

The Folly of Electoral Politics and the Imperative Merger of the Humanitarian Camp

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Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement.—Lenin

(Note: No effort has been made to remove dead links from this old article)

Summary: This essay argues that revolutionaries can draw two valuable lessons from history. First, they must realize once and for all that electoral politics in the USA cannot possibly bring meaningful change, and hence, that a more radical strategy is required. Second, to survive, to retain their relevance, to earn the gratitude of future generations, the liberty, environmental, social justice, and peace camps must merge into a single revolutionary movement.

No Change Can be Expected from American Elections

What is the use of voting? We know that the machines of both parties are subsidized by the same persons, and therefore it is useless to turn in either direction.—Woodrow Wilson

If voting made any difference they wouldn't let us do it. — Mark Twain

History reinforces the view that nothing can be expected from electoral politics in America (and in most other countries of the world). If change ever comes to our shores, it cannot possibly be brought about by politics as usual.

Many of my acquaintances, and many writers in the alternative media, put their faith in electoral politics. They feel, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that it makes a difference whether a Republican or a Democrat is elected, that it makes sense to sue the government for one or another gross violation of the public interest or common decency. They fail to notice that most of our presidents, governors, and mayors, most of our “elected” representatives at the local, state, and federal levels, most of our judges—are puppets of the men in the shadows (a few international banking families and their lieutenants in huge corporations, governments, armed forces, and intelligence services).

Others acquaintances, a bit more sophisticated but still profoundly misinformed about the nature of American politics, reject the corrupt two-headed party system out of hand, yet put their trust in the electoral process itself and in the ability of friends of the American people (as opposed to the traitors, swindlers, sycophants, and psychopaths who now infest most public offices of this land) to gain political or judicial office and bring about meaningful change. That trust is touching, but it fails to acknowledge incontestable political realities. To campaign for a Ron Paul, or a Dennis Kucinich, or a Jesse Ventura, or a Eugene Debs, or Jesus of Nazareth himself, in this system is utterly futile. A few crystalline raindrops cannot disinfect a cesspool.

The reasons for this futility, the reasons it is misguided in principle and perhaps even immoral to take part in electoral politics are many. For the moment, I can only offer a summary statement and some supporting

documentation for the seven interacting factors (there could be more, but at this writing I can only think of seven) that render electoral politics in America a sad joke (for a more detailed review of the first three factors, please consult [this](#)).

Information

I am sure that I never read any memorable news in the newspaper.—Henry David Thoreau (*Walden*, 1854)

American Journalism is a class institution, serving the rich and spurning the poor.—Upton Sinclair (*The Brass Check*, 1919)

Almost all conventional sources of information—schools, universities, books, movies, newspapers, TV, radio—are under the thumb of the men in the shadows. Most of us, therefore, end up voting against our own convictions and interests. For example, in 1919 Upton Sinclair (*The Brass Check*, p. 9) already sizzled:

The social body to which we belong is at this moment passing through one of the greatest crises of its history . . . What if the nerves upon which we depend for knowledge of this social body should give us false reports of its condition?

Many people put their trust in experts, not realizing the centuries-long dependence of academics and intellectuals on the bankers and their lieutenants. Arthur Schopenhauer:

Party interests are vehemently agitating the pens of so many pure lovers of wisdom. . . . Truth is certainly the last thing they have in mind. . . . Philosophy is misused, from the side of the state as a tool, from the other side as a means of gain. . . . Who can really believe that truth also will thereby come to light, just as a by-product? . . . Governments make of philosophy a means of serving their state interests, and scholars make of it a trade.

This is even truer today, and especially so when it comes to disciplines that directly affect the bankers. As just one example, an article in the left-of-center mainstream press explains “[how the federal reserve bought the economics profession](#).”

The Federal Reserve, through its extensive network of consultants, visiting scholars, alumni, and staff economists, so thoroughly dominates the field of economics that real criticism of the central bank has become a career liability for members of the profession. . . . This dominance helps explain how, even after the Fed failed to foresee the greatest economic collapse since the Great Depression, the central bank has largely escaped criticism from academic economists.



William Hogarth, "Scholars Listening to a Lecture," 1736

Prof. [Anatal Fekete](#) provides a less polite characterization:

The light has gone out at the great American universities as far as monetary science is concerned. Through bribe, blackmail, and attrition all upright and serious monetary economists were bumped from their academic chairs. The Great Chinese Cultural Revolution was a picnic in comparison to the Great American Cultural Revolution eliminating monetary economics from the curriculum.

I wish to make the point clear: Information nowadays is controlled everywhere and always. For instance, the bankers reserve to themselves the right of censoring all academic publishing (not only in economics, history, or political "science," but also in the [natural](#) sciences) under the guise of the referee system. And here is another typical example, this time from the strait-jacketed world of children book publishing. [Madeleine L'Engle](#) looks back:

A Wrinkle in Time was almost never published. You can't name a major publisher who didn't reject it. And there were many reasons. One was that it was supposedly too hard for children. Well, my children were 7, 10, and 12 while I was writing it. I'd read to them at night what I'd written during the day, and they'd say, "Ooh, mother, go back to the typewriter!" *A Wrinkle in Time* had a female protagonist in a science fiction book, and that wasn't done. And it dealt with evil and things that you don't find, or didn't at that time, in children's books. When we'd run through forty-odd publishers, my agent sent it back. We gave up. Then my mother was visiting for Christmas, and I gave her a tea party for some of her old friends. One of them happened to belong to a small writing group run by John Farrar, of Farrar, Straus & Giroux, which at that time did not have a juvenile list. She insisted that I meet John any how, and I went down with my battered manuscript. John had read my first novel and liked it, and read this book and loved it. That's how it happened.

Recommended Starting References: 1. Sinclair, U. 1919. *The Brass Check*. 2. Bagdikian, B. H. 1987. *The Media Monopoly*. 3. Huxley, Aldous, 1958. *Brave New World Revisited*. 4. Carlin, George. [Who Really Runs America?](#) 5. Loewen, James, 1995. *Lies my Teacher Told me*. 5. Nissani, M. [Media Coverage of the Greenhouse Effect](#). *Population and Environment: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 21: 27-43.

Sunshine Bribery

In the USA, bribery is institutionalized. In fact, if one looks only at the sheer quantity of wealth being stolen from the people, one can perhaps surmise that the USA is the most corrupt country that has ever existed. Bribery is implemented principally through campaign financing, then complemented by such things as lucrative speaking and publishing arrangements after leaving office and by invitations to serve on the boards of the corporations that benefited from the ex-politician's or ex-judge's duplicity. As a result, politicians and judges gain adoration and millions, while a handful of banking families and their thousands of corporations gain extraordinary power and trillions.

Over the years we have gotten used to occasional outbursts on this issue (please consult [this source](#) for countless quotations). For instance, in 1987, Robert Byrd, then Senate majority leader, appealed to his colleagues:

It is my strong belief that the great majority of senators—of both parties—know that the current system of campaign financing is damaging the Senate, hurts their ability to be the best senator for this nation and for citizens of their respective States that they could be, strains their family life by consuming even more time than their official responsibilities demand, and destroys the democracy we all cherish by eroding public confidence in its integrity. If we do not face a problem of this magnitude and fix it, we have no one but ourselves to blame for the tragic results.

Political scientists Adamany and Agree share that view:

[The] political finance system . . . undermines the ideals and hampers the performance of American democracy . . . Officials . . . are . . . captives of the present system. Their integrity and judgment are menaced—and too often compromised—by the need to raise money and the means now available for doing it . . . The pattern of giving distorts American elections: candidates win access to the electorate only if they can mobilize money from the upper classes, established interest groups, big givers, or ideological zealots. Other alternatives have difficulty getting heard. And the voters' choice is thereby limited. The pattern of giving also threatens the governmental process: the contributions of big givers and interest groups award them access to officeholders, so they can better plead their causes . . . The private financing system . . . distort[s] both elections and decision making. The equality of citizens on election day is diluted by their inequality in campaign financing. The electorate shares its control of officials with the financial constituency."

A 2013 [update](#):

Pretty much every politician in the western world is basically an employee of the ruling class, which is made up of a handful of traditionally powerful families including the Rothschilds and Rockefellers.

Recommended Starting Reference: Nissani, M. [Brass-tacks Ecology](#).

Human Nature

We are not only indoctrinable, but seem to enjoy being brainwashed (how many of us abstain from commercials and TV?). We are not as open-minded as we need to be, nor do we readily surrender convictions in the face of overwhelming evidence against them. More often than not, we prefer obedience and conformity to individualism and critical thinking. Most of us lack the self-confidence, and perhaps the inborn taste, to detect quality on our own—in food, architecture, music, drama, paintings, literature, or politics. The vast majority of the still-reading public (which is itself a small minority) depends on the bankers for their choice of books, instead of trusting their own tastes and proclivities. Many of us have accepted the bankers' absurd self-serving notion that crass materialism, endless accumulation of money and power, consumerism, specialization,

and selfishness hold the keys to personal fulfillment.

Moreover, these failings are magnified by the diminution—probably deliberate—of our very humanity. Our bodies nowadays are loaded with synthetic chemicals and radioactive materials. Our brains are loaded with heavy metals (e.g., mercury, lead) and thousands of commercials, infomercials, trivialities, and lies. It is no accident that the bankers facilitate prescription and illegal drug use in the USA, for such use clearly serves their interests. The bankers and their allies discourage us from ever getting even close to dissident literature, classical music, folk music, critical or holistic thinking, compassion, and non-conformity. By getting us addicted to TV and artless movies, through their control of the educational system, and by doing everything they can to suppress the love of reading, they even managed to diminish our vocabulary—and thus our capacity to detect nuances of speech and thought.

Consider Thomas Paine's 1776 pamphlet, *Common Sense*. According to *Wikipedia*, "in relation to the population of the Colonies at that time, it had the largest sale and circulation of any book in American history." Could 1% of today's Americans understand and be moved by such a pamphlet? In just 236 years, then, there occurred a remarkable decline in the intellectual and spiritual caliber of the American people.

In short, we are not as rational, altruistic, and compassionate as we should be. On top of that, the bankers have deliberately diminished our positive qualities and amplified our failings, thus putting another nail in the coffin of our electoral process.

Recommended Starting References:

Human Failings: 1. Milgram, Stanley, *Obedience to Authority*. 2. Nissani, Moti. [Conceptual Conservatism: An Understated Variable in Human Affairs?](#) *Social Science Journal*, vol. 31, pp. 307-318.

Human Strengths (under natural conditions, human beings prefer cooperation, freedom, and rough equality of material possessions): 1. Stefansson, Vilhjalmur. [Lessons In Living From The Stone Age](#). In *A Treasury of Science*, 1943, p. 502. 2. Mann, Charles C. 2005. [The Founding Schems](#). 3. Harris, Marvin. [Life Without Chiefs](#).

Cloak and Dagger

Occasionally, in ancient Rome or Greece, or 21st century UK or USA, a champion of the people poses a threat to the Machiavellian system itself. In such cases, overwhelming evidence suggests, the top oligarchs resort to character—or literal—assassinations. They routinely malign, incarcerate, poison, or blow the brains out of anyone, anywhere on earth, who threatens their control—whistle blowers, congressmen, judges, U.S. presidents, DC madams who know too much, environmental activists, businessmen who dare tell the American people the truth about the Mexican Gulf disaster, sport celebrities naïve and idealistic enough to join the neo-colonial armies yet smart enough to read the dissident literature, journalists who uncover the bankers' collusion in the "war" on drugs, American peace activists, singers/songwriters with a huge fan base who figure out how the system works—and dare share this information with the public, movie directors who had come to know a member of the Rockefeller family a bit too well—and who are bold enough to tell the world what they have learned, British princesses who speak up against landmines, union leaders, the

bankers' own head of the International Mafia Federation, countless foreign heads of state who would not betray their countrymen.



US Senator Frank Church (nearby) displays a Central Institute of Assassinations (CIA) poison dart gun that, depending on the poison used, causes an immediate heart attack or belated cancer, 1975. According to Congressional testimony, the gun fires a frozen liquid poison-tipped dart, the width of a human hair and a quarter of an inch long. The dart can penetrate clothing and leaves a barely-visible pin-sized tiny red mark where it enters the victim's body. In the heart attack version, once in the body, the poison melts and is absorbed into the bloodstream and causes a heart attack. Once the damage is done, the poison denatures quickly, so that a routine autopsy is likely to trace the heart attack to natural causes. Church probably paid for his courage—and for his progressive record—with his life. By 1984, at the early of 59, he died of . . . cancer.

Once upon a time, oligarchs kept such calumnies and strangulations below the surface, following their masters Niccolò Machiavelli's and Amschel Rothschild's sage advice. But now, as befits the emerging in-your-face style of oligarchy, some of these atrocities are carried out in the open.

There is a common misconception in progressive circles that America had once been the land of the free and the home of the brave, and that its decline only commenced with President Reagan. In reality, what is happening in 2012 is merely a culmination of a centuries-long gradual march towards fascism. I have provided numerous examples of this [here](#), so, for now, let me give a couple of quotations from the past (Upton Sinclair's self-published *The Brass Check*, 1919):

There was a certain labor leader in America, who was winning a great strike. It was sought to bribe him in vain, and finally a woman was sent after him, a woman experienced in seduction, and she lured this man into a hotel room, and at one o'clock in the morning the door was broken down, and the labor leader was confronted with a newspaper story, ready to be put on the press in a few minutes. This man had a wife and children, and had to choose between them and the strike; he called off the strike, and the union went to pieces. This anecdote was told to me, not by a Socialist, not by a labor agitator, but by a well-known United States official, a prominent Catholic.

I cite this to show the lengths to which Big Business will go in order to have its way. In San Francisco they raised a million dollar fund, and with the help of their newspapers set to work deliberately to railroad five perfectly innocent labor men to the gallows. In Lawrence, Massachusetts, the great Woolen Trust planted dynamite in the homes of strikebreakers, and with the help of their newspapers sought to fasten this crime upon the union; only by an accident were these conspirators exposed, and all but the rich one brought to justice. Do you think that 'interests' which would undertake such elaborate plots would stop at inventing and circulating scandal about their enemies?

Most certainly they did this in Denver. I was assured by Judge Lindsey, and by James Randolph Walker, at that time chairman of Denver's reform organization, that the corporations of that city had a regular bureau for such work. The head of it was a woman doctor, provided with a large subsidy, numerous agents, and a regular card catalogue of her victims. When someone was to be ruined, she would invent a story which fitted as far as possible with the victim's character and habits; and then some scheme would be devised to enable the newspapers to print the story without danger of libel suits.

In extreme cases they will go as far as they did with Judge Lindsey—hiring perjured affidavits, and getting up a fake reform organization to give them authority. Lindsey, you understand, has made his life-work the founding of a children's court, which shall work by love and not by terror. Love of children—ah, yes, all scandal-bureaus know what that means! So they had a collection of affidavits accusing Lindsey of sodomy. They brought the charges while he was in the East. A reporter went to the Denver hotel where his young bride was staying, and when she refused to see the reporter, or to hear the charges against her husband, the reporter stood in the hallway and shouted the charges to her through the transom, and, then went away and wrote up an interview!"

Recommended Starting References: 1. Pepper, William, F. 2008. *An Act of State: The Execution of Martin Luther King*. 2. Caldwell, Taylor, 1972. *Captains And The Kings* (fiction).

Self-guided internet exercise: What's common to all-but-one dead-in-office American presidents?

Rigged Elections

Joseph Stalin reportedly said: "It is enough that the people know there was an election. The people who cast the votes decide nothing. The people who count the votes decide everything." Now that the bankers everywhere in the Western World are ingeniously re-introducing their version of Stalinism, following the same script in each and every country (just to dispel any doubt about this being a *coordinated* attack), the Trojan Horse in modern Western elections is the counters themselves. Such outrageous rigging provides the bankers another safety valve, and again makes a mockery of those who believe in electoral politics.

Recommended Starting Reference: Palast, Greg. [Election Rigged for Bush](#).

Broken Promises

There is a vast gap between what a politician or a party promise before the elections and what they deliver after the elections. Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, for instance, promised peace but, once elected, served the bankers and, through guile, [false-flag operations](#), and propaganda, led their country to catastrophic wars. Politicians lie and get away with it, again making a mockery of the people's will and of ballot-box reformers.

Woodrow Wilson's betrayal was, perhaps, the most disastrous of them all. He not only dragged the American people to war—against their will and on behalf of the bankers—but also broke his campaign promises not to sell his country to the [bankers](#):

"During the Democratic Presidential campaign, Wilson and the rulers of the Democratic Party pretended to oppose the Aldrich bill. As representative, Louis T. McFadden, explained twenty years later, when he was Chairman Of The House Banking And Currency Committee (and before the bankers silenced him forever),

'The Aldrich Bill was condemned in the platform . . . when Woodrow

Wilson was nominated . . . the men who ruled the Democratic Party promised the people that if they were returned to power there would be no central bank established here while they held the reins of government.

“Thirteen months later that promise was broken, and the Wilson administration, under the tutelage of those sinister Wall Street figures who stood behind Colonel House, established here in our free country the worm-eaten monarchical institution of the ‘King’s Bank,’ to control us from the top downward, and to shackle us from the cradle to the grave.”

We may note in passing that, to his credit, Wilson would later rue his betrayal:

I’m a most unhappy man. I have ruined my country; a great industrial nation is now controlled by its system of credit. We’re no longer a government by free opinion, no longer a government by conviction and vote of the majority, but a government by the opinion and duress of a small group of dominant men.

One additional supporting example: [Obama’s promise to end the neo-colonization of Iraq](#). In another example, [John Perkins](#) documents the assassination threats, blackmail, and bribes used to turn decent elected officials into renegades.

Co-Option

The best way to control the opposition is to lead it.—Lenin

The men in the shadows often support phony dissident organizations, e.g., the so-called “Tea Party” in the USA. Or, with their limitless supply of money, they might infiltrate and achieve partial control of a formerly genuine reform organization, e.g., *the Sierra Club*. They are thus able to control their own opposition. Also, an individual who discovers for the first time the sorrows of the biosphere might join, say, *the Wilderness Society*, and might never realize that this suit-and-tie organization had sold out decades ago. If she uncovers the deception, she might give up in disgust, mistakenly believing that it is just “human nature” to deceive, look out for number one, and ignore long-term perils. And even if she manages to find her way to a grass-roots environmental organization, she might have only few years left to put her wisdom to good use.

This applies, in particular, to some “alternative” media. Many of these accept commercials and thus are, to a certain extent, at someone else’s beck and call. Other media have been created, funded, and sustained in order to throw confusion into the dissident camp. They magnify certain issues (which pose no threat to the bankers), thus deflecting attention from more pressing issues (e.g., Who is behind the ongoing destruction of the middle class, the ongoing Syrian and Palestinian genocides, the USS Liberty Massacre and cover-up, Pearl Harbor, USS Maine? How in heaven’s name did the Rockefellers and Rothschilds manage to exclude themselves from the list of the richest people in the world? What is money? Is the Rothschild/Rockefeller Cartel doing God’s work, as it claims, or Satan’s? Did this cartel accumulate its wealth and power honorably, or by sleight of hand? Who really owns British Petroleum, Monsanto, and just about any giant western corporation?).

These phony media and websites often accept the absurd contention that our rulers never ever [engage in conspiracies](#) (relying on that standard, absurd dismissal: “He is just a conspiracy theorist”). For them, there is no point in investigating [9/11](#), for the simple reason that our rulers never plot in secret! Well, yes, the Russians, or the Chinese, or the Romans might

have, but our lily-white bankers conspiring? Are you out of your mind? Such sites often refer to bankers' propaganda organs (e.g., *CNN*, *New York Times*) and to government sources as legitimate interpreters of reality. And again, seekers of truth must laboriously sift through their contrivances before beginning to see the world as it is.

I'm writing these words, scarcely believing them myself. My heart tells me that this is preposterous, that there cannot possibly be people out there so vicious as to not only corrupt everything they touch, but who do everything they can to diminish goodness, health, decency, and kindness in this world. But then my cortex takes over, providing me with multiple proofs—both personal and research-based—that these people do exist. The existence and ascendancy of pure evil is no conjecture, but fact. There are people in this world who have enough ill-gotten money to last them one thousand and one reincarnations of obscene physical comfort, but yet give nothing, absolutely nothing, to help the thousands of children who will go blind this year because they can't afford \$1 worth of Vitamin A. As if this is not enough, these villains steal from these children the few centavos they do have, and torture or kill them outright if they refuse to surrender these centavos. A key step in planetary recovery is acknowledging the existence of evil, its pervasiveness, and its capacity to control human destinies.

[Mike Krieger](#):

We must admit to ourselves that there are truly evil geniuses out there, and in most cases these characters have taken control of the power structure (corporations, politics and factions of the military in most of the nations we reside in).

Recommended Starting Reference: Helvarg, David. 2004. *The War Against the Greens*.

To sum up. Electoral participation, in any way, shape, or form is counter-productive because it involves opportunity costs. As long as we accept the bankers' myth that the system can be changed peacefully from within, the bankers and the system are safe. Some of our best people take part in this charade either as candidates or supporters, deluding themselves that anything at all can come from their electoral toil. Imagine all that energy and good will channeled into a strategy that could possibly work!

Electoral politics cannot work for many reasons. To begin with, how can we tell whether our champion is indeed our champion? How do we know that she would prefer sure death by saying no to the bankers to joining the fairly exclusive multi-millionaire club by saying yes? What guarantees do the people have that she will not break every single promise?

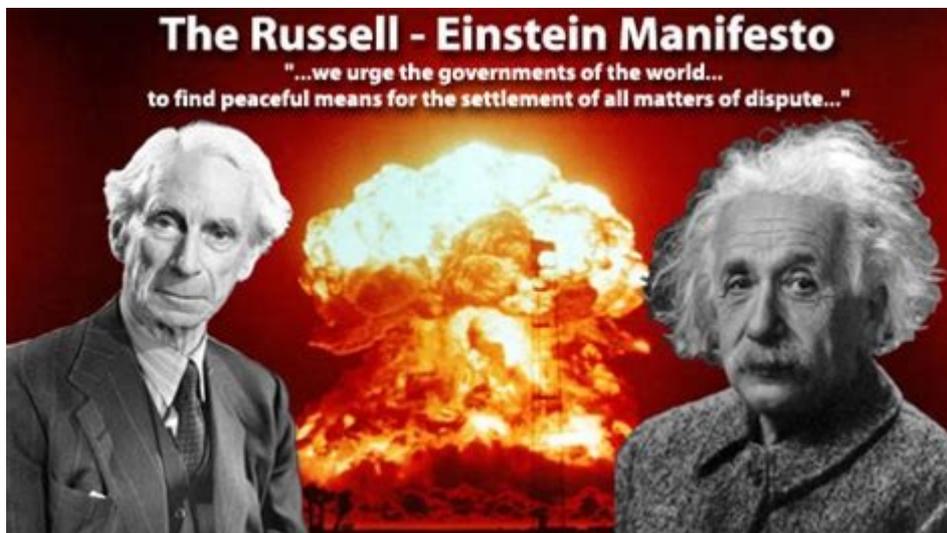
Moreover, the vast majority of gullible voters would believe that she is their enemy and that the bankers' and weaponeers' marionette is their friend. She cannot effect change because bankers can steal and print as much money as they want, which they can give to her opponents. In the very unlikely event that she survives all this and becomes a threat to the bankers, they will crucify her in their media, threaten her, offer her bribes, slander her, arrest her on false charges and keep her naked and humiliated, without trial, in solitary confinement, in a freezing-cold, filthy, noisy cubicle. In the still more unlikely event that she actually receives a majority of the votes, they will doctor the results. If she miraculously manages to overcome all this, and if nothing else works, she will be

impeached on false grounds, suicided, incinerated in the skies or roadways, or poisoned.

She will waste time and money, and never change anything, regardless of her sincerity. Since the American people are too drugged and televised, they will not be outraged by yet one more assassination, and will accept the bankers' version of events. In cases that cannot be readily forgotten, the bankers will establish a commission, appoint its members—and then proceed to ignore post-mortem reports of even these carefully-screened commissioners that the investigation was a cover-up, a hoax. The people would even permit these bankers to derisively reproduce the image of the people's murdered champion on their fiat money.

In more general terms, putting our hopes for freedom and for a better world in the process of electoral politics is fundamentally ill-advised, if not immoral. We must grow up, as the Ancient Athenians did, or as the American revolutionaries did, and provide for our own freedom and security. Our system is irreparably broken and must be overthrown, [one way](#) or the other. The contemporary ballot box is a bewitching siren, a mirage, a shibboleth, a bankers' trap.

The Different Branches of the Humanitarian Camp Must Unite



“There lies before us, if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge, and wisdom. Shall we, instead, choose death, because we cannot forget our quarrels? We appeal as human beings to human beings: Remember your humanity, and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new Paradise; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death.”—The Russell-Einstein Manifesto, 1955

History provides us with yet another crossroads for improving our reform strategies: Recognizing our common humanity and goals and forming a universal, humanitarian, reform movement.

What, really, are the things that decent, politically literate, human beings care most about? The answer, I suggest, must comprise at least these four elements:

Freedom

That so many of the well-fed young television-watchers in the world's most powerful democracy should be so

completely indifferent to the idea of self-government, so blankly uninterested in freedom of thought and the right to dissent, is distressing, but not too surprising. ‘Free as a bird,’ we say, and envy the winged creatures for their power of unrestricted movement in all the three dimensions. But, alas, we forget the dodo. Any bird that has learned how to grub up a good living without being compelled to use its wings will soon renounce the privilege of flight and remain forever grounded.”—Aldous Huxley, [Brave New World Revisited](#), 1958

Throughout most of their existence, human beings seemed to have lived in tribal democracies, with themselves making every major decision. For a long time, America had been a somewhat free country, but that is no longer the case. Here is Former President Jimmy Carter ([A Cruel and Unusual Record](#), 6/24/2012):

While the country has made mistakes in the past, the widespread abuse of human rights over the last decade has been a dramatic change . . . In addition to American citizens’ being targeted for assassination or indefinite detention, recent laws . . . allow unprecedented violations of our rights to privacy through warrantless wiretapping and government mining of our electronic communications. Popular state laws permit detaining individuals because of their appearance, where they worship or with whom they associate. . . . Meanwhile, the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, now houses 169 prisoners. About half have been cleared for release, yet have little prospect of ever obtaining their freedom. American authorities have revealed that, in order to obtain confessions, some of the few being tried (only in military courts) have been tortured by waterboarding more than 100 times or intimidated with semiautomatic weapons, power drills or threats to sexually assault their mothers. Astoundingly, these facts cannot be used as a defense by the accused, because the government claims they occurred under the cover of “national security.” Most of the other prisoners have no prospect of ever being charged or tried either.”



If we ignore the horrors of slavery, inequality of women, and limited rights of people of foreign origins, we can probably say that a similar system existed in the democratic phases of many ancient Greek city-states. We can mention in passing that freedom is not only a natural right, not only good for one’s soul, but that it promotes excellence in the moral, cultural, artistic, intellectual, and commercial spheres—as shown by the astounding achievements of democracies like Athens. [Genuine democracy](#), it so happens, is also the political system most likely to promote environmental sustainability, social justice, and peace.

Environmental Sustainability

At this point in history the capacity to doubt, to criticize and to disobey may

be all that stands between a future for mankind and the end of civilization. –
Erich Fromm

Environmental scientists suspect that “[human beings and the natural world are on a collision course](#).” Cancer rates have already at least doubled; obesity, autism, diabetes, and asthma are on the rise, to name just a few human-facilitated scourges. Shouldn’t freedom include the right to have one’s fat tissues not soaked with synthetic poisons, one’s brain not loaded with heavy metals, one’s lungs not bathed in plutonium and depleted uranium? Are the victims of environmentally-acquired autism free? Don’t I have a right to know if the corn kernels I’ve just ingested are laced with built-in poisons? Shouldn’t we all share the burden of pollution equally?

Many among us dismiss environmental concerns as a swindle. The world’s population, they believe, can forever go up by 80,000,000 a year. We can puncture as many holes in the stratosphere as we wish; we can continue the ongoing destruction of forests, topsoil, oceans, lakes, aquifers, and air; continue to produce as many new chemicals as we wish; go on [tampering](#) with the evolutionary heritage of living organisms; persist in the creation of massive amounts of imperishable radioactive wastes; continue to reduce species diversity—and yet survive unscathed.

This is not the place to refute such scientifically naïve views. Instead, let me just say that the majority of the people who are best qualified to judge the matter—independent scientists—are extremely concerned about the very future of the biosphere. For example, in 1992—when the situation was less desperate than it is now—some 1,700 of the world’s leading scientists, including the majority of Nobel laureates in the sciences, issued this “[Warning to Humanity](#).”

Human beings and the natural world are on a collision course. Human activities inflict harsh and often irreversible damage on the environment and on critical resources. If not checked, many of our current practices put at serious risk the future that we wish for human society and the plant and animal kingdoms, and may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner that we know. Fundamental changes are urgent if we are to avoid the collision our present course will bring about.

This is echoed in turn by more recent warnings. According to the [U.N.](#)’s 2011 *World Economic and Social Survey*, “humanity is on the verge of breaching planetary sustainability boundaries” and heading towards “a major planetary catastrophe.”

And that is exactly the threat we face now. For those of us capable of simple extrapolation of past trends into the future, the conclusion is inescapable: We are an almost-extinct species, give or take a couple of centuries. We treat the earth, our only home, with reckless abandon. We have been warned, time and again, by our best and brightest about the peril, the absurdity, for example, of relying on nuclear fission to boil water (a process which, when analyzed in all its complexity and throughout its entire period of relevance, paradoxically consumes more energy than it produces), but the psychopaths totally ignore the absurdities and warnings. As of now, humanity has forever lost land to the 1957 Kyshtym disaster in the Urals, to the Chernobyl catastrophe in the Ukraine and Belarus, and to the Fukushima cataclysm (including, perhaps, Tokyo). How many more such disasters before we reach the tipping point?



More worrisome is not one or another tipping points, but the multiplicity of threats, the daily arrival of new anthropogenic threats, our inability to predict the impacts of these threats on something as complex as the biosphere, and our failure, in [Paul Watson's](#) words, to give precedence to natural laws. We may survive a dozen threats, but we are unlikely to survive thousands, and yet our scientific and political systems excel at introducing new ones. We shall have to be extremely fortunate, or the earth must be exceedingly resilient, to be forever lucky and reckless. You can't play Russian roulette forever.

It takes a science fiction writer to fully grasp the irony and hopelessness of our situation. In Karel Capek's humorously pessimistic *War with the Newts*, sentient and prolific salamanders are encountered in some far-off bay. At first their discoverers offer them knives and protection from sharks in exchange for pearls. Gradually, however, many of the world's nations avail themselves of these creatures for other purposes, including war. In a few years, the salamanders run out of living space. To accommodate their growing numbers, they flood countries, one at a time. To do this, they need supplies from other countries and from merchants of the soon-to-be ravaged country itself. Needless to say, the salamanders have no trouble securing everything they need. At the end, humanity is on the verge of sinking and drowning; not so much by the newts, but by its greed, shortsightedness, and colossal stupidity.

A similar conclusion is reached in Kurt Vonnegut's [Cat's Cradle](#):

"And I remembered the Fourteenth Book of Bokkonon, which I had read in its entirety the night before. The Fourteenth Book is entitled, "What Can a Thoughtful Man Hope for Mankind on Earth, Given the Experience of the Past Million Years?"

It doesn't take long to read, The Fourteenth Book. It consists of one word and a period.

This is it:

"Nothing."

Social Justice

Throughout most of human history—in humanity's hunter-gatherer phase—rough egalitarianism (as well as freedom and sustainability) probably

prevailed. Our ancestors rightly believed that no one fellow tribesman should starve in the midst of plenty, suffer cold, no sick person should be left unattended by the local shaman because she was poor, no one should be denied access to local traditions because she couldn't afford to hire a teacher. We look down on these "savages," but in this we're mistaken—we are the top practitioners of savagery the world has ever seen. A few among us— psychopaths, sycophants, misers, swindlers, or their heirs— have untold riches, while billions of us are starving, lack access to decent housing and water, or are trampled upon and imprisoned by some feudal lords.

According to [Joseph Stiglitz](#), once seen as the land of opportunity, the U.S. today is grappling with rising inequality and a political system that benefits the rich at the expense of others.

The U.S. worked hard to create the American dream of opportunity. But today, that dream is a myth . . . we are paying a high price for inequality: it contributes to social, economic and political instability.

Is that the best we can do? What does political freedom mean to the 18,000 children under five who [will die today](#) because of malnutrition and hunger-related diseases, while humanity produces more than enough to comfortably feed everyone? What does it mean, freedom, to [the 215 million children trapped in child labor around the world?](#) What does our indifference say about us? Have they stopped assigning Swift's "A Modest Proposal" in college, or are recent graduates too televised to get the irony? What is the meaning of this, that we can readily create a system where every child, every adult, every old and infirm person, has all that is needed for a dignified existence, yet we pretend that the present system gives us the best of all possible worlds?

Thankfully, some of us (and not surprisingly, such people tend to die prematurely, under suspicious circumstances) ask themselves the same question. Here is Michael Jackson:

I see the kids in the streets,
With not enough to eat
Who am I to be blind,
Pretending not to see their needs?

A summer disregard, a broken bottle top
And a one man's soul
They follow each other on the wind ya' know
'Cause they got nowhere to go
That's why I want you to know

I'm starting with the man in the mirror
I'm asking him to change his ways
And no message could have been any clearer
If you want to make the world a better place
Take a look at yourself, and then make a change

I've been a victim of a selfish kind of love
It's time that I realize
That there are some with no home, not a nickel to loan
Could it be really me, pretending that they're not alone?"

Peace

Most people pay at least lip service to the notion that war, military or economic occupation, and violence are undesirable because they kill and maim countless human beings, degrade both perpetrator and victim, destroy the earth and its inhabitants, squander valuable resources that could help close the gap between rich and poor, and, nowadays, pose

potential risks to continued human survival. War is clearly a [racket](#), evidently avoidable. The Swiss and Swedes escaped it for centuries, because they have a greater measure of control of the political process than most other nations on earth. We could avoid war too, if we wanted to.

[James Miller](#):

Then and now, wealthy special interests are a driving force behind American imperialism. Lies will be spun till they are seen as facts. When the truth comes out, the irreparable damage will already be done. Like anything the state lays its filthy hands on, war is a racket. The beneficiaries of the ruling class's gleeful foray into mass murder are few in number. The masses, still brainwashed into feverish nationalism, end up paying the costs with their pilfered income, eroded liberty, and, ultimately, their own lives.

But that is not all. War is intimately linked to freedom, the environment, and social justice. Thucydides graphically described the blood-curdling cultural transformation of Athens during the Peloponnesian War. In times of war, classical Rome turned itself from a republic into a dictatorship. In the USA, one of our greatest champions of freedom, Thomas Jefferson, refused to be dragged to war despite numerous Rothschild Family provocations (acting through their underlings in the British Parliament), because he clearly understood the inverse relation between freedom and war. During the Civil War, World War One and Two, freedom in the USA was cynically made subservient to security. And once you let the tyrants and the bankers grab some of your freedoms, they never again, if they can help it, let you have these freedoms back. Likewise, the never-ending [bogus war on terror](#) is the chief excuse for dismantling the Constitution, Bill of Rights, privacy, bogus war on terrorpresumption of innocence, and the Posse Comitatus Act. That same bogus war likewise facilitates the bankers' plan of destroying the middle class, bringing the pleasures of hunger and scarcity to an ever-increasing number of human beings, further stretching the wealth gap between the parasitic bankers and militarists and the rest of us, and accelerating the pace of planetary rape.

There is a better way, [Pete Seeger](#):

One blue sky above us,
One ocean, lapping our shores.
One earth so green and brown,
Who could ask for more?
And because I love you
I'll give it one more try
To show my rainbow race
It's too soon to die.

Some folks want to be like an ostrich;
Bury their heads in the sand
Some hope for plastic dreams
To unclench all those greedy hands.

Some want to take the easy way:
Poisons, bombs! They think we need 'em.
Don't they know you can't kill all the unbelievers.
There's no shortcut to freedom

Go tell, go tell all the little children!
Go tell mothers and fathers, too:
Now's our last chance to learn to share
What's been given to me and you."

Closing Remarks

Freedom, sustainability, justice, and peace begin with us. We must strive to open our minds to new ideas, subordinate our selfish desires to the interests of humanity and the biosphere, and try to understand the world in all its complexity and interconnectedness.

We must also strive to liberate our minds, beginning by disconnecting ourselves, as much as possible, from the bankers' propaganda system. We must actively fight such ingrained but palpably false notions that America is a democracy, that our economic institutions come even close to genuine capitalism, that our president is "the most powerful man in the world," that we should write letters to "our" representatives, that the only qualification a reformer needs is an avowal of reforming sentiments, that our dear bankers never conspire against us. We should condemn such Punch and Judy shows as contemporary elections, political debates, the mendacious 9/11 and Warren "Commissions," or trials by judges. We ought not to send our children to the bankers' indoctrination centers, nor allow the bankers' propaganda to intrude into our living rooms while masquerading as news or entertainment. We must grasp that Hollywood is part of the bankers' propaganda system and look for entertainment, uplifting art, or comic relief elsewhere. We must give the slip to that artful *National Propaganda Radio*, and all other radio programs provided to us by our masters. We must see how vulnerable we all are, and how any exposure to political and commercial propaganda pollutes our most cherished asset—our minds. We ought to be doubly careful when it comes to our children.

We must carefully and open-mindedly study the political process. Such a study will show that we ought to abandon all hopes of the system reforming itself. Our real rulers have wrested every bastion of power within our republic, and will cling to it come hell or high water. At this advanced stage of decay, electoral politics can accomplish *less* than nothing.

We must overstep the ideological boundaries that divide us. Instead of aspiring to just one or two of the following—genuine freedom, environmental sustainability, social justice, peace—we ought to embrace them all. We ought to do so because all four are interdependent, and because this is the right thing to do.

If a sufficient number of us grasps these urgent truths, the world may yet turn towards the morning. The hour is late but perhaps not too late; our chances admittedly slim, but still above zero. If, on the other hand, we let our rulers and our own delusions, close-mindedness, and ignorance partition us into countless disparate or even hostile ideological camps, if we go on diverting precious resources to the corrupt electoral masquerade, if we go on waiting for a knight in shining armor to conduct the revolution for us instead of conducting it ourselves, if we fail to establish [direct democracy](#) within our own organizations and set it up as one of the revolution's primary goals, if we fail to subject the records of our more prominent spokespeople and strategists to dispassionate analyses, if we fail to embrace the [only strategy](#) that could possibly overthrow the bankers, then we shall have no chance at all.