

Scientists Can Help Us Understand That Natural Laws Also Govern Business and Politics¹

PROGRESS in the field of science grows by leaps and bounds and amazes all of us from decade to decade. History will record that we are now living in the atomic age. If the forces which can be unleashed by the atomic bomb, the hydrogen bomb, and the talked-of cobalt bomb are permitted to be used destructively, it is within the realm of possibility that mankind may blunder into destroying civilization as we know it today. To avoid anything so unthinkable horrible it is therefore imperative for nations and people to prevent such a thing from happening. If the world is permitted to use the discoveries of this age for the benefit of mankind instead of for its destruction, a future so attractive as to stagger the imagination is promised.

The discoveries of science in the field of communications, radio and television, are equally as important as the nuclear fission and fusion discoveries. Actually radio and television may be even more dangerous than the atomic and hydrogen bombs if we fail to have sufficient understanding of the cause and effect of our individual actions. History records the actions which inevitably lead to disaster. Mankind seems to learn little from the past as we make the same mistakes over and over again. Up to the present no disaster has been created by man which would destroy our civilization, but never again can mankind afford another tragedy like World War II. How do we prevent it? The only way is for people to understand better the consequences of their actions and to exert greater responsibility and more wisdom in taking such actions.

Today through radio and television any demagogue has ready access to the eyes and ears of the whole nation. If, through promises that are impossible of fulfillment, a demagogue can capture a majority of votes by appealing to our selfishness, what chance have we under such leadership to escape eventual destruction through war or what may be even worse, slavery? No doubt many of us think it cannot happen here, but let us remember how a great nation of fine and presumably intelligent German people succumbed to the blandishments of Hitler. Let us not be deceived: no people or nation is immune from the inevitable consequences of nurturing selfishness. If we permit it to thrive and flower unchecked in our country, we shall be destroyed or enslaved.

Perhaps the most impressive accomplishment of scientists is the success achieved in convincing almost everyone that scientific truths, natural laws, are inexorable and relentless. Somehow even demagogues and dictators respect the natural laws of science. Yet all of us to some degree fail to have equal respect for the natural laws of human relations and of economics which are the ones which govern business and politics. We seem constantly under the illusion that we can violate these laws for our own self-benefit and somehow escape the consequences or even better still require someone else to pay for the consequences of our violations.

OUR chambers of commerce, our labor unions, our trade associations, our farm organizations, and we citizens individually never urge Congress to repeal the law of gravity or to pass laws which contravene the law of conservation of energy. Yet the same organizations, we same citizens somehow do not hesitate to urge Congress to pass laws intended to set aside or nullify the law of supply and demand or intended to imply that one can get something for nothing. Are such instances not equally as flagrant violations of natural laws and just as eventually disastrous in consequences as would be the general belief by our citizens that Congress could set aside the law of conservation of energy or the law of gravity?

Scientists, though, have done an almost perfect job of educating us all that the natural laws of science are constant, eternal, and unchangeable and that the consequences of violating them are not only futile but dangerous as well. To illustrate, we all teach our children as soon as they can climb that they will get hurt if they jump off the top of the house. But do we teach them as painstakingly and as thoughtfully the consequences of violating the natural laws of human relations and of economics, such as the law of loving one's neighbor, the law of supply and demand, etc.? I am sure we do not. The cruel wars from which mankind has suffered intermittently since the beginning of time and the great capacity of human beings for cruelty to each other seem positive enough proof that we have

been considerably less successful in teaching people that violating the natural laws of human relations and of economics is eventually as devastating in effect as violating the natural laws of science.

Perhaps we fail because the consequences of violating the natural laws of science more quickly and obviously affect the violator whereas the adverse consequences of violating the natural laws of human relations and of economics are often not only slower in becoming apparent but, sometimes in the short-range effect, actually appear to benefit the violator. For instance, when a pressure group is able to induce Congress to vote it special benefits at the expense of the rest of the nation, the pressure group often appears for a period of time to have benefited. But invariably the natural laws of economics assert themselves and, however long postponed, eventually the "crows come home to roost." Can there be a more striking example than the price-depressing farm surpluses which now overhang the market as the result of the perpetuation of an unsound law passed to benefit the very group which now is being injured by its ultimate, though long-delayed, consequences? Our economy is so finely integrated and its parts so interdependent that the effects of any violation of social laws are often thinly diffused over the whole. Injuries from single actions are little felt, and so we repeat and enlarge the injurious action; and only in time are the consequences felt, as in taking dope or piling straws on a camel's back.

FARMERS however are not the only ones to harvest the bitter fruit from the bad seed planted years ago when Congress undertook to set aside the law of supply and demand as it applied to certain agricultural crops. In a desperate move to dispose of the mountainous and price-depressing farm surpluses, the present Congress and Administration are undertaking various export "dumping" schemes, some by legislation, some by the exercise of administrative discretion. By whatever fancy name such schemes are called by their advocates—"export subsidy," "selling at competitive world prices," "two-price plan," "domestic allotment plan," etc.—foreign nations which are adversely affected call selling a commodity abroad for less than it brings at home by the simple and appropriately descriptive word, "dumping." The practical considerations which are given as justification for these rather desperate measures are not lacking in weight or in good intention. But what will the consequences be to some nations which are friendly to us, to those which are our enemies, to our nation and its people? Will it bring more or less government interference to our farmers? These are weighty problems, and it is difficult for any man to predict the ultimate consequences. At the very least the consequences will be a strain on our bonds of friendship with the nations friendly to us and to that extent helpful to our enemies, and expensive beyond all reason when the illusory benefits realized are compared to the cost of postponing the inexorable workings of the law of supply and demand. At the worst the consequences can be an important contributing factor in creating a chaotic world economic climate in which the cancer of war breeds prolifically.

Let's take another case, the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act which Congress passed in 1930 with the positive intention, no doubt, of benefiting certain groups within our country and with the less positive but no doubt hopeful intention that it would benefit all groups in our nation. How all groups could be benefited by a measure intended to raise prices and therefore the cost of living was apparently not reasoned through. How much thought was given to its effect upon the other nations of the world cannot be known, possibly very little thought was given, and many no doubt would have indignantly asked why any thought should be given to the other nations? Are the ultimate consequences of individuals violating the Golden Rule any less disastrous than violating the laws of science and are the consequences of nations violating the Golden Rule any less disastrous than when individuals do so? I often wonder how much blame the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act should carry for creating economic conditions which made desperate peoples give up their freedom to demagogues who became dictators and violated so many human rights and economic laws that World War II became the inevitable consequence. We cannot today maintain the friendship of nations while denying them the self-respecting privilege of earning their way by trading with us.

HOW many lessons have we learned from our past mistakes? We still see nations which will support only governments committed to the erroneous principle that inflationary fiscal policies will bring a higher standard of living to its citizens. We see our own country committed to a policy of "controlled" inflation. Frankly, who knows what "controlled" inflation means and whether inflation can be controlled once it gains

¹ Presented at the 47th annual meeting, American Oil Chemists' Society, Houston, Tex., April 23, 1956.

sufficient momentum? We see nations demanding that government take over ever-increasing segments of businesses and services, presumably on the theory that government ownership provides more incentive, greater ingenuity, and a higher standard of living for its citizens than ownership by individuals or groups of individuals can provide. While these tendencies seem far less pronounced in our own great country, there are strong forces here which with some success constantly urge the same course for us. It is my belief that inflationary fiscal policies and government ownership of production violate fundamental laws of economics and human relations and that the bad seeds of such violations will eventually reap a harvest of bitter fruit. While it may not be as difficult to compromise for a time with the natural laws of economics and human relations as it is to compromise with the law of conservation of energy or the law of gravity, it is in the end no less harmful. In the final analysis it is not just as impossible to have a little bit of inflation or a little bit of government ownership of production as it is to regulate the pull of gravity to suit the occasion desired?

My adult life has been devoted to business, principally marketing and administration. However I am not here as a businessman to deplore the acts of our Congressmen and Senators, as disturbing as is the preoccupation of so many of them with schemes that would nullify the law of supply and demand or would provide something for nothing to vast numbers of our citizens. Why do so many divert their energies into such legislative endeavors which seem to contradict the natural laws of human relations and of economics? Most certainly it is because we demand that they do. If we demand as a condition to election that our Congressmen and Senators constantly violate these natural laws, then we deserve the sort of government that we get and the consequences of such government.

Whatever personal association I have had with Congressmen and Senators leads me to believe that they are far more capable than their constituents ever give them credit for being and that they would prefer to give us better government if we weren't constantly pressuring for bad government. In the final analysis bad government is not much more or less than taking away from one group to give to another group or taking away from other nations for supposed benefits to certain groups within our nation.

OUR real hope for good government, for economic well-being, for peace, and for preservation from annihilation by destructive war lies solely in developing greater respect for and more thorough observance of God's laws, which include the natural laws of science, economics, and human relations. This is the only solution to our problems. The observance of these natural laws is complicated however by the fact that God, in raising man above the animals, has given him freedom of choice, which means freedom to make bad choices as well as good choices, freedom to elect evil as well as goodness, even the freedom to destroy himself and the rest of mankind completely. If we had not been given this freedom, life would be wholly lacking in purpose and meaning. If all of our decisions were pre-determined for us we would be no better than characters in a play. But it seems clear that the sum total of these choices that man is given freedom to make determines the destiny of individuals, of nations, and of mankind; I believe that good choices create positive moral forces and that bad choices create negative forces, which erode the positive forces. Evils like communism thrive on the consequences of such negative forces. Collectively, enough bad choices by individuals and by nations can and do create negative forces of such magnitude that they seem to engulf mankind in periods of great distress like the Dark Ages which followed the fall of the Roman Empire. Even in so-called enlightened ages, such as the present, there are within nations and within parts of nations and even within individuals their own Dark Ages when the forces of evil almost completely overshadow the good.

Although it is more difficult to bring people to the widespread belief that the natural laws of human relations and of economics are just as eternal and inexorable as the natural laws of science and that the consequences of violation in the long run are just as disastrous, scientists can help lead the way to better understanding of these fundamental values. Scientists have shown great capacity for educating themselves and practically everybody else in the futility of trying to nullify, set aside, or change the natural laws of science. We businessmen and those who make politics their profession seem not only to have failed to convince people generally that our natural laws of economics and human relations cannot be violated without disastrous consequences but have often deluded ourselves into believing the specious arguments which we make for special interests in the name of the general welfare. We need better

understanding among ourselves. No doubt the scientist can help us attain it.

The difficulty of the task should not be under-rated, but one thing is sure, the more difficult it is, the more determined we should be to make some progress. Progress will come not through committee resolutions, but when enough individuals become determined to act and speak in accordance with what they know within their hearts to be truth, in other words, as the scientist acts and speaks of his science. If a sufficient number of individuals can carry the message with conviction to enough other persons, their combined individual actions will build up a positive moral force which will not only remove the threat of atomic extinction but lead the way to a better and more wholesome life than mankind has ever known. Let's each of us begin individually. It may be later than any of us think.

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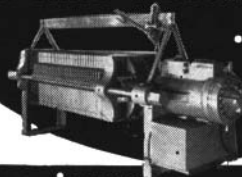
Fatty Acids Drop

Production of fatty acids in April 1956 was 35.1 million lbs., approximately 1.8 million lbs. less than the previous month's total of 36.9 million, but 1.7 million above the April 1955 figure of 33.4 millions lbs., according to the Association of American Soap and Glycerine Producers Inc., New York.

Total disposition was 35.7 million lbs., about 1.3 million below April 1955. This included some 1.6 million lbs. of sales within the industry so that actual disposition outside the industry is overstated to this extent. Stocks, including work in process, totaled 47.1 million lbs., about 2.4 million above last month's level.

John L. Gillis, vice president of Monsanto Chemical Company, St. Louis, Mo., was elected chairman of the board of the MANUFACTURING CHEMISTS' ASSOCIATION INC. at the 84th annual meeting in June 1956. J. E. Weaver, Columbia-Southern Chemical Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pa., is the new chairman of the association's tank car committee, and D. M. Long, Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company, Philadelphia, Pa., is vice chairman.

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