

A Moral Economy

A good economy is the necessary basis of a good society. A moral society requires a moral economy.

Instead we have an economy which gives wealth to the few and poverty to the many. It is an economy in which many are addicted to luxury, while many lack basic necessities. But do we really object to the morals of the wealthy ? Or do we merely envy them their success ?

It is an economy in which everyone pursues **wealth without work** by cheating or by gambling or by speculating. Everyone seeks a place in the bureaucracy. Everyone looks to the government for favors. It is a **rip off economy** at every level. cf. Jeremiah 6.13 *For from the least to the greatest of them, every one is greedy for unjust gain.*

Predatory Occupations--occupations in which you have to rip off your customers in order to survive--are a major part of the economy. Occupations which are benign in theory are predatory in practice. Rip-offs are so routine in the health care industry that they have become standard operating procedure. The usual hospital bill is a list of crimes--theft by prescription, extortion by staff, and armed robbery at the point of a scalpel. This dishonesty is so epidemic in many occupations that someone who persists in trying to be honest can't survive. The theft becomes traditional and accepted. We become so accustomed to it that we lose track of what it really is. You don't smell the fertilizer factory after a few years of living down wind from it.

Instead of looking to the government to create a good economy we have to do what we can to build an economy which is independent of the government. Which has different moral standards from those of The People. Who never seriously oppose government corruption because their real aim is to get their share of it.

I do not mean that we need a new *system*. That there is some neat and simple way to replace the old bad *system* with a new and better *system*.

We are all *Capitalists* at heart. We all tend to pick up any money put in front of us without any serious scrutiny as to whether we acquired it by honest and useful labor or not. We learn early in life that you can earn a few dollars by honest work but that real money comes in 101 other ways and that *everybody is doing it*. Everybody except the few. And these few are not defined by *class*. They are defined by whether they follow the narrow path which leads to the strait gate.

We need better people. We need to become better people and take better care of one another. Not turn it over to the government and then complain about how badly it is done. We need to construct an economy around honest people which is insulated from dishonest people--which refuses to do business with them.

Why buy from a merchant you know to be dishonest ? Does that not describe the global economy ? If Diogenes went looking for an honest man in the global economy, his lantern would run out of fuel before he found one. When you buy from people who care about money and who don't care about you, you wind up with poisoned dog food and poisoned toothpaste. Toys contaminated with lead. *Chinese Wall Board* which emits sulfur gas. And those are only the poisons you find out about.

And aside from what this merchandise does to us, what is the manufacture of it doing to those who make it ? Half of what we buy is produced by people forced to live in conditions of near slavery. When those conditions are forced upon you, what complaint do you have ?

The American Indians, once proud and free and self reliant, were confined to reservations, deprived of their livelihood, and **MADE DEPENDENT** upon the Government. After the buffalo were gone, they could only complain that the beef ration was wormy or that it wasn't delivered on time. Their self-sustaining local economy, controlled by them, was replaced by an economy over which they had no control. What they ate--whether they ate--was no longer under their control. It was decided by men who lived far away and who weren't accountable to them.

In the modern economy this Dependence has enveloped all of us. And left us at the mercy of impersonal and often predatory forces we cannot hold accountable unless we have a fortune to spend on lawyers. Trying to manipulate a corrupt judicial system is the useless remedy for a corrupt economy. We are like the children in the fairy tale who are at the mercy of a wicked step mother who means us no good.

Homeless Capital

Just before the international financial collapse of 2008, there was about 70 trillion of homeless *capital* in the world looking for a home. As soon as any of it found a home, whether in stocks and bonds or California real estate or Brazilian currency, the rest of it rushed to follow. The price of houses in California doubled and tripled. And then collapsed.

For the sake of the argument, let us make the silly assumption that all of the *capital* now in **private** hands was accumulated by honest and useful work and that it is being *invested* in enterprises and projects and charities which benefit all of us. Actually, most of it goes into making money off money by gambling on a rigged market or relying on *insider trading*. They *invest* in a roll of the dice and then figure out how to load the dice.

But aside from this private capital, what about all the trillions of *capital* that belongs to *Sovereign Wealth Funds* ? In theory it is public money. It belongs to the people. Especially the people who control the government as it turns out. Corruption turns prosperity into poverty.

Endless Corruption

Thirty years ago Mexico developed a huge oil field. The revenue was supposed to lift Mexicans out of poverty. Today, the poverty of Mexico is worse than ever. All the revenue went into the pockets of the ruling party and its supporters. Meanwhile a certain kind of *private enterprise* flourished: the murderous drug dealing gangs are a major part of the Mexican economy.

Same story in South America and Africa and Asia and the Middle East. Colonel Khadafy's son threw a party and paid an American pop singer a million dollars to sing. Most of the public wealth of the world disappears into private **CORRUPTION**. This corruption is common all over the world. It defines government in a fundamental way: Government is 80 per cent Armed Robbery and 20 per cent vote buying. This corruption insures the hopeless poverty which forces millions to emigrate. Those who set out to *Reform* these governments only replace the robbers or make a deal with them.

Here in the United States we make corruption disappear by buying a new legal carpet and then sweeping corruption under the rug of the new law. Batteries of lawyers find loopholes in any law aimed at corruption. A man is never guilty of corruption until a jury finds him guilty despite his high priced lawyers. It rarely happens. People with money aren't so much *above the law* as they are empowered to rewrite the law with the help of their lawyers.

Thanks to the 2.25 billion acres Americans expropriated from the natives, there was enormous raw wealth here, enough to last several centuries. But those centuries have passed, our wealth has been

gobbled up, and we now find ourselves entering a twilight of the empire increasingly characterized by the same chronic and widespread poverty which afflicts most of the rest of the world.

A Tidal Wave of Paper Money

The tidal wave of international capital is a *tsunami* that leaves a wasteland behind. We should move to high ground where it can't reach us. It is an invading army of paper money. Instead of welcoming it, we should build a barrier to keep it out.

We have to somehow get out of the way of those juggernauts of financial power driven by those who aim at **wealth without work** via *investment*. Via speculation. They produce those booms that always end in busts. A flood of capital poured into Ireland. Then abandoned Ireland for Poland. Tomorrow, it will go somewhere else. American *Capitalists* have no loyalty to America. They are loyal to their *capital*.

Meanwhile, something called *microfinance* has appeared in several countries. Making small loans to poor people--mostly women--who launch small businesses. That is a step in the right direction. But why is it so hard for men who are willing to work to get access to land and stock--capital ?

These microfinance programs discriminate against men because they aim to make women independent from men and push them away from having children.

There is a hidden ideological agenda in most modern so-called *humanitarian* ventures which is to *liberate* women by putting them to work. Which really aims to *abolish the family*. Instead of putting the men to work so they can support their families.

The *abolish the family* ideology was set forth in Plato's *Republic*. Then it was preserved down through the centuries by secretive homosexual societies like the Knights Templar. It was an essential part of the secret faith of the Freemasons. It came out into the open during the early euphoria of the French Revolution before they started concealing it again. It has persisted as a half concealed basic principle of classical Marxism / Communism. And it was revived by the **Women's Liberation Movement** of the late 1960s. It has heavily infiltrated government bureaucracies, especially left / liberal bureaucracies like those at the U. N. It intends no good to women who want to have children plus a husband to provide a living while they stay home with the kids.

The denial of economic justice produces the situation where our only hope is some sort of charity. We wait for a handout from the government, from a foundation, from a charity.

faith in the free market ?

When you produce for *the market* instead of for other people who need it, you soon find yourself at the mercy of a **market** over which you have no control. Which is manipulated by men with money in far away places. They care about money and they don't care about you. They are entirely unscrupulous as they prove over and over. How can you trust them ? You can't. How can you trust this so-called *free market* ? You can't. Faith in the free market means putting your faith in unscrupulous men whose god is money.

But how much faith can we put in ourselves ? Do we not belong to the same tribe ? Everybody and his brother wants to join that vast tribe of middle men and market manipulators and traders who add nothing of value but who raise the price of every transaction by getting a piece of it.

The *market* is controlled by the *sovereign wealth funds* of corrupt and oppressive governments. It is dominated by giant corporations and manipulated by international financiers. It is a rigged market. It is only a pretence that there is anything *natural* or *free* about it. Does *free* belong in the same sentence with *China* or *Russia* or *Saudi Arabia* ?

We are indignant when we read about the corruption in high places. Why am I excluded ? It is the corruption in low places and our own participation in it which undermines the foundation of a just society. We all trample on those below us in our haste to join those above us on the economic scale. We want to get into the upper class because we imagine them to be happy. Are they ? Can we blame the rich for succeeding at what all of us are trying to do ?

wealth without work

Jesus defined *USURY* as *reaping where you did not sow and taking up what you did not lay down*. And that describes 90 per cent of the modern economy. The runaway passion for **wealth without work** and **easy money**. Everyone *greedy for unjust gain*. People *fixing and flipping* houses. Or flipping them without fixing them. Charging for *value added*--Add \$ 100 and charge \$ 1000. Doubling and tripling the price. Which is what happened with American houses before the market collapsed.

Now they are trying to re-inflate the housing market. That is, they have learned nothing. Is it a grand thing when your home doubles or triples in market price ? It means your taxes will double. And, if you cash in by selling the house, where will you live ? You have to buy another house at the same inflated price. It means your children are excluded from being able to buy a house in your neighborhood. It means that it takes two incomes to buy a home. So your wife has to go to work and can't afford to stay home and raise kids. The family with kids winds up paying rent to the family with no kids.

But people have this unshakeable faith in arriving at riches. It is the American Dream. And the Egyptian Dream. And everyone else's dream. And everyone knows there is no way to get there by honest and useful work. You have to luck in. Or play the lottery. Or play the market. Or get a government job--get hold of one of the teats of the great government sow. We can all find security by working for the government and then we can all get rich by playing the market.

Food and the *Free* Market

For most of the last century, governments have been paying farmers to **NOT GROW FOOD** to keep the price up. Now people are going hungry because they can't afford to buy food, even with government subsidies.

For our food we depend upon a so-called *free market* which is neither natural nor free. It is dominated by giant agricultural corporations which operate for the profit of stock holders. Like the stock market, the commodities markets are manipulated by unscrupulous speculators .

Most places in the world could raise all the food they need, absent war. [Nigeria, one of the most fertile countries in Africa, imports all of its food. Now they are giving free land to white farmers run out of Zimbabwe by Robert Mugabe to show them how to raise food.]

What sense does it make to ship food halfway around the world with oil at \$ 100 a barrel ? We could double our food supply with back yard gardens.

People would not be so helplessly dependent upon the government and the giant corporations if they could escape from the gigantic cities into which all of us are relentlessly herded. The countryside is

deserted and the small towns are half abandoned while everyone is crammed into already over crowded cities. We choke on the fumes of these cities of ridiculous size. When the unemployment gets bad enough we turn out in the public square to demand more welfare from the government. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire was marked by abandoned rural areas and impoverished urban mobs appeased with *bread and circuses*. The modern equivalent is food stamps and television.

affordable houses

Meanwhile, you can buy a house in a small town for a tenth of what a house costs in the big city. There is space for a family garden that can raise much of what a family needs. A family should be able to buy a home without having to pay two or three times what it is worth so that the tribe of middle men can take their cuts of a transaction to which they contribute nothing of value.

But how to get there and how to survive is the question. The other question is how to wean your kids from the illusory joys of the big city. People easily become addicted to what the city has to offer before they discover that they can't afford it.

It is not that easy to escape from the octopus of modern society, but the main reason we don't do it is that we don't seriously try to do it. We don't believe in doing it. We are mesmerized by the hope of climbing into the privileged class where we can afford all of the luxuries of the city. All our energy goes into that effort.

Meanwhile, a real family life has become a luxury we can no longer afford. The disappearance of *community* and the erosion of spiritual life pushes us into the endless pursuit of the material satisfactions that the big city provides. A real spiritual life, which is missing from most religiosity, is the only effective antidote to the endless pursuit of material satisfactions to fill the void in our lives. Even if we can afford it, our lives are consumed by the vain pursuit of the illusory pleasures of the city.

Simple living and escape from materialism require spiritual and moral qualities that most people do not have. Those that do have those qualities have to work free from their entanglement with and dependence upon structures which pander to those that lack those qualities.

a family wage

In the last 50 years, millions of good jobs have been *Down Sized* and *Out Sourced* from our economy. There has been a steady disappearance of jobs which pay a *FAMILY WAGE*: **enough so that a man can provide a decent life for his family working no more than a 40 hour week.** His wife does not have to work and she can give her time to their children. She can give them that full time **ATTENTION** which they so ardently desire and which makes all the difference in how a child develops. And the father is home evenings and week ends. [see: *Adam Smith and Family Wage*]

The doubling and tripling of the price of a family home forces women to go to work to help pay the mortgage. [See: *Pricey House, No Kids*] The manipulations of the speculators and the financiers have coincided with the *Women's Liberation* agenda which aimed to push women out of the home and into the work force. And men and women are suckered into a dream of wealth which makes them vulnerable to these anti family forces.

The original socialist movement had a half concealed **ABOLISH THE FAMILY** ideology. Accompanied by a program to put the children into government child care centers. This fundamental ideology of the Socialist / Communist / Feminist movement was sometimes openly proclaimed but more often it was concealed behind the call for **careers for women**.

Careers for Women was pushed by the feminists but it also fit into the pursuit of wealth by men and women caught up in that Dream of Easy Street which has characterized American life ever since we took 2.25 billion acres of prime real estate away from the original owners without compensation.

Putting the women to work doubles family income. But doubling the work force cuts wages in half. So now it takes two wage earners to hang on to the same income. So now women have to work to support their families. And don't have time for families. They wait until age 35 to have that one baby allowed by modern society. And often wind up sterile and childless because of using contraception backed by abortion for 20 years. Wind up with endless nightmares because of aborted babies sacrificed to careers. More and more, the modern international economy is putting families into the trash at Planned Parenthood.

Equal Rights versus Equality

Women are entitled to *Equal Rights* but equal rights do not produce *equality*. The mandate for equality has become the vehicle for the feminist attack on the traditional family in which the woman raises the children while her husband supports the family.

The **Mandate for Equality** logically leads to conscripting women into the army and putting them in combat in the front lines. That has in fact been the goal which the socialist movement adopted and which has been halfway realized in several modern nations including Zionist Israel and Syria under the Baath Socialist party. The mandate for women soldiers is first found in Plato's *Republic*. He also mandated, logically enough, that their children should be taken away from them and put into **child care centers**--government run nurseries. **LESBIANS WITH GUNS** is still the feminist dream. As seen relentlessly in contemporary TV dramas.

The most basic and important **Rights** that genuine *WOMEN* require is 1. the right to have children--plural; 2. the right to have a home; 3. the right to have a husband with a good job who brings his pay check home. 4. the right to a real *community*.

They should be able to marry young without being thereby condemned to a life of poverty. Instead of having to defer child-bearing indefinitely and running the risk of sterility because of contraception and abortion.

It isn't that women should be stuck at home all the time. And, if they had real *communities*--extended families in a stable economy--they wouldn't be. But sticking them into the factories or the offices 60 hours a week while depriving them of their chance to have children is a sorry sort of *liberation*.

Men and women need the opportunity to develop their talents. Those talents we encourage in children and then force adults to abandon. Talents which add much to life even if they pay no money. Exercising your *talent for factory work* day after day, 60 hours a week, forces you to neglect all your other talents.

Historically, conscripting women into the labor force while the men are conscripted into the army is characteristic of oppressive nations. People are effectively prevented from having families.

Pushing women out of the home and into the work force has produced a situation in which women have the jobs while the men are unemployed. Men without jobs cannot support families. And often father children who grow up without a father. Or they seek out prostitutes to meet their sexual needs. Women who have to work remain childless or become *single mothers* who scramble to hang on to marginal jobs while they neglect their children. Those neglected children get a very poor start in life and are liable to delinquency.

Single mothers is the new euphemism for mothers of illegitimate children whose fathers are unknown or out of the picture. Such children begin life with a serious handicap. What about their *rights*? What about the right of a child to have a father who really cares about her?

A good society with a good economy would secure such rights. What we have now is a bad society which is getting worse.

Favoring *women* in employment produces unemployment among men. And so it disfavors **women** who want to raise children with a husband who supports the family. These two groups have contrary interests. In the modern world the **WOMEN** label is regularly used as camouflage for females who have not much interest in the things that traditionally have belonged to *women*. They are promoting an Anti Woman who is the sworn enemy of the traditional woman.

Power for Women

Supposedly, *Empowerment of Women* is the good alternative to women being beaten. But **Power for Women**, like **Power to the People!** is an ideological fiction. Like wealth, **power** belongs to the few, never the many. People use these misleading slogans as the excuse for their own pursuit of wealth and power.

They pander to our fantasies of wealth and power with *get rich quick schemes* and meaningless slogans like *power to the people*. Could all of us become millionaires if the government wrote us a check? Your barber would want \$ 10,000 for a haircut. Why else would he cut hair now that he is a millionaire? All the restaurants would be closed. Why would millionaires wash dishes or wait on tables? We all imagine ourselves as **The General**. But how many will go forward on your command if they are all *generals* too? In a gold rush, when all of us pursue wealth, a few get rich and the rest stay poor. When you march off in the direction of *power to the people!* you wind up digging latrines in some warlord's army. The pursuit of wealth and power takes us no where that we want to go.

Society is permeated with violence and men are the victims of it as much as women. Then the victims of violence perpetuate it. Men who have themselves been beat, beat up on women. Ending violence against men is the way to prevent violence against women.

The epidemic violence of lower class humanity is produced by the less obvious violence which is built into the very structure of society. As Gandhi said: *poverty is the worst form of violence*. Women of the prosperous and privileged class, who share in wealth and power, are the cause of that violence as much as the men. In fact, much of the world's *capital* is already in the hands of women. Who participate directly or indirectly in that predatory pursuit of wealth without work which is a fundamental source of economic violence. Taking away a man's livelihood is as bad as beating him up. If he has a wife, you are beating her also.

The economy we have now beats up on women in a dozen ways. What else is it when the economy pushes women out of their homes and into the factories and into the military? What else is it when women are pushed into having an abortion? What could be more **violent**? Feminism is not the remedy

for **violence against women**, it is one of the causes. It has become the vehicle for strange females who pursue **power** in place of the families they do not have.

Sinister Forces

There is a world wide movement to eliminate the problems of humanity by eliminating humanity through contraception and abortion. Eliminate poverty by eliminating poor people.

Look at the world wide complicity with the one child forced abortion policy of China. The American government and the United Nations tacitly go along with this policy.

The wealthiest foundations finance organizations like Planned Parenthood which aggressively promote contraception and abortion in Africa and Asia, as well as North and South America. The mandate of the men who set up these foundations is to reduce the population of the poor so that there is more room for the estates of the rich.

Organizations that have no scruples about abortion, have no scruples. If getting rid of people qualifies as *humanitarianism* then Adolph Hitler, Joe Stalin and Mao Tse Sung were all *humanitarians*. Abortionist Warren Hern, who has gotten rid of thousands of persons via late term abortions, is presented to the world as a *humanitarian*. Who pays himself several thousand dollars an hour for his services. There would be no shortage of *humanitarians* in this world if it paid everyone that well.

Family and Community

What future is there for society without families ? A good society is based upon family and *community*-that now meaningless word.

A good society is not based upon the tribe or the *nation*. The nation is established by the army and the police. It depends upon the government.

A real *community* has an entirely different basis.

Work Not Just Wages

People need *work*, not just income. It is spiritually unhealthy and morally debilitating to receive an income while we remain idle, while we do nothing useful for others, while we play games of speculation. We need the work which properly belongs to us, which we are called to do.

To own your own place of work and the tools of your trade is a great blessing. The curse of the modern economy is that so few of us achieve that. Helping people to become self employed at something which pays better than collecting cans or pushing a rented popsicle cart is in the obvious right direction of independence and freedom.

Instead, we are lost in the bureaucracy, dependent upon the government, at the mercy of impersonal corporations or dependent upon unscrupulous people who care nothing for us. We are unemployed and helpless to do anything about it, having no resources of our own.

You have to do everything you can to escape from dependence upon such an economy. It is easier said than done.

But the main reason we don't do it is that we have not really tried to do it. We and our children are addicted to the luxuries of the city and mesmerized by those bright pictures of the affluent lifestyle, as seen on TV and in the movies, which we can get hold of somehow--like with a College Education. We seek **a place in the sun** = a slot in the government bureaucracy.

We are obsessed with the government and Dependent upon it. We bow to the giant corporation and pray to it for economic mercy.

Without a real religious faith, we are vulnerable to that faith in material success and that obsession with the latest gadgets that is so characteristic of modern society.

Revolution by cell phone. But cell phones can only communicate the same old silliness we used to communicate by regular phones. The modern means of communication via the internet is wonderful. But what is communicated is not so wonderful. Maybe *the media is the message*, but the message is usually not worth hearing.

Education

Real education begins when you escape from school and get a library card.

It is true that it does not give you that job credential which will supposedly admit you to the privileged class. Most of our young people have the faith that a college degree is the road to prosperity. For many, it has become an illusion.

The amount of money spent on a college education could buy a house or a farm or stock a small business.

It could finance a major first step in the direction of self-employment and independence or starting a family.

Can we all find jobs in the government bureaucracy ?

A good first step in the direction of a good economy would be to greatly reduce the size and expense of the government bureaucracy beginning with the military establishment. Instead of, as now, everyone trying to join it and constantly expanding it.

There is only so much room in the upper class, however much they try to expand it. We can't all belong to it. We are soothed and misled by the fantasy that we can. We can't all be movie stars and famous football players. Neither can we all get into the professional class or become CEOs and brokers.

Does that mean we have to starve ? There has to be a way for people to make a living on a simple basis of honest work and a minimum ownership of property. An alternative economy which is not being constantly eroded by forces beyond our control. We need to somehow emancipate ourselves from dependence upon those who do not love us, and whose honesty cannot be trusted.

The insistence that we have to **compete** in the international market by advanced education means that only the elite have the right to a good life. Those who can't afford endless schooling or who can't get into the best universities are eliminated by the rule of *survival of the fittest / survival of the wealthiest*. Those who are merely willing to do an honest day's work at a low tech task are doomed. Have no right to go on living. They failed to **compete**.

Automation is rapidly destroying jobs. Bank clerks are replaced by ATMs. Store clerks are replaced by scanning machines. Computers with mechanical voices answer the phone. It is only a question of time before most of us join the ranks of the NO LONGER NEEDED. The Surplus Population. The Un Wanted. *Every Child a Wanted Child* is Planned Parenthood's slogan. If you are **Not Wanted** you are not really a child. Your proper home is in the trash.

So, if we continue to Depend Upon this Global Economy which classifies us as Surplus, we have No Future. That is where there is some urgency in working to establish an economy which no longer depends upon this treacherous Global Economy. Let them keep their paper money so long as we can hang onto enough land and *stock* to go on living.

Right to Life / Right to Property

We have the right to life from the moment of conception. *A person is a person, no matter how small.* Everyone has the right to a birthday. Modern society commits a fundamental crime of injustice when it takes away that right by allowing abortion. Governments which will not protect the preborn child lose any moral claim arising from the pretence that they protect their own citizens. Whatever else is wrong with Moslem society, they still hold the line against abortion.

In a dozen other ways, modern societies systematically snuff out the lives of poor people. At best, they put them on the dole instead of giving them the opportunity to support themselves. Every mouth which needs feeding is accompanied by a pair of hands which are capable of feeding it, **IF** that pair of hands can get hold of a little land and / or *stock*. [Adam Smith's word for *capital*] Such as a few chickens. Or a tamale cart. From which you can sell chicken tamales. It's a start anyway. Better than can collecting--*aluminum mining*--the most common form of modern *free enterprise*.

We have a right to live, which means we have the right to what we need to live--the necessary minimum of property or opportunity to make fruitful our own work. The world belongs to God and He gives it to all of his children, not just those whose grandfathers got in on the government land giveaway at the expense of the natives.

Limited Rights

Everyone has the right to property and that is why the right **cannot be an absolute right**. It is limited by the rights of others. Your right to swing your arm freely ends where someone else's face begins. The fallacy of the argument that *a woman has the right to do what she wants with her own body* is that there is a **second body** at risk in an abortion. When Mr. Castro delivers a 6 hour speech, while everyone else has to shut up and listen, this illustrates the denial of the right of free speech, not the affirmation of it. If the Sultan puts all the women into his harem, that is not covered by the right of matrimony. If the Duke collects all the farms into an estate which takes up half the county, that is a violation of the right of property which belongs to those left landless.

But no government and no revolution will ever deliver *justice*. Justice depends upon us. It is our responsibility. There is a fundamental crime of injustice built into an economy which deprives people of the minimum of property which is necessary to make a living. It is up to US to remedy that injustice.

We should not have to wait forlornly for a government handout or a change of government. It is up to us, not to the government, to see that justice is done. Passing that moral obligation off to the government, which only pretends to take care of it, is where the trouble begins.

We don't have the right to live off someone else's work, like so many people do, at every level of society.

There should be, if not a ceiling upon wealth, a floor under poverty. Guaranteed by us, not the government. When the government does it, the money sticks in the bureaucracy. And then we all become dependent upon that bureaucracy. And do our best to get into it.

Obviously there is a connection between the extreme property of the few and the entire lack of property of the many. But who can be trusted to fairly re-distribute property without most of it winding up in his own bank account? Every violent revolution against wealth and privilege only brings us full circle to the same situation with a **New Class** holding onto the wealth and privilege.

If we cannot prevent the wealthy few from controlling the market, perhaps we can prevent that market from controlling us. Their wealth will turn into so much paper if they cannot buy us with it. It is astonishing how much *wealth* did turn into toilet paper in the past few years. Gone with the wind. When a \$ 100,000 house becomes a \$ 300,000 house and then returns to being a \$ 100,000 house, where did that money go?

A Free Society

The first real step on the road to freedom is to become *independent*. Free from dependency upon the government. Upon a society in which everyone is pursuing wealth without work. A society in which some take advantage of privilege while the rest must struggle to survive.

Maybe it cannot be done. But the main reason we haven't done it is that we haven't really tried to do it. It cannot be done via a popular revolution which aims at replacing the fellow in the Presidential Palace with some other fellow. That is the big illusion we must discard.

This faith in an over night *revolution* is childish. It takes time to build anything right. The foundation has to be put in right. Otherwise the whole edifice will collapse. The foundation has to be peace and justice. The workmen have to be honest and competent. Guns are not the tools which can be used to build a good society.

How about instead a *moral evolution*--a steady step by step progress in the right direction. An evolution directed by God and carried out by good men and women doing the right thing every day.

I don't expect people to embrace moral reform because I point out to them that they should do it. But there are honest men who can join together and find ways to Escape from Dependence Upon Dishonest Men. Usually we get cheated while we are trying to cheat. cf. *You Can't Cheat an Honest Man*. You can, but usually it happens for the other reason. Stay out of the dice game. If you get into the dice game, don't complain when you walk away with empty pockets.

Terry Sullivan

see 5 other articles on *moral economy*:

The Great Land Hunt

Governor Bradford Discovers the Folly of Communism and the Wisdom of Piece Work

Christian Economy [Adam Smith in the Dock]

Adam Smith and Family Wage

The Unjust Economy