

## 17. Fair Share

If you think globally, people everywhere ought to have the same chance to take advantage of whatever resources World has to offer. There's more surplus in nature than want, it's just that someone in order to profit unfairly separates surplus from those who need it.

A nation with a population only 12% of the 2 most populous nations, China and India, combined and barely more than Indonesian archipelago, America depletes an inordinate share of World's mineral resources. By rights, United States should be allotted only 5% of global oil production on an annual basis. It grabs something like 25%, 50% of all gasoline, 40% of which go into personal cars and SUVs. A fair allotment would totally alter American lifestyles. It would prohibit individual motorized transportation. Remaining oil would have to be allocated to industrial and military uses. None imported, which wastes too much in the process, all energy would have to be produced stateside. Mo-ves used for shipping would have to be electric, because nation's coal fired, garbage burning or nuclear powered electric plants could supply recharging voltage. Since nuclear uses rare minerals, some percentage of power thus created should be redirected to source mining countries. Electric plants that are gas fired, most of them, would have to be converted or shut. For individuals, non-motorized and public conveyance would become the norm: bikes, cyclos, feet, ferries, hydrofoils, monorails, rickshaws, river runners, subways, trains. Streets would become covered in sand, crumbling, dirty for lack of sweeping, empty, feral, in major disrepair over time. Given this just premise, one could imagine this scenario occurring sometime soon unless wars are waged to dominate these dwindling resources which cannot be renewed, what they've already proposed with Iran.

A famous Princeton geologist, the same one who foresaw each energy crisis since the 1960's, keeps a chart monitoring oil production and predicting where it's headed. Before there was a demand, oil bubbled out of ground near surface, nothing more than a local nuisance. Once applications were found, surface deposits were quickly exhausted. Derricks were raised, and wildcatters pumped shallow wells dry. Companies consolidated independents and began digging deeper wells, until also dry. They had to go offshore to drain deposits. World's biggest reserve, in Middle East, is greatly diminished. Now they're faced with exploring in the most remote regions—beneath inhospitable deserts, miles of ocean, tundra

permafrost—to keep supply flowing. Soon it will become impractical and unprofitable to continue. Oil sources are finite. But, long before they totally run out, it will become too costly and inefficient to tap them. Without its 6:1 profit ratio, oil production is prohibitively labor intensive, like gold mines they close because ore gets too scarce to justify risks of extraction of what little remains.

Meanwhile, demand is increasing as more populous nations adapt to Western technologies. China has a burgeoning road system and manufacturing base. India absorbs outsourced responsibilities from multinationals, thus raising the standard of living for those employed as well as their fuel needs. You'd like to scream, "Don't repeat our mistakes! Don't become addicted to alien energy!" For short term luxury, they are inviting an unrecognized evil of associated crime and devastation that threatens to kill all life on planet, leaving a legacy for which future generations will have to suffer. If only 20% of planet's population already depleted 55% of these finite sources, and World census has meanwhile quadrupled, you can see this is only going to hasten an irrevocable turning point. That geologist predicted this would happen right about *now*.

As costs rise for exploration, permanent despoilment increases exponentially. Companies losing profitability can little afford to pay for cleanup operations, such as another Valdez spill. Equipment can't be maintained as necessary. Neglected boats sink. Ecological effects are devastating. One only has to look at Eastern European countries, towns in Poland, to see what negligence can do: exposed strip mines with poisonous cadmium and lead and radioactive debris resulting in compromised health and no relief in sight. Protected pristine wildernesses in places like Alaska's ANWAR or Iceland's highland succumb to dictatorial policies intent on exploiting through global economies. Every 1% increase in demand drives oil prices up 20% despite stepped up production. Given potential for harm any supply cut might cause, you'd think energy would be a closely regulated industry, if not state controlled altogether, that is, carefully run by democracies of citizens, or United Nations. Not even that would ensure planetary safety.

Should we care that oil is disappearing? Illich called the very notion of an energy crisis, "A euphemistic phrase that conceals a contradiction and consecrates an illusion." If your future depends on traditional energy sources, it's truly doomed. Commodity speculators are already running up price/barrel. The low energy production inherent in individual bodies working for themselves is far more efficient to harness. Do it yourself projects have created a vast empire for Home Despot and other companies that feed off

self reliance. Yet people *are* waking up to the fact that they can empower themselves to deal with their own needs, rather than swap energy credits to get stuff done. When all oil is gone, atmospheric pollutants might return to noncarcinogenic, pre-industrial levels, although burning coal and wood will be a net degradation.

New alternatives can be imagined and implemented. One must set a desirable target and move toward it. Can't design for an unknown power source, wasteful to design for one that's disappearing. If everything is going to be electric, electricity should be free, sensibly rationed and state produced. Energy should be guaranteed to farmers and manufacturers of key commodities; people using computers and gameboys would have to produce their own through photovoltaics, treadmills or windmills. This is not to say such a solution would not be without problems, as would any paradigm shift. It'd behoove people to focus on what's most important for the common good. Of course, everyone wants their project or vice to take precedence. But, push come to shove, he'd rather see hospitals get theirs before casinos with thousands of 1-arm bandits sucking up coins from sedentary patrons and juice from the grid. Certain rides at forward thinking amusement parks already run principally on sunlight. Sunlight is free, mighty powerful when artfully harnessed, and ultimately the source of all energy on Earth whether directly, as with wind, or indirectly, as biomass turned into oil over eons.

Once a year some bureaucratic agency makes electric companies disclose where they get their power from. With 1 monthly bill they enclose an addendum, which almost everyone tosses into garbage unread. But not him. It differentiated between coal, diesel, gas, oil and a plethora of sources, but what it all amounted to was 2/3 came from rapidly disappearing fossil fuels, 1/4 from nuclear fission that produces radioactive waste, and 1/20 from renewable hydropower and wood. Alternatives, as landfill gases or trash-to-energy, accounted for only 1 megawatt in 100. At issue is not enough is being done to expand diversity. Federal initiatives were periodically announced, but they always turned out to be giveaways which did nothing to fix this mix. Practically ignored were biomass, digester gas, fuel cell, resource efficiency, solar photovoltaic, solid waste, and wind. They mean to say they can't squeeze 1% each out of these? No, their latest brainstorm is to charge you extra if you'd prefer your electricity "clean". What a tactic! All joins together on filthy grid, so this is just another rip off. Utilities regulators should force them to do it as a matter of course. Meanwhile, over 1,000 pounds per megawatt of carbon dioxide was emitted along with

traces of deadly carbon monoxide, mercury, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide, as if everyone wasn't already poisoned enough. Gags bicyclists breathing deep during nonpolluting self propulsion.

Hydroelectricity is a tightrope walk. You can't dam rivers and flood forests or sensitive wildlife preserves that might be responsible for controlling weather patterns or preserving species survival without devastating consequences. Cars, chainsaws and cattle, what scientists call the 3-C's, create havoc. Projects to hack up rain forests for grazing land were well underway until curtailed around 1990. They even planned to dam Amazonia until Lovelock, Sagan and other scientists pointed out that its equatorial jungle affects entire troposphere and all life on Earth, just as the rapidly disappearing polar glaciers reflect excess radiation back into space. But some rivers flow steadily through rural and suburban areas over existing dams without being harnessed, and small generators could easily tap this potential without harm. Small kilowatt turbines are disdained by greedy utilities, when many of them could certainly fortify their grid. Big power plants are easier to manage, it seems, and write off costs onto consumers.

Small strides had been made providing alternative propulsive fuels. They can stretch gasoline with alcohol made from grain. Doesn't have the same punch as real gasoline, so mileage is less, which makes you question whether it's worth doing. Some analysts think of it as a net loss in energy. Average miles per gallon peaked slightly above 22 in the late '80s, and had been falling ever since, currently 20.7. In 2003 mo-ves were bigger, heavier and wider, surpassing 2 tons on average for the first time since 1976. Brings back the fanny fins. Consumption of 50 mpg and above had repeatedly been demonstrated by engineering students trying to win contests, but their successful technologies are never applied. Anyway, they can't restore this resource. Replacing crude oil would take millions of years. Natural gas (methane) can be produced from decaying matter, but not on a scale massive enough to make a dent in demand, especially since most new electric plants are gas fired. Shale is meager. Even hydrogen extracted from plentiful seawater is no solution, as hydrogen is highly unstable, not readily transportable and technologies to extract it use more energy than would be yielded. Nuclear plants don't operate on burnable fuels, but what do you do with spent materials? Storing radioactive wastes is already a major problem. You'd think some innovation would harness this waste to extract remaining potential. Until entire nuclear lifecycle can be worked out, society should suspend its use.

At least in industrial settings or on a grid they can seek ways of working in alternatives. At home, recovery times for better insulation, energy efficient replacements, multifuel furnaces, and solar installations all represent lifetimes of use. You'd have to catch young parents, who probably couldn't then afford an upgrade, to jump start initiatives, so, by the time they pass property on to heirs or retire in sunny climates, expenses might be recouped. Consequently, a preponderance of 50-year-old oil burners waste 25% or more of aptly named *fossil fuel*, a relic from a past fast becoming extinct. Minimum municipalities could do is enact a moratorium on any domestic building other than passive solar, but this might interfere with their mission of expanding tax rolls for short term greed. A better strategy than giving corporations energy credits would be to give homeowner incentives to increase energy efficiency. This would broaden effective base with far more participants, create careers, extend tax relief to responsible homeowners, and generate indirect benefits of countless home improvements: new doors, siding, windows; properties kept up; urban renewal. It's been tried with minimal success, but incentives were too small to attract anyone but the most daring. Nearly impossible to force compliance; anyone could claim credit by falsifying documents.

Some might argue that capitalism is a way to keep score or share, effort for energy entitlement, goods and money for crude. Americans pays increasingly more for fuel, which winds up in the coffers of a few bizarrely wealthy monarchs. Ironic. Lower and middleclass minions drive most, struggling to commute to ever more distant work, since the very wealthy are few and far between and don't have to. CEOs have been known to move corporate headquarters to wherever most convenient for them, near an airport they like, a favorite resort, their Summer home. Workers commute to them or relocate at their own expense. Trickle up never ceases.

What happens when oil is gone, party's over, relationships sour? You'll have ultra-rich kings in armed camps fending off trillions of sufferers, a pure medium for spawning rebellion, surely a better explanation for what's already happening. Sheiks are rousing their deprived minions to strike back at those who made them unimaginably affluent, their insatiable customers. Islamic extremists are being baited into hating the wrong party, those on a far continent, with an incessant mass media undercurrent that urges "Get *them*, not us!" It would be far easier to cripple America if they simply overthrew Arabian ruling class and denied access to crude.

This didn't make Iran any better off, though, because they've forgotten a customer is always right, and will find another supplier rather than be held hostage. Being the last nation with oil will only make you a takeover target ripe for invasion.

Middle eastern nations are run by mentalities on a kindergarten level. They grab and squabble. If it wasn't for a vast proved oil reserve, industrialized countries would have rightly continued to ignore them. It was only after America used up its own reserve this became an issue. Middle eastern oil ministers claim there's no shortage in worldwide supplies. Market speculators use any excuse to run up gasoline prices for profit. Conflicts, even rumors of more, create chances to profit if you're in position. It works under the same sociology as when weathermen predict a snowstorm; daily staples of bread and milk disappear from supermarket shelves.

It'd take a lot of cash and a concerted effort to develop alternatives, and no private enterprise has that much to invest. Delivery of such technology is decades away. Physicists estimate it will take 50 years to develop reactors using nuclear fusion, a cleaner kind of energy. As long as there's an easy way out, nobody wants to take any initiative. People make do when faced with adversity; during revolutionary chaos in Moscow they burnt furniture to keep warm, a desperate, short-lived waste. Considering the energy to produce durable goods, emphasis should be on long service life for all products, a plummeting parameter under planned obsolescence. About the only advantage of short duty cycles is that mankind can get rid of fleeting cars and other flimsy products altogether within a decade, replace them with durable, fuel efficient rail and seaboard transport, both of which also make adequate housing, another unrealized savings. They should've developed alternatives when they had a chance, but mercantile combat is dirty and quick. Conventional industries actively lobbied against, as this might have negatively impacted short-term profits. Consequently, there's no long-term solution. This entire economy will destabilize and collapse, never to recover. The only question is how soon. Al was sure privileged dolts didn't want to hear this. Almost everyone unreasonably expected more of the same indefinitely. He knew better.

Upon learning this truth, many would run in circles gnashing teeth and howling. Whose interest does this serve? Nobody's. People to whom he said it immediately denied. They believed there were a 50 year supply, endless reserves, plenty of alternatives, secret clever technologies standing by. The horror of what's really happening was too much to deal with. His attitude was, "Wake up, sniff the air, notice there's no coffee to smell, get busy." Mankind has to

find other ways to deal with everyday needs—energy, food, materials, tools—to ensure each was sustainable, and an environment within which it’s possible. While working under a profit motive, this becomes a low priority, when, in fact, nothing else was more important to your species’ survival, at least on this planet. “Change is not necessary; survival is not mandatory,” quipped Deming in a cheery if twisted way.

He imagined a long history of humans colonizing planets, which, within a few generations, reverted to a primitive status, predecessors using chert tools to survive after energy was spent, tools broken, skirmishes claimed massive numbers of select intellects, and so knowledge too lapsed. Genetic intelligence resurfaced on occasions, a Mendelian inevitability, only for the starving masses to snuff it out again. An empty belly was incentive enough to develop workable stone tools. Eventually more and more began to agree that smart ways were better, and agreements were made, only to have them set back periodically by jealousies and squabbles by sibling rivals. This just about describes all history on Earth to the present, except evidence an initial colonization had, naturally, been obliterated by scavengers over time. In the billions of years Earth has been around, this may have happened more than once, or repeated from a series of distant planets, rendered unusable by contamination, depletion of minerals, and hideous idiocy. Hard to believe that, on Earth, minerals deposited themselves in caches that were relatively easy to mine; sounded more like someone had stashed them to be retrieved later. Makes a good sci-fi plot, no?

As a fantasy, this seemed plausible. There were reasonable scientific theories to refute, for example, carnivorous dinosaurs devouring humans into extinction, and any lack of fossilized remains for modern humans dating earlier than a million years ago. Australopithecine protohumans only appeared about 4 million years ago, and fossils of developmental forms seemed to indicate an evolutionary chain. But this is only an interpretation, and what difference does it make, anyway? You could spend a lifetime never deriving any truth about the irrevocably guarded past, create even weirder myths to explain, and forget to create a viable future for yourself. The only evolution he ever personally witnessed was de-evolution, civilization crumbling.

If people were smart, they’d move to mesh well, as efficiently as possible, so as to use the least amount of fuel and preserve road beds from heavy braking damage. Instead they show ads of SUVs tearing through deserts, further disturbing these delicate ecosystems, just to avoid roadwork or traffic lights. Not bad enough

they've so oversold people on smooth driving that \$576 billion spent per year is not enough to assuage their lust to accelerate and burn more fuel, but do they have to thoughtlessly slog through beach dunes and struggling micro-environs, where greenery is barely hanging on? Tourwreck tagline: "The highway is just a suggestion." Gee Whiz quickly countered with their own off-road pickup ad. Soon everyone will be driving through cabbage patches and wheat fields. Defoliating countryside is a lousy way to preserve roadbeds. Might instead recommend farmers leave their combines and tractors in fields and ride dirt bikes back and forth to them. Would conserve a lot of fuel. He considered many such ways to work in *effective* trips, like riding to enlightened clients or volunteering. Nobody should hold riding a bike against you when you're donating your time for free. Don't want much? Looking for balance? Humdingers are sold as a way to "restore balance", but they really mean "to get even" for rude mistreatment. Might as well make vengeance a motive, since the Governor of California has a half dozen Humdingers; all Arn's flicks were about vengeance, and California gave up its fight to make motormakers introduce clean vehicles. In Massachusetts, bicyclists can *get even* by noting license plate of a smoking mo-ve and reporting it to their stinkpot hotline, 888-VIOLATE. According to a new book, GW recalled and baled about 600 test electric cars despite their popularity among those who leased them. No reasonable explanation was given.

Even if 4 in 5 suddenly stopped driving, this wouldn't forestall coming crisis very long. Bicycles won't preserve status quo. They do provide an alternative should the unthinkable suddenly occur. They *could* be used while everyone is trying to sort out how to get to work, if there still was any, where to move nearby before working out how to reach opportunities closer to home. Suburbs only exist because of cheap transportation and disappearing resources. Cities will be transformed as masses migrate from suburbs into cities or out to countryside to begin subsistence farming. It'll be, "Exodus/movement of the people," as Marley sang. Steam locomotives, run on a renewable fuel, split wood, will again be practical. They'll have to again be used to bring produce into cities. Horses and carts might serve locally, as farmers supply central markets at railheads. Unfortunately, rail rights-of-way were all being converted to bikeways, but this could be adapted easily enough, or turned into elevated mag-lev monorail lines, multiplying their uses.

Farming gradually diminished across America in favor of imported produce. Once predominantly farmed land had reverted to trees. Vermont went from 35 to 80% forested. This provides a

head start for lean times. Trees could be harvested and replaced with crops. But the nation would never fully revert to agrarian practices. Farming has evolved into vast enterprises run on fossil fuels by reactionary bigots. Conservatism creates starving masses, who would attack farmers, the only ones with anything left worth fighting over, food, when money becomes useless as a method for exchange. In cash poor ghettos, drugs, sex and stolen bikes are already interchangeable as street currency. If engineers persist on solving problems of information transmission and retrieval, rather than developing alternative resources and practical manufacture, such disasters are virtually assured. A nation needs more chemical, civil, and mechanical engineers, physicists, and technology appliers than software designers, a clean, safe, stable, sweet deal everyone wants, not that they all aren't somehow linked and mutually supportive. They should put more effort into integrating technologies.

America today is structured like this [forgive the inhuman digits]: Struggling poor make up 75%; they can't care about anyone else because that might impact survival. A bourgeois 15% live on credit, deep in debt, whose thoughtless consumerism obviates caring about anyone else. This 90% of populace owes a combined debt of over \$800 billion. Only 7% are doing okay, have debt in check; they mind their own business, which is what makes them successful louts with a lust for SUVs and such stuff. Another 2% are well off, live in nice houses, and think of nothing else but how to make more; money flows their way, and they grab whatever they can, siphon sustenance like sea anemones, but seldom spend any. Then there's this sly plutocracy above it all which only cares about its own program, a zero sum game in which everyone else loses.

Wealth separates the privileged from the multitude. Like supertankers set sail, there are rich liberals and rich conservatives, as well as middleclass daysailers and poor dingies bobbing in their wakes. Conservatives generally believe that they don't have to pay for anyone else's welfare. They complain, "Once you give stuff away, people begin taking and trespassing." Wage earners are easily seduced by this idea, and are duped to vote for wealthy candidates who label themselves "fiscally responsible". No matter what you've been foolish enough to agree on, government's sole purpose is to pool your money for irresponsible spending. You can be very liberal on social issues if all your assets are wrapped up in tax exempt trusts, constantly seek new justifications for costly ventures, dream up thousands of ways for wasting someone else's money, use this to gather a basis for support among struggling lowest class. Conservative or liberal are sides of the same dime. The only thing of which

you can be sure is that the *haves* play the *have nots* as pawns and wind up with all the dimes.

Companies pay teams of henchmen to stay up nights thinking of ways to bilk you. By yourself, you could never be as devious. They should be devoted to organizing work for as many unemployed as possible, break even, if they must. Corporations crave profits, and as long as the privileged benefit their minions subsist. Why? So CEOs and board members can abuse privileges with virtual impunity? Often companies rate as their single biggest expense executive compensation. Makes it hard to remain profitable. In other words, no stakeholders benefit except a few executives. Economists estimate that less than 1% of families hold 90% of America's wealth. Whether or not that's true, gap between poorest and richest has never been greater. With so few holding so much wealth, the middle class is quickly disappearing. Economy isn't working. Wide-scale stock market swindles deplete 401K retirement savings. Because government runs on money, all Congressional legislation, despite its ostensible virtue, somehow favors corporations and the wealthy, for example, a new bill abolishing taxes on capital gains and dividends. Instead of focusing on needs of consumers, who actually pay all bills, and those struggling to survive, they dangle this carrot of affluence, deplete resources, impoverish the majority, and poison minds against cooperation. Maybe Wordsworth was on to something in that strophe, "Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers: /Little we see in Nature that is ours." Time for America to reassess its priorities. Oh, yeah.

Concentrating wealth makes it easier for ever fewer powers-that-be to concentrate it all the more, win in their minds, a game that can never be won without totally collapsing entire World's economy, and thus devaluing whatever they achieve. Evil megalomaniacs bent on world domination seem a tame threat in comparison. When too few have too much, what's left isn't worth fighting over. Somewhere in that middle 7% there's a small retinue among whom rational dialogue can occur. As a group they constitute a buffer that keeps the poor from killing rich and vice versa. They suggest hope to the poor for eventual self-improvement and success, yet hold them at arm's length, as if they smelled bad, and would rather be rich, since changing today's material mindset appears impossible. They'd wield a lot more power than they know if they were better organized and had a compassionate plan. They outnumber plutocrats by more than 7:1, which could be an advantage if applied by efficient teams trained in tactics. Why bother? They are billionaires' next target when rest have nothing left.

How fragile is democracy? All you need to do is introduce an amendment attached to an appropriation bill that assigns powers to the executive branch should assassins successfully attack a seated House of Representatives. This was already accomplished by Republican majority. After 9/11, who can say who originated attack? Would have never had to endure had Dudbubba never been elected. Ignorance doesn't discriminate between father and son. Around Dud's 6th year in office, rhetoric about doctrine and domestic policy began. By then, most of society had already failed. Maintaining Congressional balances and representative government are in the people's best interest. Governmental gridlock on noncritical issues means democracy works, hard earned tax dollars aren't wasted. But people don't matter in a dictatorship where war can be waged without their approval. It sounds like a revenge of sith, a movie storyline that was obviously written to parallel contemporary failures of a 2 party system as it marches toward a cruel paternalism, shades of Stalin.

Young anarchists want to tear down everything. Bloated rich neutralize anyone who decreases their net worth. Bourgeoisie are contented cows to be milked over and over. There used to be a vibrant central core, high on rungs of a social ladder, willing to expand a moderate center, but latest play is to make all but upper class exist on less, permit more poverty. Kicking middleclass workers in their teeth is a participant sport among today's rich. You've got to watch those bastards every minute or they'll screw you. Beware when they bribe with small favors and smiles. When Public Enemy snarls, "Rob the rich and give back to the poor... watch the door," can social upheaval be far behind? Yes, unfortunately. Rock stars rage against the machine and sleepy fans are glad someone else takes a stand. Nobody's got your back, like cold war Hungary.

There's action afoot to eliminate democracy. Opponents claim it doesn't work: too confusing, uncontrollable, undisciplined. Nothing of value gets done. Many of these partisans had strict military upbringing, were forcibly toilet trained. Teamwork is potent, uniformity safe; otherwise, profitability may be compromised. Cows don't suddenly begin dancing and partying and refuse to be milked. People who require rules are too dull to think for themselves, and naturally would prefer dictatorships or monarchies, particularly ones where they are given rights nobody else has and granted immunity from thinking. This is not smart. Who'd welcome a monarch who suddenly threw them into a dungeon? Intelligence adapts to new circumstances. They want to take it easy, not ascend on their own, plug along, put in effort. Anti-

democratic monarchists exist outside validity in a totally self-delusional state. Hopes of seven billion others mean zilch to them.

Diversity is the single source of new ideas, innovation, personal growth, and solid business models. Conformity is a dead end. An all white America, for example, was something Ku Klux Klan espoused, but why? Guilty over centuries of Negro bondage? False religion riding high upon a white horse with their Antichrist? What makes them think their inbred Jughead sons deserve to inherit this country ripped from aboriginals? Must be imbecility. Look around; check your census. There are more people of color and non-Anglo ethnics in America than not. The mono-racial mothership has long since sailed and sunk. Granted, if only WASPs were allowed in America, it'd be really depopulated, elbow room galore, but then there'd be no beer, luxuries, weekends hanging around with buddies with bloated bellies because cotton would go rotten. Illegal aliens surround you because greedy businessmen can pay them less than minimum off their books and offer no benefits. Once here, they work the system for which you, not these businessmen, pay. Yet legal immigration is not the root problem. Enforcing existing labor laws is. When his young friend Alexis marched to bring attention to this very issue, she was brutalized by police; shut up or suffer.

For a corrupt American administration to insist on democratic reforms abroad, they had to redefine democracy itself. What's dangerous about that is its boomerang effect on existing, real democracies. People under such rule are supposedly in charge of their own fate. The sooner they realize this, the sooner they can get about the business of governing themselves, impeaching presidents and traitors, recalling corrupt public officials, tossing out dictators. This would enrage those in office and render such posts not worth holding among scoundrels. Who needs them anyway?

With some skill as a Lean Sigma analyst, he had an idea how to uncover root causes. It's never employees stealing pencils who drive companies into ruin. Executive policies are behind all problems, from customer and worker dissatisfaction to low enterprise profitability; from economic downturn to loss in headcount; from declining nonprofit volunteerism, to expanding pavement sprawl. CEOs urge subordinates to curb waste in hundreds of dollars while they jet about wasting millions doing what nobody can justify. There are financial constraints on freedom of movement for ordinary people, most of all obtaining decent accommodations each night. For the very poor or rich, this isn't as much a problem; doesn't make much difference to a homeless wretch what spot that cardboard box occupies, while first class tickets and luxury suites are bought with

other people's money. The fastest way to balance your bottom line is curtail frivolities of executives, or simply fire them. But, because all boards of directors are interlinked, they'd poison your future banking and business relations out of spite.

This is what happens when you tolerate incompetent leaders and a simpleminded president, one who not only doesn't acknowledge newsmen but never reads. Why should anyone? Didn't Republicans destroy press under Nixon during '70's? Or did press self-implode with all their tabloid nonsense catering to a superficial readership? Yes, most writers believe it's clever to dumb it down to some infantile level or least common denominator. Better to concentrate on those who do read and make decisions based upon it. Presidential spokeswoman said "White Horse" doesn't believe what's in newspapers or listen to polls. Unless, of course, it's favorable, and then quote it. Flattery will get you a front row seat at press conferences. Rebuke might get you tossed from press corps.

Sharing is a slippery slope. Sharing your essence, your thoughts, your time is seldom reciprocated when everyone else is devoted to another program, raking in all they can. The very best thing you can receive is a spirit of giving. The only people who can truly say, "The pleasure is all mine," are those who give to those who are grateful. All his peak experiences were when he did something, people reciprocated to his surprised delight, and they continued this relationship for as long as it pleased them. If all dealings were only this simple, a lot more would get done.

Sharing has become an alien notion in America, widely acknowledged as the worst place to be poor, although common in other corners of the known universe. There's an entire economic program developed around it called PROUT, Progressive Utilization Theory, developed a generation ago by an Indian whose name had far too many syllables to remember, but only lately linked by him. Anyone who deep thinks what causes societal ills will discover that it all can be attributed to basic inequalities and sociological flaws. Proutists are neither capitalists nor communists, both failed precepts, rather people seeking fair distribution and resource sharing through cooperative ventures. Proutists are obviously from among the thoughtful 7%, or, could be, failures who've simply had it with status quo. It's a primary difference between haughty imperialists and the masses they target: Asian Indians, Buddhists, Chinese, Moslems. But this cancer of consumerism is spreading, along with resource depletion. Can't make do on less? Can't make things that last? Soon World won't be fit to live in. Sustainable processes could save everyone, but nobody cares. Easier to pursue a daily

grind as if it would go on forever than figure out how everyone might work cooperatively to solve mutual problems.

He began to write while still acquisitive. Years later, found acquiring exhausting and futile, as if picking at sores, and so backed off. Bicyclists drift into a *don't care* mode when riding short rides seems too much of a bother, or even half centuries. What's the difference? Suiting up for what? Even if bicycling is middle-age heal all, it was dull and repetitive. Began to think of it as just another way to get around, not a noble endeavor like "saving planet", wasteful in similar ways if not as pronounced. If you stay home and do nothing at all, costs practically nothing and uses hardly any resources. But is this any way to live? That's what survivalists do, cower, run away, squat in fear, subsist as a hermit. He was a contra-survivalist, committed to finding ways of becoming more dependent upon others until everyone is totally locked in a global embrace nobody ever wants to release.

There's something perverse about society today. It finds and follows bad leaders. The last generation had FDR for several terms. The Dealer was rich, but understood that wealth brought responsibilities. The powerful 400 fought him fiendishly, but they were few. The rich are never a majority, believe this is a *republic*, some system run by them without you. But it isn't. Let them reread the Constitution. In a democracy, majority is supposed to rule, but seldom does, which means democracies belong to cowardly heartless masses. The idea of the rich paying their fair share is very appealing to the actual, vast majority. Millionaires should be delighted to turn some back for the privilege of enjoying a comfortable life because their fellow countrymen allow them to. Instead, they pay practically nothing and scoff at suckers who do. Being free to feather your nest is not the same as struggling for survival. FDR's New Deal included public works projects proposed to employ dispossessed and promote prosperity for everyone, a fair shake. FDR suffered from polio, which deprived him of mobility, made him acutely aware of want. This current president has always enjoyed privilege and never endured deprivation. Such people are now common among those elected. Postwar pols never had to fret about losing their home or shortchanging their children, go without food when there's was no money, live on a shoestring, or work far beyond retirement out of necessity.

Social programs—feeding children and such—aren't socialism, which supposedly leads to communism. Taxes today only affect the middleclass, which only redistributes wealth among lower classes. Just muddies the water, less mixing with little. Wouldn't a homog-

enous solution be better? Corporations and really rich people simply need to pay their share, which they don't. Companies claim their employees pay taxes. Meanwhile, they're downsizing and offshoring as fast as they can to evade even more. Their foundations lock up huge deductible endowments from which only earnings are redistributed. Would take legislative change to cure, but all legislator campaigns are funded by them. Anyone that says otherwise they label an anarchist, communist, or terrorist. McCarthyism used to be vilified, but it has silently crept back redoubled.

Jealous? Over money? He didn't want what others had. Cars, fancy homes, vacations were all a crock. As long as you had clean shelter and enough income, anything else was superfluous. These should be easily attained, not dearly earned through sweat and tears, then continually held only by fighting taxes out of control. Jealousy didn't end at finances for some. Writers issue withering opinions to impugn rivals. If they suppress their egos long enough, once in a while writers expose corruption, each official or politician in turn, most of them being somehow dirty. Anyone you give power to so you can pursue status and wealth yourself becomes an enemy of both. You need not obey current administration or local authorities any more than mullahs or other power brokers. Whoever tells you, "You must...", more often than not lies.

You might think that a small minority would have no clout. But there are obvious precedents of despots and kings exercising nearly complete control. For example, take the top 1%, wealthy untouchables who control media and exert undo pressure. *Grime Magazine* named Dudbubba their "Man of the Year"—secular blasphemy! Dud doesn't read! Couldn't find anyone suitable? Any librarian would be better. At least pick someone who knows the difference between *disassemble* and *dissemble*. Forget trying to ascribe society's ills on a liberal media, which doesn't exist. Any liberal message squeezes around conservative editor scrutiny, clever turns of phrase which go right over their heads. The worst thing about Dud's administration is how it's totally pissed away any good will America could have had after suffering 9/11, after introducing freedoms into former dictatorships, after what its citizens had done for drought and hunger relief, market economies in Eastern Europe, political amnesty, and so forth. Then Dud stands up and lies to you and rest of World; what else can an incompetent do? Government sat on its thumbs when it had a chance to develop stable World trade, end hunger, and invigorate international relations. No, their zero-sum game would suffer; not profitable. Too easy for individual greed to overtake motives and ruin all progress.

The World Resource Institute says marketing to the poorest four billion, two thirds of World's population, is beginning to interest some companies, who've always focused on the top 5% of consumers. None among the poor have much, but collectively they represent a burgeoning market if you're clever enough to make inexpensive products they can afford or can't do without. Until now this has meant addictive stuff, like cola, cigarettes, and over-the-counter medicines. But, for lean manufacturers with smart engineers, it could mean cheap alternatives to durable goods. Affordable prosthetic limbs, for an example already being done, are something many civilian victims of leftover landmines can use. Producers need to understand a market to fulfill its needs, and this takes two-way communication, a messy proposition if not carefully handled, but an opportunity for hiring gifted individuals on either side. If farmers stopped distributing food, everyone would starve, yet farmers could live off their own land, no worries. They don't need the rest of you. Entrepreneurs are another such group. Of tax revenue, 85% comes from small businesses started by sole proprietors, who came up with an idea, found courage to implement it, and made opportunities for others. All great enterprises start with one person. Never underestimate a disaffected nobody.

After 60 years of relative stability, people took it for granted. The Great Depression of the '30's, postwar pandemic of the '20's, reconstruction after the Civil War, and other calamities had slipped from their collective memory. Few knew how to fend for themselves anymore, make do, make their own clothes, put up food for hygienic storage, survive off the land. Luckily, it was all in manuals, if you could get your hands on them. Libraries would be closed long before this dilemma deepened. Printing will be drastically curtailed as superfluous. Forget Internet; without electricity, what would power computers? Bicycle generators? Personal treadmills? Largely ignored encyclopedias, Rodale Press magazines, and Whole Earth catalogs might come in mighty handy. One day Western Civilization will cease to exist, as Oswald Spengler, another nobody, described in detail a century ago. What would replace it? People don't want to consider scenarios; they want someone to change their spark plugs, find solutions, finger plug their dike, keep them going. Where? Who knows? Stay home!

