists and craftsmen whose work also glorifies God, unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth?"

Mrs Thatcher added: "And remember the alabaster jar of ointment."

She did not need to spell out the reference for her Kirk audience. But the story is of the sinner criticised by the Disciples for wasting ointment on anointing the feet of Christ. Jesus replied that the woman had "wrought a good work" adding: "For ye have the poor always with you. But me ye have not always."

In another key passage, the Prime Minister said that the only way to ensure that no one was left without sustenance, help or opportunity, was to have laws to provide for health and education, pensions, succour for the sick and disabled.

"But intervention by the State must never become so great that it effectively removes personal responsibility. The same applies to taxation."

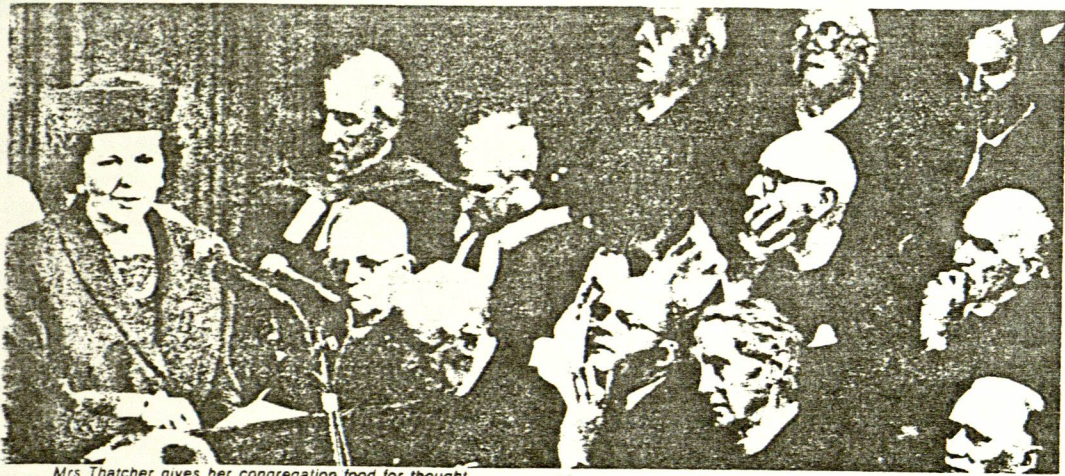
And in a passage invoking the hymn, *I vow to thee my country*, she asserted that "secular patriotism" was "a noble thing indeed in a country like ours."

The Rev Paraic Reamonn, one of the ministers who objected to the invitation to Mrs Thatcher, said later: "What this government has been doing to the country and particularly to the poor since 1979 makes the speech a disgraceful travesty of the Gospel."



Jesus lives for tens of thousands of young people who blocked central London yesterday. Clean cut, healthy living, and dancing to gospel music, 50,000 evangelicals set out to convert the nation's leaders in a way reminiscent of the Trotskyite demos of the 1960s. "The power of the Holy Spirit will use us as a battering ram," said one of the speakers.

JULIAN SIMMONDS



Mrs Thatcher gives her congregation food for thought.

MAGGIE IN KIRK PROTEST

THE Prime Minister addressed the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland yesterday ... despite a historic protest.

Five ministers rose in succession to record their dissent at Mrs Thatcher's invitation to peak.

The dramatic moment came just as the Prime Minister was invited to address the General Assembly.

But their protests came too late and the remaining 1400 Assembly Com-

MAIL REPORTER

missioners greeted her with thunderous applause.

And the new Moderator, The Right Rev Professor James Whyte, said the will of the Assembly had been clearly declared by its welcome.

Mrs Thatcher then moved swiftly from the visitors' gallery to the rostrum.

She told the Assembly about the way she saw things as a Christian as well as a politician.

"We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth," she said. "But it is not the creation of wealth

that is wrong, but love of money for its own sake."

SMILE

Mrs Thatcher smiled when at the end of her speech the Moderator told her: "Doubtless your words to us will be quoted sometimes with great approval and sometimes with disapproval in the subsequent debates of this Assembly."

As a parting gift he gave her copies of two Church of Scotland reports - "Just Sharing", about the distribution of wealth, and "Housing Scotland's People", which calls for massive reform of housing finance.

Urgent virus checks

A UNION has demanded urgent checks on water supplies at all London hospitals.

This follows the discovery of Legionnaires Disease at Guy's Hospital and the epidemic at BBC headquarters.

The virus has also been found in the hot water system at the London headquarters of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, half-a-mile from the BBC building.

The Manufacturing, Science and Finance

demand

union, representing hospital laboratory and technical staff, has sent an urgent order to all its London groups.

They must "raise with their managements the need for an urgent check on the water supply".

Joint general secretary Clive Jenkins said: "We suspect air-conditioning systems in many factory and office buildings are coming to the end of their lives and this could increase the danger."

TORONTO

What's next Maggie?

MRS Thatcher has obviously become a fan of Scotland.

In fact, she just can't stay away.

Last week she was at the Scottish Cup Final and yesterday she was addressing the fathers and brethren of the Kirk's General Assembly.

It would be churlish to complain. But it's no coincidence that her new-found love for things Scottish has surfaced with the Tory Party here in a sad state.

It only remains for Maggie to go the whole hog - and persuade Denis to dress up in the kilt.

Sunday Mail

22 / 5 / 88

A lesson in restraint as Tory prophetess recites her Bible story

By WILLIAM PAUL

GOOD MANNERS being at least as important as good morals, it was the will of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland that the Prime Minister be given a hearing on its opening day.

Five Ministers objected, briefly delaying Mrs Thatcher's descent from the Lord High Commissioners' gallery to the floor of the packed Assembly Hall, but they quickly bowed to the clear decision of the majority and returned to their seats.

Mrs Thatcher, in a suit of the finest Tory blue, then proceeded to explain the firm foundation of Christian values on which she — brought up a Methodist and now Church of England — claims to have built the distinctive political philosophy that bears her name.

She spoke a little faster than usual, with

controlled passion, eyes glittering like some ancient mariner obliged to tell her story to the disbelieving wedding guest commissioners.

She based her speech on Biblical texts, quoting St Paul approvingly on those not working not eating, emphasising the theme of individual responsibility and asserting that the creation of wealth is not wrong in itself, only the love of money for its own sake.

No doubt, she hopes the many critics of her social policies within the Kirk will wake up sadder and wiser men having listened to her freely-offered exposition.

The Assembly received her views politely but the applause was muted, certainly less enthusiastic than that which

drowned out the initial objections to her being invited to speak in the first place.

The restraint was in marked contrast to the enthusiastic ovation which greeted the address of Sir Iain Tennent, the Lord High Commissioner and Mrs Thatcher's host, when he warned of the dangers of jealousy, selfishness and intolerance among the new generation of people racing to obtain riches on earth.

The newly-installed Moderator, the Rev Professor James Whyte, who had effectively outmanoeuvred and silenced "the hotbeds at his feet" as they described themselves, then made his own, infinitely more subtle, protest.

The Assembly appreciated the significance

as he presented Mrs Thatcher with two recent reports, both of which are highly critical of Government policy. One deals with the need for reform in housing in Scotland, and the other laments the widening gap between rich and poor, offering a Christian perspective on the distribution of the country's wealth.

At the same time, Prof Whyte told the Prime Minister that her words would be undoubtedly be quoted back at her with approval and with disapproval by supporters and opponents alike.

Good manners being at least as important as good politics, Mrs Thatcher smiled and accepted the reports with good grace, as well as the Assembly's continued

prayers for the guidance and protection of her and her Government.

In the corridors later, after Mrs Thatcher had slipped away as unobtrusively as she had arrived, the commissioners mullied over what she had told them.

It was by general consensus an interesting and revealing expression of her personal thoughts and beliefs, but not necessarily one that will be allowed to go unchallenged during the course of the Assembly.

Few denied that it was an overtly political occasion, but most were of the opinion that, amid the pomp and ceremony and determined politeness which masked the basic conflict of attitudes, it was a useful exercise.

As for the detailed content and Mrs Thatcher's invocation of St Paul and other Biblical sources as the forerunners of her brand of present-day Conservatism, it seems likely that such an analysis will stir up as much controversy as the claim she has staked to the writings of Adam Smith in support of her philosophy.

Before Mrs Thatcher addressed the Assembly, the Moderator said that the Kirk was always prepared to listen when those in authority spoke directly to its members, but they would not be shy in speaking back if it was felt a word was required.

On Saturday, the Kirk had the good manners to do the listening. It assumes that gesture will be reciprocated now that it is its turn to speak back.

HAMISH CAMPBELL

Thatcher's biblical discourse fails to win over Kirk critics

By WILLIAM PAUL

THE Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, revealed the Christian principles on which she bases her political philosophy in a speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh on Saturday.

A move by five dissenting Ministers to deny her the opportunity to speak was overwhelmingly rejected by the commissioners and her audience then heard a remarkable personal statement describing her innermost beliefs.

She told how key elements of the Old and New Testaments had created for her "a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and the principles to shape economic and social life."

The theme of individual responsibility ran through her speech and she asserted that it was not the creation of wealth that was wrong, but love of money for its own sake.

Afterwards, the Rev Maxwell Craig, convener of the Church and Nation Committee, said he was glad the Assembly had been courteous and listened to what she had had to say.

However, his initial reaction was that Scotland's needs were better declared in the two reports presented to her by the Moderator than in any of her words. The reports, to be debated at the Assembly, are critical of Government policy over

housing and the distribution of wealth.

"Her speech was a wise one that did not touch on any points of controversy," he said. "But that does not remove the controversy that will be demonstrated during the Assembly. It is to be regretted that she will not be able to see the debates. Only to come to the opening day gives a somewhat superficial impression of the Assembly's business."

The Ministers hoping to stop her speaking had their dissent

Assembly reports — Page 4; Editorial — Page 10
Alan Macaule on The Sermon on the Mount — Page 11

recorded. Afterwards the Rev Parasc Reamona, of East Lothian, said: "I felt the Prime Minister was coming to the Assembly not out of zeal for the glory of God but to use the Assembly for her own debatable political purposes."

"Many of us in the Kirk think the gospel of acquisitive individualism she preaches is diametrically opposed to the Christian gospel."

He described her speech as cleverly constructed but from a theologically ill-educated lay woman. "What this Government has been doing to the country

since 1979, and particularly to the poor makes her speech a quite disgraceful travesty of the gospel."

The Rev Stuart MacQuarrie, of Toryglen in Glasgow, said Mrs Thatcher's presence was both inappropriate and insensitive because the visit was using the Assembly for blatant party political purposes. "Rather than lecturing and sermonising to us she should actually listen to what we have to say."

The Rev Alan Sorenson, of Househillwood in Glasgow, said

he had opposed the visit because it was part of a campaign to raise Mrs Thatcher's profile in Scotland. "I am dismayed at the Church being lumped in the same bag along with a football game and a visit to the Garden Festival."

The two other dissenters were the Rev John Ainslie, Easterhouse community minister, and the Rev Hugh Drummond, of Pitligo and Sandhaven.

Support for Mrs Thatcher came from the Rev Dr David Whiteford, from East Lothian. He said Mrs Thatcher had delivered one of the best speeches

he had ever heard any Prime Minister give to the Assembly. It was a personal declaration of her deep Christian faith.

As there was no election pending, it was an appropriate time for her to speak to the Assembly. It was customary for the Assembly to hear Prime Ministers, provided there was no election imminent.

"In a sense it was a personal confession of faith. It showed her deep and convinced Christian belief and how she strove to relate this to the political realities that she has to deal with. She did this, I thought, superbly. I thought it was a masterly speech."

Mr Neil Kinnoch, the Labour leader, and his deputy, Mr Roy Hattersley, both criticised Mrs Thatcher's stance. Mr Hattersley said the problem with Conservative philosophy was that wealth was being used to slake individual greed.

Mr Kinnoch, in a report in the Observer, accused Mrs Thatcher of joining the less than glorious line of rulers who sought to justify their excesses and deficiencies on the basis of selective interpretation of the Bible. He repeated his view, given in a speech last week, that the Government had created a "loadsamoney" economy where the poor got poorer and the rich got richer.



THE SCOTSMAN 23/5/88.



Mrs Thatcher with Professor White

Creation of wealth not wrong, P.M. tells ministers

MRS THATCHER told Church of Scotland ministers it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but love of money for its own sake.

Addressing 1200 ministers and Kirk elders at the General Assembly on Saturday, she said abundance rather than poverty had a legitimacy which derived from the very nature of creation.

The spiritual side came in deciding what one did with the wealth.

The Prime Minister added, "Nevertheless the Tenth Commandment—Thou shalt not covet—recognises that making money and owning things could become selfish activities.

"But it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but love of money for its own sake."

Quoting St Paul, she told the ministers, "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

Mrs Thatcher said it was important to work hard and use our talents before we could help others.

She said the debate on the nature of Christianity was too often polarised on the lines that it was about spiritual redemption, not social reform. However, most Christians would regard it as their duty to help their fellow men, she added.

Mrs Thatcher said everyone

was responsible for their own actions and could not blame society if they disobeyed the law. Nor could they expect someone else to exercise mercy and generosity towards them.

"The politicians and other secular powers should strive by their measures to bring out the good in people and to fight down the bad. But they can't create the one or abolish the other."

She said intervention by the state must never become so great that it removed personal responsibility.

The same applied to taxation. "While you and I would work extremely hard whatever the circumstances, there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was there. And we need their efforts, too."

The Moderator, the Right Reverend Professor James White, presented Mrs Thatcher with two Church of Scotland reports, both highly critical of Government policies.

The reports dealt with housing and the Christian approach to the distribution of income and benefits.

Earlier five ministers had attempted to stop the Prime Minister making her speech but their objections were overruled by Professor White.

The assembly continues this week.

Thatcher reveals politician's view of Christianity

By PETER JONES, Political Reporter

THE IMPORTANT influence of the Church of Scotland in the spiritual life of the whole nation, through the caring services provided by the department of social responsibility, and through its links with other churches, were recognised by Mrs Thatcher at the start of her speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Saturday.

But the bulk of her speech was devoted to explaining how she saw things "as a Christian, as well as a politician". She said she had recently read the phrase - Christianity is about spiritual redemption, not social reform.

"Sometimes the debate on these matters has become too polarised and given the impression that the two are quite separate. Most Christians would regard it as their personal Christian duty to help their fellow men and women. They would regard the lives of children as a precious trust."

These duties came from being a Christian and not from secular laws, she said, but were also accepted by some who were not Christian. She identified three beliefs, stemming from spiritual rather than social parts of life which she believed were the distinctive marks of Christianity.

"First, that from the beginning man has been endowed by God with the fundamental right to choose between good and evil.

"Second, that we are made in God's own image and therefore we are expected to use all our own power of thought and judgement in exercising that choice; and further, if we open our hearts to God, he has promised to work within us.

"And third, that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, when faced with his terrible choice and lonely vigil, chose to lay down his life that our sins may be forgiven.

"I think back to many discussions in my early life when we all agreed that if you try to take the fruits of Christianity without its roots, the fruits will wither. And they will not come again unless you nurture the root."

Mrs Thatcher went on to state her belief in the relevance of Christianity to public policy - Old Testament teaching of the importance of observing a strict code of law, and the New

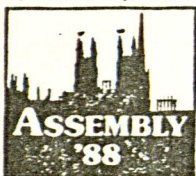
Testament teachings of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, both of which emphasised, she said, loving our neighbours as ourselves.

"I believe that by taking together these key elements from the Old and the New Testaments, we gain a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life.

"We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth. *'If a man will not work he shall not eat'* wrote St Paul to the Thessalonians. Nevertheless, the Tenth Commandment - thou shalt not covet - recognises that making money and owning things could become selfish activities.

"But it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but love of money for its own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth.

"How could we respond to the many calls for help, or invest



for the future, or support the wonderful artists and craftsmen whose work also glorifies God, unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth?"

Mrs Thatcher said that social and economic arrangements had to be founded on the acceptance of individual responsibility, that politicians should strive to bring out the good in people and fight down the bad, but could not create the one or abolish the other.

Today, she said, the only way to ensure that no-one was left without sustenance, help or opportunity, was to provide by law for such things as health and education, but intervention by the State must never become so great that it effectively removed personal responsibility.

"The same applies to taxation, for while you and I would work extremely hard whatever the circumstances, there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was

there. And we need their efforts too."

Mrs Thatcher said she strongly believed politicians should see religious education had a proper place in the school curriculum, for the Christian religion was fundamental to the nation's heritage. It was impossible to understand our history or literature without understanding that the nation's ideals are founded on the Bible.

Mrs Thatcher declared she was an enthusiast for democracy "not because I believe majority opinion is inevitably right or true, indeed no majority can take away God-given human rights, but because I believe it most effectively safeguards the value of the individual, and more than any other system, restrains the abuse of power by the few. And that is a Christian concept.

"But there is little hope for democracy is the hearts of men and women in democratic societies cannot be touched by a call to something greater than themselves.

"Political structures, State institutions, collective ideals are not enough. We parliamentarians can legislate for the rule of law. You the Church can teach the life of faith.

"I always think that the whole debate about the Church and the State has never yielded anything comparable in insight to that beautiful hymn I now to thee my country.

"It begins with a triumphant assertion of what might be described as secular patriotism, a noble thing indeed in a country like ours: *'I now to thee my country all earthly things above; entire, whole and perfect, the service of my love'*.

"It goes on to speak of *'another country I heard of long ago'* whose King cannot be seen and whose armies cannot be counted, but *'soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase'*. Not group by group, or party by party or even church by church - but soul by soul - and each one counts.

"That, members of the assembly, is the country which you chiefly serve. You fight your cause under the banner of an historic church. Your success matters greatly - as much to the temporal as to the spiritual welfare of the nation."

Theology and Mrs Thatcher

PASS whatever verdict you like on Mrs Thatcher's address to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, there was something enormously refreshing about the circumstances under which it was made.

There were no PR men to pave the way, there was no allegedly pulse-quickening music to herald her entrance, no slogan-draped backcloth or high-technology autocue, just her, a lecturer and for once a critically attentive audience rather than a slavishly adoring gathering of the faithful.

It was an intensely Scottish occasion too, one of those occasions where the mighty meet with the ordinary for no other purpose than to debate important issues on equal terms.

That point was emphasised not by the stupid gestures of the thankfully few who would rather Mrs Thatcher had not been heard, but by the way in which she had to take her seat in the hall unobtrusively and wait for the summons to speak.

The Scottishness was emphasised by the presence of the Lord High Commissioner and his attendant dignitaries, none of whom would have been present in their resplendent official garb and status had not Scotland once been a sovereign state.

And that gave Saturday a peculiarly historic note. To dismiss Mrs Thatcher's appearance as simply part of a much needed image-polishing process following her party's rebuff by the Scottish electorate is to miss an important point.

As we and others have often noted, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is the only forum we have which approximates to a Scottish Assembly. But for once the General Assembly fitted the bill of a forum where we can call the executive arm of Government to account.

It will be recalled that in the political burly-burly during and after the General Election, much was made of how the Government's policies were not in tune with the morals, attitudes, aspirations and values of the Scottish people.

And did not Mrs Thatcher on Saturday somehow recognise the existence of that divide, real or perceived, in the way she addressed the Assembly, not to denounce it as some Opposition party as some in the Conservative Party would, but to give an account of her morals, attitudes, aspirations, and values.

Accept or reject what she said, the fact remains that Saturday was an important landmark in the political life of our nation. The fact that the Prime Minister gave an account of herself to the General Assembly has enhanced the status of the Church of Scotland, not demeaned it to the status of the PR value of a football match appearance as a few were asserting.

As to the nature of Mrs Thatcher's theology, it seemed curiously homespun, not in itself surprising, since all of us who have not been immersed in theological seminars throughout our lives, but call ourselves Christians, must necessarily conduct our lives according to a homespun theology.

But Mrs Thatcher conducts the life of a nation, and much of her policy thinking, we now understand, is ruled by her own theology. Much is acceptable to all, for example the primacy of the doctrine of free will rather than that of Calvinistic predestination.

However the opening up of her soul has revealed the fundamental reason why such a gulf has opened up between Mrs Thatcher's Government and the Church, not just in Scotland but in England as well.

Mrs Thatcher's theology gives pride of place to the individual and the exercise of individual responsibilities according to Christian principles. But she has either consciously rejected, or simply not thought about, the extension of that thinking.

In a nutshell, what she said was that if the individual gets his or her spiritual thinking right, the correct material consequences in terms of help for the less fortunate will follow. It is the kind of thinking that has led her to declare previously that there is no such thing as society, only individuals.

But for churchmen, the spiritual and the material, like freedom, is indivisible and not sequential. Mrs Thatcher called in aid of her theology the hymn that tells of a country whose king cannot be seen and whose armies cannot be counted but "soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase."

Not "group by group but soul by soul" she emphasised, to which churchmen would say, yes, soul by soul, but as brother and sister. The failure of Mrs Thatcher to have that kind of thinking in her theology, is where she and the Church part company.

Jon Akass



THE BRIGHTEST
WAY TO
START YOUR WEEK

Thatcher's Epistle to the Scots

IN HER Epistle to the Caledonians, Mrs Margaret Thatcher will have embarrassed some of her disciples by talking about God and the Bible.

To old Tories these are deeply personal matters, akin to sex and personal hygiene, that ought not to be the subject of public discussion.

At one time, even Church of England vicars blushed at the mention of religion and there are still bishops who wince when The Almighty is introduced into the conversation.

Mrs Thatcher, who was brought up in a Methodist household, has no such inhibitions. When she addressed the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at the weekend, God was the first item on the agenda.

Welcomed

This is a turn of events much to be welcomed. Politics in Britain has been about economics for as long as I can remember, and it would be exhilarating if we could now start talking about something else.

Whether she was wise, politically, to launch the new Tory spirituality in Scotland is more questionable.

The Scots, by and large, hold to gauntly Calvinistic beliefs, are regularly attendant at church, and are

Blessed turn of events

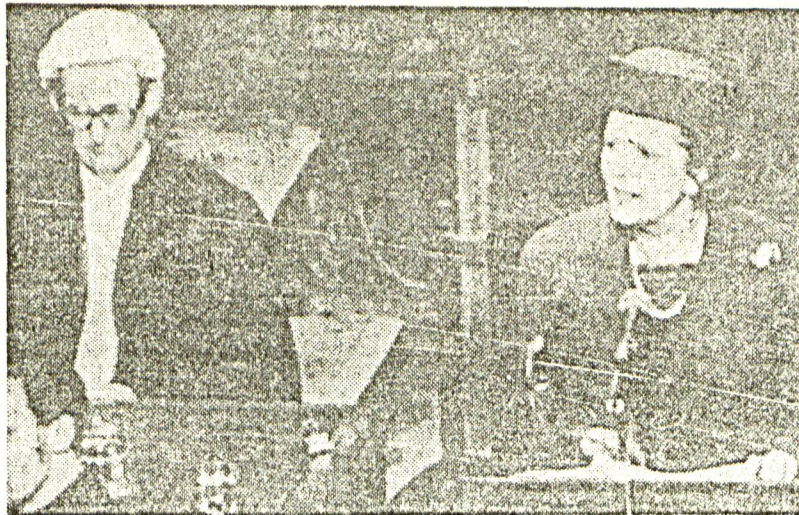
traditionally censorious of decadent carryings-on South of the Border.

I am always inclined to take my hands out of pockets, straighten up and watch my step when I go to Scotland.

Then again, the Scots have recently fallen into sinful habits like not voting Tory at General Elections. It was necessary for Mrs Thatcher to act swiftly and boldly.

She is aware, obviously, that the outward and visible signs of her Administration's success consists largely of baubles like Porsches and wine bars.

So she hit the Elders of the Church with this: "We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth. 'If a man will not work he shall not eat', wrote St Paul to the Thessalonians.



Money talks . . . Mrs Thatcher preaches to the disbelievers

"But, it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but love of money for its own sake.

"The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth."

There is no denying that this is edifying stuff. Mr Nigel Lawson, next door at No 11, can be left to the earthy business of making us all rich.

Mrs Thatcher, at No 10, will take care of the spiritual side of things. There are many flaws in this strategy although Mr Neil Kinnock, in his knee-jerk response, failed to identify any of them.

The choice that Mrs Thatcher envisages—the anguish over the distribution of surplus wealth—is itself a luxury.

The great majority in the nation would be delighted with so high-falutin' an anguish. Such spiritual torment costs more than most people can afford.

It is rare for a Prime Minister to express convictions and feelings that cannot be explained in the form of a graph. Margaret Thatcher has revealed herself.

THE CRISIS IN THE FAMILY . . . AND ON THE TERRACES

By JOHN DEANS
Political Correspondent

THE British must match their new-found wealth and freedom with a fresh moral crusade and return to traditional family values.

That was the message from Mrs Thatcher and Home Secretary Douglas Hurd last night as the country faces the new challenges of the 1990s.

The Prime Minister, speaking in Scotland at the weekend, firmly defended the creation of wealth and restoration of individual freedom achieved since she swept to power nine years ago.

Hurd backs Maggie over moral crusade

Emphasising the importance of self-reliance and personal responsibility, she defied the protests of some churchmen to declare to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh: 'It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but the love of money for its own sake.'

Expanding on the strong beliefs which underscore her pioneering po-

litical views, she added: 'The spiritual dimension comes from deciding what one does with the wealth and how we respond to the many calls for help . . . and invest for the future.'

Just 24 hours later, Mr Hurd backed her up with a fresh plea to parents, teachers and church leaders to play a bigger role in restoring moral values and achieving a return to the commu-

nity spirit which reigned in Britain before the television age.

Interviewed on the ITV programme Weekend World, the Home Secretary said that since 1979, the restoration of personal freedom had reversed the country's economic decline.

But the time had now come, he said, to tug the other string and re-emphasise personal responsibility.

Deputy Labour leader Roy Hattersley claimed after watching Mr Hurd, however, that the Home Secretary was breaking ranks and distancing himself from Mrs Thatcher and that he was embarrassed by the 'greedy and violent society created by the Prime Minister.'

Gospel truths

MRS THATCHER should beware of quoting the Bible in support of her politics. Not the least of the Holy Book's uses is that it can be employed to prove anything.

In her search for the kirk vote, the Prime Minister quoted to the Church of Scotland — from the New English Bible — St Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

That, no doubt, justifies cutting unemployment benefit.

A better quotation, however, would have been from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans (xv. 1):

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves."

Charity

But she might have had a job justifying the last Budget to the apostle had she met him in a DHSS office.

Even more to the point of present day needs was St Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (iii. 13):

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor... and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

That, though, wouldn't have agreed with the passage she did quote. Still let St Paul have the final word (Corinthians, xiv. 34 and 35):

"Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak. If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home..."

Dentists would enjoy that.

THE MIRROR, Monday, May 23, 1988

And the Gospel according

Parish mags in her handbag point way

by CHRIS BUCKLAND
Political Editor

and might want to ask her for a bit of advice.

The Prime Minister's religious faith, however, is vitally important to her.

It is much more important than the blazing rows she has with the "wets" who lurk under Bishop's robes.

MORAL

She moved to the Church of England after a Methodist upbringing under the watchful eye of her dotting father Alderman Roberts in Grantham.

She now believes that the Established Church

has a duty to join in the crusade to look after the nation's morals while she looks after its bank balance.

She may not read every word preached by Dr Robert Runcie — a man who, according to Edward Heath, she wants booted out of his job as Archbishop of Canterbury.

She does, however, carry around in her handbag obscure parish magazines with homilies from vicars that

meet her approval squeezed among the announcements of flower festivals and bring-and-buy sales.

Indeed it is surprising that some startled clerics have not demanded copyright payments when their vicarage jottings appear in a major political speech or are trotted out in a TV interview with Sir Robin Day.

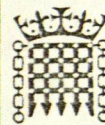
Close colleagues saw a change come over Mrs Thatcher after she nar-

rowly escaped death in the Brighton bombing almost four years ago. It was moving when she described the light coming through the Church window on the following Sunday and realised, "this was the day I was not meant to see."

One of her closest Cabinet colleagues said: "That made her realise she was mortal — a difficult enough concept for the most humble of us."

"She knows that round any corner there may be an Armalite pointing at her or another bomb waiting."

She does not forget, either, the message the IRA sent her after Brighton — "This time you were lucky. We only have to be lucky



WHEN Mrs Thatcher delivered the Gospel According to St Margaret at the Church of Scotland's General Assembly at the weekend, she was suspected of hijacking a religious meeting.

After all, breathing life into the Tory vote north of the border will require a miracle almost as great as the Resurrection.

Some of her more cynical opponents even believe she goes to Church every Sunday not to listen to The Word but in case the Almighty has problems

to St Margaret

once." When she spoke in Scotland at the weekend she was simply repeating the message she had first heard at her father's knee.

It was a simple dictum from John Wesley, whose split from the Church of England 250 years ago this week led to the founding of the Methodist Church.

He said: "Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can."

She has carried this further with her own brutal logic when she once declared that the Good Samaritan wouldn't have been a blind bit of good if he hadn't been able to pay the innkeeper to look after the mugged traveller he found by the

roadside. Mrs Thatcher clearly believes the dear old C of E should be more like the robust free churchers of her formative years with their fulminations against sin.

She does have her favourites among the muddlers, like Bishop of London and anti-women priest campaigner Graham Leonard.

BLAME

She can barely disguise her loathing, however, for the "parachute" clergy who land in the middle of deprived cities, take up the class war of their downtrodden parishioners and blame the Government for every ill.

That was why she sent the Chief Rabbi to the House of Lords this year. He has no time for such nonsense and neither do the many Jewish voters in her Finchley constituency.

But the lady does try to convert the "heathen" clerics to the true path of Thatcherism.

Last November she called Dr Runcie and seven senior bishops to Chequers to tell them the Church of England must play a leading role in raising moral standards.

She did not get very far. Indeed, as one of them is reputed to have said after meeting her: "There, but for the grace of God, goes God."

★★★★ TODAY Monday May 23 1988

Kirk rebuff for Mrs Thatcher

PRIME Minister Margaret Thatcher suffered a rebuke from the Church of Scotland at the weekend when she was presented with a document outlining alternatives to her policies.

At the kirk's general assembly in Edinburgh she was urged to read the document, called *Just Sharing*, which calls for redistribution of

by our
Scottish Correspondent

wealth to the poor.

The document, said the kirk, contains policies based on Christ-

ian values and reflects the kirk's strong opposition to the budget, poll tax and social security changes.

And it contained a housing policy calling for comprehensive provision to meet all needs in place of exclusive promotion of the private sector.

But the 1,200 ministers and elders at the general assembly were split on whether the Prime Minister should have been allowed the unique honour of addressing it at all.

Five ministers in succession

opposed this, while Mrs Thatcher waited in the visitor's gallery waiting for the opportunity she was seeking.

Three of them were from deprived Glasgow areas: John Ainslie from Easterhouse, Stuart MacQuarrie from Toryglen, and Alan Sorenson from Provan.

Mr McQuarrie walked out of the assembly after it volubly rejected

the dissenters, and invited Mrs Thatcher to the rostrum.

Another one of the five ministers who tried to stop the Thatcher sermon, the Rev Paraic Reamonn of Cockburnsparth, was clearly outraged by it.

"What this government has been doing to the country and particularly the poor since 1979 makes the speech a disgraceful travesty of the gospel," he said.

THE SUN SAYS

The gospel according to Maggie

WHICH is better—loadsamoney or loadsadebt? Neil Kinnock was talking his usual load of Godswallop when he gave the impression that there is something wicked about making money.

We have been poor under the socialists and prosperous under the Tories.

We know which is preferable.

In her speech to church leaders at the Scottish General Assembly, Mrs Thatcher was right to point out that it is a Christian duty to help others.

She was also right to point out that the money to help others does not fall from heaven.

If we are to spend more on hospitals, on education, on looking after the poor and the needy we first have to create wealth.

Mrs Thatcher's main achievement has been to unshackle the talents and the energies of the people.

She has made it possible for them to help themselves and they have helped the country.

However, there is still a stubborn minority who ask first what the state can do for them before they ask what they can do for themselves.

They still need to be convinced of the power of self help.

When they are, watch Britain go.



Maggie... right

Tory emphasis shifts to social responsibility

By Colin Hughes
Political Correspondent

THE PRIME Minister's speech to the Church of Scotland was yesterday confirmed by the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, as a determined Tory attempt to switch the political battleground from economic freedom and selfishness to a new emphasis on social and individual responsibility.

The shift is partly a response to the dissent and unpopularity which have descended on Margaret Thatcher's third term social reforms — health, social security, the poll tax, and to some extent education and housing.

It is also a reaction to the accusation that her government has rewarded only greed. That charge was levelled forcefully last Friday by Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, when he called Thatcherism a "loadsamoney" philosophy that would lead to "loadsatrouble".

Tories know they stand vulnerable to the charge. A Harris poll published in yesterday's *Observer* found that most people feel richer and freer, but less happy and more selfish.

Mr Hurd said yesterday that Conservatism had always contained the two strands of freedom and responsibility. "But sometimes you have to put the emphasis on the one, sometimes on the other. We do now need to emphasise more than we have, more than we did at the beginning, that individualism is not a narrow or selfish thing.

"The reason why you put stress on individual achievement, encouraging people to achieve, and making it possible for them to do so, is not so that we can pile up individual masses of wealth, but so that the community as a whole is a more decent place."

In an interview recorded last week, before Mrs Thatcher's address, but broadcast yesterday on ITV's *Weekend World*, Mr Hurd

Thatcher responds to 'greedy society' unease

said that when Thatcherism started out the emphasis had to be on economic freedom, individualism and the creation of wealth, because that was where the country had been going wrong.

"We mustn't lose that. But we have also got, I think now, to tug the other string, and say to those people doing quite well, with a bit more money than they have ever had before, owning their own house, owning some shares — 'look, there's a community to which you also belong, be an active citizen within it'."

Mrs Thatcher told the General Assembly of the Kirk in Edinburgh on Saturday that the tenth commandment, 'Thou shalt not covet', recognised "that making money and owning things could become selfish activities". But it was not the creation of wealth that was wrong, but love of money for its own sake: the spiritual dimension came in deciding what to do with wealth.

Both the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary insisted that the essentials of the welfare state should remain intact. "In our generation, the only way we can ensure that no one is left without sustenance, help or opportunity, is to have laws to provide for health and education, pensions for the elderly, succour for the sick and disabled," Mrs Thatcher said.

Mr Hurd said: "You are going to go on having a health system, an education system and a social

security system, which are overwhelmingly funded out of the taxpayer's pocket." But he added that the state's systems could not produce "all the answers that people now require". The recent Tory emphasis on voluntary service, neighbourhood and parental involvement, and on charitable giving was intended to reach the parts the state could not reach.

The Government could extend its statutory schemes, but that would mean "the fountain plays over everything... a very inflexible and wasteful way of doing it". It was better to choose voluntary people and groups, "and encourage them to find places, not reached by the schemes, where there is need".

Mrs Thatcher said: "There is little hope for democracy if the hearts of men and women in democratic societies cannot be touched by a call to something greater than themselves. Political structures, state institutions, collective ideals, are not enough." Politicians should strive "to bring out the good in people, and to fight down the bad".

Mr Hurd believed politicians were "not very good at preaching responsibilities", and conceded that it was not much good "the Home Secretary going up and down the country telling people to be virtuous". The Government's role lay in helping people to rediscover their abilities.

Roy Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, commented that "the greedy and violent society created by Mrs Thatcher is clearly an embarrassment to Douglas Hurd. He knows that it will not last in the 1990s, and he didn't try very hard to disguise his feelings."

Mr Hattersley added that Mrs Thatcher's speech in Scotland showed "she still has no compassion, no feelings of fairness, no generosity of spirit, and no sense of community".

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THE INDEPENDENT Monday 23 May 1988

THE INDEPENDENT

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The Epistle to the Caledonians

MARGARET THATCHER could have been braver in her address at the weekend to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. She might have quoted Psalm 146: "O put not your trust in princes." But she preferred an argument which did not involve disparaging the mighty.

difficulty of changing anything for the better; he warned that revolutionaries, even well-meaning ones, would find it much easier to destroy than to build. Burke considered that the social order which he defended rested on Christian principles. With her concept of the Christian bourgeoisie, Mrs Thatcher updates him; *bourgeoisie oblige* is the new rallying cry. But how far her fresh emphasis on moral choice can be reconciled with her economic views, which owe more to liberalism than conservatism, remains open to question.

"We are all responsible for our own actions," she declared. "We cannot blame society if we disobey the law. We simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others." At its lowest, her sermon was an adroit exercise in passing the buck. You must not blame the Government for rising crime: blame the criminals. Nor can you blame the Government for the poverty in which some people live: if rich, ask what you can do about it; if poor, ask the same questions. Do not look to politicians, or the arrangements they might devise, for salvation.

This speech significantly extends the moral claims made by Mrs Thatcher. The nation has grown used to being told that the Government cannot create jobs, merely the conditions in which others can perform that task. But never before has the Prime Minister suggested so forcefully, or in so spiritual a gathering, that the Government cannot relieve citizens of the duty to be merciful and generous; it can merely create the conditions in which individual virtue flowers.

Though in the old days monarchs as well as their subjects were meant to be virtuous, Mrs Thatcher's claims are in some ways profoundly Tory. An appreciation of the limitations of government lies at the heart of conservatism. Edmund Burke preached the

difficultly of changing anything for the better; he warned that revolutionaries, even well-meaning ones, would find it much easier to destroy than to build. Burke considered that the social order which he defended rested on Christian principles. With her concept of the Christian bourgeoisie, Mrs Thatcher updates him; *bourgeoisie oblige* is the new rallying cry. But how far her fresh emphasis on moral choice can be reconciled with her economic views, which owe more to liberalism than conservatism, remains open to question.

The most telling objection to unfettered economic liberalism is that it reduces men and women to their market value. The trouble with this is that some men and women appear to have little or no market value. Indeed, the miners in a loss-making pit can, on a strictly economic view, appear worse than worthless: they are a drain on everyone else. The present Government seems on occasion to take an exclusively materialistic view of people. Insistence that financial viability is not just an important test but the supreme one (which can be crudely reduced to the idea that "wealth is right") diminishes respect for people such as teachers, whose financial rewards are relatively small. It encourages the growth of a society whose representative figure is the moneyed job.

Mrs Thatcher's speech is a welcome indication that she realises the free market is not enough. It would help, however, if she admitted what her actions as a minister have often confirmed, that governments as well as individuals sometimes have to buck markets in order to be considered moral.

Church leaders say Thatcher speech missed the point

RELIGIOUS leaders said yesterday that Margaret Thatcher's speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland betrayed an ignorance of Christian ideas of justice.

The Rev Brian Duckworth, general secretary of the Methodist Division of Social Responsibility, said that despite the Prime Minister's Nonconformist background and her participation in Methodist discussion groups while she was a student in Oxford, she had missed the point.

"The issue is not whether people are charitable or courteous, although they are both important. What matters as far as governments are concerned is the stewardship of resources and the justice of the societies they preside over. This has been a central point in both the Jewish and Christian tradition from Leviticus onwards.

"Our fundamental charge is that we are moving from a rela-

By Nick Cohen

tively just society to a relatively unjust one, and that is something which sticks in the craw of those of us who have to see the consequences."

The Prime Minister told the assembly on Saturday that: "Christianity is about spiritual redemption, not social reform." She said that any set of personal and economic arrangements which is not founded on individual responsibility will do nothing but harm.

Quoting St Paul, she said: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat. It was important to work hard and use our talents before we could help others."

Mr Duckworth said that Mrs Thatcher failed to distinguish between the need for individual responsibility and the responsibilities of society. The Anglican Bishop of Manchester, Stanley Booth-Clibborn, added: "The

need for individual responsibility over the use of money is something on which all Christians are agreed. But the message of the Bible is that governments have responsibilities too.

"It is not part of Christian teaching to produce a situation in which the gap between rich and poor is increasing and public services such as health and education are not given a proper share of our resources. This is the reason why so many church leaders have been critical of Government policy in recent years."

On Saturday, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Right Rev James White, presented Mrs Thatcher with two church reports on housing and a Christian approach to the distribution of income and benefits, both highly critical of Government policies. Five ministers had attempted to stop the Prime Minister making her speech but, they were overruled by Professor White.

Man behind the moral tone of Conservatism

THE PRIME Minister's moral defence of "Thatcherism" underlined her growing concern about the uncaring image of her brand of Conservatism.

Her speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh echoed the themes of a recent private lecture to the Centre for Policy Studies, in which she stressed the need for self-help and for people to use the reforms achieved by her administration.

The man behind Margaret Thatcher's credo on the morality of Conservatism is Brian Griffiths, the head of her policy unit at Downing Street.

Mrs Thatcher appointed him to take over the unit after being impressed by his two books on the morality of right-wing economic policies: *Morality and Monetarism* and *The Creation of Wealth*, written when he was the Dean of The City University Business School.

Wounded by the criticism that the Conservative Party was uncaring about the unemployed, the poor and the sick, Mrs Thatcher used the parable of the Good Samaritan to argue that wealth creation was the precondition for helping the less well off: the Samaritan could not have helped if he had not had the wealth to do so, she argued.

By Colin Brown
Political Correspondent

But Professor Griffiths gave intellectual force to her personal beliefs. A sidesman at his local church, and academic consultant to the Bank of England, he combined Christianity and Conservatism in credo which she instinctively believed to be right: the importance of wealth creation in providing freedom and dignity to the individual; and the recognition that wealth carried responsibilities.

He wrote: "The Christian accepts that self-interest as well as selfishness are hallmarks of the world in which we live. It is no use, therefore, designing and devising an economic system based on an unrealistic view of man and for the Government to try to manipulate that system for the common good. In this sense the Christian has a sympathy for Adam Smith, who faced up to the challenge of how to use both self-interest and selfishness or as he put it, self-love — in the interests of the wider community."

In the introduction to *The Creation of Wealth*, he wrote that the Christian church had never found it easy to come to terms with the market place.

"Ever since the early Church's experiment in communism, there have always been those who have considered that private property, interest and profit were at best questionable and at worst immoral and wicked."

He answered these misgivings by arguing that "it was the market economy which brought about the transformation of the Western world from widespread poverty to the level of prosperity which it now enjoys".

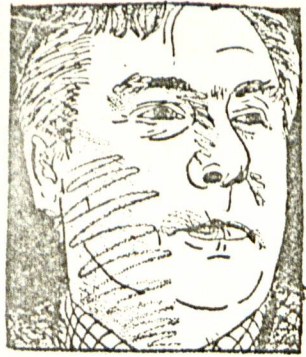
The redistribution of wealth was not an adequate solution to the problem of world poverty, he said. "The challenge for the Christian is this: a certain degree of inequality has to be allowed in society if such a society is to preserve human dignity and freedom and to achieve basic standards of justice.

"It is important that people should receive the rewards of their work. But at the same time money involves responsibility and the Christian as steward is called to share his resources with others."

The moral case for the market economy was that it helped to protect the freedom and dignity of the individual, according to Professor Griffiths — two factors which have been repeatedly stressed by the Prime Minister.

Creating a mix and match morality

Commentary



Ian Aitken

NEITHER Cardinal Hume nor the Archbishop of Canterbury, would, I suspect, seek to deny that religious belief has been the cause of a great deal of the world's ancient miseries.

It is patently true, of course, that a lot of wars which were officially supposed to be about religion were really about ideology or greed, or more likely both. But then no one but God is in a position to know exactly what emotions, sinful or otherwise, are in the mind of a priest when he blesses the spears, the cannon or the bombs.

In terms of this sort of hypocrisy, the Christian religion must be well up the scale in the mega-death league. Though it is a creed officially based on mercy, forgiveness of enemies and turning of cheeks, it has a lot of bloodshed to answer for.

So we need not be greatly surprised by the controversy between Mrs Thatcher and a substantial section of the clergy concerning the precise moral status of wealth and property within Christian ethics. If it has been so easy for our rulers through the ages to ignore anything as direct as the sixth commandment (thou shalt not kill) how can we expect them to have serious scruples about the tenth (thou shalt not covet)?

But of course, Mrs Thatcher was not talking about breaking any of the commandments when she gave that august body, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the benefit of her Christian philosophy last Saturday. On the contrary, she was concerned to show that the ideology underlying the actions of her Government was consistent with — no, actually the embodiment of — Judaic-Christian morality.

Nor were her remarks remotely new, let alone surprising, to anyone familiar with the development of Thatcherism since she hijacked the old Conservative party in 1975. At the heart of her address (one dare not call it a mere speech) was the familiar Thatcherite proposition that wealth has to exist if we are to have the resources to help the unfortunate, either individually or collectively.

It is this proposition which has been consistently deployed whenever the Government has needed to justify what it was doing. As Mrs Thatcher's third term has progressed, it has become a deafening chorus.

Thus the measures which have been brought under its moral umbrella extend from such contradictory actions as handing out vast tax concessions to a handful of astronomically rich people to cutting some social security benefits for the very poor; to seeking new ways of dividing the rich from the poor in health care and education; and even to removing the concept of "ability to pay" from local taxation.

As Mr Frank Field, Labour chairman of the Commons social services committee, remarked recently, the orchestrated nature of this campaign suggests that even ministers

are now frightened by the harsh society they are creating, and by the growing public revulsion from it. They suddenly see the need to clothe it in Christian garments.

Thus Mr Douglas Hurd, in a campaign which colleagues insist is his own idea and not that of Mr Bernard Ingham, has recently been lecturing the Church of England about its duty to preach personal morality rather than social engineering. But his unease with his recently-adopted Thatcherite creed has been reflected in his plea for its wealthy beneficiaries to show, quite literally, some Christian charity towards its victims.

Yet I suspect I am not entirely alone in seeing Mr Hurd's rather condescending version of Mrs Thatcher's philosophy as in some respects even more offensive than its robust original. The Iron Lady has the virtues of her faults, and though she pays some lip service to that archetypally "Victorian" virtue, the basket of fruit for the poor, her main concern is the creation of wealth to finance collective care for the unlucky and the incapable.

Her case rests on two main pillars; both are simplistic in the extreme, though none the worse for that. The first is that a "dependency society" is the inevitable result of an all-embracing welfare state, and that dependency stifles initiative. Only its removal will restore the incentive to work.

The second is that high taxes also stifle initiative, and that low taxes actually produce more revenue by encouraging high earners and wealth creators to earn still more. A low tax economy, it is argued, generates more private wealth as well as more revenue for the Exchequer.

The juxtaposition of these two propositions has caused Mrs Thatcher's critics to ask pertinently why it is that the rich must have more money to work harder, while the poor will only exert themselves if they get less. It is a fair debating point, but a better question is whether either or both proposition is true?

And here there is an obvious inconsistency, if not an outright contradiction, between the two propositions. For the logic of the first is that it is the very existence of a welfare state which creates debilitating dependency. Yet not even Mrs Thatcher has so far dared to advocate the dismantling of the social services in their entirety.

It is true that there are people who actually advocate just such a course, and that some of them remain close to Mrs Thatcher. But electoral politics still ensure that even a fourth term Thatcher administration will stop short of anything so radical.

As for the second proposition, even some otherwise orthodox Treasury officials have genuine doubts about the incentive effect of tax cuts on the rich. What's more, even on the most optimistic view, their success clearly depends on the Lawson boom continuing more or less indefinitely. In the current world climate, and with a balance of payments crisis already looming, few people would count on that.

But if these two propositions prove mistaken, what is left of Mrs Thatcher's version of the Christian ethic? Not much, except perhaps her assertion last week that everyone, absolutely everyone, had already benefited from her brand of Christian economics.

Perhaps she hasn't seen the youngsters camping out under the walls of London's Royal Festival Hall. But, if she has, she might turn her attention to the ninth commandment — the one that says "Thou shalt not bear false witness."

Passing by on the other side

THAT was a remarkable speech the Prime Minister delivered to the assembled Church of Scotland on Saturday: both because it told us more clearly than a dozen Conservative Conference orations what she stands for, and because it told us something new about Mrs Thatcher. Three sentences spanned the core. "We are all responsible for our own actions. We cannot blame society if we disobey the law. We simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others." In her mind, "Speaking personally as a Christian," those beliefs have Old and New Testament roots. Jesus "chose to lay down his life that our sins may be forgiven." Saint Paul told the Thessalonians: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." One of the Ten Commandments is to love your neighbour as yourself. Hitherto she has not outwardly appeared much concerned about Christianity, except occasionally to berate its more exalted Anglican representatives on earth for their 'damp obstreperousness. Now we have an evenly matched theological debate. Not between the Church and the forces of uncaring, agnostic capitalism, but between two interpretations of the Christian faith. When Mrs Thatcher journeys through the decrepit back streets of Stepney she thinks, perhaps, of what St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. When the Bishop of Stepney addresses his flock, however, he cannot put from his mind, the slum houses along the mean streets in which his congregation lives. He would say that it is the responsibility of the only national congregation we have, the State, to help rescue his parishioners from squalor. She would say that the rescue must be individual, because the State (under umpteen socialist governments) contrived the squalor and the hopelessness. The bishops of urban decay are merely parroting the failed nostrums of a failed politics. If she were to accept their sermons, then she would fail too.

And yet there is a chink in the argument worth dwelling over. Human nature. If (on Mrs Thatcher's reckoning) the old apparatus of State socialism collapsed because of collectivist apathy, then her vision must reflect what people can actually do. But it doesn't. On taxation: "While you and I would work extremely hard whatever the circumstances, there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was there. And we need their efforts, too." There are no quotations from the Testaments, Old or New, to lend theological resonance to that. It says that whilst I, for myself, am not idle or dilatory or selfish or greedy, I am perforce surrounded by people who are. They do not have my sense of personal responsibility. They must be induced — even in Old Testament terms, bribed — to fit into my scheme for things. But who can say that they will. Who can tell what St. Paul would have thought about a credit card society borrowed to the hilt, feeling less content with its own conscience than once it did, watching the gap between rich and poor open wider? Mrs Thatcher's speech is not to be easily derided; it is too serious for that. But one wonders how it might have applied to the Good Samaritan. Would the travellers have passed by on the other side because it would do the hapless wayfarer good to stand up and shape up? Would they have shrugged and left it to the Social Services Department of the day, currently on a go-slow because of controversial adjustments to the Damascus waiting allowance? Would there have been followers of Mrs Thatcher who, though she herself would have helped if she'd been on the road at the time, were more interested in creating wealth in the Jerusalem development zone? The questions are not simply put. They are questions (for which we must thank the Prime Minister) about the shape of British society to come.

THE GUARDIAN
Monday May 23 1988

The ironies in Thatcher's letter to the elders

Economics Notebook



Victor Keegan

THE MOST interesting revelation in Mrs Thatcher's first epistle to the elders of the Kirk is that the Prime Minister is not herself a Thatcherite.

The driving force of the philosophy which has made her famous throughout the world is that people, particularly rich people, respond to increased incentives. But, turning to the subject of taxation during her weekend speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, she said: "While you and I work extremely hard whatever the circumstances, there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was there. And we need their efforts too."

So, all these taxes are being reduced in order to get some (a minority?) to unleash their self interest in a way that the Prime Minister admits doesn't apply to her and which she seems ever so faintly to disapprove of.

Few would question Mrs Thatcher's assessment of herself. She is one of the hardest working politicians in the world. Most people would accept that in the present scale of values she certainly deserves more money, but it is difficult to see how it could increase her application.

There are only 24 hours in the day. Indeed the Prime Minister suffered a substantial self-inflicted pay cut when she waived an increase a few years ago "pour encourager les autres". Whether there is a causal connection between this pay cut and her amazing incentive to work would require more detailed study by others.

The proposition that the rest of the populace needs Thatcherism when its architect does not sits ill at ease with another Biblical precept which she emphasised at the weekend: "Do as you would be done by".

It would also be helpful to have a reaction to her emphasis on the virtue of tolerance from rusticated politicians like Heselstine, Biffen, Prior, Gilmour, Brittan, Carrington, Pym and St John-Stevias to name but eight.

It is difficult to underestimate Mrs Thatcher's contribution to wealth creation. But for all the undoubted (though difficult to quantify) extra wealth generated among individuals and companies through tax changes it falls into insignificance compared with the extra wealth generated by inertia.

The archetypal hero of the Thatcher revolution may be the budding entrepreneur who sells his (or, her) house to make it rich in business. The blunt truth is that most of them, particularly in the bloated South-east, would have been much

better off keeping their house, opening a bottle of white burgundy and letting the ludicrous rise in house prices do the rest.

Mrs Thatcher herself may well have earned more by buying a house in Dulwich she has never occupied than from the hard-earned fruits of office. And thus far, at least, richer businessmen — unless they have lucrative stock options — have also received more from house inflation and the tax cuts themselves than from the extra wealth which reduced taxes were supposed to generate.

And it doesn't end there. Britain, thanks to Mrs T, consists of 66 per cent owner occupiers. It is not because owner-occupation is self evidently a good thing. If it was then why is renting so popular in wealthier countries like France, Switzerland and Germany? It is popular mainly because of the unparalleled financial incentives attached buoyed up by a shortage of homes linked partly to the Government's refusal to build council homes which traditionally have satisfied so much of the market for first homes.

And, coming shortly, the abolition of the last remaining property tax — the rates — in favour of the poll tax which neither relates to ability to pay (the millionaire will be charged as much as a pauper) nor to use of the services involved (because tramps making no demands will also have to pay something).

The theory is that people will get rich and, as the more enlightened Victorians did, they will give their money to charity.

Far too much of today's prosperity is money which would otherwise have gone to the poor had not pensions and other benefits been deliberately held back from participating in the strong growth of earnings of those in employment.

If the effect is to take money from the poor and give it to the rich in the hope that they will give it back again, what is the point of starting it in the first place?

What Mrs Thatcher is doing for the present generation is nothing to the problems of inequality bequeathed to posterity.

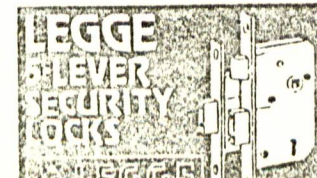
In the next century as children inherit (tax free if you have a passable accountant) the "owner-occupied" wealth artificially stimulated by Government policies, the country will be divided as never before between those whose parents passed on these unearned fortunes and those who did not.

Mrs Thatcher will not only (if she has her way) have buried socialism, but the very concept of equality of opportunity which she proclaims so sincerely elsewhere.

It may be significant that the person whom the Prime Minister first quoted as an example of Thatcherism being exported around the world — President Mitterrand — is now presiding over a swing back to the left.

It is, to be fair, a government whose policies are far more market orientated than they otherwise would have been as a result of Mrs Thatcher's revolution. But the only concrete policy to emerge from President Mitterrand's rambling letter to the French people was the promise of a wealth tax which the majority of voters seem to have accepted as the equitable counterpoint of a policy which attempts to reduce life-time taxes to create more wealth.

Indeed, far from burying socialism, the most lasting effect of Mrs Thatcher's regime may yet turn out to be to have forced socialist parties both here and abroad to shed nineteenth century ideological baggage which they may have found it impossible to do on their own.





Thousands of Christians from all over Scotland converged on the Glasgow Garden Festival to celebrate the beginning of the Year of the Bible. But it all proved too much for one youngster who fell asleep in his father's arms during the massed singing. More than 5,000 people packed into the main arena to enjoy hours of entertainment.

Thatcher's biblical discourse fails to win over Kirk critics

THE Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, revealed the Christian principles on which she bases her political philosophy in a speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh on Saturday.

A move by five dissenting Ministers to deny her the opportunity to speak was overwhelmingly rejected by the commissioners and her audience then heard a remarkable personal statement describing her innermost beliefs.

She told how key elements of the Old and New Testaments had created for her "a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and the principles to shape economic and social life."

The theme of individual responsibility ran through her speech and she asserted that it was not the creation of wealth that was wrong, but love of money for its own sake.

Afterwards, the Rev Maxwell Craig, convener of the Church and Nation Committee, said he was glad the Assembly had been courteous and listened to what she had had to say.

However, his initial reaction was that Scotland's needs were better declared in the two reports presented to her by the Moderator than in any of her words. The reports, to be debated at the Assembly, are critical of Government policy over

housing and the distribution of wealth.

"Her speech was a wise one that did not touch on any points of controversy," he said. "But that does not remove the controversy that will be demonstrated during the Assembly. It is to be regretted that she will not be able to see the debates. Only to come to the opening day gives a somewhat superficial impression of the Assembly's business."

The Ministers hoping to stop her speaking had their dissent

since 1979, and particularly to the poor makes her speech a quite disgraceful travesty of the gospel."

The Rev Stuart MacQuarrie, of Toryglen in Glasgow, said Mrs Thatcher's presence was both inappropriate and insensitive because the visit was using the Assembly for blatant party political purposes. "Rather than lecturing and sermonising to us she should actually listen to what we have to say."

The Rev Alan Sorenson, of Househillwood in Glasgow, said

he had ever heard any Prime Minister give to the Assembly. It was a personal declaration of her deep Christian faith.

As there was no election pending, it was an appropriate time for her to speak to the Assembly. It was customary for the Assembly to hear Prime Ministers, provided there was no election imminent.

"In a sense it was a personal confession of faith. It showed her deep and convinced Christian belief and how she strove to relate this to the political realities that she has to deal with. She did this, I thought, superbly. I thought it was a masterly speech."

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, and his deputy, Mr Roy Hattersley, both criticised Mrs Thatcher's stance. Mr Hattersley said the problem with Conservative philosophy was that wealth was being used to slake individual greed.

Mr Kinnock, in a report in the *Observer*, accused Mrs Thatcher of joining the less than glorious line of rulers who sought to justify their excesses and deficiencies on the basis of selective interpretation of the Bible. He repeated his view, given in a speech last week, that the Government had created a "loadsamoney" economy where the poor got poorer and the rich got richer.

By WILLIAM PAUL

Scotsman
23/5/88

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Allan Massie on The Sermon on the Mount — Page 11

recorded. Afterwards the Rev Paraic Reamonn, of East Lothian, said: "I felt the Prime Minister was coming to the Assembly not out of zeal for the glory of God but to use the Assembly for her own debatable political purposes."

"Many of us in the Kirk think the gospel of acquisitive individualism she preaches is diametrically opposed to the Christian gospel."

He described her speech as cleverly constructed but from a theologically ill-educated lay woman. "What this Government has been doing to the country

he had opposed the visit because it was part of a campaign to raise Mrs Thatcher's profile in Scotland. "I am dismayed at the Church being lumped in the same bag along with a football game and a visit to the Garden Festival."

The two other dissenters were the Rev John Ainslie, Easterhouse community minister, and the Rev Hugh Drummond, of Pitsligo and Sandhaven.

Support for Mrs Thatcher came from the Rev Dr David Whiteford, from East Lothian. He said Mrs Thatcher had delivered one of the best speeches

St Paul writes back . . .

• The Episcopal Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, the Rt Rev Michael Hare Duke, dons the mantle of the apostle to reply to the Prime Minister.

Dear Margaret,

Your address to the General Assembly was most interesting. In it you quoted me a number of times and, being a compulsive letter writer, I cannot resist a reply.

First may I congratulate you in laying to rest once and for all the myth that theology and politics are best kept apart. Your whole argument depended upon the belief that social action must be rooted in faith. You robustly affirmed that your thinking sprang from the Jewish-Christian tradition.

As a rather elderly apostle, may I say that I was gratified to see that you wore a hat. I am still old-fashioned enough to prefer things that way.

I am concerned, however, at the use you have made of the phrases taken from my letters. When I wrote to my friends at Thessalonica, I wished to stop

the rise of a group of preachers who seemed to be sponging on the faithful.

You will remember that I had made it a rule, wherever possible, to earn my own living in my trade as a tentmaker and not to become a burden upon the Christian church, many of whom came from the low income bracket. I was not advocating a social policy which denied those who were unable to work the basic resources of life.

Indeed the gospel which I received was one of free and unmerited love from God. This I continually taught must be translated into generosity and sharing between people.

Your particular view of life has led you to misunderstand some other parts of the Christian writings. When you spoke of the need to create wealth as a basis from which generosity could be exercised,

you seemed to quote the women with the alabaster jar of ointment who gave this freely to anoint the feet of the Master.

Had you, I wonder, seen her as a successful small businessperson who had taken her opportunities to amass sufficient savings to make the gift possible? When my friend Luke told the story he did not approve of her source of income; the normal interpretation of his phrase is that she was a prostitute. The point of the story was not about the money she spent but the depth of her love and her repentance.

The mists of time make things unclear but as far as my memory serves, it is unlikely that those letters to Timothy actually came from my own pen.

Let me, however, pick up your argument. Your own commitment, I realise, is to

Continued on Page 4, Col 1

A letter to Premier from St Paul

Continued from Page 1
encourage self-help as opposed to reliance upon the community to provide for sickness and need. This may have led you to understand the emphasis on making provision for one's own household as some sort of reference to schemes like BUPA ahead of their time.

None of us whose works have been gathered together into what you know as the New Testament would feel happy about this way of interpreting what we wrote. We said things pertinent to those amongst whom we lived but always basing them on the priorities of our Gospel about love, identity with the poor and the primacy of God's Kingdom.

I hope that you may find time to read those books given you by my wise friend, Dr James Whyte, the new Moderator. The titles that he chose *Just Sharing* and *Housing Scotland's People* are I believe the kind of things that I might have written at the end of my letters had I lived in your day.

Your generation has been given a deeper understanding of the way that human beings

belonged to each other in one family. I think that those words that you quoted from the letter to Timothy might not now be limited to a duty to a single "household". They might now read "Anyone who does not look after the members of his community has rejected the faith . . ."

As a Jew, I struggled hard with all that had been given me out of my past. I was grateful for the Law but understood it as a foreshadowing of that new creation which was begun in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. I do not find in your words an appreciation of that new burst of life that we experienced in dying to the old Law and rising to new life in Christ.

You have begun well, for you have understood that in the Cross of Christ our wealth is nothing. As you quoted: "My richest gain I count but loss". You have discerned the human predicament in which absolute answers must be avoided.

Yet I find it hard to know where you find the text upon which you base your statement,

"We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth". It may be that our distressed world is going to be led forward by those who can discover richness in renunciation not acquisition. Hungry people in Africa might take that view.

The centuries divide us. Perhaps your meaning is not plain to me any more than mine is to you — especially as I have to entrust my dictation to a scribe who has forsaken an honest stylus for a word-processor. At least we can agree that in the search for true living there are many mistakes of which we must repent.

I marvel at your travels. I was often on the move but never managed so swift a transition as yourself from the playing fields of Glasgow to the academic pastures of New College within a week. I wonder if I was entirely wrong in discouraging women from speaking — I expect I was, times have changed.

Your brother in communication,

X Matthew 25, 14 Paul.

23/2/88
SUNSMO

Warning by Hurd seen as split in the ranks

BY PETER HANNAM, Chief Political Correspondent

MR DOUGLAS HURD, the Home Secretary, warned Conservatives yesterday of the importance of policies which increased social cohesion and community values.

He claimed Tory philosophy had for the last 150 years entailed two strands — freedom and responsibility. The first had rightly been at the heart of the first years of Thatcher Governments but now was the time to emphasise the second.

Mr Hurd's remarks came in an ITV *Weekend World* interview recorded before Mrs

His warning reflected a key theme of Mrs Thatcher's third term of encouraging people to accept their social responsibilities. But it also recognised strong anxieties that the Government was seen as materialistic and uncaring for old community values.

That image appeared to be reinforced yesterday with a Harris Opinion Poll for the *Observer* newspaper about the way Britain had changed in the Thatcher era. It indicated that people believed that society was richer and freer but also more unhappy and more selfish.

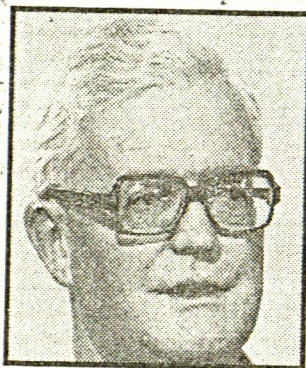
Mr Hurd's comments were not a direct attack on Mrs Thatcher and rejected criticisms of the Government as a "loadsamoney" Government. But it was a clear attempt to push the Conservative Party into more caring and more community orientated policies. He argued that the two strands of freedom and responsibility were not mutually exclusive. Sometimes it was necessary to put the emphasis on one and in 1979 it had been quite clear that the emphasis must be placed on individualism and the creation of wealth because, then, something had gone wrong."

Now they had to tug the other string and say to people doing quite well, "with a bit more money than ever before", that there was a community to which they also belonged and to be an active part of it.

Mr Hattersley reacted quickly to the interview by trying to drive a wedge between Mrs Thatcher and her Ministers, claiming that one by one they were distancing themselves from her. First it had been the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson then the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, and now Mr Hurd.

Mr Hattersley said "The greedy and violent society created by Mrs Thatcher is clearly embarrassing to Douglas Hurd. He knows it cannot survive into the 90s and he did not try to disguise his feelings.

"But Mrs Thatcher in her disgraceful speech in Scotland showed that she still has no compassion, no feelings of fairness, no generosity of spirit and no sense of community."



Mr Douglas Hurd: Remarks seized on by Labour.

Thatcher's speech at the General Assembly on Saturday and they were immediately seized by Labour leaders as the latest sign of divisions between the Prime Minister and her Cabinet colleagues.

The Labour deputy leader, Mr Roy Hattersley, said Mr Hurd appeared to be distancing himself from Mrs Thatcher, clearly embarrassed by the "greedy and violent society she had created."

Mr Hurd said yesterday: "We have to emphasise more than we did at the beginning that individualism is not a narrow or selfish thing."

Referring to the role of "active citizenship" he argued in scarcely coded comments that the Government must take on board concerns about the effects of its policies on social cohesion in the last nine years. He said the task was to reawaken people to their individual responsibilities to their fellow men.

Hurd tempers Thatcher's credo

James Naughtie, Chief
Political Correspondent

THE Government's public agonising over the morality of an acquisitive society was given another twist yesterday by Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary. He said that ministers should put more pressure on the better-off to exercise community responsibilities.

Following the Prime Minister's delivery of her credo on money and society in Edinburgh on Saturday, Mr Hurd's words seemed to highlight the concern among some ministers that the Government is appearing to condone selfishness, and that individualism is not being harnessed to the health of society as a whole.

He recorded his interview, for Weekend World, on London Weekend Television, before Mrs

Thatcher's speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Coincidentally, a Harris poll for The Observer yesterday suggested that the number of people who considered Britain a selfish society had risen sharply in the last decade.

Mr Hurd said that there were two strands in Conservative thinking — freedom and responsibility. Individual achievement had been stressed in pursuit of economic recovery but something else was needed.

He said: "We mustn't lose that but we've also got, I think, to tug the other string and to say to those people, doing quite well with a bit more money than they've every had before — owning their own house, owning some shares — look, there's a community to which you also belong, be an active citizen within it."

Mr Hurd also distanced himself clearly from Tories claiming

that the Government's task was to destroy a "dependency culture" based on the welfare state. He said that while over-dependence on government had an atrophying effect in some cities he would not want to extend the argument further.

Mr Hurd's remarks are little more than a repetition of his consistent approach to social problems, but coming against the background of Mrs Thatcher's forthright declaration of her own moral view of society, they will tend to encourage a debate already going on in the Government.

Mrs Thatcher, too, stressed the need for individuals to use their wealth productively and the importance of individual responsibility, but Mr Hurd favours an approach which emphasises community responsibility much more.

He said: "I think we do now need to emphasise more than we

have that individualism is not a narrow or a selfish thing... it's not just so that we can pile up individual masses of individual wealth, little mountains of wealth, but so that the community as a whole is a more decent place."

Mr Roy Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, seized on the issue and claimed that the undermining of Mrs Thatcher was now well under way in the Cabinet.

He said: "A greedy and violent society created by Mrs Thatcher is clearly an embarrassment to Douglas Hurd. He knows that it will fail in the 1990s and he didn't try very hard to disguise his feelings."

"One by one senior Tories are breaking ranks. Nigel Lawson, then Geoffrey Howe, now Douglas Hurd — each in his own way distancing himself from the Prime Minister." He claimed that Mrs Thatcher's speech had

shown that she still had "no compassion, no feelings of fairness, no generosity of spirit."

Ironically, the speech was evidently intended to demonstrate precisely the opposite. As well as wanting to perform in Scotland as often as possible to assist the much-sought Conservative recovery, Mrs Thatcher clearly saw the speech to the general assembly — the parliament of the Kirk — as an opportunity to answer the criticism of her Government for encouraging selfishness, which has become an important Opposition theme.

In so doing, however, she appears to have highlighted the debate in a way which could produce a clash of views inside the Government. Mr Hurd's remarks are quite different in tone from the Prime Minister's.

Leader comment, page 22; Ian Aitken, page 23; Agenda, page 38; Victor Keegan, page 13

Hurd joins in Tory drive on moral debate

Thatcher returning to the attack this week

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

The Government yesterday intensified its campaign to win for itself the high moral ground of political debate and repudiate Labour's insistent claim to be the nation's conscience.

Mr Douglas Hurd said he saw the "active citizen", enriched by the new-found prosperity of the Thatcher era and involved in his local community, as the key to achieving the social objectives that dominate Mrs Margaret Thatcher's third term.

The Home Secretary's intervention came only 24 hours after the Prime Minister in Scotland had spelt out the spiritual beliefs that underpin her political philosophy.

The Home Secretary indicated he had no wish to

reopen the rumbling church versus state controversy, but in what appeared to be an unguarded moment he urged the churches to be less "defeatist" about their power to influence people for good.

Although Labour immediately seized on Mr Hurd's remarks as a coded attack on the Prime Minister, Tory MPs believed he was giving voice to her growing belief that more people must begin to exercise the personal responsibility

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that goes with her brand of economic freedom.

The recent controversies over the health service, social security, education and the community charge have stiffened her resolve to take the moral debate to the Opposition.

She is expected to return to this theme this week, emphasizing the importance of good neighbourliness, when she addresses 2,000 Conservative women at their conference in London. She spent yesterday at Chequers working on her speech.

Mr Hurd said on independent television's *Weekend World*: "I do think that we need to emphasize more than we did at the beginning that individualism is not just a narrow or selfish thing.

"The reason why we put stress on individual achievement is not just so that we can pile up individual little mountains of wealth but so that the country is a more decent place.

"We have got to say to people who are doing quite well: 'Look, there is a community to which you also belong. Be an active citizen within it.'"

Mrs Thatcher told the General Synod of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh: "It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but love of money for its own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth.

"How could we respond to the many calls for help, or invest for the future, or support the wonderful artists and craftsmen whose work also glorifies God, unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth?"

Mrs Thatcher coupled this vision of people freely using their money for the betterment of society in general with an insistence that social and economic arrangements not founded on an acceptance of individual responsibility would do nothing but harm.

"We are all responsible for our own actions. We cannot blame society if we disobey the law. We cannot simply

delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others."

Mr Hurd's remarks were seen by Tory MPs as an attempt to flesh out the moral basis of Thatcherism by showing how a combination of philanthropy and the voluntary spirit could overcome social ills. But Mr Roy Hattersley, the Shadow Home Secretary, maintained they were evidence of a new Cabinet rift.

Mr Hattersley said: "The greedy and violent society created by Mrs Thatcher is clearly an embarrassment to Douglas Hurd.

"But Mrs Thatcher's disgraceful speech in Scotland shows that she still has no compassion, no feelings of fairness, no generosity of spirit and no sense of community.

"One by one Tories are now breaking ranks. First Nigel Lawson, then Geoffrey Howe and now Douglas Hurd. Inside the Cabinet the undermining of Mrs Thatcher is now well and truly under way."

Mr Hurd said that strengthening the forces of law and order was not enough. It was necessary to go deeper and enlist the support of potentially influential groups such as the churches, parents, teachers, businessmen and broadcasters to restore social cohesion, particularly among the young.

● Last night the Bishop of Manchester, the Rt Rev Stanley Booth-Clibborn, welcomed the Prime Minister relating her Christian faith to political life but criticized her speech as a "distortion of the Christian Bible".

He argued that Mrs Thatcher had laid too much emphasis on individual responsibility and not said enough about corporate responsibilities.

The Bishop of Peterborough, the Rt Rev William Westwood, said: "She is right. It is the love of money that is wrong. Our Lord did not attack people who were rich but those trapped by their possessions."

A spokesman for the Archbishop of Canterbury said that he was not making a comment yesterday because he had not seen a full copy of the speech.



Mr Hurd: Proposing active role for the well-to-do.



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THE MORAL DEFENCE

In neither logic nor fairness is there justification for denying Mrs Thatcher's right to defend the moral basis of her policies in the light of her personal religious convictions. This is the ground on which she is regularly attacked by clerics and others who condemn the Government's social policies as morally flawed or even, as the Bishop of Durham described them recently, "wicked". While it has to be assumed that his criterion of "wickedness" has something to do with his understanding of Christianity, Mrs Thatcher is entitled to rebut it by reference to the same criterion.

Yet one of the clergymen who had opposed the invitation to Mrs Thatcher to address the Assembly of the Church of Scotland said afterwards that what the Government had been "doing to the... poor since 1979" made her speech "a disgraceful travesty of the Gospel". Such intemperance is alone reason enough for Mrs Thatcher not to let the charges against her policy go by default. On the whole, she and her theological advisers made a good job of defending her case at Edinburgh.

The essence of her argument was that Christianity is concerned with spiritual redemption and personal responsibility. It follows that the individual should have scope to work and to use his talents to create wealth. It also follows that each individual has a personal moral duty to use that wealth responsibly and for the good of others. Though the State must provide that nobody is in want of sustenance and that education and health care are available for all, the intervention of the State should not be on a scale that diminishes individual responsibility.

This is a clear and sensible creed that ought to command general consent. The political debate should be concerned with where precisely the lines of limitation are to be drawn between State and individual to achieve the maximum possible good. That is the issue, and it ill-becomes Mr Neil Kinnock, who does not base his own political position on any religious foundation, to denounce Mrs Thatcher for "selective quotation from the Bible".

Yet in one respect the focus used by Mrs Thatcher did not fully display the true basis in reason for her political ethic. The heart of her argument can be summed up in the following phrases: "It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but the love of money for its own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth... we are all

responsible for our own actions... we cannot simply delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others."

All this is true. Confidence in the spread of responsible individual stewardship must plainly provide the moral justification for the Government's approach to encouraging personal wealth. Yet the fact must also honestly be faced that what first stirs any individual to work hard is the urge to provide as fully as he can for his family's and his own needs. What is at issue is where he draws the boundary between such needs and what altruistically he gives to other causes.

No rule can be devised to guide the decision and it is here that the better off confront the eye of a needle. Conscience rules in this matter and needs to be stirred. Indeed, the clergy would be more usefully employed stirring it in the older fashion than in pronouncing political anathemas. But it is important to recognize honestly that the primary spur in individual earning is not the urge to dispose of money altruistically, but to discharge the obligation to immediate direct dependants.

Mrs Thatcher did not confront this reality directly and her address might have left the unreal impression that altruism is the moral spur for wealth creation. She came closest to the truth in quoting St Paul: "If a man will not work he shall not eat." For what is at issue is how best to stir mankind to work for the good of all, given the reality of human nature.

The pretence that policies for State provision are intrinsically more unselfish is an empty one. Even where the State takes most in order to redistribute it, this is done on the basis that each individual retains what is deemed to satisfy his or her need. Pure morality in material terms is attainable only by the special self-denial of the monastery to which few are called. The State cannot provide it.

The fundamental moral and religious defence of Mrs Thatcher's case is that her politics work *with* the grain of human nature to create the most productive form of altruism. The case against the dominance of State provision, for which so many of her clerical critics hanker, is that it works *against* the grain of human reality to the disadvantage of all. This is the lesson the communist countries have been learning so painfully, and with which even the Labour Party under Mr Kinnock is trying to come to terms.

★★

FINANCIAL TIMES

Monday May 23 1988

Hurd tells prosperous of social responsibilities

BY MICHAEL CASSELL

THE MILLIONS of individuals who have prospered under the Conservatives now have an active duty to help improve the overall quality of their communities, Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, said yesterday.

His remarks follow Mrs Thatcher's weekend speech to the Church of Scotland general assembly in Edinburgh, during which she defended the Government's wealth-creating policies and set out the spiritual beliefs which underlie her political philosophy.

Mr Hurd, who was speaking on London Weekend Television's Weekend World, repeated a theme which he and some other senior ministers have pursued in recent months, stressing that the individualism encouraged by the Government should not stimulate personal greed but should oblige

the better-off to embrace wider social responsibilities.

The theme reflects some ministerial concern that the Government is seen by the electorate as increasingly hard-hearted towards the less well-off and that it is pursuing policies which are heightening divisions in society.

Government critics claim the message forms part of a longer-term strategy increasingly to transfer to individuals the traditional responsibilities of the welfare state.

An Observer-Harris Research Centre opinion poll published yesterday showed that although 44 per cent of those questioned thought people had more freedom and 48 per cent thought people were richer than 10 years ago, 61 per cent believed people were

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Social responsibilities Continued from Page 1

more selfish and 48 per cent believed people were more unhappy.

Mr Hurd yesterday emphasised that the Government's twin objectives of enhanced freedom and individual responsibility had to work together. In its early years, the Government had been forced to place much of the emphasis on personal freedom and the creation of wealth because incentives had been destroyed and the nation's economy had been going "dramatically downhill."

The Government, he claimed, had been successful in reviving the economy and it was now "time to tug the other string"

and say to those people doing well under Thatcherism that there was a community to which they belonged and towards which they had responsibilities.

Mr Hurd said that during the Government's third term, the theme of the "active citizen," not compelled by law but motivated by a wish to help, would be increasingly emphasised.

He added: "We do now need to emphasise more than we have that individualism is not a narrow or selfish thing. The reason we put stress on individual achievement is not just so we can pile up individual masses of wealth but so that the community as a whole is a more decent place."

In her Edinburgh speech, Mrs Thatcher said it was not the creation of wealth which was wrong but "love of money for its own sake." She said the "spiritual dimension" came in deciding how the wealth was then spent.

She underlined the state's obligation to provide a range of fundamental services to support the sick and the disabled but stressed that government intervention should never become so great that it removed personal responsibility.

Any set of social and economic arrangements which was not founded on the acceptance of personal responsibility would "do nothing but harm."

The Daily Telegraph

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The moral base for a successful economy

THE Prime Minister is right. A certain disdain for material achievement has been for too long the characteristic of our ruling classes. Yet as Mrs Thatcher told the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Saturday, it is only when we have "used our talents to create the necessary wealth" that we can respond to "the many calls for help". The present popularity of sterling, and the attractiveness of this country as a magnet to foreign investment, bear witness to the world's perception of vitality restored. This is the road back to full employment. There is nothing particularly Christian about the allocation of resources before they are created. That only leads to penury and social discontent, as we should have learned by now. Paradoxically, it is the very scale of our recovery which today confronts the Prime Minister and her colleagues with problems of control and management. It is a less painful adjustment than the ones we used to know too well, to lost markets and lost confidence at home and overseas. But it cannot be neglected for all that.

The latest figures tell us that shop-floor earnings are growing by 8½ per cent a year, and they are no longer being absorbed by soaring productivity. More seriously, our borrowing from the high street banks and the building societies has grown by 50 per cent in 12 months. Nor is any slow-down in sight. On the contrary, with cash pouring into the building societies while the stock market is neglected, borrowing is likely to be further stimulated and saving further discouraged by another cut in mortgage rates before we are much older. It is not therefore surprising that the sharp jump in the April retail price index should have set the alarm bells ringing about renewed inflation out ahead.

Too much should not be read into one month's inflation figures, least of all those which reflect budget increases in indirect taxation. The RPI is, in any case, the "lagging indicator". It bears the impact of past cost pressures, not of those to come. The Treasury's budget-time forecast of 4 per cent inflation over the current year still looks reasonable. Anxieties concern 1989.

The Government is not ignoring them. The Chancellor gave it as his judgment last week that "some resurgence of world inflation looks to be a greater danger than world recession". But in acting to restrain the credit boom at home, he is inhibited by the popularity of sterling. He yearns for others — notably the Americans and the Germans — to put up their interest charges, so that he could follow suit without (or so he would hope) provoking another jump in the international price of the pound. He is likely to be disappointed.

The Treasury now believes in retrospect that the 1980 recession, and the ensuing loss of jobs, was indeed, as its critics complain, attributable in substantial part to monetary policies which failed to take account of the strength of sterling. It is determined not to make the same mistake again. But its professed belief that a rising exchange rate justifies cuts in the cost of borrowed money is dangerously simplistic. While the appreciation of the pound increases competitive pressures on manufacturers and traders, it cuts no ice with borrowers or lenders. It leaves those parts of the labour market, from financial services through to public utilities, where wage pressures are strongest, unaffected. Cuts in interest rates, on the other hand, discourage saving and promote still more borrowing. Nor, as we have seen, do they cool the pound for very long.

Mr Lawson last week successfully reasserted his authority over economic policy. All the more reason, therefore, that he should be prepared to use it to take the credit boom in hand. He insists that the current rate for the pound in the foreign exchange markets is "unsustainable". If so, it should do no lasting harm. What would do lasting harm is any return to the mentality of inflation, in 1989 and beyond, or the acceptance by too many of our fellow citizens of commitments to lending institutions which they may be unable to honour.

"We are all," Mrs Thatcher reminded the Kirk, "responsible for our own actions." But in a complex modern democracy, government is obliged to influence the environment in which we perform. This

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"We are all," Mrs Thatcher reminded the Kirk, "responsible for our own actions." But in a complex modern democracy, government is obliged to influence the environment in which we perform. This Government has been astonishingly successful in restoring individual energy and enterprise. Its task now is to take whatever steps are needed to discourage over-borrowing. Creating wealth is one thing. Presuming on the future is something else again.

Hurd backs Thatcher on wealth

By Nigel Dudley
Political Staff

MR HURD, the Home Secretary, yesterday renewed the Government's campaign to establish the moral basis of Thatcherism, insisting that "individualism is not a narrow or selfish thing".

His comments came 24 hours after Mrs Thatcher claimed the moral high ground of politics, insisting that her beliefs were underpinned by religious beliefs.

Tory and Labour politicians are now engaged in a struggle to persuade voters that their policies are more morally acceptable than those of their opponents.

After a period in which Labour has concentrated its assault on specific policies, including the Community Charge, the Health Service and the benefit changes, Mr Kinnock has broadened his attack to what he describes as the "loadsamoney" economy.

Yesterday Mr Hattersley tried to drive a wedge between Mrs Thatcher and Mr Hurd, claiming that he was embarrassed by the "greedy and violent society created by the Prime Minister".

But sources close to Mr Hurd insisted last night that he totally backed Mrs Thatcher.

The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary strongly defended the creation of wealth, and the need to put the individual before a collectivist society.

Mr Hurd said in a television interview that after a period in the early 1980s, when it had been essential to stress the need for individual wealth creation, "I think we do now need to emphasise more than we have that individualism is not a narrow or selfish thing".

On Saturday Mrs Thatcher had told the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh that "it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but love of money for its own sake".



GLASGOW HERALD

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SCOTLAND'S NEWSPAPER

Thatcher's sermon on the Mound

PRIME Ministers put themselves in a vulnerable position when they forsake the despatch box for the pulpit. Mrs Thatcher, with what is bound to be seen as her sermon on the Mound, is no exception. It would be too simplistic, however, to argue that religion should be kept out of politics, any more than the reverse proposition. Some good would have come from this visit if, as we suggested on Saturday, it had pointed Church and State towards a better understanding. This now seems highly unlikely to be the result, although the Prime Minister on this occasion refrained from lecturing the Kirk about its proper role. Her address, she emphasised, was in the nature of a personal testament. As such, it is full of interest but it would be ingenuous to expect it to be seen as a thing apart from politics and from the newly launched campaign to paint the electoral map of Scotland blue. Only the previous Saturday, she had been a stranger in the House at Hampden. As one irreverent divine put it, the Assembly had been locked in the same bag as the Old Firm game and the Garden Festival. At the Scottish Tory conference in Perth earlier this month Mrs Thatcher had claimed eighteenth-century Scottish antecedents for Thatcherism, and on Saturday she seemed, to some of her listeners at least, to be giving it a theological dimension.

This is a perilous game: the Scottish Enlightenment can't be reduced to Thatcherism, just as there is more to Christian moral-

ity than Victorian values. It should be conceded, however, that there was also more to Mrs Thatcher's address than Victorian values; and she rejected also the "what's the matter with greed?" Boesky philosophy. It was not the creation of material wealth that was wrong, she said, but love of money for its own sake.

Certainly, as one critic pointed out, her sermon seemed short on community values. St Francis of Assisi, quoted by the Prime Minister when she took office nine years ago, seems to have gone the way of other Wets. Yet there was much in her address that would command consensus — her observation that the spiritual dimension consists in deciding what to do with one's wealth, her underlining of the work ethic. The problem comes in relating this to some of the Government's current programme, notably the social security reforms, the community charge legislation, and the Budget, involving as they all do a shift of resources towards the better-off.

The Government's expectation, as Mr Hurd also seemed to be saying yesterday, although in much more qualified terms, is evidently that private industries and individuals will use their new wealth to help bridge this gap. Good luck to any attempt to encourage private philanthropy, but the Government must set the example by its own generosity of spirit. Trickle-down theories of morality are as suspect as the straightforward economic kind.

TAKE CARE. The politicians are after your social conscience. As usual, Mrs Thatcher is the catalyst for this new barn-storming campaign, although unlike Mr Kinnock she puts the emphasis on social responsibility rather than conscience.

What it amounts to is this: come the next election, if the British revival continues to be the envy of the economic world, the political parties want to have a coherent claim for providing the next step — ethical and spiritual wellbeing.

In Tory terms this means persuading the people that freedom from State and local-authority interference occasions more social conscience/responsibility. Only by this means can crime figures fall, education standards rise, essential services improve. Mrs Thatcher took the new Tory credo to the Assembly in Edinburgh. Her Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, who seems to be her second in command for moral regeneration, had already delivered it to the Church of England Synod. Sir William Rees Mogg is about to do his bit for broadcasting standards.

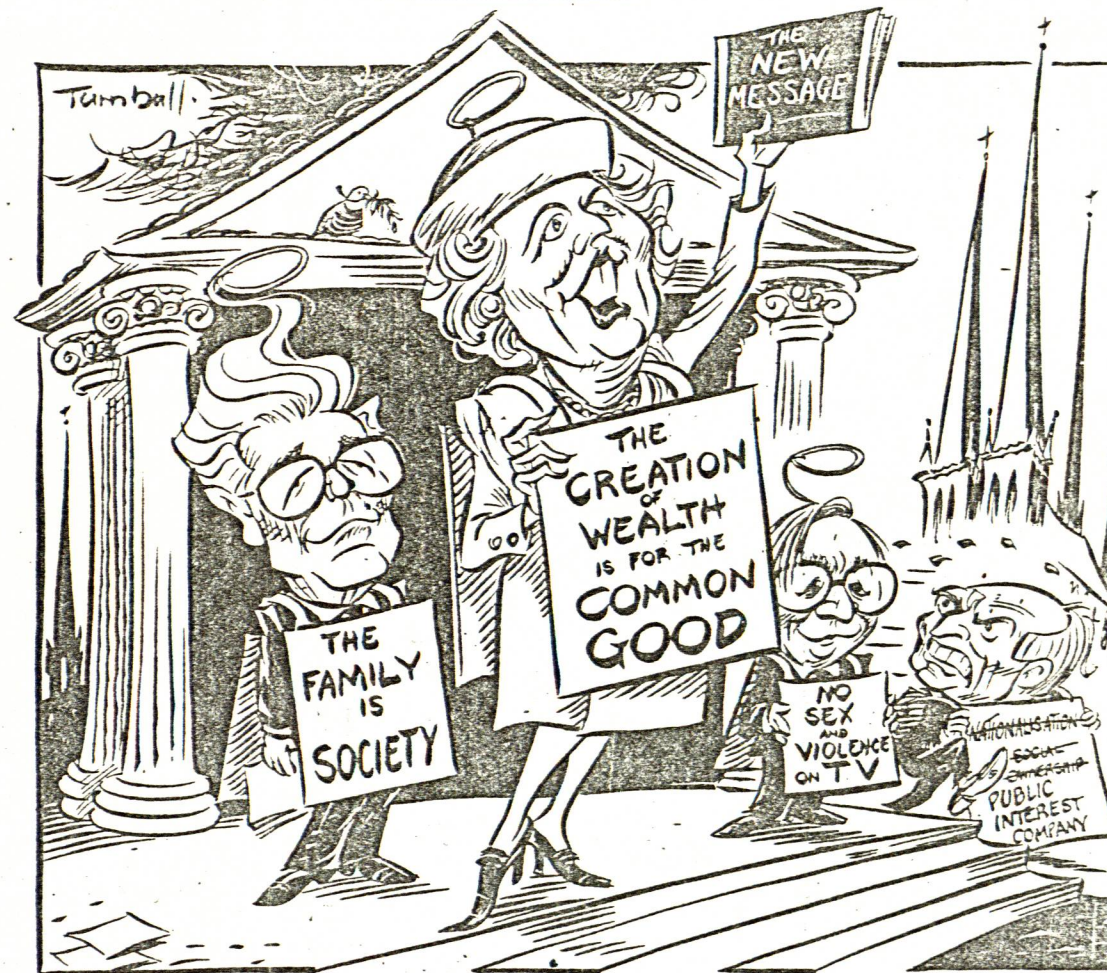
Quite what the campaign is going to mean in Labour terms is not yet clear. Perhaps we will glimpse a vision of it when the national executive debates policy review papers on Wednesday. Perhaps we have already had one in Mr Kinnock's "loadsamoney-loadsatrouble" speech to his Welsh party, which favoured his customary evangelical tone.

We can be reasonably sure, however, that if Mr Kinnock has his way, social conscience will be a major theme on the General Election hustings. That will come as no surprise, but the essence of it has yet to be determined. Learning from John Smith's draft policy document that an objective of economic equality is "to banish want and poverty from Britain," does not enlighten.

The whole point in this two-year policy review, coupled with the "Labour Listens" enterprise, is to drop the cant from Labour manifestoes and deploy the stuff people will vote for in sufficient numbers to create a Labour Government in the 1990s. If the predicted "loadsatrouble" implying economic crisis just around the corner eludes Labour again, it needs to approach the electorate appropriately.

One detects a desire in Mr Kinnock to be able to say to the voters: "Look, I am not going to take your wealth away, but I am going to make it work better for the things that you want — schools, housing, hospitals, employment." Thatcherite concepts are to be adapted, not reversed. That is if Messrs Benn, Heffer, and the Labour Party at large will allow it to be so.

If socialists are trying to be more



Now Thatcherism with a conscience

INSIDE POLITICS

GEOFFREY PARKHOUSE

pragmatic about it, Tories aim to be less so. If Mr Kinnock wants to appear more hard-nosed about his policies for well-being, Mrs Thatcher seems to want to appear less so constrained. She has spent years advocating Victorian values and was taken to be advancing the moral values of the Ironmasters. She reels off the colossal social spending figures of her Governments, and is still taken for an uncaring person. But it may be — how else does she keep getting elected? — that her message "You can't care

unless you've got the cash," has struck home.

It is presumably on this basis that she wants to develop a more sympathetic morality for her brand of Toryism, her secular patriotism. Quoting from I Vow To Thee My Country, she reminded the Assembly that God's kingdom is enlarged "soul by soul and silently." She added the rider: "Not group by group or party by party or even church by church, but soul by soul — and each one counts." Was it just by accident that she was address-

ing these remarks' at this time, in Scotland, where she appears to be so actively and personally despised?

Many of us will ponder for some time exactly what she meant by soul by soul and how it applies to her approach to policy. It seems to fit Mr Douglas Hurd's thoughts that government ought to give a lead in establishing community loyalties and responsibilities, though not in any grandiose style and not necessarily by legislation. He wants what he calls "active" citizens making their

presence felt for the better in, for example, education, medical care and law and order.

It may be that the Tories now believe that the on-going political success of Thatcherism will depend more on individuals, soul by soul as it were, accepting her doctrines willingly and melding them enthusiastically with their communities. Parents, priests and teachers must be a good deal less lackadaisical about imbuing the young with shared, Christian values according to the Thatcher-Hurd philosophy. In short, there should be more individual participation encouraged by a newly prosperous business community rather than directed by the State.

When Mrs Thatcher declares that "the family is society" she seems to imply a family that gets its priorities right, funds for itself and applies its own loyalties and standards within its social environment. There should be leadership within this unit, but discussion and involvement by all members. Her dependency culture is based on family self-sufficiency.

It's the sort of thing that might be better got across by a good song rather than a thousand speeches. What we are seeing now is the political parties grappling with the task of finding that song. It may mean the abandonment on all sides of dogma regarded as inappropriate or starkly inoperative in the 1990s. Personal example counts for a lot.

In a way, Mrs Thatcher's Cabinet is a family. It is supposed to get its priorities right by collective discussion, full individual participation, etc, etc. It certainly has family leadership in the person of Mrs Thatcher and the odd family row takes place with the likes of Nigel Lawson.

But it strikes me that full Cabinet meetings are getting shorter, with much of the time taken up by Sir Geoffrey Howe droning on with his weekly report on foreign affairs. A very tart look was the response I got from a Cabinet Minister the other day when I suggested that sterling exchange and interest rates were now discussed more on the floor of the House of Commons than they are in Cabinet. It's just a thought, but maybe if it got out that individuals in Mrs Thatcher's family were asserting their rights of participation a bit more we would begin to look on Mrs Thatcher more as a benign figure.

We are accustomed to the sandwich boards on our own local roads to Damascus proclaiming: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," or (rather more urgent): "The end of the world is nigh." Look out over the next three years for politicised placards borne by those you will easily recognise from your sanitised television. And check your purses along with your spiritual wellbeing.

THE CRISIS IN THE FAMILY . . . AND ON THE TERRACES

By JOHN DEANS
Political Correspondent

THE British must match their new-found wealth and freedom with a fresh moral crusade and return to traditional family values.

That was the message from Mrs Thatcher and Home Secretary Douglas Hurd last night as the country faces the new challenges of the 1990s.

The Prime Minister, speaking in Scotland at the weekend, firmly defended the creation of wealth and restoration of individual freedom achieved since she swept to power nine years ago.

Hurd backs Maggie over moral crusade

Emphasising the importance of self-reliance and personal responsibility, she defied the protests of some churchmen to declare to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh: 'It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but the love of money for its own sake.'

Expanding on the strong beliefs which underscore her pioneering po-

litical views, she added: 'The spiritual dimension comes from deciding what one does with the wealth and how we respond to the many calls for help ... and invest for the future.'

Just 24 hours later, Mr Hurd backed her up with a fresh plea to parents, teachers and church leaders to play a bigger role in restoring moral values and achieving a return to the commu-

nity spirit which reigned in Britain before the television age.

Interviewed on the ITV programme Weekend World, the Home Secretary said that since 1979, the restoration of personal freedom had reversed the country's economic decline.

But the time had now come, he said, to tug the other string and re-emphasise personal responsibility.

Deputy Labour leader Roy Hattersley claimed after watching Mr Hurd, however, that the Home Secretary was breaking ranks and distancing himself from Mrs Thatcher and that he was embarrassed by the 'greedy and violent society created by the Prime Minister.'



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Twenty Seven Pence



Hurd pledges more caring role

By **STEPHEN McGREGOR**
Parliamentary Correspondent

THE Government is about to switch its emphasis from individual freedom to what the individual could do for the community, Home Secretary Mr Douglas Hurd said yesterday.

He said the Government had to emphasise more than it had in the past that individualism was not a narrow or selfish thing and that people owed a responsibility to the community in which they lived.

"The reason we put stress on individual achievement is not just so that we can pile up individual masses of wealth, but so that the community as a whole is a more decent place," he said.

Labour immediately seized on his remarks and sought to drive a wedge between Mr Hurd and the Prime Minister, claiming that his comments contrasted sharply with Mrs Thatcher's address to

the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Saturday.

She had quoted St Paul's words, "If a man will not work he shall not eat".

Opposition MPs said that senior Cabinet Ministers were breaking ranks one by one and that Mr Hurd was trying to distance himself from the Prime Minister.

Labour's deputy leader Mr Roy Hattersley claimed last night that the way Mr Hurd had handled his interview, on ITV's Weekend World, demonstrated that he was clearly embarrassed by "the greedy and violent society created by the Prime Minister".

In the interview, Mr Hurd said that in the early part of its administration, the Government had concentrated on individual freedom, but it was now time to "tug the other string". Freedom and

responsibility worked together, he said.

Mr Hurd said: "We have to say to those people who are doing well, with a bit more money than they had before, that there is a community to which you also belong: be an active citizen within it."

The idea of the active citizen working to improve his community would come through more and more in the policies to be followed during the Government's third term in office, he said, and he made it clear that businesses would also be expected to play their part.

In her address to the General Assembly, Mrs Thatcher used Biblical quotations to justify the ideology underlying the Government's economic and social policies.

She told the Assembly: "It is not the creation of wealth that is wrong, but love of money for its

own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth.

"How could we respond to the many calls for help, or invest for the future, or support the wonderful artists and craftsmen whose work also glorifies God, unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth?"

Labour Leader Mr Neil Kinnock said at the weekend: "History is littered with rulers who sought to justify their excesses and deficiencies on the grounds of a selective interpretation of the Bible. Mrs Thatcher is joining a long and less than glorious line."

Christopher Reekie writes: Mrs Thatcher told how she interpreted her faith as a Christian when she addressed the Assembly after a few ministers protested at her speaking.

Stating the Biblical teaching

that we must work and use our talents to create wealth, she quoted St Paul's words, "If a man will not work he shall not eat", and went on to say that intervention by the State must never become so great that it effectively removed personal responsibility.

A handful of ministers tried to prevent her speaking when she was invited to do so, but the Rt Rev. Professor James Whyte, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, quashed the protests by saying that the applause indicated the will of the Assembly very clearly.

The Moderator overruled the Rev. Alan Sorenson, of Househillwood, who wanted to move a counter-motion which would simply have extended warm Christian greetings to Mrs Thatcher.

Five commissioners immedi-

ately announced their dissent from Mrs Thatcher being invited to speak. They were Mr Sorenson, the Rev. Paraic Reamonn, of Cockburnspath, the Rev. Stuart MacQuarrie, who said pointedly that he came from Toryglen, the Rev. John Ainslie, Easterhouse, and the Rev. Hugh Drummond, Pitsligo.

These five were later joined by a sixth, the Rev. Colin Anderson, of Greenock, in dissents recorded at the clerks' table.

Mr MacQuarrie, a Labour district councillor in Glasgow, said later that people in his parish were suffering from the housing benefit changes. He could not listen to Mrs Thatcher and went out of the hall.

Mr Reamonn said Mrs Thatcher's speech was "a very selective and distorted version of the Gospel. It was highly individualist and lacking in a sense of community."

Mrs Thatcher, who was greeted by sustained applause, began her 2000-word address lasting 15 minutes by speaking personally as a Christian, as well as a politician, about the way she saw things and went on to discuss her personal belief in the relevance of Christianity to public policy.

She believed that by taking together key elements of the Old and New Testaments we gained a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life.

The Prime Minister said that any set of social and economic arrangements which was not founded on the acceptance of individual responsibility would do nothing but harm. She said "intervention by the State must never become so great that it effectively removes personal responsibility".

In conclusion, Mrs Thatcher expressed the thought that the

Church and State debate had never yielded anything comparable in insight to the hymn "I vow to thee my country".

Meanwhile the Free Church of Scotland's public questions committee has accused Mrs Thatcher's administration of lacking in compassion and contributing to human misery.

"Many of the Government's measures seem to be dominated by a 'cost effective' philosophy which pays more attention to the dogma of materialism than to social concern. The compassion that ought to be mirrored in the Government's policies is all too often relegated in the interest of cost-cutting exercises," says the committee in a report to Free Church General Assembly which opens in Edinburgh tomorrow.

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A bold sermon on the Mound

Allan Massie weighs up the importance of Mrs Thatcher's historic address to the General Assembly



Daniella on her way to address the clerical lions: Mrs Thatcher enters the General Assembly

MRS THATCHER came to Edinburgh rather in the spirit of that other Puritan from the Fens, Oliver Cromwell, when he besought the ministers of religion to "Beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, that you may be mistaken".

Her efforts will have had no effect on her sternest critics. I particularly relished the response of the Rev. Steuart MacQuarrie of Toryglen (no less), who said that "rather than lecture and sermonise she should listen to what we have to say" — a piece of advice congregations have often directed at the pulpit. He reportedly refused to listen to her speech because he was so angry. This is the true wrath of the Covenanting man, who knows God's mind is his.

Others will certainly scoff, even while perhaps also admiring her performance as Daniella in a den of clerical lions. Doctor Johnson compared a woman preaching to a dog walking on its hind legs — "it is not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all". Critics will make this comparison carefully, aware that the enlightened Church of Scotland has long ordained women; they will therefore be wise to restrict the comparison to this particular woman.

The Rev Paraic Reamonn, for example, one of the five who would have stopped her speaking, has already said that you might have thought it "simply the speech of the theologically ill-educated lay woman," but that "what this Government has been doing to the country and particularly to the poor since 1979 makes the speech a disgraceful travesty of the Gospel."

Mr Reamonn's logic is distinctly rocky, ill-educated even, since the Government's record might render the speech hypocritical, but could hardly influence its content as he suggests. It would be as logical to say that a sinful minister cannot preach a good sermon against sin. However, many will doubtless agree with him, disregarding logic; certainly there

seems little chance that such as he will heed Cromwell's advice.

The speech or sermon is certainly extraordinary. It is hard to think of another Prime Minister who would have chosen to engage the Assembly on its own ground and with its own weapons.

You would probably have to go back to Mr Gladstone to find one ready to do so. He of course was the author of a great tome on *The State in its Relations with the Church*, written in his Tory days, and torn apart with the utmost relish by Macaulay in the *Edinburgh Review*. At that time Gladstone believed in a Christian polity; later he went to Naples and found a government which described itself as such, and he denounced it as "the negation of God erected into a system of government", which is rather what Mrs Thatcher's severest critics think her administration to be.

It is easy to detect inconsistencies and oddities in her argument, but then few sermons escape these. Moreover, whatever else she is, Mrs Thatcher is not an ordinary woman. She is indeed distinctly odd. That is one of the reasons she is able to surprise one so often. You never really know what she is going to do next.

No doubt many, far better versed in theology than I, will be examining her sermon in detail. It seems to me, I must say, no more open to contradiction or mockery than most I have heard from the pulpit.

There are moments indeed when she has quite caught one characteristic pulpit mannerism: the dragging of a recondite and ill-chosen biblical illustration. It is hard to see for example just what the woman with the alabaster jar of ointment is doing in her text. To make sense of her appearance, one would have to conclude that Mrs Thatcher is about to reverse her policy towards the university and pour money into arts faculties, and indeed into the promotion of music, dance, painting and literature beyond the Academy. I am not convinced that this is just what she intended to convey.

Similarly, the text she has lifted from St Paul's Epistle to

the Thessalonians — "If a man will not work, he shall not eat" — was surely not wisely selected. It is all very well to assert the dignity and value of labour, but a Prime Minister who has presided over a period of high unemployment is not the best person to do so. Many even among those who do not hold her directly responsible for that unemployment must think that she should be more humble in this connection.

NEVERTHELESS she was surely right to answer the accusation that her policy is based on the appeal to greed. Indeed it would have been pointless to have come to address the Assembly if she had not drawn attention to the distinction that exists between the creation of wealth and the love of money.

When she says that "abundance rather than poverty has a legitimacy that derives from the very nature of creation", she is surely making a valid theological point. I admire her

self-denial in not calling the parable of the talents into play to justify her economic and fiscal policies.

What in the end has she achieved? Her coming to Edinburgh was an act of courage and courtesy. The Church of Scotland has been her consistent critic, and her decision to accept the invitation to address its General Assembly recognised that opposition as serious and worthy. Even her enemies should admit that her willingness to argue with the Church on its own terms was an act of respect.

Of course she came for political reasons, and the utterances of politicians are always political. Nevertheless her sermon did credit to both the Church and herself, because it offered a serious and well-considered response to serious and well-considered questions.

Secondly, by presenting her political philosophy within Christian terms, she was affirming its fundamental morality.

Mrs Thatcher has been more bitterly attacked than any

British politician of our times. She has been denied even good intentions. Yet, placing her philosophy of life within her understanding of Christianity, she mounted a vigorous defence. There are other possible interpretations of the Christian ethic, but when she asserted the importance of personal responsibility and of man's "fundamental right to choose between good and evil", she was expressing her own belief that she is firmly within the Protestant Christian tradition.

Thirdly, she did her audience the courtesy of admitting the thorniness of the debate. (I found her admission that she has had difficulty with the commandment to love your neighbour as yourself rather endearing.)

She did not take refuge behind the argument that the concerns of the Church and of politics are two different things. She did not tell the ministers that their business was to care for souls and hers to look after bodies. She admitted, by implication, that the two cannot be so neatly separated.

No doubt many will criticise Mrs Thatcher for her arrogance in thus addressing the Assembly, though I would suggest that she actually displayed humility rather than arrogance. (I wonder too what would have been said if she had declined the invitation). No doubt many besides the Rev. Paraic Reamonn will sneer at her grasp of theology. No doubt the old arguments will continue.

Yet these arguments are sterile. The most depressing feature of the debate about Thatcherism that resounds through the land and fills the correspondence columns of this newspaper is the lack of understanding and generosity.

Critics of Thatcherism are as deficient in these qualities as Mrs Thatcher herself is when she talks about Socialism. It would be good for all of us if we could admit that Mrs Thatcher, Neil Kinnock, David Steel and the Church of Scotland all want the same thing: all desire a prosperous society in which the relations between people are decent and honourable.

Thatcher reveals politician's view of Christianity

By PETER JONES, Political Reporter

THE IMPORTANT influence of the Church of Scotland in the spiritual life of the whole nation, through the caring services provided by the department of social responsibility, and through its links with other churches, were recognised by Mrs Thatcher at the start of her speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Saturday.

But the bulk of her speech was devoted to explaining how she saw things "as a Christian, as well as a politician". She said she had recently read the phrase — Christianity is about spiritual redemption, not social reform.

"Sometimes the debate on these matters has become too polarised and given the impression that the two are quite separate. Most Christians would regard it as their personal Christian duty to help their fellow men and women. They would regard the lives of children as a precious trust."

These duties came from being a Christian and not from secular laws, she said, but were also accepted by some who were not Christian. She identified three beliefs, stemming from spiritual rather than social parts of life which she believed were the distinctive marks of Christianity.

"First, that from the beginning man has been endowed by God with the fundamental right to choose between good and evil.

"Second, that we are made in God's own image and therefore we are expected to use all our own power of thought and judgement in exercising that choice; and further, if we open our hearts to God, he has promised to work within us.

"And third, that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, when faced with his terrible choice and lonely vigil, chose to lay down His life that our sins may be forgiven.

"I think back to many discussions in my early life when we all agreed that if you try to take the fruits of Christianity without its roots, the fruits will wither. And they will not come again unless you nurture the root."

Mrs Thatcher went on to state her belief in the relevance of Christianity to public policy — Old Testament teaching of the importance of observing a strict code of law, and the New

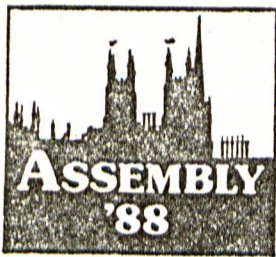
Testament teachings of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, both of which emphasised, she said, loving our neighbours as ourselves.

"I believe that by taking together these key elements from the Old and the New Testaments, we gain a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life.

"We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth. 'If a man will not work he shall not eat' wrote St Paul to the Thessalonians. Nevertheless, the Tenth Commandment — thou shalt not covet — recognises that making money and owning things could become selfish activities.

"But it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but love of money for its own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth.

"How could we respond to the many calls for help, or invest



for the future, or support the wonderful artists and craftsmen whose work also glorifies God, unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth?"

Mrs Thatcher said that social and economic arrangements had to be founded on the acceptance of individual responsibility, that politicians should strive to bring out the good in people and fight down the bad, but could not create the one or abolish the other.

Today, she said, the only way to ensure that no-one was left without sustenance, help or opportunity, was to provide by law for such things as health and education, but intervention by the State must never become so great that it effectively removed personal responsibility.

"The same applies to taxation, for while you and I would work extremely hard whatever the circumstances, there are undoubtedly some who would not unless the incentive was

there. And we need their efforts too."

Mrs Thatcher said she strongly believed politicians should see religious education had a proper place in the school curriculum, for the Christian religion was fundamental to the nation's heritage. It was impossible to understand our history or literature without understanding that the nation's ideals are founded on the Bible.

Mrs Thatcher declared she was an enthusiast for democracy "not because I believe majority opinion is inevitably right or true, indeed no majority can take away God-given human rights, but because I believe it most effectively safeguards the value of the individual, and, more than any other system, restrains the abuse of power by the few. And that is a Christian concept.

"But there is little hope for democracy in the hearts of men and women in democratic societies cannot be touched by a call to something greater than themselves.

"Political structures, State institutions, collective ideals are not enough. We parliamentarians can legislate for the rule of law. You the Church can teach the life of faith.

"I always think that the whole debate about the Church and the State has never yielded anything comparable in insight to that beautiful hymn *I vow to thee my country*."

"It begins with a triumphant assertion of what might be described as secular patriotism, a noble thing indeed in a country like ours: *I vow to thee my country all earthly things above; entire, whole and perfect, the service of my love*."

"It goes on to speak of 'another country I heard of long ago' whose King cannot be seen and whose armies cannot be counted, but 'soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase'. Not group by group, or party by party or even church by church — but soul by soul — and each one counts.

"That, members of the assembly, is the country which you chiefly serve. You fight your cause under the banner of an historic church. Your success matters greatly — as much to the temporal as to the spiritual welfare of the nation."

Theology and Mrs Thatcher

PASS whatever verdict you like on Mrs Thatcher's address to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, there was something enormously refreshing about the circumstances under which it was made.

There were no PR men to pave the way, there was no allegedly pulse-quickening music to herald her entrance, no slogan-draped backcloth or high-technology autocue; just her, a lectern and for once a critically attentive audience rather than a slavishly adoring gathering of the faithful.

It was an intensely Scottish occasion too, one of those occasions where the mighty meet with the ordinary for no other purpose than to debate important issues on equal terms.

That point was emphasised not by the stupid gestures of the thankfully few who would rather Mrs Thatcher had not been heard, but by the way in which she had to take her seat in the hall unobtrusively and wait for the summons to speak.

The Scottishness was emphasised by the presence of the Lord High Commissioner and his attendant dignitaries, none of whom would have been present in their resplendent official garb and status had not Scotland once been a sovereign state.

And that gave Saturday a peculiarly historic note. To dismiss Mrs Thatcher's appearance as simply part of a much needed image-polishing process following her party's rebuff by the Scottish electorate is to miss an important point.

As we and others have often noted, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is the only forum we have which approximates to a Scottish Assembly. But for once the General Assembly fitted the bill of a forum where we can call the executive arm of Government to account.

It will be recalled that in the political hurly-burly during and after the General Election, much was made of how the Government's policies were not in tune with the morals, attitudes, aspirations and values of the Scottish people.

And did not Mrs Thatcher on Saturday somehow recognise the existence of that divide, real or perceived, in the way she addressed the Assembly, not to denounce it as some Opposition party as some in the Conservative Party would, but to give an account of her morals, attitudes, aspirations, and values.

Accept or reject what she said, the fact remains that Saturday was an important landmark in the political life of our nation. The fact that the Prime Minister gave an account of herself to the General Assembly has enhanced the status of the Church of Scotland, not demeaned it to the status of the PR value of a football match appearance as a few were asserting.

As to the nature of Mrs Thatcher's theology, it seemed curiously homespun, not in itself surprising, since all of us who have not been immersed in theological seminars throughout our lives, but call ourselves Christians, must necessarily conduct our lives according to a homespun theology.

But Mrs Thatcher conducts the life of a nation, and much of her policy thinking, we now understand, is ruled by her own theology. Much is acceptable to all, for example the primacy of the doctrine of free will rather than that of Calvinistic predestination.

However the opening up of her soul has revealed the fundamental reason why such a gulf has opened up between Mrs Thatcher's Government and the Church, not just in Scotland but in England as well.

Mrs Thatcher's theology gives pride of place to the individual and the exercise of individual responsibilities according to Christian principles. But she has either consciously rejected, or simply not thought about, the extension of that thinking.

In a nutshell, what she said was that if the individual gets his or her spiritual thinking right, the correct material consequences in terms of help for the less fortunate will follow. It is the kind of thinking that has led her to declare previously that there is no such thing as society, only individuals.

But for churchmen, the spiritual and the material, like freedom, is indivisible and not sequential. Mrs Thatcher called in aid of her theology the hymn that tells of a country whose king cannot be seen and whose armies cannot be counted but "soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase."

Not "group by group but soul by soul" she emphasised, to which churchmen would say, yes, soul by soul, but as brother and sister. The failure of Mrs Thatcher to have that kind of thinking in her theology, is where she and the Church part company.

Hattersley in onslaught on morality of Thatcherism

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

Mr Roy Hattersley will tonight trenchantly reassert Labour's claim to be the conscience of the nation in a direct riposte to Mrs Margaret Thatcher's weekend speech to the Church of Scotland.

Labour's deputy leader says the Prime Minister speaks about a morality unrecognized by most of the population.

He will maintain that her brand of individualism and economic freedom is a rejection of community and the type of society people hold dear, and suggest that if she continues she will be unelectable by the next election.

Mr Hattersley's intervention in his Birmingham, Sparkbrook, constituency represents the latest sally in the party dogfight over the moral high ground.

It comes after Mrs Thatcher's speech in which she spelt out the spiritual beliefs underpinning her political philosophy.

This was very much a "personal statement", high-ranking government sources indicated yesterday.

The disclosure came as Labour MPs reacted angrily in the Commons, accusing the Prime Minister of "twisting arms" to address the church's general assembly.

Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, said she had offended many people by saying that the love of money was the root of all evil.

Turning the Prime Minister's words against her, he told MPs: "We see such evil taking place, particularly in the City of London".

The view yesterday was that her text in Edinburgh, redolent with Biblical allusions and quotations, was her own work.

However, sources insisted that her remarks, in which she maintained that wealth had to be created before it could be used and emphasized the importance of personal responsibility, were in tune with many previous addresses.

It was clear that differences remain in the upper reaches of the Tory party over the extent to which the Government should play the moral card in response to Labour's attacks over social policies.

Some insiders are concerned that the Government may be in danger of mixing religion and politics in a potentially damaging way. They believe that it should concentrate on the bread and butter issues such as the economy where it has a winning hand.

The Labour attack came in questions to Mr Michael Alison, the Second Church Estates Commissioner and a former Parliamentary Private Secretary to Mrs Thatcher.

Mr Foulkes said the Church of Scotland had its arm twisted and asked Mr Alison to ensure Mrs Thatcher practised what she preached.

Thatcher's appeal to scripture strikes chord only with some

THE PRIME Minister's speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at the weekend - in which she invoked scripture to underpin the virtues of individual responsibility, personal charity and "spiritual redemption" - has struck powerful resonance in the breast of at least one of its communicants.

Sir Hector Laing, chairman of United Biscuits, was moved yesterday to quote Sophocles ("or someone like that - of course I knew him well") to the effect that "when the freedom the citizens of Athens wanted most was the freedom *from* responsibility, then Athens ceases to be free." That, Sir Hector said, spoke to the fact that the Government had created freedom and it was now up to all to use it with responsibility.

Mrs Thatcher's speech, advertised as a keynote statement of principles, is also seen by both right and left as a gauntlet thrown down to those in her party who favour a Conservatism more oriented to social justice.

Sir Hector, a strong supporter, said: "I spent some time at the weekend being interviewed by the BBC's Panorama who suggested to me - in the nicest possible way, of course - that I had substantially benefited from the Budget and did I not feel bad about that? And I said, not at all. Wealth is a responsibility and a privilege and one has to use it in that way."

He agreed wholly with her view that church and state moved in separate spheres. "Look, the Government is there to protect the trade routes, uphold the currency and preserve law and order. It is then up to the individual to try to keep up society as he would like it to be."

John Lloyd looks at reactions to the prime minister's speech on religious and social values

It resonated, too, in the breast of Professor Kenneth Minogue, Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics. "It's up to the church to flail the sinners on greed and morality: Governments get ahead and govern."

However, Prof Minogue, who achieved prominence as the television presenter of the New Enlightenment series on the advance of the liberal right, was worried about the "nasty underside" which has Mrs Thatcher and Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, hectoring the electorate on its duties. "I think they should just shut up there: I think that's the main weakness of the Thatcher Government."

Prof Alan Budd, director of the London Business School, cannot see, he says, much sign of business responding to calls for social responsibilities. "You could argue that they should: that their new profitability has been made possible by the redundancies they made. But I think they are still at the first stage - making the profits: they're not yet at the stage of distributing them."

Those whose thinking leads them to the left of the spectrum naturally view the speech without much charity. Prof Raymond Plant, who heads the politics department at Southampton Uni-

versity and who has been the prime mover of the Socialist Philosophers' Group, says: "The Prime Minister is seeking to prove that the 'trickle down' effect plus personal charity can take the place of much state provision. The evidence must be against that: quite a large group is now marginalised and not reached by this."

"As for criticising the churches for intruding - the Government has itself moralised the social sphere, by talking of dependency and trying to create a new model individual - she cannot blame the churches for posing their moral view."

"She assumes a rigid distinction between personal morality and the outcomes of economic decisions: even if the market *was* amoral, as she and others have claimed, it's perfectly open to governments to intervene in its outcomes."

A.H. Halsey, Professor of Social and Administrative Studies at Oxford University, thought the speech "humbug." He is prepared to allow "that it's not total cynicism on her part: she believes some of it: but she wants to tell people she belongs to a *good* tradition, and she doesn't."

"My view about biblical argument is that it's always selective: but I note that the churches, including the Catholic Church, are now all stressing the communitarian tradition in scriptures, and she's dead against that."

"I think it's changing now: I see commentators and others reacting against all this 'loads-a-money' thing. There's a very deep distrust of money, and love of money - money as a way of life. That will count against her, increasingly."

PM's speech under fire

THE Prime Minister's weekend speech to Scottish churchmen setting out her beliefs on personal morality came under Opposition fire in the Commons yesterday.

But her former Parliamentary Private Secretary, Mr Michael Alison (C. Selby), responding in Question Time for the Church Commissioners, denied a Labour charge that the Prime Minister had "twisted arms" so as to address the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Mrs Thatcher, he said, had made a notable contribution to the debate on personal faith and civic responsibility and her speech had been well-received.

Mr Tony Banks (Lab. Newham North West) said — in a jibe at the reported rift between Mrs Thatcher and the Chancellor Mr Nigel Lawson — that until the week-end speech, he had thought the Budget speech was "written by St Nigel rather than St Paul."

Mr Banks, also quoting St Paul said our leaders should be sober, temperate and not greedy of filthy lucre.

Mr Alison replied: "I am very glad you have taken to quoting scripture. We can look forward

to more. "If you want to take the letter of the word, Mrs Thatcher has never hitherto, as far as I am aware, been guilty of insobriety and she certainly was not when she addressed the General Assembly."

Mr George Foulkes (Lab. Carrick, Cumnock and Doon) asked Mr Alison "if the Church Commissioners had their arms twisted — as did the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland — to issue an invitation to Mrs Thatcher to address the Synod of the Church of England, will you make sure she practises what she preaches."

To Tory jeers, Mr Foulkes said Mrs Thatcher offended many people when she said the love of money is the root of all evil. He added: "We see such evil taking place, particularly in the City of London."

Mr Alison said Mr Foulkes was doing less than justice to his fellow Scots. It was a mockery if he thought the several hundred General Assembly members all had arms so weak they could be twisted by Mrs Thatcher. The Prime Minister had made a "notable contribution" to an important topical debate, he told MPs.

Mr John Marshall (C. Hen-

don S) said certain Church leaders should give their flock "sound spiritual leadership rather than indulging in partisan politics."

Mr Alison said the Prime Minister's message to the General Assembly was that "Christians will often genuinely disagree about aspects of secular politics though it is a mark of Christian manners they should do so with courtesy and mutual respect."

Labour's attack on the Prime Minister's speech continued during an Opposition-initiated housing debate.

Labour frontbencher Mr Clive Soley (Hammersmith) said: "One of the reasons the Prime Minister gets into so much trouble with the churches is because the churches do have a different perception of what the priorities are in this country today."

Leftwinger Mr Dennis Skinner (Lab. Bolsover) added that with 50,000 more homeless people than when the Conservatives came to power in 1979, Mrs Thatcher ought to be preaching about something other than what individuals could do with their personal wealth.



Mrs Thatcher... "inspired"

Mrs T has given up £100,000

By SIMON WALTERS

PREMIER Margaret Thatcher has given up £100,000 in pay since 1979, she revealed yesterday.

She currently draws only her Cabinet Minister's pay of £51,068—£11,630 LESS than her salary as Prime Minister.

Mrs Thatcher made the disclosure after Neil Kinnock attacked her in the Commons for telling church leaders her policies were in line with Christ's teachings.

The Labour leader accused her of cutting aid to the poor and asked: "Which passage of the Bible inspired you to do that? Was it when Pilate took water and washed his hands?"

Depths

Mrs Thatcher angrily denied she had encouraged a greedy society.

She told Mr Kinnock: "Look at the amount I have voluntarily foregone from my salary."

Labour's deputy leader Roy Hattersley later accused her of "plunging the depths of cynicism".

© CHANCELLOR Nigel Lawson praised Mrs Thatcher's "inspired leadership" in a kiss-and-make-up speech following their clash over the pound.

Why Maggie must call it a day—Page 6

MAGGIE TAKES A £100,000 PAY CUT

PREMIER Margaret Thatcher has taken a pay cut totalling £100,000 since she came to power nine years ago.

This was revealed last night after a bitter Commons clash in which Neil Kinnock said she had washed her hands of the poor, like Pontius Pilate. Amid hoots of derision and shouts of "loads of money" from Labour MPs, Mrs Thatcher told the Labour leader to check how much she had left in the nation's coffers since becoming Prime Minister.

Mrs Thatcher has always believed she should get the same pay as one of her Cabinet ministers.

In the current year she will get £51,068 — £11,630 less than the £62,698 she is entitled to when her Parliamentary allowance is included.

Over nine years that's a saving of £100,000 to the Exchequer. Mrs Thatcher came under fire during Prime Minister's question time for a weekend

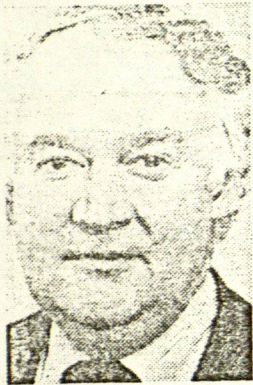
by **CHRIS BUCKLAND**
Political Editor

speech justifying Government policies with quotations from the Bible.

Mr Kinnock said she had "cut child benefit, stopped school meals and ended single payments. Can she tell us which particular passage of the Bible inspired her?"

"Could it have been Matthew 27(24) 'And Pilate took water and washed his hands'." Mrs Thatcher's pay cut decision may have been made easier by millionaire husband Denis, who is on several company boards.

Tories turn on 'disloyal' Critchley



Critchley: Irritant

TORIES at Westminster turned on back-bencher Jullian Critchley last night after he launched an astonishing attack on Mrs Thatcher from abroad.

They accused him of treachery for writing an article criticising Mrs Thatcher's personal style and leadership in the New York Times.

Mr Critchley's attack is viewed as breaching the unwritten code of not criticising Britain overseas.

The Aldershot MP—a constant, but minor, irritant to the Tory front bench—alleged

By PETER HOOLEY Political Reporter

widespread discontent with the PM in the Tory party.

He called on Mrs Thatcher to quit before the end of her third term saying she had "served her purpose".

Mr Critchley accused her of trading as a politician in "exhortation and rebuke" and that some of her Cabinet colleagues found her "self-righteous and hard to bear."

Last night his back-bench colleagues accused

Mr Critchley of being out of touch and totally wrong.

From the Commons Nicholas Winterton declared: "He spends more time out of this place than he does in it. Perhaps people should be aware that he is not as in touch with Parliament and the party as he would lead them to believe."

"It is typical of him to make his attack from the other side of the Atlantic in a foreign newspaper."

Ealing MP Harry

Greenway joined the criticisms of Mr Critchley.

"It would be better if he came to the House and attended to see what is going on. He is rarely seen here," he said.

Tory back-bencher Eric Forth said Mr Critchley had "got it wrong in every respect."

He said: "I can't remember Mr Critchley being in the Commons regularly for Prime Minister's Question Time. He does not make a huge contribution at Westminster so I think for his remarks to be printed in New York are appropriate."

ARCHBISHOP BACKS THE PREMIER ON THE NEED FOR WEALTH CREATION

Hurt Maggie scolds Neil over faith jibe

MRS THATCHER was clearly hurt yesterday as she accused Mr Kinnock of "debasement" everything she believed in after he had tried to attack her religious beliefs.

Her bitter rebuke came in the Commons as he compared her to Pontius Pilate, implying she had washed her hands of the less well-off.

She said her weekend speech to the Church of Scotland, when she explained the spiritual basis of her go-getting political philosophy, had been a personal avowal of faith.

She repeated her theme that creation of wealth was not wrong—but love of money for its own sake was.

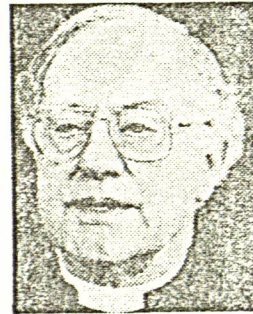
And she reminded Mr Kinnock of her financial sacrifice since becoming Premier in 1979. She is entitled to draw £62,698. Instead, she only accepts a Cabinet Minister's £51,068 salary.

Later Mr Kinnock, though stressing he was "not married to a millionaire," admitted he draws his full salary—and intends to accept his increase from Tory tax cuts.

And Archbishop of Canter-



Mrs Thatcher: Sacrifice



Dr Runcie: Support

By ROBERT GIBSON
Political Editor

bury Dr Robert Runcie later backed Mrs Thatcher, saying: "I thought she had, as usual, clear and coherent things to say about the means of wealth creation and I agree with her on that."

Mr Kinnock had sparked the row by asking Mrs Thatcher to "unfreeze" child benefit.

She said it is targeted at families needing it most.

Mr Kinnock hit back: "She has cut child benefit, she has stopped free school meals, she has ended single payments—which passage of the Bible inspired all that?"

"Could it have been Matthew 27:24, when Pilate took water and washed his hands?"

Mrs Thatcher told him: "You debase everything I believe in if we tried to exchange verse quotations across the despatch box."

She emphasised the need for

personal responsibility and generosity to the less fortunate.

And she said her political philosophy had provided "more houses, a better health service, better salaries—in fact life is better off all round precisely because of the policies we have now."

Dr Runcie also said later: "I would want to ask a little more about the questions of making wealth and at the same time it dividing society in a way which makes the people who have fallen behind, through no fault of their own, feel on the edge of things."

Mr Kinnock added later: "Naturally I will go on giving to charity but tragically the contributions do not begin to make up for the reductions in support for the poor and disabled children or the needy in Britain."

Mr Kinnock, brought up a Methodist, said he was not an atheist but from the age of 18 had had difficulty accepting the idea of immortality of the soul and the absolute requirement of forgiveness.

Left rip into Kinnock's new ideas

LABOUR'S hard Left yesterday launched a blistering strike on Neil Kinnock's key policy reviews which aim to rewrite the party's election manifesto.

With Labour's ruling executive set overwhelmingly to endorse the seven reviews later today, Ken Livingstone and leadership contender Tony Benn fired the first broadside in

what is likely to become a long and bloody battle.

Mr Livingstone bluntly attacked the economic plans stating the figures did not add up, that the policy lacked any credibility and would once again prove to be an electoral liability.

Mr Benn followed through claiming the reviews were superficial and vague and were based on an acceptance of Tory policies.

The reviews which have been hammered out by leading front benchers and union bosses since Labour's election defeat aimed to "modernise" the party's appeal.

They have already come under attack for accepting the principle of the free market and ditching the Ban-the-Bomb defence policy.

And yesterday Mr Livingstone said that by refusing to cut defence spending and

foreign investment the only way a Labour Government could pay for its programme would be through either an incomes policy or tax increases.

Mr Benn accused Mr Kinnock of attempting to bury socialism.

Eric Hammond's moderate union yesterday gave a vote of confidence to the Kinnock-Hattersley leadership.

Kinnock's blueprint, Page 9

A BETTER LIFE FOR BRITAIN'

Premier:
We must not leave mercy to others

By JOHN DEANS
Political Correspondent

THE Prime Minister issued a ringing defence of her wealth-creating revolution yesterday.

It gave everyone in Britain the chance of leading a better, more responsible life, said Mrs Thatcher.

She carried her moral mission into the Commons, insisting that her vision for the country was firmly based on her Christian beliefs.

'Life is better off all round precisely because of our policies,' she told MPs.

'There is more money available to pay ourselves, more houses, better health services and salaries.'

Important

Her stand delighted Tories during Question Time. The exchanges were dominated by her speech last Saturday to Scottish churchmen when she stressed the importance of traditional Christian virtues like hard work, self-reliance and charity.

Turning on Labour critics who say her policies amount to a 'creed of greed', she said: 'We simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others. There is an important place both for help from the State, which we operate, and also personal help and personal responsibility.'

She was involved in an angry exchange with Labour leader Neil Kinnock which came to a head when he spoke of the cuts in child benefit and social welfare subsidies and quoted Matthew 27:24: 'When Pilate took water and washed his hands.'

Mrs Thatcher accused him of 'debasing everything I believe in' by hurling Biblical quotations across the Commons in an attempt to make political points.

Then the Prime Minister suggested that her own personal restraint was an example of the sharing society she is trying to achieve.

'Perhaps you will kindly look at the amount I have voluntarily foregone from my salary,' she said.

Turn to Page 2, Col.2

Better life for Britain, by Maggie

Continued from Page One

Since she came to power in 1979, Mrs Thatcher has passed up almost £100,000 in pay. As Premier, she is currently entitled to £62,698, but draws only £51,068 the same as a Cabinet Minister.

Mr Kinnock had opened the duel by asking her to 'unfreeze' child benefit — which was not uprated this year in line with inflation — and restore to it the 70p which he said had come off its real value in the past two years.

Mrs Thatcher replied that child benefit was reviewed every year. 'This year we chose

to give a great deal more to children in families who have no earnings, so it helps those who need it most'.

Mr Kinnock retorted: 'It did not make up for child benefit cuts. When I heard you on Saturday saying that children were our precious trust, I wondered if you meant it in practice.'

'Now I know you do not.'

Mrs Thatcher told him: 'Perhaps you will do me the courtesy of reading the speech.'

'I do not believe that one discharges all one's duties by casting them off onto the State.'

Labour's deputy leader Mr

Labour's cash boost

THE SUBSIDY from the taxpayer to help Neil Kinnock run the Labour Party machine is to go up from £493,900 to £839,700.

The huge scale of the increases in funding the Opposition parties running expenses almost overshadowed a decision that will mean Ministers fired by the Prime Minister receiving a 'golden handshake'

Roy Hattersley last night attacked Mrs Thatcher's weekend speech, saying she was attempting to 'recapture the moral ground' because her Government had 'lost the ethical argument'. He told constituents in Birmingham that the speech was 'as intellectually demeaning as it was morally bankrupt'.

The Prime Minister and her Chancellor Nigel Lawson now seem back on the best of terms after their disagreement over handling exchange rates.

In a speech to the Conservative women's conference in London yesterday he went out of his way to pay generous tribute to her.

He acknowledged Mrs Thatcher's fears that cutting interest rates to make the pound less attractive overseas could threaten the fight against inflation and said squeezing it out of the system remained at the core of Government strategy.

But Julian Critchley, backbench Tory MP for Aldershot, bitterly attacked his leader in an article in the New York Times, saying Mrs Thatcher's growing unpopularity would make Labour favourites to win the next election.



Maggie refuses to give up her crusade

THE Prime Minister today set out to ram home the moral crusade she launched at the weekend, unmoved by fire and brimstone from Labour.

In what was heralded as a far-reaching speech, Mrs Thatcher prepared to reassert her message about the Christian virtues of self-reliance, hard-work and the creation of wealth to help others.

by Charles Reiss
Political Editor

The continued Government effort to win the moral high ground was reinforced by Home Secretary Douglas Hurd.

He called on the churches to speak out more often about personal, moral responsibilities. And

he said that television broadcasters and teachers—as well as parents—must play their part.

The Prime Minister and Mr Hurd were both speaking at the Tory women's conference at the Barbican. Mr Hurd stressed what he called the "obligation on each one of us to help turn young people away from the temptation towards crime".

Politicians and the police could do a certain amount, he said, "but you cannot legislate for neighbourliness".

The "good neighbour" theme promises to become a repeated message from ministers in the weeks ahead.

The objective, Mr Hurd said, was to "revive a spirit of responsible citizenship throughout the

nation, amongst men and women of all ages, all professions, from all social and ethnic backgrounds".

Labour was rapidly preparing its counter-attack claiming, as Neil Kinnock did yesterday, that Mrs Thatcher, like Pontius Pilate, was "washing her hands" of the problems of the poor.

Mr Hurd pointed out that the peak age for crime was 15 and that children spent hours "goggling at the television".

Broadcasters, he went on, "must recognise their responsibility to ensure that television, vivid and powerful as it is, does not provide that extra excitement which can push someone into violence.

"The churches, although less influential than in years past, can still speak with more authority about personal moral conduct than can any politician.

"I would encourage them to do so more often."

Flowers for Raisa

MRS THATCHER did her bit for glasnost today when she sent a bouquet of flowers and "very best wishes" to Mikhail Gorbachev's wife Raisa.

The Prime Minister agreed to send the flowers to mark the launch of Interflora's service to Moscow.

The order for the bouquet was transmitted from the Chelsea Flower Show, via Sweden. The cost? About £25.

• DAILY MIRROR, Wednesday, May 25, 1988

THATCHER 'LIKE PILATE'

PREMIER Margaret Thatcher was accused yesterday of being a Pontius Pilate and washing her hands of the fate of Britain's children.

Labour leader Neil Kinnock branded her a hypocrite for cutting the value of child benefit while describing children as "our precious trust."

He launched the Commons attack over her speech to Scottish church leaders in which she said Christian teaching backed her policies.

Mr Kinnock asked: "Can she tell us which

passage from the Bible inspired her?"

"Could it be Matthew 27:24 when Pilate took water and washed his hands?"

Mrs Thatcher replied: "I believe we debase everything we believe in if we exchange verse quotations across the floor."

Then she astonished MPs by boasting of her own generosity in taking £11,600 less than a Prime Minister's salary.

Runcie supports Thatcher view of wealth creation

Labour battles ferociously for 'moral high ground'

By George Jones, Political Correspondent

THE BIZARRE battle for the moral high ground of British politics intensified last night as Labour's leaders launched a ferocious attack on Mrs Thatcher's record for compassion and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Runcie, signalled his support for the Prime Minister's weekend declaration that there was religious justification for the Government's wealth creation policies.

In sharp personal exchanges in the Commons, Mrs Thatcher accused Mr Kinnock of "debasement everything" by quoting the Bible back at her during Prime Minister's question time.

She cited her refusal to draw her full £62,098 salary as Prime Minister—forgoing nearly £100,000 since entering Downing Street nine years ago—as evidence of her personal responsibility towards wealth.

Mrs Thatcher was clearly stung by Mr Kinnock's comparison of her to Pontius Pilate washing his hands at the trial of Christ over the Government decision to freeze child benefit, stop free school meals and end single payments to social security claimants.

The controversy followed Mrs Thatcher's weekend speech to the Church of Scotland in which she gave an unequivocal declaration that Thatcherism and wealth creation were underpinned by religious faith.

In the speech, Mrs Thatcher referred explicitly to her own Christian faith and said wealth creation was not immoral but the love of money was.

Last night Labour intensified its attack on the Prime Minister by sending a new "poverty survey" to Church leaders which, it claimed, showed that almost eight million homes had lost out because of the impact of the Budget changes.

According to a computer analysis published by Mr Gordon Brown, a Labour Treasury spokesman, more than one million families were losing £3 a week and two million more than £2 a week, while the better off had benefited from tax cuts.

"In view of Mrs Thatcher's claims about the morality of her policy, I am sending this survey to Church leaders so that they can judge for themselves the sincerity of her comments," said Mr Brown.

Mr Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, accused Mrs Thatcher and her advisers of "plumbing the depths of cynicism" by attempting to provide a moral dimension for her policies after fighting elections as the party of "crude self-interest".

On Budget Day, the Government had £6,000 million to allocate according to the Prime Minister's "spiritual dimension".

But Mrs Thatcher decided to cut taxes and provide the richest members of society with tax reductions of thousands of pounds a week, said Mr Hattersley.

By using the Budget surplus on tax cuts, the Prime Minister chose not to use it to provide an adequate system of social security or to revitalise the health service.

"To create a moral justification for ignoring the old, the sick and the poor in favour of super-tax payers requires some spectacular intellectual gymnastics."

But there was support for the Prime Minister's weekend speech from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who on Monday voted in support of the unsuccessful attempt in the Lords to force the Government to relate the poll tax to ability to pay.

Parliament—P13
An underclass beyond
reach—P18

In a radio interview, Dr Runcie said he thought Mrs Thatcher had made a "very clear statement" of her own position as a Christian concerned about the creation of wealth in the country.

"I approve of wealth creation as an activity of human beings that they may flourish better, and I approve of the challenge she issued to people who are concerned with wealth creation to remember the point of it all—that it should be for the service of creating a common life among people in our country."

Dr Runcie said there might be some Church people who would want to say wealth creation could be a dangerous activity if it led to exploitation or injustices.

All of the time there had to be consideration for the common interest of the people and a recognition of the rights of groups in society.

The Prime Minister's weekend speech was seen as a direct response to senior Churchmen who have attacked Mrs Thatcher's economic policies, including the Bishop of Durham who recently described them as "wicked".

It is also part of a deliberate attempt by senior Ministers to open up a moral debate about the role of society and to encourage the exercise of more personal responsibility and less reliance on the State.

The speech included numerous Biblical quotations, and Mr Robin Catford, the Downing Street aide who advises the Prime Minister on ecclesiastical appointments, is credited by Whitehall insiders as playing a leading role in its preparation.

But yesterday the Church of Scotland took issue with the philosophy behind Mrs Thatcher's speech by adopting a report which warned of the dangers of wealth creation.

The Very Rev John Paterson, commending the report, said "an exclusive concentration" on wealth creation "endangers an understanding of the true meaning of life".

Today Mrs Thatcher is expected to develop the theme of family responsibility in a speech to the Conservative Women's conference in London.

In the Commons yesterday, she strongly defended the Government's economic policies, saying life was "better off all round". There was more money available to share, more houses,

Continued on Back Page

Moral ground

Continued from P1

a better health service and better salaries.

The acrimonious exchanges with Mr Kinnock underlined the deepening personal hostility between the two party leaders.

Mr Kinnock asked the Prime Minister what passage from the Scriptures had inspired her to cut child benefits and other welfare payments.

"Could it be Matthew 27.24. 'Pilate took water and washed his hands?'" he asked.

Mrs Thatcher said the weekend speech had been an expression of her personal beliefs and views, adding: "I believe you debase everything I believe in if we try to exchange various quotations across the Despatch Box."

She had made clear in her weekend speech the exercise of "mercy and generosity" simply could not be delegated to others. There was an important place for both help through the State and personal responsibility.

Mrs Thatcher then pointedly reminded Mr Kinnock of her own decision voluntarily to forego part of her salary. Instead of drawing the full £62,098, she takes the same amount as a Cabinet Minister, £51,068.

Since she became Prime Minister this has resulted in between £95,000 and £100,000 remaining with the Treasury to be used for Government spending.

The Prime Minister has made clear on several occasions that she does not wish to be paid more than any other member of her Cabinet.

But last night Mr Kinnock hit back at Mrs Thatcher's decision to use her voluntary pay cut to underline her views on wealth and the love of money.

"I wondered when the Prime Minister would eventually get around to using the sacrifice which she can well afford to make as a political gimmick," said the Labour leader.

"I thought that virtue was its own reward."

An underclass beyond the reach of Tory morality

MARGARET THATCHER is largely impervious to political abuse, but she is surprisingly easily hurt by the accusation that she is uncaring. She would reject angrily any suggestion that the Government cared only about the rich, striving and successful — and any claim that the Conservatives want to see the newly tax-cut flaunting their wealth in a vulgar, "loads-a-money" fashion would horrify her.

These reactions are entirely sincere. Tory cynics might rest content with the thought that a substantial majority of the population is now part of a coalition of prosperity: not she. The Prime Minister believes that Thatcherism is for everyone.

Moreover, both in public and private life, she has always laboured under a strong sense of duty. Riches for her are not a means to ease, indulgence and luxury — but merely a broader horizon for the discharge of duty. Even though she now conforms to the established Church, Margaret Thatcher's career is the latest flowering of the nonconformist conscience in British politics (nonconformists have always tended to impute snobbery and insincerity to the bench of Bishops).

So it is hardly surprising that she should take the moral offensive, and seek to vindicate the Government's record by reference to Christianity. It is even less surprising that there should be a fierce counter-attack, although — perhaps because they were taken by surprise — few of the Prime Minister's critics have matched the serious tone of her remarks, or avoided muddled thinking.

It is clearly possible to argue that this is an un-Christian Government. If the Christian attitude to worldly goods is that practised by St Francis or Mother Theresa, and expounded in Christ's reply to the young man — "Go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor" — then Mrs Thatcher and her administration fail the test. But who could possibly pass it? Not Roy Hattersley, anyway.

But are Christians required to take

Mrs Thatcher has set out the values she believes will regenerate society. But, asks BRUCE ANDERSON, is anyone at the bottom of the pile listening?

a vow of poverty? John Wesley thought not: he advised his followers to gain all they could by honesty, wisdom and hard work, so as to look after their families and succour the poor — and there is also the Parable of the Talents. If those are the criteria, this Government has nothing to fear: it has been strikingly successful in husbanding the Talents.

If Wesley was right, a Christian government is perfectly entitled to encourage wealth creation, as long as it intends to use some of the additional resources to help eliminate poverty. The argument then becomes a matter of detail — about how much money should be allocated and how it should be spent.

At that point, Mrs Thatcher is fully entitled to become exasperated with most of her critics for their persistent lack of intellectual rigour and their refusal to face facts. She can claim that those who think the answer lies in higher taxes on the rich plus more government spending are ignoring two crucial factors.

First, all the evidence suggests that lowering taxes on the rich is both a stimulus to the private sector and a boost to the Treasury's receipts. The only motive for raising taxes would appear to be envy — which used to qualify as a deadly sin.

Second, the causes of poverty are not only financial, but moral.

Certainly there are the deserving poor, who are either too ill or too old to work: in many cases such persons' savings were eroded by inflation, and they should be compensated for that. The Government should, and probably will, do more to help such groups. Equally, many of the unemployed also have a strong claim on the public

purse, in that they have had to pay a disproportionate part of the cost of economic recovery.

But there is no doubt that the unemployment figures greatly exaggerate the extent of the problem. Why are there apparently so many long-term unemployed in the South-East, a region of increasing labour shortages? Although not all the unemployed are in the black economy, it might be better if they were: idleness is perhaps even more corrosive of character than the fraudulent claiming of benefits.

THE PRIME Minister is greatly exercised by the danger of a dependency culture emerging — a cycle of dependence. What likelihood is there that demoralised young people brought up on welfare benefits, who have never had any contact with the world of work, will possibly teach decent values to their own children? The problem is compounded when the quickest way to obtain a flat is not to save for a mortgage, but to become an unmarried mother.

Possibly the gravest domestic threat currently facing the nation is the emergence of an urban underclass, among whom the transmission of values and disciplined habits has largely broken down, and whose children are wholly unsuited to life and work in an increasingly complex society. As the rest of the country advances, the gap between it and the underclass will widen, making it still more difficult for those who have fallen off the ladder to climb back on.

This is a new form of poverty: members of the underclass have a much higher standard of living than the unemployed in the Thirties did — and much lower standards in every

other particular. They are not poor in money, but poor in morals.

This is therefore primarily a moral problem, not a monetary one. The Prime Minister acknowledges that fact, which most of her critics refuse to do. The Labour party will not publicly face up to the moral dimension, and the churchmen may have a guilty conscience. Where were the Churches when the underclass was emerging?

Although Mrs Thatcher is more realistic than most of her critics, that is not to say she understands the scale of the problem. Indeed, there is one great drawback which prevents her from doing so — her own qualities.

Given her drive, determination and energy, it is probably impossible for her to have any insight into the mentality of the shiftless and feckless. She probably feels that all the underclass needs is a good talking-to — by her. A quarter of an hour of pull-your-socks-up, concluding with a bit of encouragement — and they would all be small businessmen. If only it were that simple.

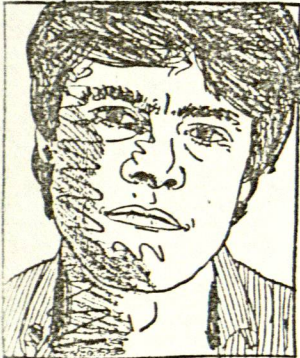
Today, at the Conservative Women's Conference, Mrs Thatcher may well return to the theme of morality: it is undoubtedly going to play an important role in the political debate for the rest of this Parliament. This is thoroughly desirable, for it may lead to fresh thinking. The Left ought to acknowledge the inadequacy of traditional state action, while the Right should realise that the problem will not be solved by economic recovery and individual enrichment alone.

Sometimes, however, politicians tend to confuse the discussion of an issue with the resolution of it. It should be easy for Mrs Thatcher to refute any charges of immorality. If she moves the discussion of moral issues to the top of the political agenda, that will be to everyone's advantage.

But a solution to the problems of the underclass will be no nearer. At present, no-one has any idea how to set about the task of re-moralising it.

Christian charity takes a beating in Bible punch-up

Sketch



Andrew Rawnsley

sayeth: "Will the Prime Minister now unfreeze child benefit and restore the 70p cut she has made in the last two years?"

And seeing the multitudes, Thatcher went up to the despatch box and spoke in riddles.

"This year we chose to give a great deal more to children in families who have no earnings, so it helps those who need it most."

And when she sat down, most of her disciples came unto her and cheered.

For they knew the greatest of all the commandments, that thou shalt love the Lady thy Thatcher with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with whatever mind thou hast.

But Kinnock answered: Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures and, neither did it make up for the child benefit cuts.

"The Prime Minister has cut child benefit, she has stopped free school meals, she has ended single payments — which passage of the Bible inspired all that?"

Could it, wondereth Kinnock, have been Matthew 27:24: "Then Pilate took water and washed his hands."

Now there was a great wailing and gnashing on the Tory benches, and a rending of double-breasted pinstripe suits. Though it was difficult to sympathise with their objection. For if Mrs Thatcher had felt free to recruit St Paul as an early Thatcherite it was open to Mr Kinnock, and also shrewd, to find in Pontius Pilate an early convert to Tory penal policy.

Mrs Thatcher rose for the second time. "I believe you debase everything I believe in if we try to exchange verse quotations across the despatch box."

Then the Prime Minister had a fit of morality. "You asked me personally," sayeth Thatcher — though yelleth or shrieketh would be as accurate. "Perhaps you will look at the amount I have voluntarily foregone from my salary over the last years."

And the Opposition just had a fit. For, verily, the thought struck you, the wife of a millionaire, given to quoting the Bible, might recall Matthew 6:1.

"Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men: Else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven"

And Tom Clarke offered a parable: "Pious words don't represent Christian values." And Clarke begat Roy Evans and Evans begat David Steel all making a similar point.

And there came a man called Neil Kinnock. Now Kinnock began a great weeping and mourning for the children, and would not be comforted. He

Gibbard's view



"We have rather been invaded . . ."

Kinnock and PM clash on ethics

Question time

Martin Linton

THE Prime Minister came under Opposition attack again yesterday over her speech to the Church of Scotland, exchanging views on Christian ethics and morals across the despatch box with Mr Neil Kinnock.

The Labour leader asked her to unfreeze child benefit and restore the 70p cut in value over the past two years.

Mrs Thatcher said child benefit was reviewed every year. This year the Government had chosen to give an increase to

low-income families who needed it most.

Mr Kinnock said that did not make up for the cuts in child benefit. "When she said on Saturday that children were our precious trust, I wondered if she meant it in practice. Now I know she did not."

Mrs Thatcher replied that she had also said: "I do not believe one discharges all one's duties by casting them off on the state."

Mr Kinnock said she had cut child benefit, stopped free school meals, and ended single payments. "Which particular passage of the Bible inspired her to do all these?"

To a chorus of approval from his backbenches, he asked

whether it might be Matthew, chapter 27, verse 24: "And Pilate took water and washed his hands."

But the Prime Minister said Mr Kinnock "debases everything I believe in" by exchanging biblical quotations across the despatch box.

She repeated her belief that "you simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others. There is a very important place both for help from the state and also personal help and responsibility."

She suggested that "perhaps he would look at the amount I have voluntarily foregone from my salary" — she accepts only £51,068 of her £62,698 a year.

Mr Tom Clarke (Lab. Monklands W) asked her if she had had time to read the booklet Just Sharing — presented to her at the weekend by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland — which concluded that Scotland was a sick society with 1½ million people living on the borders of poverty.

The Prime Minister said she had been glad to receive the booklet. "It is because of this Government that there is far more available for sharing out," she said.

There were more houses, better health, and better salaries. "In fact, life is better off all round, precisely because of the policies we have followed," Mrs Thatcher said.

Labour takes moral line

James Naughtie
Chief Political Correspondent

THE PRIME Minister yesterday cited her decision to forego part of her salary as evidence of her moral approach to public life, and promptly intensified the debate stirred up by the speech she made on Christianity and politics at the weekend.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, said last night that he had wondered how long it would be before Mrs Thatcher used a voluntary sacrifice as a political gimmick. "O, though virtue was its own reward," he said.

Later, Mr Roy Hattersley, the deputy Labour leader, accused Mrs Thatcher of "plumbing the depths of cynicism" in producing a spurious moral justification for a philosophy of ruthless individualism.

Labour has seized with glee on the moral debate started by Mrs Thatcher's speech to the general assembly of the Church of Scotland last weekend.

She accused Mr Kinnock of debasing Christianity by seeking to trade scripture across the despatch box, but Labour attacked her in turn for allegedly trying to justify her policies on

spurious Biblical grounds. Mrs Thatcher responded to Mr Kinnock's criticism in the Commons — which he directed at the failure to fully uprate child benefit — by saying her speech had been well received.

When he compared her to Pontius Pilate washing his hands of responsibility, she said that he was debasing what she believed. "Perhaps you will kindly look at the amount I have voluntarily foregone from my salary."

This brought roars of laughter from the Labour benches and audible cries of "What about Denis?" a reference to Mr Thatcher, a highly-successful businessman.

Since becoming Prime Minister in 1979, Mrs Thatcher has drawn only a £51,068 Cabinet minister's salary and not her full entitlement of £62,698 from the exchequer.

Mr Hattersley's speech, to his local party in Birmingham, was an indication of how Labour intends to proceed. He said that Mrs Thatcher was disqualified from any claim to occupy the moral high ground because she had chosen to make her speech on her beliefs "on the advice of public relations consultants, media advisers and opinion poll analysts".

"She had dressed up 'in spurious Christian justification' her belief that people would make their best contribution to society without the prospect of a cash bonus, he said.

Labour MPs were happy after Question Time yesterday than they have been for some weeks, believing that Mrs Thatcher has given them a tactical opening.

When Dr David Owen, the SDP leader, asked her to consider reforming the Lords and the Government's use of bad-woodsmen peers to win a political vote on Monday, she claimed that the result was due to the argument put by the Government swinging the debate.

This produced raucous laughter on the Opposition benches and even among some of her own supporters. Mrs Thatcher based her claim on the fact that more cross-bench peers had voted for the Government than against it.

Later, when journalists questioned a Downing Street spokesman at Westminster he asked them why did Mr Kinnock give away part of his salary as suggested he would be able to give more to charity because of the Government's tax cuts.

Thatcher uses personal sacrifice in claim for moral high ground

MARGARET THATCHER used the sacrifice she had made in forgoing about £100,000 in her Prime Ministerial salary yesterday to counter a challenge by Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, to her claim to the moral high ground in British politics.

The clash between Mrs Thatcher and Mr Kinnock during Prime Minister's questions was seen by both senior Labour and Tory MPs as an important shift in the political battleground.

Ministers said last night that Mrs Thatcher had moved onto the attack on Labour's ground on the welfare state because the Government had proved that Britain's economic growth can be sustained.

But Tory MPs said she was hurt by the attacks on the Conservatives for "not caring" about the effects on the poor of the social security changes, health charges and the poll tax.

Shadow Cabinet ministers said last night that Mrs Thatcher had made a blunder by fighting on what they regard as Labour's home ground.

Mr Kinnock attacked her defence of the morality of Conservatism at the weekend by challenging Mrs Thatcher's personal commitment to the poor, following the real terms cut in child benefit this year. She retorted: "You asked me personally. Perhaps you will look at the amount I have voluntarily foregone from my salary

By Colin Brown
and Stephen Goodwin

over the last years."

Tory MPs cheered Mrs Thatcher and jeered at Mr Kinnock. One shouted, "eatyermoney", a reference to Mr Kinnock's attack at the weekend on the "loadsamoney" economy. But privately, many Tory MPs said later they were uncomfortable about the Prime Minister's remark. "It was *Daily Express* vulgarity," said one Tory MP.

Mr Kinnock later dismissed it as a political gimmick: "I thought virtue was its own reward."

Mrs Thatcher is entitled to a full salary of £62,698, but draws £51,068 — the ordinary Cabinet minister's salary. One Tory MP pointed out that her sacrifice was

mitigated by the support of a rich husband.

Mr Kinnock picked on the Prime Minister's assertion in her weekend speech that children were "our special trust". Amid cheers from his backbenchers, Mr Kinnock said: "You have cut child benefit; you have stopped free school meals; you have ended single payments — which passage of the Bible inspired all that?"

"Could it have been Matthew 27:24 when Pilate took water and washed his hands?"

Mrs Thatcher retorted: "I believe you debase everything we believe in if we try to exchange various quotations across the dispatch box."

Supporting the sentiments of Mrs Thatcher's speech to the General Assembly of the Kirk, Roger Sims (C, Chislehurst) said

that "more compassion and tolerance" were principles shared by all parties, including the Conservatives.

Warning against "pious words" alone, Tom Clarke (Lab, Monklands West) asked if the Prime Minister had glimpsed one of the books given to her at the assembly. Entitled *Just Sharing*, it concluded that the lot of 1.5 million men, women and children who lived on the borders of poverty represented "a sick society in Scotland".

David Steel, joint leader of the SLD, pursued the same point. Did Mrs Thatcher now accept that the Government had a duty to do something about the 31 per cent of the Scottish population who lived near the margins of poverty?

Mrs Thatcher repeated: "Be-

cause of the policies run by this Government there is more money available to share."

Last night, Mrs Thatcher and her advisers were accused of "plumbing the depths of cynicism". Roy Hattersley, the deputy leader of the Labour Party, told his Sparkbrook, Birmingham, constituency: "They have also admitted by implication that they have lost the ethical argument . . .

"They are beginning to turn back towards the gospel of community, the belief in shared rights and responsibilities . . . For those of us who have believed that all our lives, it is immensely heartening that the idea has become again so strong that the Prime Minister has been forced to cobble together a spurious moral justification for the callous waste of the free-for-all society for which she is totally responsible."

■ The Archbishop of Canterbury yesterday supported the praise of wealth creation in Margaret Thatcher's speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Sandra Barwick writes.

"I approve of wealth creation as an activity of human beings that they might flourish better, and also I approve of the challenge she issued to people who are concerned with wealth creation to remember the point of it all — that it should be for the purpose of creating a common life amongst people in a country," Dr Robert Runcie said.

Survey reveals wealth gap

CHURCH LEADERS will be sent a survey by a Labour spokesman showing that the gulf between rich and poor has widened under Margaret Thatcher's administration, despite her defence of the morality of Conservatism at the weekend, *Colin Brown writes*.

Figures produced by Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, show that one million families and households were losing more than £3 a week as a result of the Budget and social security changes. The computer analysis shows that 7.6 million households would see their living standards fall. It also reveals that 150,000 families have gained more than £100 a week and 50,000 families have

gained more than £200 a week from the changes.

Mr Brown said: "This new analysis provides hard evidence of the Government's clear and direct responsibility for the growing gap between rich and poor. Mrs Thatcher's Christianity should be judged not by pious words but her actions."

The figures show that 6.3 million families could gain up to £2 a week from the combined changes, but Mr Brown pointed out that inflation could wipe out the gains, after price rises of 11 per cent for electricity, 10 for water, 12 for rates, 9 council rents, 8.3 for prescriptions, 6 for gas and about 10 for bus and rail fares.

Thatcher fury over Kinnock Bible quote

Leaders in battle for moral high ground

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

The battle for the high moral ground of politics erupted yesterday as the Prime Minister and Mr Neil Kinnock clashed furiously in the Commons over her speech to the Church of Scotland last week.

In one of their most highly-charged confrontations yet, Mrs Margaret Thatcher accused Mr Kinnock of "debasement" as he quoted the Bible at her across the dispatch box and likened her to Pontius Pilate.

She provoked cheers from Conservative MPs and cries of derision from the Opposition as she replied to the attack on

her speech by reminding him of the sum she voluntarily relinquishes from her salary.

She is estimated to have forgone £100,000 since 1979 by taking the salary of a Cabinet Minister rather than her entitlement as Prime Minister.

Mr Roy Hattersley, deputy leader of the Labour Party, later described Mrs Thatcher as the modern prophet of

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ruthless individualism, saying her speech to the church was as "intellectually demeaning as it was morally bankrupt", and accusing her of "breath-taking effrontery" in saying that a spiritual dimension came from deciding what was done with wealth.

Mrs Thatcher is expected to return to the fray with her speech today at the Conservative women's conference in London, when she will emphasize the virtues of good neighbourliness.

In a speech in Birmingham, Mr Hattersley said that in the Budget, the Government had £6 billion to allocate according to Mrs Thatcher's "spiritual dimension".

By choosing to use it on tax cuts, particularly for the richest, she had chosen not to use it to meet social needs. "To create a moral justification for ignoring the old, the sick and the poor in favour of the super-taxpayers requires spectacular intellectual gymnastics", he said. "Last Saturday, Mrs Thatcher fell off the high-wire several times."

Mrs Thatcher's decision to set her personal religious creed alongside her political beliefs last weekend has worried many Conservative MPs and has opened a new area of political debate which could dominate the coming months.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, said yesterday that he welcomed the challenge in Mrs Thatcher's speech about the way people used their wealth.

However, his own reservations surfaced when he added:

"I would want to ask a little more about the questions of making wealth and at the same time dividing society in a way that makes people who have fallen behind feel on the edge of things."

Mrs Thatcher emphasized in the Commons yesterday that she had been giving a "personal view" of her Christian faith.

Her clash with Mr Kinnock came during an exchange about freezing child benefit. The Labour leader said her remark on Saturday that children were "our precious trust" caused him to wonder whether she meant it in practice. Now he knew she did not.

Mrs Thatcher angrily asked him to do her the courtesy of reading the speech. She did not believe "one discharged one's duties by casting them off on to the state".

As the uproar grew, Mr Kinnock retorted that Mrs Thatcher had cut child benefit, stopped free school meals and ended single payments to social security claimants.

He asked what particular passage of the Bible had inspired her to do that and suggested Matthew 27:24: "Pilate took water and washed his hands".

She replied: "He debases everything that he and I probably believe in if we try to exchange various quotations across the dispatch box. I made it perfectly clear in that speech, one simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others."

Her subsequent comment on forgoing part of her salary

Continued on page 24, col 1



Leaders battle on morality

Continued from page 1

brought roars of support from her own side, but a dismissive wave of the hand from the Labour leader.

Last night Mr Kinnock said: "I wondered when the Prime Minister would eventually get around to using the sacrifice which she can well make as a political gimmick."

When Mr David Steel, the former Liberal leader, referred to Scottish poverty levels, Mrs Thatcher again drew cheers when she said that "there are more houses, there is a better health service, there are better salaries, in fact life is better off all round, precisely because of the policies we have run".

Mr Hattersley said that over the past 10 days, Mrs Thatcher and her advisers had "plumbed the depths of cynicism" and admitted by implication that they had lost the ethical argument.

"Until it seemed expedient to provide their policies with a moral dimension, Conservatives offered themselves in successive general elections as the party of crude self-interest", he said.

Labour, on the other hand, had argued since its creation for a community working together

☆☆☆

Commons sketch

From Archangel to Sybil Fawcety

Mrs Thatcher might have merited the odd mention in the pages of P.G. Wodehouse, or perhaps her very own chapter in E.F. Benson, but it is hard to see her squeezing into the pages of the New Testament with any great ease. Nevertheless, these were the surroundings she seemed to choose for herself in her speech to the synod of the Church of Scotland at the weekend.

Tory backbenchers seemed cock-a-hoop at her elevation, and wished to shower her with glad tidings of mass approval from their constituencies. For them, the four gospels are primarily concerned with Individual Responsibility and Getting On With It Yourself. When was it I saw you hungry? they would ask, and, not waiting for a reply, they would offer their own reply: "Oh, yes, I remember - when you weren't exercising your Individual Responsibility."

Looking back to the Old Testament, their new privatized, assertive, streamlined, economic version of the Five Commandments, would most certainly include "Thou Shalt Not Whimper", "Shoplifters will be Prosecuted", "Don't Come Running to Me" and "Never Knowingly Undersold". The Jesus Christ of Tory backbench dreams was a first-class salesman for Free Enterprise, a sort of bearded Terence Conran.

Mr Roger Sims, the Conservative Member for Chislehurst, wished to alert the Prime Minister to the widespread support for her speech to the synod, and wondered if she would care to reassert her principles of "Christian ethics and individual responsibility". The mutters and mumbles of the unbelievers began to ring around the Chamber. The two main parties are as divided on Christianity as they are on everything else: for the Labour Party, the Feeding of the Five Thousand represents a clear demand for the nationalization of the loaves and fishes industries while for the Conservatives it is a firm indication of market forces supplying the consumer with what he wants, when he wants it.

Mrs Thatcher thanked Mr Sims for his kind words. She

reminded him that her speech was "an expression of personal beliefs and views". As a plague of complaining locusts prepared to flutter upwards from the benches opposite, she attempted to soothe the multitude by adding "others may disagree, but it is a mark of Christian manners and courtesy that we do so in a mannerly way". So now Jesus Christ, the Conservative Member for Nazareth South, was not merely a getting entrepreneur but also a first class graduate from a leading school of etiquette.

Up popped Mr Neil Kinnock, ever the Doubting Thomas. Calling to mind recent cuts in child benefit and the end to free school meals, he wished to know which passage in the Bible most influenced the Hon Lady. Was it Pilate washing his hands? From a quick burst as the Archangel Gabriel, Mrs Thatcher was back to her less demanding role of Sybil Fawcety, indignant, furious, and always in the right. "He debases everything I believe in, trying to exchange quotations from the Bible across the Dispatch Box" she said, adding: "I made it perfectly clear in that speech that one simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others". Far better, she seemed to imply, that mercy and generosity should be formed into a privatized company, Merc-Gen plc, so that all charitable acts could be scrutinized for efficiency and profitability before taking their position in the market place.

By this time, both sides of the House were screaming at each other, every Member now a theologian, now an all-in wrestler. Even the normally demure Dame Jill Knight was bouncing up and down, pointing and yelling, moving this way and that, resembling from a distance nothing so much as a fist-fight in a rhododendron bush. When Mr Bill Walker, the last Tory in Scotland, said that his people were delighted by the speech, and that it was "a nice change to have a leader who's a practising Christian", Mr Edward Heath looked a little disgruntled, and half-motioned to complain, the original warder turned to whiner.

Craig Brown

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY MAY 25 1988

Labour tackles Thatcher over wealth divide

By Richard Ford
Political Correspondent

The Government's welfare reforms will leave one in six of Britain's households poorer even after the tax cutting Budget, the Labour Party claimed yesterday as argument continued over the morality underlying Mrs Margaret Thatcher's beliefs. The tax cuts and changes in social

security benefits show that the bottom 25 per cent of families lose £600 million compared with the top 5 per cent who receive £2.5 billion, according to a computer analysis carried out for Labour. Two million households lose more than £2 a week and 3.5 million more than £1 a week.

The analysis also showed that 150,000 families have gained more

than £100 a week from all the changes and another 50,000 more than £200 a week.

With the Government and the Opposition now battling for the moral high ground in politics, Mr Gordon Brown, shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said the combined effects of the Budget and the social security changes provided "hard evidence of

the Government's clear and direct responsibility for the growing gap between rich and poor".

He was sending the results of the computer analysis to church leaders so that they could judge for themselves the sincerity of Mrs Thatcher's comments to the Church of Scotland outlining the spiritual belief underpinning her political philosophy.

Thatcher defends her Christian moral stance

BY IVOR OWEN

A DEFIANT Mrs Margaret Thatcher rejected criticism of her personal interpretation of Christian values in the Commons yesterday. She highlighted the fact that since becoming Prime Minister in 1979 she has voluntarily forgone between £95,000 and £100,000 of her salary entitlement.

She did not quantify the extent of her financial sacrifice - nor mention that new pension arrangements for the office of Prime Minister will increase her retirement income by a third more than that currently available to £22,894.

Tory backbenchers rallied to Mrs Thatcher's support as she vigorously defended the views she expressed to the general assembly of the Church of Scotland on Saturday in the face of a sustained attack - backed by persistent heckling - from the opposition benches.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, led the onslaught by calling on the Prime Minister to "unfreeze" child benefit and restore the 70 pence cut in its value which had taken place in the last two years.

Mrs Thatcher replied that child benefit was reviewed each year. This year the Government had decided to give "a great deal more" to children in families with low earnings to help those who needed it most.

Mr Kinnock insisted that cuts in child benefit had not been restored and, to Labour cheers, said when he heard the Prime Minister describe children as "our precious trust" he had wondered if she meant it in practice.

He scoffed: "Now I know you do not."

Mrs Thatcher urged Mr Kinnock to read her entire speech to the general assembly.

Backed by government cheers,

she said: "I do not believe that one discharges all one's duties by casting them off on to the state."

Mr Kinnock said: "You have cut child benefit, stopped free school meals and ended single (social security) payments - which part of the Bible inspired you to do all that?"

Amid further Labour cheers he inquired if it could have been Matthew's account of how Pilate had washed his hands to disclaim responsibility for the death of Christ.

As supporters of the Government protested against Mr Kinnock's charges the Prime Minister told him: "I believe you debase everything I believe in if we try to exchange verse quotations across the despatch box."

Mrs Thatcher reaffirmed her view that the exercise of generosity and mercy could not be delegated to others and that there was a place for help through the

state as well as for personal help and responsibility.

Looking directly at Mr Kinnock, the Prime Minister said: "You ask me personally. Perhaps you will look at the amount I have voluntarily forgone from my salary over the last years."

Later Mr Kinnock commented: "I wondered when the Prime Minister would eventually get round to using the sacrifice which she can well afford to make as a political gimmick. I thought that virtue was its own reward."

When challenged by Mr David Steel, joint interim leader of the Social and Liberal Democrats, about a Church of Scotland report drawing attention to the 31 per cent of the Scottish population living on the margins of poverty, Mrs Thatcher emphasised that government policies had resulted in more money being available for sharing.

As Prime Minister Mrs

Thatcher is entitled to £62,698 a year, comprising £45,787 salary and £16,911 parliamentary allowance.

Under revised pension arrangements announced yesterday Mrs Thatcher's current pension entitlement of £17,170 rises to £22,894.

Mr Roy Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, last night maintained the Opposition's attack on Mrs Thatcher's stand on moral values, by claiming she had been forced "to cobble together a spurious moral justification for the callous waste of the free-for-all society for which she is totally responsible."

Mr Hattersley, speaking to his Sparkbrook, Birmingham, constituency party, said the Tories had offered themselves in successive elections as the party of "crude self-interest" until deciding that it would be expedient to provide a moral dimension to their policies.

May 24 1988

PARLIAMENT

Thatcher furious over 'Bible attack'

In trying to swap quotations from the Bible across the Dispatch Box the Leader of the Opposition was debasing everything that they believed in, Mrs Thatcher said during Prime Minister's question time.

Mr Neil Kinnock had accused her of being like Pilate in the way she washed her hands of child benefit and other social benefits.

The accusation came from Mr Kinnock after the Prime Minister had been congratulated by Mr Roger Sims (Chislehurst, C) on her speech in Edinburgh last weekend to the Church of Scotland.

Was the Prime Minister aware of the degree of support that existed throughout the country for the sentiments she had expressed in that speech, Mr Sims asked, to loud Labour protests and laughter.

Would she take the opportunity of asserting that one of the principles of the Christian ethic was personal and individual responsibility? And were not other principles, such as care, compassion and tolerance, shared by people of all political parties, including that to which he and the Prime Minister were proud to belong?

Mrs Thatcher said that the remarks in her speech had been an expression of personal beliefs and views. As she had pointed out at the time, there might be those who disagreed, but as a matter of Christian courtesy that would be done in a mannerly way.

PRIME MINISTER

Mr Kinnock asked if she would now unfreeze child benefit and restore the 70p cuts that had been made in the past two years?

Mrs Thatcher said that child benefit was reviewed each year. This year the Government had decided to give a great deal more to children in families which had low earnings. That helped those who needed it most.

Mr Kinnock said that that did not make up for child benefit cuts. When she had said in her speech on Saturday that children were "our precious trust", he had wondered if she had meant it in practice.

"Now I know she does not (loud Conservative protests). By their fruits shall ye know them."

Mrs Thatcher said that perhaps Mr Kinnock would do her the courtesy of reading her speech. She did not believe, and it was a personal view, that one discharged one's duties by casting them off on to the state.

Mr Kinnock said that the Prime Minister had cut child benefit, stopped free school meals and ended single payments.

"Could she tell the House which particular passage of the Bible inspired her to that? Could it have been Matthew 27:24, 'Pilate took water and washed his hands'?"

Mrs Thatcher: He debases everything that he and I probably believe in if we try to exchange various quotations across the Dispatch Box. I made it perfectly clear in that speech,

one simply cannot delegate the exercise of mercy and generosity to others.

Therefore there is a very good place both for help through the state, which we operate, and also personal help and personal responsibility.

There were noisy interruptions when Mrs Thatcher added that remarks had been directed at her personally and perhaps Mr Kinnock would like to know the amount she had voluntarily forgone from her salary over the years.

Mr Thomas Clarke (Monklands West, Lab): Has she had time to glimpse at *Just Sharing*, one of the books presented to her on Saturday by the Church of Scotland, and to agree with its conclusion that the reality of 1.5 million men, women and children who live on the borders of poverty represents a sick society in Scotland?

In view of the charity which the assembly demonstrated by listening to her speech — (Conservative shouts of "Rubbish") — will she respond by showing humility and offering to meet the real challenge of poverty, if only because pious words themselves do not always represent Christian value.

A Conservative MP: Sit down then.

Mr Clarke: Positive policies and a caring approach, in a meaningful sense, often do.

Mrs Thatcher: I was glad to receive the booklet *Just Sharing*. It gives me the opportunity to point out that because of the policies of this Government, there is far more available for sharing.

Mr Roy Hughes (Newport East, Lab): In her speech she attempted to reconcile the creed of greed with morality and in that speech she also pointed out that each one counts.

Can she confirm that this was the moral imperative uppermost yesterday when she whipped in hundreds of backwoodsmen in the House of Lords?

Mrs Thatcher: He will not be surprised if I do not agree about the premise which underlies the question. I do not believe that those, such as nurses and doctors, are exercising the creed of greed when they ask for more.

Mr William Walker (Tayside North, C): Many people in Scotland were delighted to see her going to the Church of Scotland assembly and delighted that it is a pleasant change to have a leader who is practising her beliefs in what she is doing.

Mr David Steel, joint leader of the SLD, asked whether the Prime Minister remembered that he had asked last month whether she had seen a Church of Scotland report on poverty showing that 31 per cent of the population was at or near the margins of poverty.

The report had been handed to her by the moderator of the general assembly, at the end of her speech.

"The Government has a direct and moral duty to do something about it."

Mrs Thatcher: As I have indicated many times in the past few minutes, there is more money to share, more houses, a better health service, better salaries. Life is better all round, precisely because of our policies.



Mrs Thatcher: Mr Kinnock debases everything he and I believe in if we try to exchange quotations across the Dispatch Box.

Kirk decides not to invite Thatcher

By Jonathan Petre
Religious Affairs
Correspondent

A PROPOSAL to invite Mrs Thatcher to next year's General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was defeated yesterday in Edinburgh, four days after her controversial speech there on wealth creation.

The Assembly rejected the proposal from the Rev Gordon Savage to invite both the Prime Minister and Mr Rifkind, Scottish Secretary, to listen to next year's debate on social issues.

But the Church last night denied that a snub was intended.

An official statement said: "It is a gross misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the decision of the General Assembly to represent it as being in any way a snub to the Prime Minister."

The Rev James Weatherhead, Principal Clerk of the Assembly, added: "I cannot believe that anyone who was present in the General Assembly and faithfully and honourably reported its proceedings could have been so grievously and irresponsibly mistaken.

"What the General Assembly decided was not to take what would have been the totally unprecedented step of issuing a direct invitation to the Prime Minister to attend the General Assembly.

"This does not mean that she would be unwelcome if she chose to attend and it certainly does not mean that she has been, in any sense, 'banned'.

"It was evident that in taking this decision the General Assembly was moved not only by precedent but by consideration for the Prime Minister in view of many demands on her time."

Several prime ministers have attended the Assembly before Mrs Thatcher.

In a separate move, the Rev Paraic Reamonn, one of five dissenters who objected to Mrs Thatcher being allowed to speak last Saturday, suggested that a special study should be made of Mrs Thatcher's speech for possible debate next year.

But Mr David Wright, a lecturer at Edinburgh's New College, said this would give Mrs Thatcher's address it which she said it was love of money, not wealth creation that was wrong, more prominence than it deserved.

Kirk counterblast to Thatcher sermon

Caithness minister to be dismissed

By GORDON DEAN

THE GENERAL Assembly of the Church of Scotland yesterday gave a spirited counterblast to the sermon preached to it by the Prime Minister, and to what was referred to as the "new economic Westminster confession of faith."

But though Mrs Thatcher had enjoyed the attention of the majority of commissioners, neither she nor any of her Ministers was present in Edinburgh to hear two well-known churchmen defend the Kirk's right to be involved in politics.

One, the Rev Maxwell Craig, has become known for his outspokenness as convener and spokesman of the Church and Nation committee. He affirmed the Kirk's right to speak out for justice in a society which, whatever the politicians might say, was not yet just.

But it was a much-loved elder statesman, the Very Rev Leonard Small, who made the dramatic gesture which fired the Assembly.

In an impassioned call for more Government help for the elderly, Dr Small said he expected to hear the

parrot-cri that ministers should go back to their pulpits and stop playing politics.

Echoing the words of a minister who a century ago put paid to the Assembly's nervousness about sending out missionaries, Dr Small thrust an arm at the clerks' table and demanded: "Rax me that Bible."

From what he said was Jesus's first sermon, he read: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." (Luke 4:18). Treating the poor with compassion, not condescension, was no optional extra, Dr Small said. "It is a binding obligation on any Christian Church and any society which dares to call itself Christian."

Mr Craig also used the Bible to back his argument — though with far less frequency than Mrs Thatcher had done.

To those seductive voices which whispered that it would be easier for the Church to keep out of controversy the Old Testament prophets

said: "Why say peace, peace when there is no peace?"

And it was Jesus who said: "Woe to you, for you do all the right religious things, but you neglect the justice of God and the love of God."

Mr Craig went on: "If we obey our and you were probably also in

By PETER MACDONALD

majority down at the bottom of the pile.

"Our society is no longer like that pyramid. It is shaped like a diamond. The majority of our people are well-off." They could accept the changes in benefit because they didn't need benefit.

Many commissioners were surprised to find that they had been accused in some sections of the media of snubbing Mrs Thatcher by refusing to invite her to next year's Assembly. True, they voted down a proposal to invite her, but only after it had been suggested that such invitations were best left, as at present, to the Lord High Commissioner. They had also been told that a general invitation to interested politicians had already been made.

Government, making sure you Lord, we shall not be popular." But there were reasons to speak out.

It did not follow that, just because there was democracy, there was justice. "There was a time when our society was a pyramid. If you were in the top quarter you were fine — stayed fine. The poor were the

"The majority can look after themselves. Democracy will see to that. What our democracy is failing to do is to look after that third of our people who are poor. That's why democracy can be unjust — that's why our democracy presently is unjust.

"It is the justice of God which

requires the Church to be the voice of those who have no voice," Mr Craig said.

He spoke of the "curious love-affair with market forces in the economic sphere," and said: "Market forces sound like the very basis of a free society. They sound kind of couthy — they remind us of the Barras in Glasgow or a corner shop in a country town.

"Think again," Mr Craig said. "Market forces are increasingly at the mercy of fewer and fewer multi-national companies and conglomerates.

"The scope for human decision grows less each year, as a computer in Tokyo talks to computers in London and New York. Market forces have no care of people — there's no compassion in a computer.

"That's why we cannot expect market forces to heal the growing divisions in our nation or in our world."

Referring to criticisms within the Kirk about his committee's high profile, Mr Craig said: "Scotland today,

like today's Britain, is a community divided against itself. Such a community cannot stand. That's why our committee must keep a high profile, must risk criticism — to inform the Church, and then the nation, that the justice of God is the oxygen of his people. Dodge his justice, and we die."

Mr Craig, however, dodged a criticism from an Elie elder, Mr Norman Warnock, that the committee's reports this year had "an obvious bias against everything the Government has tried to do."

The Rev Paraic Reamonn, Cockburnspath, who was one of the group that dissented from the decision to invite Mrs Thatcher to speak, said her speech gave the Kirk a new opportunity to examine the thrust and direction of Government policy and to do so in the light of her theological defence of it.

It had been right to hear the Prime Minister, but Mr Reamonn defended the dissenters' action and said it was right to indicate the breadth, length, height and depth of their disagreement.

THE Rev William Dungeval, minister at Orlig and Dunnett for the past 17 years, is to be dismissed from the charge on June 30, the Assembly decided last night when it upheld a decision of the Presbytery of Caithness.

Earlier this year the presbytery decided that Mr Dungeval had created "division" in the congregation, and failed to administer it properly.

He appealed to the Assembly last night on the grounds of mistrial and miscarriage of justice, but these were dismissed.

Mr Dungeval (62) told the Assembly that he wished to remain a minister of the Church of Scotland but not to continue at Orlig and Dunnett. He now worships at the Canisbay Free Evangelical Church with his wife, Leita.

The Rev Michael Mappin, presbytery clerk, said that many attempts had been made at reconciliation without success. He said that if Mr Dungeval remained as parish minister the parish would almost certainly die.

On leaving the Assembly Hall, Mr Dungeval, a former Coatbridge steelworker, said it was a "very sad day" for him.

Free Church Assembly

Tributes to pension offerings

By JAMES JOHNSTON

SPECIAL tribute was paid to the Free Church Assembly yesterday to old-age pensioners who, on receiving their pensions, immediately put aside the

Plea for poor as poll tax plans come under fire

By PETER MACDONALD and GORDON DEAN

DESPITE attempts to gain some last-minute support for the Government's reforms, the Assembly gave a forceful thumbs down to the poll tax.

It accepted the view of its Church and Nation Committee that the Government should look again at the abolition of Rates (Scotland) Act and introduce changes in the interests of people on low incomes.

It also called on the Government both to review the 20 per cent minimum payment and to provide a progressive rebate system.

Neither the committee, nor individual commissioners, proposed that the tax should not be paid. But the idea was hinted at by the Rev George Charlton, Fort Augustus, who reminded the Assembly that an Assembly

to "monitor sensitively" its effects, and introduce amendments if there was undue hardship.

A Strathaven elder, Mr Kenneth McDougall, said he had three wage-earning sons who at present contributed nothing to local government and he saw nothing unjust in their being asked to make a contribution.

The committee also agreed to urge the Government either to exempt full-time students from poll tax, or to compensate them for the cost through increased grants.

The Assembly also criticised Government proposals to end the Community Programme and expressed concern about the morality of provisions in the Employment Training Scheme, which it said should be



Attack on benefit cuts for elderly

ELDERLY PEOPLE were already suffering hardship as a direct result of the operation of the new Social Security Act and the situation would worsen as its effects really began to bite, a former Moderator, the Very Rev Leonard Small, said.

Dr Small, who is also president of Age Concern Scotland and only a few days over 83, successfully asked the Assembly to urge the Government to make resources available to alleviate the hardship.

Giving instances of individual cases, he said he found it offensive that some people tried to minimise the effects of the Act or to suggest that in some way the problem was aggravated by the inprovidence of old people themselves.

"The older people we are

Labour package

LABOUR leader Mr Neil Kinnock claimed last night that his party had a "firm platform for the 1990s" after its executive committee overwhelmingly endorsed a series of policies. The package commits Labour to remain in the European Community, to reform the taxation system, to maintain a non-nuclear defence policy, and to keep secret ballots for unions. However, left-wing critics — ousted three to one on the executive — dubbed it "the socialist sell-off of the century." Stuart Trotter reports on Page 9. Editorial comment — Page 14

Glasgow Herald
26-5-88

Bids go ahead

A £2 BILLION battle for control of chocolate-makers Rowntree began in earnest last night after Trade and Industry Secretary Lord Young refused to refer the Nestlé takeover bid to the Monopolies Commission. His decision — which also covered the buying of Rowntree shares by fellow Swiss takeover competitor Jacob de Heur — led to a furious reaction in Parliament. MPs and peers from all sides criticised the decision, saying it should be reversed, and demanded a full statement from the Government. Managers and workers in Rowntree's home city of York were also angry and upset. The company shares soared to £10 each — putting on an extra 83p. Robert Martin writes on Page 21.

Schooling bias

TODAY sees the publication of probably the most important book about Scottish education to be published since the war. In Government Education Andrew McPherson and Charles D. Raab analyse the many fundamental changes which have taken place in Scottish schooling over the past two generations. In a special article in Education Herald on Page 18 they show how an inbuilt educational bias against the West of Scotland has gradually been broken down.

The Financial Times Ordinary share index closed at 1430.7 — up 2.4 points.
£ = \$1.8645 — down 0.35¢.
Wall Street closed at 1951.37 — down 1.16 points

Births, marriages, and deaths ... 2	Leader comment, letters 14
Farming Herald, weather 2	Education Herald 18
World news, Arts/Review 4	Business Herald 21-23
Parliament 9	Herald sport 32-34
Women's Herald 10	Radio 32
General Assembly 13	Television 34

Mrs Thatcher warned that the Government must never supplant personal responsibility.

"Our social security system did that sometimes. That is why we had to reform it," she said.

She stressed that children needed to be taught traditional moral values and to understand Britain's religious heritage.

"We cannot leave them to discover for themselves what is right and wrong," said Mrs Thatcher.

Earlier, she learned that a move to invite her back to next

with her pending social problems which no government could possibly cure — or perhaps even cope with."

It was self-defeating to have systems of state provision which undermined the self-reliance of the individual.

"Self-reliance and self-respect are precious commodities. They are the source of all endeavour. But they are all too easily destroyed by the temptation of state-induced dependence.

She said the Labour Party, in

She said: "We worked hard to achieve our present success. But we cannot take it for granted.

"We still have much to do. We are only in our third term. And a woman's work is never done."

The Prime Minister also stressed Britain's major world role in the run-up to the Moscow summit. She said she had last week sent messages to both President Reagan and to Mr Gorbachev setting out the areas where she hoped progress could be made.

children of a Yorkshire developer, and fending off questions about her new appointment as nanny to the baby the Duchess of York expects in August.

"I have been told not to say anything, sorry," she replied.

But she managed just two more brief answers.

"I am very happy to have been chosen. It is a great honour," she said.

Then she poked out her tongue at the cameramen before slamm-

ming:
Alis-
Victori-
rogate,
present
caster,
childre-
Dres-
smock.
Alexan-
keepin-
the ca-
Mrs-
comin-

Decision not snub, says Kirk

By DAVID ROSS and CHRISTOPHER BEEKIE

THE principal clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland last night denied the Assembly had snubbed Mrs Thatcher by deciding not to invite her to next year's gathering.

The denial from the Rev. James Weatherhead came in an angry response to a report in yesterday's London Evening Standard.

The Assembly yesterday considered a suggestion to invite the Prime Minister to hear next year's debates on Church and nation and social responsibility, and decided against it.

Mr Weatherhead said: "It is a gross misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the decision to represent it as being in any way a snub to the Prime Minister.

"What the Assembly decided was not to take what would have been the totally unprecedented step of issuing a direct invitation to the Prime Minister to attend the General Assembly.

"This does not mean that she would be unwelcome if she chose to attend and it certainly does not mean that she has been in any sense 'banned'.

"It was evident that in taking this decision the Assembly was moved not only by precedent but by consideration for the Prime Minister in view of many demands on her time."

The invitation had been suggested by the Rev. Gordon Savage, of Maxwelltown West, but was rejected not least because it would make Mrs Thatcher the first Prime Minister to be invited by the Assembly. Premiers attend as guests of the Lord High Commissioner.

Meanwhile, the Rev. Paraic Reamonn, of Cockburnspath, who was one of the first ministers to stand in opposition to the Prime Minister on Saturday, said: "However firmly some of us may disagree with the Prime Minister, it was right for us to hear her. But it was also right for some of us to show the breadth, the

length, the height and the depth of our feeling."

He said Mrs Thatcher had thrown down a challenge and it was up to the Assembly to take up the challenge and examine the whole thrust of Government policy. He proposed doing this by remitting Mrs Thatcher's speech to the Church and Nation committee for examination.

The committee's convener, the Rev. Maxwell Craig, said this was not really necessary as the committee would do it anyway.

The invitation issue was also raised in the House of Commons during Scottish Question Time by Shadow Scottish Secretary Mr Donald Dewar. Referring to the Assembly's decision, he said it was clear Mrs Thatcher's sermon had made few converts and unacceptable policies remained unacceptable, however cleverly disguised.

Scottish Secretary Mr Malcolm Rifkind replied that the Prime Minister had been given an extremely warm and generous response.

He said that apart from a tiny minority of commissioners, led by one who was also a Labour councillor in Glasgow, Mrs Thatcher had been well received.

Those who had objected to her addressing the Assembly had been shown to be totally unrepresentative of the views of the majority and their dissent was untypical of the Church as a whole.

Meanwhile a spokesman for Labour leader Mr Neil Kinnock said: "No-one should be surprised at this decision. Mrs Thatcher's speech was clearly an abuse of the occasion and of the Church of Scotland's hospitality."

Assembly reports..... Page 13

Focus on child abuse problem

A mobile exhibition to highlight the growing problem of child abuse visited Bellahouston sports centre in Glasgow yesterday.

YOU'D A FITT

Not you. You see it. You know it takes to make a kitchen proud to have in your never be conned.

Or will you? Unfortunately kitchens are becoming so cheap they can bang a couple of bits of cheap wood together and make it look like a quality kitchen. Some even charge a quality price.

Before you know it you've signed a bargain. Until do you start dropping corners. Drawers stick instead of sliding. As she start shaking and worktops wobble. Your smart new kitchen as just a clever con.

Your bargain is more than you think.

Minister suspended over priest's prayer

By A Staff Reporter
PROMINENT minister in Free Presbyterian Church Scotland has been suspended for asking a Roman Catholic

emerged yesterday it was being seen as the latest episode in a long struggle between stricter elements in the church, mainly concentrated in the Outer Hebrides, and the more tolerant

past successfully resisted efforts by fellow churchmen to make him resign from the work because it allegedly interfered with his pastoral duties.

He was chairman of an edu-

with prayer. Although the meetings were held in private, earlier this year the FP Northern Presbytery received a complaint from the Rev John Macleod, Stornoway, that Mr

Presbytery members excluded the synod's majority went against Mr Murray, who is believed again to have disputed the scriptural authority for the complaint, or concede that his

who drew the best out of everyone, listened with care and attention and helped reach a conclusion. He is a man of the highest integrity, a deeply spiritual man.

"All Mr Murray wanted was

MAGGIE IN KIRK RIDDLE



Mrs THATCHER

By DAVID ANDREW

MRS Thatcher was yesterday at the centre of a Kirk snub riddle.

They voted not to invite her back to the General Assembly next year.

The decision came days after her controversial Christian creed speech in Edinburgh.

And last night Labour MPs gleefully backed the "get lost Maggie" message.

Shadow Scots Secretary Donald Dewar asked the Commons: "Has the message about the Government's unacceptable

She won't be invited back

policies not been proclaimed loud and clear by the Church of Scotland?"

Then amid Labour jeers, Scots Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said Thatcher had received a "warm and genuine" welcome from the assembly.

He claimed that of 1200 members, only five had shown any discourtesy.

The Thatcher decision came during a motion inviting her to attend the key debate next year of the Church and Nation Committee and the Board of Social Responsibility.

A senior Kirk spokesman explained: "We never invite anyone to sit in on a particular debate.

"It would have been quite unprecedented if Mrs Thatcher had been asked to be there."

He added that anyone could listen from the public gallery if he or she was interested enough.

Assembly principal clerk the Rev James Weatherhead denied the move was a snub.

He said: "Anyone who interprets it as that would be grossly misrepresenting the situation."

And the minister who proposed the invitation, the Rev Gordon Savage of Dumfries, said: "I felt it would have been useful for the Prime Minister to come to listen to the assembly debates.

OPENING

"I realise it has never been done before, but there is a feeling that the Government are rather insensitive to the needs of Scotland.

"And it would have been a nice gesture to invite her back next year - not for the opening ceremony, but during assembly business."

Officials said that only the Lord High Commissioner could invite specific individuals to the assembly.

And it was not up to the assembly themselves.

BABY DEATH ROW

From Page One

an American who is married to an English computer analyst.

Christine bought the bumper from a Boots branch in Brighton before they returned to Florida.

Last night Boots said they were about to take action after Mrs Murdoch's complaint when they were overtaken by the Coop tragedy.

STICKERS

A spokesman said thousands of extra warning labels "were all ready to be distributed to our stores.

"But the Coop tragedy occurred before they could be sent out."

At an inquest on April 29 a coroner called for a safety inquiry and warned parents against using the product.

Boots - who sent legal representatives to the inquest - immediately said they were clearing their shelves of cot bumper pads.

Electricians face crunch

A FINAL showdown between the electricians union and the TUC looked inevitable last night.

For yesterday the TUC's General Council gave the electricians until to June to withdraw from two controversial single-union deals.

But last night the union's leader, Eric Hammond, remained defiant and declared: "We cannot accept instructions which compel us to break our word and dishonour agreements."

If the electricians fail to pull out of the deals they will face suspension from the TUC from July.

And they could then be kicked out of the TUC at the annual conference in Bournemouth in September.

Mean

The electricians are already balloting their members on the crucial issue.

And Mr Hammond said he was confident they would back the "policies of common-sense and realism which are the hallmarks of our union".

But even if the electricians are unplugged from the main trade union movement, the

By FRANK SULLIVAN

ruling would not apply in Scotland.

STUC leader Campbell Christie said yesterday: "We are a separate trade union centre. The fact that the EETPU is suspended or expelled from the TUC does not automatically mean they are suspended or expelled from the STUC."

The position would need to be reviewed by the Scottish TUC General Council.

Power play over coal

THE electricity coal supply price war took a nuclear twist yesterday.

The Torness station in East Lothian was plugged into the national grid for the first time.

And SSEB boss Donald Miller used the occasion to reinforce his stance on the cost of coal.

He said: "With a choice of coal, gas, water, oil and nuclear, we need never be at the mercy of any one sector of the market to supply our own needs."

Neil wins on new policies

LABOUR leader Neil Kinnock set the party on course for the 1990s yesterday by winning the national executive's approval for the new policy review.

All seven papers drawn up in the course of the examination of Labour's policy in recent months were accepted at yesterday's meeting - despite protests by the hard left.

Mr Kinnock was clearly delighted with the outcome - certain to



Russell Grant bases his personal horoscope forecast on your actual day, month and year of birth, so you won't get the same forecast as the millions of other people who share your sun sign.

Forward Russell will tell you what your past, present and future has in store for you.