

## Get a Job?

Throughout history, there have been many times when advances in industrial technology have put large groups of people out of work. In the past, there was generally no public safety net so there was much suffering and strife, but the next generation learned new skills and life went on. The efforts of the Luddites were of no use.

Now we come to a time when machines are doing most of the work that sustains the community. This leaves an immense amount of leftover people. In the long evolution of capitalism that spans several thousand generations, this is an event that, with a few small exceptions, is only a few generations old. Capitalism's answer to this has been to invent evermore toys for evermore factories to build, make products less and less durable, and add on layer after layer of support staff, profiteers, and thieves. Finally, we've reached a point where there's no capitalist way to get everyone a paycheck and most of the ongoing paychecks are for the irrelevant work and frivolous toys that are rapidly consuming the planet's energy and resources and poisoning the environment we have to live in. This is not a sustainable system, and the endgame will likely be grim. The size of the economy is the rate at which we are consuming the planet.

As long as the established way to get a license to consume [money] is a job, the way to survive is to get a job or beg or steal. Capitalism has driven the conventional work ethic deep into the psyche of this civilization. But we don't need more jobs. We need different kinds of work. The machines are pumping out plenty of cheap crap to throw in the landfill or waste energy recycling, but the important work of maintaining and recreating the infrastructure of civilization isn't keeping up with entropy. FDR got it right and pulled us out of the Great Depression. He didn't do it with high tech. He accomplished some of the recovery with unemployment insurance and social security, but he did most of it with shovels and a paycheck. There's a lot of work that needs to get done and it's not happening. Our infrastructure is in desperate disrepair and instead of fixing the problem, we're paying people to be unemployed and we're subsidizing Wal Mart to ship our resource base to the landfill as fast as possible.

The cost of health care for people eating nutritionally bankrupt food and getting not nearly enough exercise is more than it would cost to rebuild our nation's infrastructure. Most of today's jobs are severely exercise deficient, a condition almost guaranteed to cause obesity. If you take a look at the kinds of foods that are currently being purchased with food stamps and distributed by charity organizations, the average nutritional values are pathetic. Just the other day I watched a woman buy 5 cases of Coca Cola with food stamps. Don't just give them food; give them good nutritional education, gardening and farming skills and supplies, and spend the rest of the money hiring them to redesign and rebuild our infrastructure.

When you strip away all the complicated economics, politics, and cultural mechanisms we use to organize humanity's efforts to stay alive, healthy, and happy, it all comes down to how much food, shelter, transportation, health care, and entertainment are produced, how durable they are, how sustainable they are, what they cost in energy, resources, and poisonous byproducts, and how evenly they are distributed. Our current system of capitalism has become extremely inefficient, incompetent, wasteful, and poisonous in supplying the community's wants and needs. Capitalism, in its current form,

has been subverted by ignorance and unfettered greed to the point where it's become a deadly danger.

Capitalism is based on consumption, and the cash flow necessary for the operation of the world's governments is currently based on the cash flow of capitalism. This presents a basic conundrum, as the problems we need government for are becoming increasingly caused by excess consumption on one hand and desperate poverty on the other.

We say we live in a democracy, but we call our real system of government democratic capitalism. Democratic is the adjective. Capitalism is the noun. We have an immediate need to move beyond capitalism as our form of government. Democracy has been bought by capitalism and has been rendered incompetent and impotent by an electoral system that lets money buy the votes of fools. The pervasive dishonesty enabled by our advances in communication technology is severely corrupting the electoral process. The kind of political advertising that money buys influences the kinds of voters most easily conned and least qualified to make intelligent choices, and the choices they've made have given us a government full of crooks and fools who spend a lot of time arguing over incompetence, blaming everyone but themselves, and getting almost nothing done that really matters.

Democracy is only successful when the level of wisdom within the general community develops to the point where the electorate is qualified to elect competent leadership. A large portion of U.S. voters have become so ignorant that they were conned into electing an idiot mobster, aspiring dictator for president who was hell bent on dismantling the democracy. The need for democracy is based on the need to control the power of kings [the rich guys]. Since capitalism bought democracy, the rich guys are once again the kings of the world. Unfortunately, most of them are so steeped in the process of capitalism and greed that they can't or won't see that capitalism is not qualified to lead and are taking us to a disastrous end. Capitalism, in its current form, is eating us alive. It's change or die.

The wealth of this civilization's fall harvest is about to turn into a mean winter as desperate poverty creeps out of North Africa, the Middle East, and Central America into the rest of the world, climate change steadily destroys our homes, businesses, and croplands with larger floods, droughts, storms, and fires, our consumption addiction poisons our environment, pandemic vectors increase, and the air forces of a multitude of countries continue to destroy city after city after city. Around the world, mass migrations are piling up on borders as more and more of our planet becomes unlivable. It's time to store the seeds of this civilization in anticipation of spring. It's no longer about whether the shit's gonna hit the fan; it's about not getting hit by the fan on the way through, and it's about what to do with the fertilizer on the other side.