

Money-Men Supreme?

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There is a fascination in reading commentaries on the ever-evolving crisis of global finance. How much more do the commentators tell than they say, of a natural order being violated and taking its revenge! Yet nobody seems to know how the crisis will play out – except the master violators?

To get a glimpse of that natural order, it may be necessary to step back a few centuries. Let us briefly for our purposes define (1) religion as man's relations to his God, (2) politics as his social relations to his fellow-men, (3) economics as the art of distributing goods between producers and consumers, and (4) finance as the art of handling money. Then the natural order is that as money exists to facilitate the exchange of goods essential to any society, so finance should serve economics. And as the State is ultimately responsible for the well-being of all its citizens, especially those most in need of protection (Leo XIII, *"Rerum Novarum"*), so the material goods of economics should come under the common good of politics. But politics can only adjust and ensure the common good of all men in any society if it is properly understood what man is here on earth for, and so politics should come under the true religion.

However, modern times, especially since Protestantism, have step by step turned this natural order upside down. England is a clear example. Firstly, politics in the persons of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, etc., virtually stamped out the true religion of God in England. Then within a hundred years the Bank of England was founded, the world's first central bank, and the English government and people were off in pursuit of economics and the wealth of nations. But having made free enterprise sacrosanct meant freedom for the major money-men to gobble up the minor money-men, and so free enterprise capitalism turned progressively into the finance capitalism

now reigning supreme, not only in England but all over the world.

Thus what we can observe today is both politics and economics vainly struggling against this overthrow of their natural priority over finance. To clean up the mess created by the financiers through derivatives in particular, the politicians are resorting to huge bailouts by the State, in a desperate effort to keep money circulating. On the contrary old-fashioned economists are appealing for a return to free enterprise, as though the mass of today's citizens do not want to be nannied by the State.

But when the most decent of politicians and economists themselves believe in little but money, how can they possibly get their necks out of the noose prepared for them by the Masters of Money? These most likely think – by means of a slipknot around Vatican finances? – that they have the Lord God himself on a leash! Little, literally, do they know. Poor things!

Kyrie eleison.