

# Technologically Advanced but Very Socially Backward

We live in one of the most technologically and economically advanced ages in history. But despite this, most Western countries have become very *socially backward* and morally corrupt as evidenced by the very high rates of crime, divorce, drug-taking, alcoholism, suicide, depression, abortion, problem children in schools, the neglect of the elderly by their families, the lack of continual consistent discipline of children by many parents, the extreme self-centredness of so many people and so on. Australia is one example.

## Manning Clarks nonsense about Christianity between 1851-1900

Professor C.M.H. Clark, known as Manning Clark, was Professor of History at the Australian National University for many years in the mid-1900's. he was a competent historian and had much influence on many researchers into Australian history.

In 1955, Clark's book "Select Documents in Australian History 1851-1900" was published by Angus and Robertson. This book was 866 pages in its printing in 1975 and contained primary source historical documents from Australia during the period 1851 to 1900.

Manning Clark popularised the theory that there was a decline in Christianity in Australia between 1851 to 1900. This theory was a product of Clark's own opposition to Christianity and was not a result of any reliable research into the attendances at churches and Sunday Schools in Australia from the early 1800's to 1900. Clark wrote: "*There, however, is the great puzzle for the social historian of Australia: to say what that faith was. One thing we can say on the negative side. Religious belief was declining. The causes of this were similar to the causes operating in Europe: the higher criticism of the Bible: the study of comparative religions: the study of geology: the lives of Christ by Strauss, Renan and other agnostics: the literature of the rationalists: the public controversy over 'The Origin of the Species': and the intemperate and untenable position temporarily adopted by the Churches on that issue. The only contribution made in Australia to the controversy was the short, sharp and lively exchange between Bishop Moorhouse and that 'wayward, vagrant spirit' Marcus Clarke. Not even their fertile wit could equal, let alone surpass the American cleric's – 'Adam never had to call an ape "Dad"'. To return to our subject – Side by side with this steady decline in religious belief we have the warm approval for one of the articles in the Declaration of the Rights of Man – the pursuit of happiness.*"<sup>1</sup>

Christianity did decline greatly in Australia later in the 1900's. But Clark's theory of a declining Christianity in the 1800's is historical nonsense. The historical evidence supports the opposite conclusion. Christianity in Australia experienced a massive growth in terms of percentages of adults and children at churches and Sunday Schools from the early 1800's till the late 1800's.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, page 661.

## Clark's own primary sources refuted his own theory

Clark records the following words about Sydney in the "Report of the Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes of the Metropolis", pages 8-10, "V. and P. of the Legislative Assembly of new South Wales 1859-60", Volume 4: *"The streets of Sydney are infested by a large number of vagrant children, or children entirely neglected by their parents; and some of the revelations of juvenile depravity are appalling and almost incredible. According to the evidence of an intelligent officer of the Metropolitan Police, the traffic in female prostitution has extended its meshes around unhappy children scarcely above the age of infancy, and the closest ties of nature are converted into the bonds of their perdition..."*

*The number of boys in a vagrant state is variously estimated, and it may be doubted that there are many entirely destitute of home and kindred; but the evidence abundantly shows that a large class exists to whom the possession of parents is of no value in giving direction to their lives, and who are growing up to be an encumbrance and a curse to society. In the language of one witness, they are 'floating about the streets and lanes like fish in a pond.'*"<sup>2</sup>

Manning Clark also provides a quote from the writing of A. Metin called "Le Socialisme San Doctrines", (Paris, 1901, pages 267-272) in which Metin describes how devoted to the teachings of Christianity many Australian workers were in 1900: *"Religion and religious forms are the object of even greater veneration, if that is possible. Many of the supporters of the 'Labour Policy' say grace before every meal, go to church on Sundays and strictly observe the Sabbath as a day of rest. They would not tolerate the principles of Christianity to be questioned. In conversation they consider themselves under an obligation to observe a puritanical reserve, avoiding certain subjects and replacing certain words by paraphrases.*

*Works on religion and morals, and fiction, are the most sought-after of the books – exclusively English – which circulate in Australasia. Everyone can read, and libraries are very common."*<sup>3</sup>

Considering how anti-Christian Manning Clark was, it is surprising he did not leave this quote out of his book.

## New South Wales in Australia in the late 1700's and early 1800's

After the time the First Fleet arrived from England in 1788, the main state in Australia – New South Wales – had high rates of crime, alcoholism among both men and women, sex outside of marriage, prostitution and children born outside of marriage.<sup>4</sup> In the early 1800's, homosexuality was very common among the convicts and among workers in the country areas where women were extremely scarce.<sup>5</sup>

Also in the 1790's and the first few decades of the 1800's, most Australians lived in de-facto sexual relationships without getting married.<sup>6</sup> Thomas Watling wrote in 1794 that in Sydney "there is scarce a man without his mistress. The high class exhibit it, and the low, to do

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<sup>2</sup> C.M.H. Clark, "Select Documents in Australian History 1851-1900", Angus and Robertson, 1955, London, page 675.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, page 676.

<sup>4</sup> "With Courage and Devotion", NSW Midwives Association, 1984, pages 13-20 and Russel Ward "The Australian Legend", Oxford Uni Press, Melbourne 1966, pages 35 and 97-99.

<sup>5</sup> Ward, pages 96-99.

<sup>6</sup> Alan Grocott, "Convicts, Clergymen and Churches", Sydney Uni Press, Sydney, 1980, pages 70, 72 and 74 and "Australians – 1838", Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, 1987, page 100.

them justice, faithfully copy it.”<sup>7</sup> A survey in 1806 revealed in New South Wales, there were 395 wives, 1035 de-facto wives, 807 children born to married parents and 1025 children born outside of marriage.<sup>8</sup>

In 1809, Lachlan Macquarie, the Governor of New South Wales warned of the bad consequences of having so many couples living de-facto.<sup>9</sup> Macquarie made laws to promote marriage.<sup>10</sup> These laws had some effect in increasing marriages.<sup>11</sup> But even up to 1821, the great majority of children born in New South Wales were born out of wedlock.<sup>12</sup> In 1838, the official Molesworth Committee found that most of the marriages of female convicts to male convicts in the years up to that year had failed: “*Such marriages among convicts rarely...turn out well; for the woman not unfrequently becomes the common property of the convict servants on the establishment, and gives rise to innumerable quarrels among the men, who purchase favours generally by petty larcenies upon the master.*”<sup>13</sup> In recent decades, many Australians have returned to the previous backward custom of de-facto marriages.

## **There were few real Christians among the first settlers**

When the British first settled in New South Wales in Australia in 1788, there was just one Christian minister. Also among the convicts and soldiers, there was only a very small number of practicing Christians. This minister was Richard Johnson, a born-again Anglican with a godly heart. The first Governor, Arthur Phillip was a spiritually lukewarm Anglican who opposed Johnson’s evangelistic, Christ-centred ministry and strong Bible teaching.<sup>14</sup> After Phillip departed to England, Lieutenant Governor Grose constantly opposed Johnson’s ministry and complained to the British government that Johnson was “*one of the people called Methodists*” and “*a very troublesome, discontented character*”.<sup>15</sup>

On Christmas Day, 1793, just 3% or less than 40 of the 1200 individuals in Sydney attended the only church service in it on that day.<sup>16</sup> The convicts and soldiers were a reflection of Britain in the 1700’s where only a very small minority were practicing Christians.<sup>17</sup> One common lie which was spread by various atheists, agnostics and pagans in Australia throughout the 1900’s was that this country began with a large Christian majority who oppresses poor innocent convicts and poor free workers and that over the last 200 years or more, most Australians have been freeing themselves of this supposed ‘oppressive’ religion.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, page 70.

<sup>8</sup> Russel Ward, “Australia”, Sydney, 1965, page 25 and F.K. Crowley, “The Foundation Years”, Greenwood (editor), “Australia”, page 41.

<sup>9</sup> Plummer, to Macquarie, 4 May 1809, HRA, I, 7, page 205 and Macquarie to Castlereagh, 30 April, 1810, Enclosure 4, Proclamation of February 1810, *ibid*, pages 278-279.

<sup>10</sup> Grocott, page 74.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, page 75.

<sup>13</sup> William Molesworth, “Report from the Select Committee on Transportation; together with the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index”, Volume 2, London, 1838, page 12.

<sup>14</sup> Ian H. Murray, ‘Australian Christian Life from 1788’, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1988, page 3.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, page 5.

<sup>16</sup> Hans Mol, “The Faith of Australians”, George Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1985, page 51.

<sup>17</sup> Grocott, pages 14-21.

The second Governor of New South Wales from 1795 was John Hunter, a Presbyterian who supported Johnson's ministry. The chief opponent of Hunter was the very worldly Captain John Macarthur. Macarthur scorned Hunter as a "*self-declared evangelist for goodness, for religion and morality*".<sup>18</sup> Hunter's enemies in New South Wales convinced the British Government to sack him as Governor. So he returned to Britain in 1800.

In 1794, one born-again Anglican minister wrote about the spiritual condition of the rulers and socially more influential non-convicts in Sydney: "*All the higher ranks are lost to God*".<sup>19</sup> One notable exception was John Palmer.<sup>20</sup>

## **They hated Christianity and convicts who were sincere Christians**

Even though most of the convicts were Roman Catholics and Anglicans in name, they hated Christianity. For example, Father William Ullathorne, the young Catholic Vicar-general wrote about how the male convicts treated the very small number of convicts who wanted to pray before going to bed: "*Many men have come to me a day or two after they have been in the barracks, for the purpose of going through their religious exercises, and some of those men have been absolutely heart-broken...Many of those simple-hearted men will kneel down to say their prayers, as they have been accustomed to do, before they go to bed; and in such cases, they say, the canvas bags of the men, and their caps and their clothes, are thrown at them; they are flung down and abused and insulted and trampled upon; and consequently I have been compelled to advise those men to perform their religious duties while they were lying in their hammocks, or while they were walking, when nobody was observing them.*"<sup>21</sup>

The above occurred in the so-called "Age of Reason" and "Age of Enlightenment" when one of the main beliefs in Britain was that it was wrong to be enthusiastic about any religion and everyone should be tolerant of each other. But typically this "tolerance" degenerated into a tolerance of many types of evil and an intolerance or hatred of anyone who opposed these evils.

The "tolerance" of male convicts towards anyone praying to the God of the Bible was so great that the small number of convicts who wished to pray "stole into the woods to hide their prayers, trembling to be discovered on their knees, as though they were doing some guilty thing."<sup>22</sup>

## **Church attendance in N.S.W. from 1828 to 1904**

The official New South Wales (N.S.W.) Government statistics from the period 1828 to 1904 are proof that weekly church attendance rates in the state of New South Wales were very low in the period 1828 to 1841, rose greatly by about 10% by 1842 to 1861 and rose much again by the 1870's, 1880's and 1890's. The approximate average numbers of persons who attended church in New South Wales between 1828 to 1831 was 6 to 7%, between 1832 to 1841 was 8 to

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<sup>18</sup> Murray, page 6.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, page 30.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Grocott, page 84.

<sup>22</sup> Patrick O'Farrell, "The Catholic Church in Australia", London, 1969, page 30.

14%, between 1842 to 1861 was 18 to 24% and between 1862 to 1904 was 24 to 34%.<sup>23</sup> Because these N.S.W. Government statistics for 1828 to 1861 refer to the ‘number of persons generally attending’, this means the figures for that period may include not only weekly attenders but also fortnightly and monthly attenders. Note also these figures do not specify if they include children, if they were weekly attenders only or if they also included less frequent attenders.

In addition observe that the above figures for 1828 to 1836 add a note which shows that at least for the period 1828-1836, Anglican ministers occasionally held services in remote inland areas which did not normally have church services. Between 6,000 to 7,500 people attended these rare services. These people cannot be included in the more regular churchgoers because they were not being taught and disciplined in ways which would ensure they were living as practicing godly believers and not as hypocrites.

The relevant volumes of the official New South Wales Government publications “The Statistical Register of New South Wales” and “The Wealth and Progress of New South Wales” reveal that in New South Wales, the approximate average number of persons 14 years and over attending church weekly was 29.6% in 1865, 32.3% in 1869, 33.3% in 1872, 30.3% in 1876, 28.9% in 1879, 27.7% in 1882, 28.4% in 1885, 27.3% in 1887, 28% in 1890, 30.2% in 1893 and 30.9% in 1897. These statistics do not include churchgoers who attended less regularly than weekly.

Also note the 1887-88,<sup>24</sup> 1889-90,<sup>25</sup> 1892,<sup>26</sup> 1894,<sup>27</sup> 1900-01<sup>28</sup> editions of the above official “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.” and also “The Official Year Book of N.S.W. 1907-8”<sup>29</sup> reveal there were an *extra* approximately 19% we could add to each of the above church attendance figures.

This extra 19% includes a 10% figure for those children from 7 to 13 years who weekly attended Sunday School and an 8% figure for children under 7 years who attended church weekly with their parents. Many 14-15 year olds attended Sunday School also, but were already included in the above government church attendance statistics. Also we must add extra percentage points for churchgoers who attended other Sunday church services than the main service. Let us be very conservative and only add 3% for these latter weekly church attenders. When in 1890, the Victorian official statisticians changed from counting only those people on average who attended the main Sunday service to counting distinct individuals who on average went to one or more of all their Sunday local church services, this added 5% to the attendance figures.

Therefore, the real weekly church attendance figures in N.S.W. in between 1881 to 1900, including weekly Sunday School children and very little children was approximately between 47.5% to 53.6% of the total population.

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<sup>23</sup> “N.S.W. Colonial Secretary: Returns of the Colony, Blue Books” and “The Statistical Register of N.S.W.”, relevant volumes.

<sup>24</sup> “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.”, 1887-88, N.S.W. Government Printer, Sydney, page 613.

<sup>25</sup> “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.”, 1889-90, N.S.W. Government Printer, Sydney, page 778.

<sup>26</sup> “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.”, 1892, N.S.W. Government Printer, Sydney, page 545.

<sup>27</sup> “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.”, 1894, N.S.W. Government Printer, Sydney, page 865.

<sup>28</sup> “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.”, 1900-01, N.S.W. Government Printer, Sydney, pages 200 and 204.

<sup>29</sup> “The Official Year Book of N.S.W.”, 1907-8, N.S.W. Government Printer, 1909, page 109.

Out of the total population of New South Wales, there was a massive increase of children from 7 to 15 years who on average attended Sunday School during the period 1861 and 1900. Between 1861 and 1864, the weekly average attendance at Sunday School was 6.9 to 7.2% and between 1865 and 1900, it was 8.7 to 11%. The New South Wales Censuses revealed that children between and including 7 and 15 years was 19.6% of the total population in N.S.W. in 1861, 21.6% in 1871, 21.8% in 1881 and 20.2% in 1891. Therefore, this means between 1865-1900, *about half* of the total number of children in N.S.W. between 7 to 15 years attended Sunday School weekly.<sup>30</sup>

In 1892, the N.S.W. Government statistician wrote: “*When the sparseness of the population in some parts of the country (of N.S.W.) is considered, the church attendance will appear **very large**, and though apparently less than found in the colony of Victoria, is proportionally much larger than England.*”<sup>31</sup> This comment suggests that the large increases in the churches of N.S.W. by the 1880’s and 1890’s was not just caused by heavy migration from England. From the 1850’s onwards, there were many churchgoing British immigrants to Australia, but there were also multitudes of conversions in Australia.

## Periods of revival in Australia

Historian J. Edwin Orr records, “*Contrary to common opinion in Australia, the communities of the southern Commonwealth had experienced phenomenal (Christian) revival and awakening during the late 1850’s and early 1860’s.*”<sup>32</sup>

Even though the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Australia was greatly approximating church and Sunday School attendance in Australia in the late 1800’s, it was correct in emphasising how large the attendance figures were: “*Towards the turn of the century, on any particular Sunday, the proportions of adults who had attended church, and of children who had gone to Sunday School, were both likely to be around 45 percent.*”<sup>33</sup>

There were by God’s grace, many Australians who turned to the Lord Jesus in the early 1900’s. For example, in N.S.W. from June 1900 to April 1902, there were about 25,000 converts to Christ.<sup>34</sup> This was 1.8% of the total N.S.W. population of 1,403,332 in 1902. In the same wonderful revival, about 15% of the entire population of the Illawarra region in N.S.W. or 2,735 people turned to the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>35</sup>

Results of this Illawarra revival were greatly increased congregations, increased church membership, payment to tradesmen of debts that had been previously dishonestly avoided and reduced swearing in Mt Keira mine.<sup>36</sup> “The Methodist” on 9 August, 1902 recorded that at Mount Kembla where there were 131 converts: “*...the reality of change experienced by these converts was evidenced in altered tone of life and conversation in the mine and township. Profanity and licence gave place to purity of speech and sobriety...*”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> T.A. Coghlan, “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W” – relevant volumes.

<sup>31</sup> “The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.”, 1892, page 545.

<sup>32</sup> J. Edwin Orr, “The Flaming Tongue”, Moody Press, Chicago, 1973, page 110.

<sup>33</sup> “Cambridge Encyclopedia of Australia”, Cambridge Uni Press, Cambridge, 1994, page 102.

<sup>34</sup> Stuart Piggin, “Faith of Steel”, Wollongong, 1984, page 136.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, page 136.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, page 139.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, page 137.

## Church attendance in Victoria from 1841 to 1899

In the state of Victoria, the percentage of the total population who generally attended church was 18.5% in 1841<sup>38</sup>, 17.5% in 1846<sup>39</sup>, 20% in 1855 and 22.5% in 1863.<sup>40</sup> The percentage of the population of Victoria who usually on average attended the main Sunday church service was 23% in 1865, 25% in 1867 and 26% in 1868 and 1869<sup>41</sup>, and from 30 to 39% between 1870 and 1889.<sup>42</sup> Between 1890 to 1899, the average number of distinct individuals attending one or more of all the various Sunday church services was between 42 to just over 45%.<sup>43</sup>

In 1891, there were weekly on average 160,546 adults attending Sunday worship and children of sufficient age to attend Sunday School at Wesley Methodist churches in Victoria.<sup>44</sup> This was 13.9 % of the total population in Victoria of 1,158,372.

In 1861, Sunday School attendance was 6.4% of the total Victorian population, 7.6% in 1862 and 8.2% in 1863 and grew enormously to being between 12.2 to 16.5% between 1868 and 1911.<sup>45</sup> Between 1883 to 1886, roughly between 71 to 73½% of all children in Victoria between 6 and 15 years attended Sunday School.<sup>46</sup> There were children below 6 and older than 15 who also attended.<sup>47</sup> The Victorian Sunday School average attendance figures were 16.5% of the total population in 1909 and 15.6% in 1911.<sup>48</sup>

In his “Australian Pictures”, Howard Willoughby stated, “*Sunday schools flourish in every part of the country. The total number of children attending them is returned in Victoria as 73.5 per cent of the whole who are at the school age.*”<sup>49</sup> Willoughby then said the number would be higher if we include children in remote country areas who had no access to Sunday Schools and if we add those children whose parents taught them the Bible at home on Sunday.

## South Australian church attendance from 1843 to 1899

From 1843 to 1847, church attendance in South Australia was between 13 to 17% of the total population. But in later decades, church attendance as a percentage of the total population in South Australia was probably even bigger than in Victoria. Evidence of this is that the total church meetings or sittings in 1870 and 1877, for example, were more than double per total population in South Australia than what they were in Victoria. Note also in 1868 that in South

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<sup>38</sup> “Archives Office of N.S.W. Colonial Secretary: Returns of the Colony (Blue Books)”, 1841 volume.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 1846 volume.

<sup>40</sup> “Statistics of Victoria”, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1855, page 7 and 1863, page 70.

<sup>41</sup> “Statistics of Victoria”, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1865, page 96; 1867, page ;1868, page ; 1869, page 12.

<sup>42</sup> “Statistics of the Colony”, “Statistics of Victoria”, “Statistical Register of Victoria” and “Victorian Year Book”, relevant volumes, Government Printer, Melbourne.

<sup>43</sup> “Victorian Year Book”, relevant volumes for 1890’s, Government Printer, Melbourne.

<sup>44</sup> “The Year Book of Australia – 1893”, Turner and Henderson Publishers, Hunter St, Sydney.

<sup>45</sup> “Statistics of Victoria” and “Victorian Year Book”, relevant volumes, Government Printer, Melbourne.

<sup>46</sup> “Victorian Year Book”, 1883-84, 1884-1885 and 1886-1887.

<sup>47</sup> “Victorian Year Book”, 1890-91, page 391.

<sup>48</sup> “Victorian Year Book”, 1909-10, page 389 and 1911-12, page 545.

<sup>49</sup> Howard Willoughby, “Australian Pictures”, 1886, page 34.

Australia, there was enough seating in the churches for the whole population of the state.<sup>50</sup> For many years, the Methodists in South Australia comprised a larger percentage of the state's total population than they did in any other Australian State.<sup>51</sup>

In 1855, the average number of weekly attenders at Wesleyan Methodist churches in South Australia was 9,380.<sup>52</sup> This was 9.6% of the total population in South Australia of 97,387.<sup>53</sup> The Methodists grew dramatically to being 18.9% of the South Australian total population in 1871 and 1881 and 19% in 1891 and 1895.<sup>54</sup>

The Methodists alone grew from 5.6% of the whole Australian population in 1851 to 10.8% in 1871 and 13% in 1881.<sup>55</sup> In the state of New South Wales, the Methodists grew from 2.5% of the total population in 1841 to 5.3% in 1851 to 6.7% in 1861 to 7.8% in 1871 and 8.6% in 1881.<sup>56</sup> So the South Australian increases for Methodist Church attendance were far greater than the massive increases for the Methodists in Australia as a whole over a similar period.

In South Australia, average Sunday School attendance rates rose from only 3.9% in 1853, to 6.8% in 1855, to 10.1% in 1858, to 14.5% in 1861, to 15.1%-18.8% between 1862 to 1888 and to 18.6%-20.4% between 1889 to 1900.<sup>57</sup>

## Crime rates in the 1800's and 1900's in Australia

From the late 1800's, Christianity had a great effect on the attitudes and behaviour of a large percentage of the Australian population, including many non-churchgoers. As a result, crime rates in the late 1800's dropped dramatically and in the early and mid-1900's were very low. But from the 1960's when many Australians began to turn away from Christian attitudes to divorce, stealing, sex outside of marriage and so on, crime rates have rapidly increased.

In Australia in the 1800's, the worst criminal offences were primarily dealt with by the higher courts in each state.<sup>58</sup> The criminal convictions in all the higher courts in Australia decreased enormously between 1861 to 1905. Out of each 100,000 of population, the criminal conviction rates for Australia were 131 in 1861, 86 in 1871, 79 in 1881, 67 in 1891, 53 in 1894,<sup>59</sup> 47 in 1900 and 46 in 1905.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> "Statistical Register of South Australia", 1868, page 2.

<sup>51</sup> "The Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record" – July 21, 1858.

<sup>52</sup> Murray, page 291.

<sup>53</sup> Hans Mol, "Religion in Australia", Nelson, 1971, page 5 and T.A. Coghlan – N.S.W. Government Statistician, "A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia", 1895-6, pages 62 and 64.

<sup>54</sup> "Census of 1891 – Statisticians Report", pages 82, 91 and 218.

<sup>55</sup> Demography Bulletin No 67, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra, 1949, pages 154-5.

<sup>56</sup> T.A. Coghlan, "A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia, 1895-6", pages 63 and 65.

<sup>57</sup> "Statistical Register of South Australia", The 1859, 1865, 1870, 1872, 1877, 1880, 1890 and 1900 volumes each have figures for Sunday School attendance for South Australia for each of the previous ten year periods. "The Statistical Register of South Australia", The 1860 volume has population figures for South Australia for 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859 and 1860. The South Australian population figures for 1861 come from T.A. Coghlan's "A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australia", page 531. The South Australian population figures for 1862 to 1900 come from relevant volumes of the South Australian Statistical Register. Those for 1853 and 1854 come from C.M. Clark's "Select Documents in Australian History 1851-1900", Angus and Robertson, London, 1955, page 664.

<sup>58</sup> T.A. Coghlan, "A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia" – 1895-6", pages 93-94.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, page 94 and T.A. Coghlan, "A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia", 1897-8, page 114.

Refer also to Peter Grabosky's, "Sydney in Ferment",<sup>61</sup> – for more statistics about decreasing crime in New South Wales between 1810 and 1900.

Crime rates in each of the states in Australia did not decline each year of the 1800's. But the overall trend was a great reduction from the early 1800's to the 1890's.

## Crime in the three main Australian states in the 1800's

In New South Wales, the crime conviction rates in the higher courts per 100,000 population were 928 in 1833, 1038 in 1834, 1084 in 1835, 327 to 498 between 1841 and 1844, 194 to 294 between 1845 and 1855, 115 to 178 between 1885 and 1891, 57 to 75 between 1892 to 1897 and 55 to 57 between 1898 and 1900.<sup>62</sup>

In Victoria, the crime conviction rates in the higher courts per 100,000 population were 605 in 1841, 110 in 1859, 138 in 1860 and 1861, 70 in 1871, 52 in 1875 and 38 to 65 between 1876 and 1898.<sup>63</sup> Accompanying this wonderful reduction in crime rates, was a decrease in the approximate number of prostitutes from 210 per 100,000 population in 1883 to 110 in 1891.<sup>64</sup> The crime rates per 100,000 population in South Australia were from 47 to 92 between 1852 and 1870 and 22 to 43 from 1884 to 1900.<sup>65</sup>

## The comments of the chief government statistician

When commenting on the dramatic drop in convictions for serious crime in New South Wales from 122.3 per 100,000 population in 1870-74 to 62.7 per 100,000 population in 1895-1900, chief N.S.W. Government statistician, T.A. Coghlan commented: *"It will be seen that the fall has been nearly continuous over the whole period, convictions for serious offences being less than they were twenty-five years ago, notwithstanding the fact that population has more than doubled during that interval. It may be taken, then, as clearly proved that there has been a great decrease in crime during the last twenty-five years. The reform, if it may be so termed, has come about owing to a general improvement in the community itself, and not to the reform of individuals by reason of the deterrent effect of punishments inflicted. It is in vain to look for the reformation of persons who have lapsed into crime; the prison statistics nowhere show that punishment as now administered has in general any such effect."*<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> T.A. Coghlan, "The Wealth and Progress of New South Wales" 1900-01, page 250 and "The Official Year Book of N.S.W.", 1905-06, page 515.

<sup>61</sup> Peter Grabosky, "Sydney in Ferment", Australian National Uni Press, Canberra, 1977, pages 33-36.

<sup>62</sup> "Colonial Secretary – Returns of the Colony (Blue Books)" – relevant volumes, "New South Wales Statistical Returns" – relevant volumes, "Statistical Register of New South Wales" – relevant volumes, "Victorian Year Book" for years 1888-9 (page 346), 1890-1891 (pages 207 and 210), 1894 (pages 848 and 849) and 1895-8 (pages 1043 and 1045) confirms total conviction figures for 1884-1898 and actual rates for total New South Wales populations for 1884 to 1898.

<sup>63</sup> "Victorian Blue Books" – 1851, "Statistics of the Colony" – 1852- , "Statistics of Victoria" – volumes 1861- , "Victorian Year Book" – 1873- , "Statistical Register of Victoria" – 1874- and "Victorian Criminal Statistics" – 1865.

<sup>64</sup> "Victorian Year Book", 1890-91, page 224.

<sup>65</sup> "Statistical Register of South Australia" – relevant volumes and "Victorian Year Book" – 1888-9 (page 346) and 1890-1891 (pages 207 and 210-211) confirms total crime conviction figures for superior courts and actual rates per total population in South Australia from 1879.

<sup>66</sup> "The Wealth and Progress of N.S.W.", 1900-01, page 249.

## **Crime in Australia in the 1900's**

Between 1903 and 1952, crimes against other people's property in Australia recorded less than 25 convictions per 100,000 population in the higher courts.<sup>67</sup> Between 1963 and 1997, it rose to about 330 per 100,000.<sup>68</sup> Let us compare this to the state of Victoria between 1875 to 1894. As we saw earlier, this was a period in which there was massive attendance at Victorian churches and Sunday Schools. During these years, the government of Victoria gave no unemployment benefits, sickness benefits or other major monetary help to the poor and unemployed. Despite this, convictions in the superior courts for crimes against property in Victoria between 1875 to 1894 ranged from only 23.4 to 42.4 per 100,000 population.<sup>69</sup>

Amazingly as we will see later, during the 1890's the unemployment rate in Australia was 25 per cent among skilled workers and more among unskilled workers. The Australian unemployment rate was at the dramatically lower rates of about 2 to 11% between 1963 to 1993.<sup>70</sup>

From 1903 to 1963, the violent crime rate in Australia was below 10 per 100,000 population and grew between 1963 to 1997 to about 150 per 100,000.<sup>71</sup> The rape/sexual assault rate was about 3 per 100,000 population in 1903 and dropped to less than 1 per 100,000 between 1923 to 1952 but rose to just over 10 per 100,000 in 1993.<sup>72</sup>

## **The enormous wastage of public money because of crime**

The total expenditure by the federal, state and local governments in Australia on law, order and public safety grew from 0.81% of Gross Domestic Production in the financial year 1967/68 to 1.54% in 1999/2000 and from 2.45% of government spending on all purposes in 1967/68 to 3.51% in 1981/82.<sup>73</sup> If expenditure on law, order and public safety had remained in 1999/2000 at the 1967/68 rate of 0.81% of Gross Domestic Production, this would have saved \$4,619 million out of the total \$9,715 million spent on law, order and public safety in 1999/2000. This \$4,619 million could have been used on health and education in 1999/2000. Over 10 years, this would be \$46,190 million extra for health and education.

Australia's aging population is another major reason for the lack of public money available for health and education. But if Australia's political parties from the 1960's onwards did not legislate so many pathetic social and family policies, we would not have the present crime rates with their massive wastage of taxpayers' money.

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<sup>67</sup> Dr Lucy Sullivan, Jennifer Buckingham, Dr Barry Maley and Professor Helen Hughes, "State of the Nation – 1999", The Centre for Independent Studies, St Leonards, 1999, page 73.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> "Statistical Register of Victoria", 1883 (page 21) and

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, page 84.

<sup>71</sup> Sullivan et al, page 74.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, pages 73, 74 and 78.

<sup>73</sup> "Social Indicators – Australia", No 4, 1984, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue No 4101.0, page 274.

## The related decline in church attendance

In 1996, there were roughly 1,759,100 out of a total population of 18,423,616 in Australia who attended church weekly.<sup>74</sup> This was *only* 9.5% of the total population. Out of the total Australian population, the Anglicans had 1% weekly churchgoers, the Baptists 0.6%, the Uniting Church 0.8%, the Pentecostals 1%, the Churches of Christ 0.2% and the Catholics 4.7%.<sup>75</sup>

Also note between 1950 to 1998, the percentage of adults attending church *at least once a month dropped* from 44% to 21%.<sup>76</sup> Also the number of children under 15 years in Australia attending Christian worship weekly was only 318,000 or 1.7% of the whole Australian population.<sup>77</sup>

Note also in Australia from the 1960's, Sunday School attendance rates were dramatically less than what they were in the late 1800's. Samples of the average attendance rates in Victoria were 8.2% of the total population in 1961, 7.2% in 1966, 4.5% in 1971 and 2.8% in 1976.<sup>78</sup> Samples of Sunday School attendance rates in South Australia were 4.2% in 1966, 2.7% in 1971 and 1.9% in 1976.<sup>79</sup> The above figures did not include Pentecostal Sunday School attendance which would be much less than 1% in the 1960's and 1970's.

## The unemployment and poverty excuse

Some academics try to excuse crime increases by saying crime is caused only by unemployment and poverty. It is true that if someone is unemployed and without any income or financial support from their relatives, friends or the government, they will be more tempted to steal. But note in the 1930's when the Australian unemployment rate was at a record high of 25%, crime was at one of its lowest points in Australian history.<sup>80</sup> Also note in the 1930's, government assistance to the unemployed was very low. So low crime in the 1930's cannot be excused either by any supposed substantial government unemployment payments.

During the 1930's, most Australians – churchgoers and non-churchgoers – had Christian moral standards about stealing and other crimes and Christian generosity about helping those in need. These were the two main reasons for the low crime rate.

Similarly, as stated before serious crime in Australia dropped from 65 convictions per 100,000 population in 1891 to 53 per 100,000 in 1894 and 47 in 1900. This is despite the fact there was massive unemployment among youth and older workers, a dreadful economic depression and no unemployment benefits from governments in Australia at the time. “Australians Historical Dictionary” records: *“As depression spread, unemployment rose to 25 per cent among skilled workers and higher still among the unskilled. The unemployed suffered greatly. Without comprehensive social welfare services, they had to rely on soup kitchens the charitable*

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<sup>74</sup> Peter Kaldor et al, “Build My Church”, Open Book, Sydney, page 15.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, page 22.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, page 36.

<sup>78</sup> “Australians’ Historical Statistics”, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon Associates, 1987, pages 433-434.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Sullivan, pages 73-84.

*institutions set up.*"<sup>81</sup> This is why it is such a joke when at present we hear some academics excusing crime by saying that if we could find jobs for most of the present-day unemployed, this would reduce crime greatly.

Note in Australia in 1963 to 1973 when we had only a tiny 2 to 3 percent unemployed and only about one-tenth of the drug offences of 1992-3, we had a massive increase in convictions for crimes against property, such as theft, from about 30 per 100,000 in 1963 to about 180 per 100,000 in 1972/3.<sup>82</sup>

## **Similar to England in the 1700's**

Similarly in the 1700's in England when crime rates were extremely high, crime was not only caused by poverty. English crime was also caused by the fact that there was a dramatic turning away from Bible-based Christianity compared to the early 1600's. This turning from Jesus Christ resulted in there being a very small percentage of people in England who practiced the moral teachings of the Bible, very high rates of stealing and robbery, little concern for the poor among political and other leaders, the financial support being given to charities decreasing dramatically compared to the 1600's, multitudes getting drunk repeatedly by drinking gin straight and many of the ruling class in England being extremely corrupt and immoral examples for the rest of the population.

Homosexuality also became very common in London in the late 1600's and 1700's.<sup>83</sup> In addition, there was a wicked very high parental neglect of little children resulting in exceptionally high death rates among the latter.

Despite the marvellous ministry of John Wesley, George Whitefield and other similar preachers in the 1700's, there were only 825 Wesleyan Methodist places of worship in England and Wales by 1800. This was very small when we see that by 1851, there were 11,007 Wesleyan Methodist places of worship in England and Wales.<sup>84</sup>

Further evidence that not all crime increases in Australia since the 1960's can be blamed on drugs is the fact that so many primary school children in recent decades, who were not on drugs, have stolen things from shops, other people's yards and from school. I know this because of my dealing with so many primary school children. In my home city of Wollongong in the 1950's and before, nearly all families left milk and bread money on their front steps unprotected overnight or during the day. But it was extremely rare for any child or adult, poor or otherwise, to steal this money. The same happened in most parts of Australia in the same period.

There is a massive difference in the moral attitudes of children to stealing in Australia now when compared to the 1950's and earlier 1900's. Many of the little primary school thieves develop into criminals and/or drug addicts later in life.

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<sup>81</sup> "Australians' Historical Dictionary", Volume 9, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, 1987, page 115.

<sup>82</sup> Sullivan, pages 73, 82 and 136.

<sup>83</sup> Tim Hitchcock, "English Sexualities 1700-1800", 1977, pages 58-75 and B.R. Burg "Sodomy and the Perception of Evil", New York Uni Press, 1983, pages 12-29.

<sup>84</sup> Horace Mann's official British Government report of the Census of Religious Worship, 1851.

## **The “lucky” country not by mere luck**

Many Australians used to call Australia “the lucky country” because it had such a good economy, was protected from invasion, never experienced a civil war and had such low crime rates. But this was not a result of mere luck. It was God’s blessing on a nation which had a large percentage of its people follow Him. Deuteronomy 8:11-20, 32:13-35, Jeremiah 5:7 and Hosea 13:6-8 contain God’s warnings to the nation of Israel about not abandoning Him, His teachings and His commands after He prospered their economies. The same warning applies to Australia and other wealthy Western countries who have abandoned Him today.<sup>85</sup>

## **The effects of education**

Someone may argue, “The decreases in crime in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s were caused only by the spread of education.” But education only has a limited effect on reducing crime. In the present time in Australia, education and literacy levels are higher than ever and schools have run many programmes against drug-taking, violence and other social problems. But these have only had limited success in decreasing crime and these social problems.

## **The relationship between moral standards, ethical practices and crime**

During the late 1800’s, roughly 50% of the total Australian population attended church weekly. Of these people, they would have followed Biblical ethical standards from higher to lesser degrees. But at least they practiced Biblical moral standards to some substantial degree.

In the late 1800’s, of those who did not attend church weekly, there were many “Christianised” non-churchgoers. These latter people had been raised in Christian homes and churches when young but now did not attend church. Many of these people would have followed Biblical moral standards to certain degrees.

During the same period, there were also many non-churchgoers who called themselves “Christian” by name but who followed pagan ethical philosophies like utilitarianism, pragmatism, humanism, idealism and rationalism. These people did not follow Biblical moral standards. There were also some churchgoers who were influenced to varying degrees by these pagan philosophies when determining their moral standards. There were some Australians who had little morals at all.

During the period 1900 to the 1950’s, weekly church attendance in Australia dropped from its highs in the late 1800’s, but was still much higher than what it has been in the last few decades. But from 1900 to the 1950’s, the majority of Australians to varying degrees still held on to Biblical moral standards. This included even a percentage of non-churchgoers.

Sadly during the period from 1900 to the 1950’s, the Bible and its moral standards were constantly attacked by growing numbers of atheists, agnostics, communists, socialists and followers of pagan philosophies like utilitarianism, empiricism, pragmatism, rationalism, humanism, liberalism, logical positivism and relativism. As a result, the moral standards of Australia began to crumble.

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<sup>85</sup> I would like also to see the crime rates for England in the 1700’s, 1800’s, 1900’s and 2000’s compared against the relevant church attendance figures.

In the 1960's, the situational ethics philosophy of Reverend Joseph Fletcher <sup>86</sup>, the "if it feels good, do it" humanistic standard of the psychologist Carl Rogers, the liberal humanistic philosophy which emphasised the supposed "rights" of homosexuals, abortionists and pornographers to practice evil and the associated hippie movement with its drugs, occult and other practices spread in Australia.

Ever since the 1960's, less and less Australians have followed Biblical morals. In fact at present, there would probably be 90% of Australians who have no or only the slightest Biblical base for their ethical standards. Of the remaining 10%, of whom nearly all are churchgoers, probably not even half these have solidly Biblical morals. Sadly I speak to many born-again Christians and find also that many of these do not have Biblical morals in many areas.

The above moral collapse is the main reason for the greatly increased levels of crime since the 1960's in Australia compared to the late 1800's to the 1950's. There are other reasons for the crime increases, but the moral collapse is the main one.

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<sup>86</sup> Refer to Chapter "Avoid the Satanic Trap of Unbiblical Ethics" and Chapter "A Modern False Understanding of the Pharisees, Jesus and Paul".