

ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

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“Connecting good intentions with sound economics”

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President's Message

“From a practical point of view, state solutions don't live up to their promise.”

It has become an American habit to look to political leadership to solve our social and economic troubles. This is especially true in an economic downturn. There are two problems with this: practical and moral. From a practical point of view, state solutions don't live up to their promises. Government spending drains resources from the private sector while taxes discourage hiring and business formation. Regulation chokes off opportunity. Monetary manipulations create investment distortions and inflation. Regulating labor markets can cause unemployment and higher business taxes to help the poor can cut off a source of wealth generation. The net effect is to lower everyone's standards of living.

But we should not neglect the moral dimension. Interventions of these sorts make people less secure in their ownership of private property. They also interfere with the freedom of association, preventing people from peacefully cooperating. Also, every government intervention is based on the idea that force will solve a human problem. If you take the approach to its logical conclusion, you end up with a society based on violence, not cooperation. This is the terrible reality that opponents of the market have a difficult time facing. There is nothing wrong with having confidence in one's government. But the exorbitant faith that people have in the state today really goes beyond that. It can enter even into the realm of religion, as people seek false messiahs to lead them and build golden calves to worship. This is a grave distortion that comes at the expense of authentic faith.

To have exaggerated expectations concerning the ability of the state to perform miracles that only God can accomplish is surely the basis of a false religion. It is an urgent priority to not only educate but also evangelize on behalf of authentic faith, and your continued support of the Acton Institute makes this possible.

The mission of the Acton Institute is to promote a free and virtuous society characterized by individual liberty and sustained by religious principles.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert A. Sirico". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President

ACTON INSTITUTE

Acton Annual Dinner Underscores ‘Authentic Liberty’

This year’s Acton Annual Dinner provided encouragement and motivation for those who champion economic freedom and religious virtue. The dinner took place at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel on October 30 in downtown Grand Rapids. Speakers included Acton president Rev. Robert Sirico, Acton Cook Fellow Fernando Coronel, *National Review’s* Washington editor Kate O’Beirne, and keynoter Rev. John Nunes. Nunes is the president and chief executive officer of Lutheran World Relief. The late William F. Buckley was honored with the Faith & Freedom Award, and Kate O’Beirne accepted the award, which she followed with poignant remarks that paid tribute to Mr. Buckley.

Rev. Sirico declared in his address “never in Acton’s nearly twenty year history has our message been more essential than right now. As an institution that cherishes the free and virtuous society, we are living through this thing with all of you, and we need your help to continue.” He also added:

Liberty is a delicate fruit. It is also an uncommon

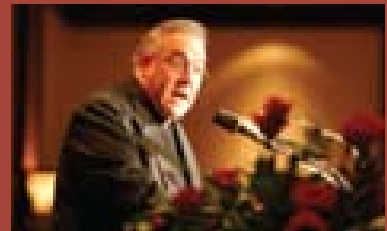
one. When one surveys human history it becomes evident how unusual, how precious is authentic liberty, as is the economic progress that is its result.

These past few weeks are a vivid and sad testimony to this fact. As a delicate fruit, human liberty as well as economic stability must be tended to, lest it disintegrate. It requires constant attention, new appreciation and understanding, renewal, moral defense and integration into the whole fabric of society.

Rev. Nunes spoke from the biblical text of Proverbs 17:5, which reads “He who mocks the poor shows contempt for their Maker; whoever gloats over disaster will not go unpunished.” Rev. Nunes said that “Lutheran World Relief helps people create their own lasting image.” He also added, “What gives me satisfaction is seeing the difference in communities and knowing the people themselves from the community itself has forever changed its future.” Rev. Nunes also said that “the best of LWR reflects an embodiment of the best thinking at the Acton Institute.”



Kate O’Beirne receives the Faith & Freedom Award



Rev. Robert Sirico speaks to the crowd

From Our Conference Participants

My experience at the Acton Conference was invaluable. It reinforced my convictions about the natural law basis of all human societies and gave me insight into concrete problems, both in this country and around the globe.

—Kony Kim
Escondido, California

I hope to use many of the materials I acquired at the Acton Institute Free and Virtuous Society Conference in many of my classes, especially in my introduction to American government course.

—Jason Casellas
Princeton, New Jersey

Seattle FAVS Educates Attendees

Since 1990, the Acton Institute has worked tirelessly to promote a free and virtuous society, and it has used a number of different educational conferences to advance this cause over the past eighteen years. Acton's Towards a Free and Virtuous Society Conference, FAVS, was the first of these. The event seeks to educate future religious leaders about the importance of sound economic thinking and foster a mindset that promotes virtue and liberty.

The FAVS program has grown and changed in its nearly twenty-year history. Dozens of FAVS have taken place across the country and around the globe. The most recent of these occurred last month in Port Ludlow, Washington. Twenty-five seminarians and graduate students joined Acton faculty at the Port Ludlow Inn situated on Puget Sound, just twenty miles from Seattle.

After arriving in Port Ludlow, the participants spent the next three days attending ten in-depth lecture sessions to buttress their existing theological understanding with sound free-market eco-

Leverage Your Acton Support

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the Acton Institute has the opportunity to triple donations received from now until January 15, 2009, through a matching grant.

The grant matches 2-to-1 the first \$5,000 of each gift, and matches 1-to-1 the remainder of the gift. One way to consider helping us meet this incredible challenge is to give a gift through your IRA or retirement account.

This is especially helpful if you are facing mandatory disbursements—which are heavily taxed—but do not need the additional income at this time.

This opportunity is made possible by recent legislation within the Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. Anyone age 70½ or older may distribute directly to a public charity up to \$100,000 without the distribution being included in taxable income, and the distribution will count toward the account owner's mandatory with-

ACTON News



Seattle Favs 2008



nomics. An accomplished faculty led them in this endeavor. Lecturers included Fr. Paul Hartmann, judicial vicar of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Mr. Michael Miller, director of programs at the Acton Institute, and Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse, senior fellow of economics at the Acton Institute.

Several attendees lauded the manner in which the conference was held and the ideals that Acton promotes. To add to this, surveys showed that 100 percent of the students expressed an interest in attending another one of the institute's educational conferences, and more than 90 percent of the students said they would recommend the FAVS experience to a friend or colleague.

drawal amount.

Please act quickly to help us leverage your generous contributions to the Acton Institute. As always, your gift will help us promote a free and virtuous society. With your involvement and the help of others, we can realize the full potential of this matching grant opportunity.

If you have any questions related to the matching grant or giving through a retirement account, please contact us at (616) 454-3080.

Acton Hosts Cook Fellow Fernando Coronel

The Acton Institute is privileged to have Cook Fellow Fernando Coronel working with us in Grand Rapids through February of 2009. Coronel is from Guayaquil, Ecuador, and is a student at the Catholic University of Guayaquil, where he will graduate with a law degree in 2010. He has already significantly contributed to Acton's mission by visiting high level Catholic clergy in Latin America, and as a discussion group leader at Acton Univesity.

Coronel spoke at the Acton Annual Dinner in October, 2008. "Liberty is truly at stake in Latin America, where populist movements with totalitarian views are consolidating in the region," said Coronel. He also declared, "With the assistance of faith and reason, liberty directs us back to our Creator who made us in his own image." He praised the church in his own country for standing against foes of human dignity and human freedom. Coronel also noted at the Annual Dinner:

Only wealth creation and economic growth reduces poverty. Economic development can only be achieved

"These are not magic formulas, rather they are a mechanism of proven success."

through the spread of individual liberty, entrepreneurship, rule of law, limited government, market economics, and respect for private property. These are not magic formulas, rather they are a mechanism of proven success.

At twenty two years old in Ecuador, Coronel co-founded a popular television program that offers interviews with leading religious and political figures of the day. He was also the author of a weekly column for the oldest newspaper in Ecuador, which was discontinued when the paper was taken over by the Ecuadorian government. He now has a guest column in *Diario El Universo*, the most important and respected newspaper in Ecuador. While in Grand Rapids he will be working with the Acton Institute on several special projects related to rule of law and limited government, and also working with the Acton staff on several important Latin American projects.



Fernando Coronel

ACTON in the News

Millions of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and others have tried to come to terms with what their own faith implies for what they should do on Election Day.

—Excerpted from Rev. Robert Sirico's article in *The Christian Post*

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: Catholics and the Election
Publisher: *Christian Post*
Date: 11.02.08

Michael Miller

Title: Diagnosing the Causes of the Economic Crisis
Program: *Morning Air*
Air Date: 10.27.08

Kishore Jayabalan

Title: Bank Nationalization and the Financial Crisis
Program: *Vatican Radio*
Air Date: 10.17.08

Reminder

Help Acton Promote Freedom and Virtue!

The Acton Institute depends on the generosity of supporters like you. If you have not donated to Acton, but enjoy *Acton Notes*, please consider helping us meet our goals! Your help makes possible our continuing mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit <https://secure.lexi.net/acton> to make a secure donation online. We send our heartfelt thanks to those who have been so generous in the past with your strategic support as well as your prayers. You have a broad vision and a generous heart.



Jonathan Witt, Catherine Snow, Marcel Burgler



Emcee Kevin Cusack speaking to crowd



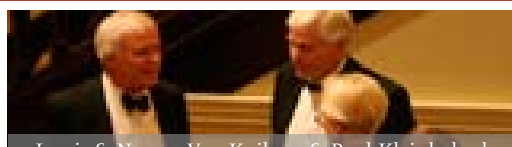
Kate O'Beirne speaking at Annual Dinner



Rev. John Nunes delivering the keynote



Cook Fellow Fernando Coronel



Lewis & Norma Van Kuiken, & Paul Kleinheksel



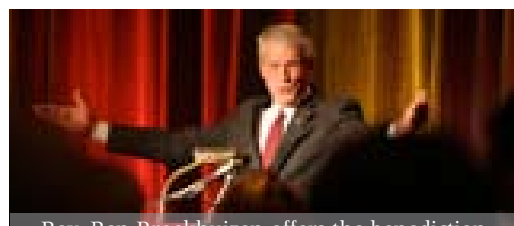
Calvin College attendees



Kate O'Beirne and Kris Mauren



Kevin Cusack, Meg Cusack, and Dr. Tammy Born



Rev. Ren Broekhuizen offers the benediction

ACTON Book Shoppe



2008 Annual Dinner DVD with Rev. John Nunes

produced by Acton Institute

Rev. John Nunes is the President and CEO of Lutheran World Relief—an organization that acts to end poverty and injustice by empowering the world's most impoverished communities to bring about the transformation they need in order to live healthy, safe and secure lives.

Length 97 minutes DVD \$15.00



And Why Not? Morality and Business

by François Michelin

This book-length extended interview provides fascinating insights into the mind of François Michelin, the former managing partner of Group Michelin. Michelin sat down with two journalists and discussed his management philosophy and his deeply felt Christian faith. Michelin speaks eloquently about the creative dimension of free enterprise and the commercial world.

Paperback 91 pages Original Price \$12.00 Sale \$8.50



What's Wrong with Our Economy?

produced by Acton Institute

In this lecture, Acton's Research Director, Dr. Samuel Gregg, will discuss some of the root causes of the economy's present problems, the merits of various attempts to grapple with them, and the fundamental reforms that are needed for sustained economic growth to reignite.

CD Length 60 minutes Original Price \$11.95 Sale \$10.00

**For our fastest service and a complete list of titles,
visit www.acton.org/bookshoppe.**

	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
2008 Annual Dinner DVD with Rev. John Nunes	\$15.00		
And Why Not? Morality and Business	\$8.50		
What's Wrong with Our Economy?	\$10.00		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada, and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$5.75 for shipping; plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$6.75 for the first item, plus US \$1.75 for each additional item.

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Calendar of Events

ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
Dec 3	Philanthropy and Human Rights Creating Space for Caritas in Civil Society	Rome, Italy
Dec 4	Finance, Globalization, and Morality: A 21st Century Challenge Prof. Carlos Hoevel & Rev. Umberto Muratore to speak	Rome, Italy

STAFF ACTIVITIES/DEADLINES

Date	Event	Location
Dec 3	Philanthropy and Human Rights Conference Rev. Robert Sirico to speak	Rome, Italy

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