

# ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

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“Connecting good intentions with sound economics.”

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# President's Message

Dear Friends,

The main objections to the market economy I hear are not related to economics. Most people grant the productivity and efficiency of markets, with reservations. The most substantial objections I hear are concerning aesthetics and matters of virtue.

The classical idea of beauty deals with issues of form, symmetry, and internal integrity. We have a hard time imagining that the market can be considered beautiful by that standard. Why? Because there is ceaseless change in a market, and at any one time its form consists of the full range of human proclivities, including evil ones.

A more modern idea of beauty emphasizes that beauty has no objective standard, that it is something we decide for ourselves. If we argue that the market is beautiful, must we then also buy into the idea that there is no standard by which we can objectively judge beauty? I don't think so. It is possible for us to gain a greater appreciation of how the market partakes of the classical idea. It has form. It coordinates the trading decisions of billions of people across all lands and does so using this remarkable little number called the price, which is generated spontaneously.

If you have ever taken a flight and looked down, you see what form is. You can't see the full picture from the ground but from a bird's-eye view you may be awestruck by the houses, parks, shopping centers, and how they are all laid out as if by an invisible hand. This is the market at work. We usually think of artists as the creators of beauty, but entrepreneurs are no less artists in what they create: prosperity where there was none, food and medicine for the hungry and sick, technological marvels we can't even imagine before they fall into our laps.

But what is the highest standard of beauty? God is, and by that standard all human institutions fall short, including markets. And yet if there is a chance for human beings to do spectacular things, the voluntary social order that allows freedom is absolutely essential, and the market is a part of that.

Thank you for all you do to help us defend this essential institution.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert A. Sirico". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President

"The classical idea of beauty deals with issue of form, symmetry, and internal integrity."

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

**ACTON**INSTITUTE

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# Yuri Maltsev Discusses “Crimes of Communism”

Yuri Maltsev said of Vladimir Lenin and the Soviet Revolution, “The more they started shooting, the more people listened.” Yuri Maltsev returned for the Acton Lecture Series on September 27, having previously spoken at the first Acton lecture in 1990. Maltsev spoke on the atrocities and crimes of communism, and also addressed Vladimir Putin and his government. He is a former senior advisor to Mikhail Gorbachev and is currently an economics professor at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Maltsev defected to the United States in 1989.

Maltsev noted that 61 million people were murdered in the former Soviet Union. Under Joseph Stalin, 43 million people were murdered. The People’s Republic of China is the second worst murderous regime with 39 million people murdered to date. The twentieth century is known as the bloodiest, most war torn century with 170 million state murders. Maltsev said, “110 million of these murders were committed by communist governments.” He noted Gorbachev’s recent remarks, which were

“...61 million people were murdered in the former Soviet Union.”

aimed at Putin, “You cannot whitewash the crimes of Joseph Stalin.” Gorbachev also stressed the need for Russia to pursue democracy with greater fervor, and to remember its horrific past. Maltsev was skeptical that Putin would voluntarily give up power. He spoke of the political opponents and journalists that Putin has wiped out.

Maltsev is convinced Alexander Litvinenko, a former KGB officer, was poisoned and killed by Putin. Maltsev continued to paint a dark portrait of Putin, criticizing Putin’s remarks that, “the most tragic event in the history of the twentieth century was the collapse of communism.”

Maltsev pointed out how North Korean laborers did not want to return to their country when they were leased out to Soviet Siberian labor camps. The conditions in North Korea were so horrific they would beg and plead to stay in labor camps or Soviet jails. In Cuba, one of the last examples in the world of a Soviet-style command economy, the average wage is nine dollars a month. You can listen to Maltsev’s entire lecture at Acton’s website.



Yuri Maltsev, former senior advisor to Mikhail Gorbachev

## From Our Conference Participants

The opportunity to attend this conference was a great blessing to me, and I’m certain that it will prove to have been a formative and significant aspect of my education.

—Lorraine Krall  
Georgetown University  
Washington, D.C.

Acton’s clear teachings on the importance of a free-market economy and the abuse of state power has helped me to think critically about my local situation, giving me ideas for practical application.

—Peter Park  
Holy Apostles College and Seminary  
Cromwell, CT

## Call of the Entrepreneur Receives Further Attention and Praise

Erika Andersen reviewed the *The Call of the Entrepreneur* for *Human Events* in a piece titled, "Entrepreneurship Preserves Life as We Know It." *The Call* premiered to DC audiences on September 26 at the E Street Cinema as part of the Renaissance Film Festival. Dr. Jay Richards of the Acton Institute reported, "People lined the back of the hall to see the film." Andersen noted in her article, "The film denounces the myth that capitalists are self serving, arguing rather that they are almost wholly devoted to others." The film will be translated into Spanish and other foreign languages. Jay Richards declared, "I think the film appeals to Africans and other non-Americans because it taps into themes that are universal and appeals to the human spirit."

*Human Events* is one of the oldest modern conservative publications, and the one that President Ronald Reagan called his "favorite newspaper." The *Weekly Standard* also covered the premiere and discussed the film. Sonny Bunch wrote an article titled "The Right Stuff: Conservatives decide if you can't beat

was going and felt as if my life was being sucked from me. I heard about this documentary and decided to stop and check it out. What a wonderful film. It inspired confidence and motivation and recharged my entrepreneurial desire to succeed." The Jesse Helms Center will be hosting screenings across North Carolina, as well as reaching colleges and universities across the state with the film.

## Jay Richards Addresses "What Would Jesus Drive" for NRO

Acton's media director, Jay Richards, discussed environmental issues in an article titled "What Would Jesus Drive?: Electrified Evangelical theological confusion." The article appeared in the *National Review* online edition. Richards declared, "With respect to the environment, the theological principles are uncontroversial: human beings, as image bearers of God, are placed as stewards over the created order." What was problematic for Richards and many evangelicals is the agenda of the Evangelical Climate Initiative. The ECI is calling for donations of ninety dollars for carbon offsets. Richards, referring to media reports said,

# ACTON News



Acton's Rachel Wondergem & Dr. Richards with Ellen and Jim Hubbard



Hollywood, join it." Bunch declared, *The Call of the Entrepreneur* is "alternately funny, moving, and educational." *The Washington Times* also praised the film, noting, "It may be hard for some people to believe that a discussion of economics can produce an emotionally powerful film experience, but the message and excellent cinematography of *The Call of the Entrepreneur* make it so. Two thumbs up."

The Jesse Helms Center in North Carolina screened *The Call of the Entrepreneur* to a packed house in September. Jerry Sogge, an entrepreneur, was in his car heading home when he heard Helms Center president John Dodd on the radio promoting the documentary. "I was a bit down on how business

"Evangelicals who question the party line are either ignored or cast as enemies of the environment." Discussing the 2002 "What Would Jesus Drive" campaign, Richards declared, "'What would Jesus drive?' is clever marketing, but ultimately employs terrible moral reasoning. The question doesn't have one right answer." He said in the article, "An outside observer is in no position to make a moral judgment just by observing that you drive an SUV. Such complexities make prudential judgments about transportation and energy use different from moral evils like selling child pornography or torturing a kitten for the fun of it, which are intrinsically evil."

# Health, Technology, and the Common Good

The Acton Institute hosted a conference titled “Health, Technology, and the Common Good” on September 28 in Rome. Opening remarks were delivered by Acton’s president Fr. Robert Sirico. Cardinal Javier Lozano Barragán gave a lecture on the future of health care. Barragán declared, “There is clearly a paradigm shift in the ethical reflection on health. This so called ‘new paradigm shift’ is supposed to be the official thought of the United Nations and its various bodies like WHO and UNESCO.” Barragán says while the goal has merit, it is basically flawed because it is “closed to the transcendent.” The cardinal is the president of the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Health Care.

Acton’s Michael Miller noted, “There was a wide range of media present for the conference, which included Roman Catholic and international news agencies.” Some of the main topics covered focused on a good and sound anthropology basing health of the human person in the context of the common good.

During the conference, Dr. David H. Carey deliv-

ered a paper on intellectual property rights and the role they play in building technology and creating medicines. Carey is a professor of philosophy at Whitman College in Washington State. Peter Thiel discussed issues related to technology. Thiel is the cofounder of PayPal and the founding investor of the social networking internet site, *Facebook*. Thompson Ayodele of Nigeria delivered an address on the greater need for DDT in Africa for combating malaria. Thompson also critiqued Rachel Carson’s famed publication *Silent Spring*, which changed pesticide policies globally. The conservative publication *Human Events* cited Carson’s book as one of the ten most harmful books of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition, Mrs. Grace-Marie Turner, founder and president of the Galen Institute, a public policy research organization that promotes free-market ideas for health reform, gave a lecture titled, “Consumer Advocacy,” where she defended competition and entrepreneurship over state-regulated health systems.



Cardinal Lozano Barragan connects healthcare to theology and the human person

Thompson Ayodele

## ACTON in the News

Hanna frequently underscores the importance of good leaders: “people who work in a superlative manner, who lead with wisdom and humility, they’re the ones who get disproportionate results.”

—Excerpted from Christopher Levenick’s article in *Philanthropy*

### Christopher Levenick

Title: The Call of the Philanthropist

Publisher: *Philanthropy*

Date: 10.3.2007

### Anthony Bradley

Title: As Obama Talks Religion, Questions Surround His Controversial Pastor

Program: *FOXNews.com*

Air Date: 10.8.2007

### Dr. Samuel Gregg

Title: Chavez the Moralist

Program: *The Right Balance with Greg Allen*

Air Date: 10.12.2007

## Reminder

### Help Acton Promote Freedom and Virtue!

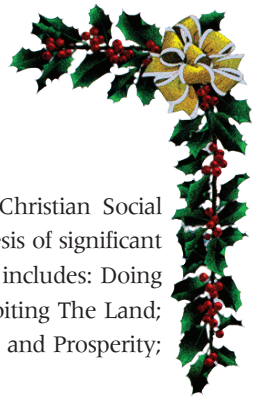
The Acton Institute depends on the generosity of supporters like you. If you have not donated to Acton, but enjoy *Acton Notes*, please consider helping us meet our goals! Your help makes possible our continuing mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope 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.

# Acton and You

During the Acton Lecture Series, Yuri Maltsev talked about his meeting with CIA officials shortly after coming to the United States. The officials believed that the Soviet Union had a gross domestic product of about 65 percent of the total U.S. GDP. Maltsev told the CIA the Soviet GDP was currently somewhere between 3 and 4 percent of the total U.S. GDP. Because of the large discrepancy, Maltsev was flown to Washington to meet with then secretary of defense Dick Cheney. Cheney told Maltsev the actual Soviet GDP must be somewhere in between the U.S. estimate and Maltsev's estimate. Maltsev told him, "You are right Mr. Secretary it's somewhere between 3 and 4." Maltsev concluded by noting Cheney responded with one word: "Sweet."



## Special Christmas Selection

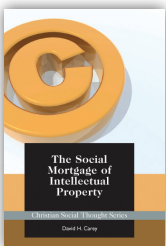


### Christian Social Thought Series Set

*Various Authors*

It is in the spirit and vision of economic personalism that the Christian Social Thought Series is offered. These books attempt a personalist synthesis of significant issues at the nexus of economic activity and the moral life. Series includes: Doing Justice to Justice; Liberating Labor; A Theory of Corruption; Inhabiting The Land; Trial by Fury; The Good that Business Does; Pensions, Populations and Prosperity; The Social Mortgage of Intellectual Property.

**Original Price \$40.00    Sale \$35.00**



### The Social Mortgage of Intellectual Property

*by David H. Carey*

Philosopher David Carey supplies an overview of the philosophical and legal foundation of intellectual property rights and argues that a Christian view of those rights is at once appreciative and critical. More specifically, while the Church's social teaching upholds the importance of property rights (including intellectual property rights) it also places all such rights within the context of obligations toward the common good.

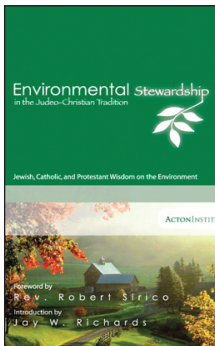
**Paperback    69 pages    Original Price \$6.00    Sale \$5.00**



### Acton Institute T-Shirt

Acton Institute Logo White T-Shirt 100% cotton. Available from Adult Small to Adult XL. **Original Price \$16.00    Sale \$12.00**

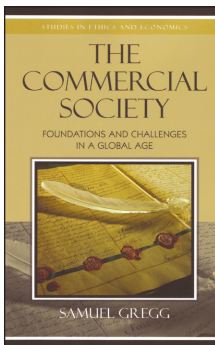
# ACTON Book Shoppe



## Environmental Stewardship in the Judeo-Christian Tradition *Various Authors*

A fair and honest debate about religious responses to environmental issues should always distinguish theological principles from prudential judgments. The Cornwall Declaration and the accompanying essays in this volume were written to do just that. They seek to articulate the broad Judeo-Christian theological principles concerning the environment, and to distinguish those principles from contrary ideas popular in the environmental movement.

**Paperback 69 pages Original Price \$6.00 Sale \$5.00**



## The Commercial Society *by Samuel Gregg*

Guided by the thoughts of Alexis de Tocqueville, Samuel Gregg's *The Commercial Society* identifies and explores the key foundational elements that must exist within a society for commercial order to take root and flourish. Gregg studies the challenges that have consistently impeded and occasionally undermined commercial order, including the persistence of "corporatist" values and political movements seeking to equalize social conditions. This book offers a historically grounded analysis for modern audiences interested in philosophy or the history of economics.

**Paperback 177 pages Original Price \$16.95 Sale \$15.00**

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## Calendar of Events

### ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
<b>Nov 5</b>	Call of the Entrepreneur <b>Premiere</b> Atlanta History Center	Atlanta, Georgia
<b>Nov 11</b>	Call of the Entrepreneur <b>Premiere</b> Rev. Robert Sirico and Kris Mauren to attend	Manila, Philippines
<b>Nov 14</b>	Call of the Entrepreneur <b>Premiere</b> Orpheum Theatre	Wichita, Kansas
<b>Nov 15</b>	Call of the Entrepreneur <b>Premiere</b> Extreme Screen Theatre at Union Station	Kansas City, Missouri

### STAFF ACTIVITIES/DEADLINES

Date	Event	Location
<b>Nov 9-11</b>	<b>Various Lectures</b>	Manila, Philippines
<b>Nov 14</b>	<b>IRD Conference on Environmental Stewardship</b> Dr. Jay Richards to speak	Washington D.C.
<b>Nov 15</b>	<b>Evangelical Theological Society</b> Dr. Jay Richards to speak	San Diego, California
<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>Veritas Forum—UC Davis</b> Dr. Jay Richards to speak	Davis, California

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