

# **UTOPIA REVISITED**

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Plato

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## ACT 1

It was the usual Friday night soirée at Plato's Cave. It's just a restaurant actually, but it has become the regular haunt for all the eccentrics in town who call themselves philosophers. Every Friday night there is a special theme posted for speeches, and this Friday night the theme is 'Utopia Revisited'. After a sumptuous dinner, an earnest young man with a preoccupied air about him rose from his table and went up to the lectern. From his manner it was evident that he was anxious to go first. He evidently had something new to say on this subject of Utopia (or at least something that he considered to be new) and he was eager to divest himself of it. His name was Tom, and what follows is his speech verbatim.

"Greetings, fellow philosophers. I have not spoken at any of these theme nights before. But it just so happens that I have been thinking for quite some time about this very topic of Utopia. I believe I have got a new take on this subject, and I was very pleased when I saw tonight's theme posted. My new slant on the Utopia issue is all tied in with the need for population reduction. For centuries now, conventional wisdom has dictated that human population growth is an essential ingredient for prosperity. It is generally felt, and no doubt many of you here tonight actually do feel, that any society where population is in decline is a poor and miserable society. So far as the so-called pillars of society are concerned, our capitalists and our industrialists, the last thing they want to hear about is population reduction or decline. For them this concept is a total anathema. Quite simply they consider that a society that is declining in numbers, is a society that is dying."

### Michel Foucault

"According to Michel Foucault in his book *History of Madness in the Classical Age* our attitudes toward population date back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Population was not considered to be a passive element determined by fluctuations in the distribution of wealth, but was a force in its own right which contributed directly to economic prosperity, and towards the generation of wealth. It is the work of human beings that creates population, that causes our numbers to multiply. The concept of population had a directly inverse relationship with the notion of poverty. Physiocrats and economists were unanimous on the point. Population was itself one of the essential elements of wealth, indeed it was considered to be the undisputed source of wealth – a solid and unshakeable pillar for our prosperity."

"Humankind was regarded as the indispensable intermediary between the earth on the one hand, and wealth on the other. There was an old proverb cited by Foucault, 'Mankind is worth only as much as the land.' If humankind is nothing then the land is nothing as well. Through human endeavor one increases one's land holdings. It is humans who acquire the land and make it productive. God may have the ultimate ability to mould man from the clay, but short of that humankind certainly had a boundless and universal ability to possess the land, and to produce what we need from the land. It therefore seemed to follow with indisputable logic that the foremost blessing was to have an abundance of human beings, which ushered in the secondary blessing to be possessed of an abundance of land."

"According to the prevailing economic theory at that time, therefore, population was an essential benefit. This was so not only for the creation of wealth in the

agricultural sector, but also for the entire industrial transformation that was going on – that is to say it was the means for all commercial circulation and exchange. Wealth is totally dependent on and tied to the work and effort of humankind. The State itself is nothing and has no wealth or substance except through the annual produce of its lands and the industry of its citizens. For the State to achieve its full potential in terms of wealth and prosperity, the produce of each acre of land and the industry of each individual subject has to have attained a maximal point.”

“Paradoxically, the population was considered to be even more precious for the State to the extent that it was numerous and continuing to multiply, because it provided for industry an inexhaustible source of cheap labor, which, by facilitating cheaper prices, would allow production and commerce to forge further ahead. In other words population was there to be exploited. In this indefinitely open and flexible labor market, it was reasoned that the basic wage – which was considered to be the level of subsistence for a worker – and the wage determined by offer and acceptance as part of market forces would arrive at a parity. So you have the situation where population growth is universally desirable as the source of wealth, but in achieving this it is constantly condemning the masses to a subsistence level existence. The suspect reasoning is perpetuated that a country will always find it much more to its advantage if it has at its disposal the maximum potential wealth of a numerically prodigious population.”

“So a vast pool of impoverished citizens was considered to be a natural asset. Foucault tells us that to utilize the poor, the vagabonds, the immigrants of all kinds was one of the best kept secrets about generating wealth. With the industrial revolution gathering momentum, attitudes towards the poor took on a different slant. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century it was felt that the old policies of incarcerating the poor in work houses and mad houses was actually exacerbating the plight and misery of the poor. The only true and effective assistance for the disadvantaged classes which would not be counter-productive was to recognize and appreciate that it was precisely the impoverished class that was its strength – the fact pure and simple that it constituted a population that could be exploited.”

### **Reg Morrison**

“For centuries now we have been working within, and driven by this population growth and economic expansion paradigm. But it has worked too well. It has pushed us too far. As a result of this attitude, we now find ourselves in the situation where the human race has become a plague species. This is argued forcibly in a book called *The Spirit in the Gene* by Reg Morrison. The devastating combination of increasing human numbers and the obsession of human beings with growth and progress is taking its toll elsewhere. The natural environment is being degraded and the lesser species are being annihilated at an alarming rate. Studies made from satellite data indicate that in excess of 80,000 square miles of tropical rain forest is being destroyed each year. It has been estimated that something like 27,000 rain forest species are doomed to extinction each year. Other well-documented problems due to exponential human population growth, are global warming and land degradation, including desertification and many other problems, such as the heat and pollution that rises into the atmosphere over large cities which is changing rainfall precipitation patterns.

Overexploitation of the world's fisheries has brought about the collapse of the oceans' commercially useful fish stocks."

"According to plague theory, what human beings consider to be growth and progress, namely the ever increasing size of towns and cities (also known as urban sprawl) is in fact a destructive process. Human beings may be driven to have bigger and better houses, and more and more material possessions, but Morrison draws the analogy between a modern metropolis and an ant-hill. What we consider to be our wondrous achievements are no more nor less than biological deposits which remain as a result of our consumption of natural resources. With the all too evident trappings of human civilization enveloping the earth, a visitor from another planet would immediately draw the conclusion that this planet is overrun by a plague of *homo sapiens*, and would no doubt write Mother Earth off as a lost cause. Our extensive cities, our shopping malls and skyscrapers, our cars and ships and railways, our museums and our sporting complexes are no more nor less than biological waste product. The whole world is being turned into a gigantic ant-heap."

"Morrison extracts a lesson from past extinctions of other species, and maintains that the essential nature of a plague from the evolutionary point of view is that it is terminal, that is to say that it will bring about its own collapse. Millions of species have evolved on this planet over billions of years, and the first law of evolution is that evolution itself has to continue. There are many prior examples where a species has become too dominant within a defined geographical area and has collapsed as a result of the sheer weight of its own numbers. It is inconceivable that all these species could evolve over such a long time span for it all simply to culminate with one species, namely *homo sapiens*, annihilating and eclipsing all the rest. This is simply not the way that evolution works."

"There is already considerable evidence that the human gene has actually switched off, in the sense that the DNA monitors its own evolution, and when a species poses a threat to evolution itself by entering plague phase, the genes themselves will take corrective measures. Morrison refers to this process as 'the chemistry of collapse', and points to the following specific mechanisms: a general adaptive syndrome which can kick in with dense populations, and is caused by social stress which can trigger a broad spectrum of physiological problems such as diminished ovulation and fertility, inadequate lactation and increased susceptibility to diseases generally. Also specific hormones synthesized from the genetic code imitate estrogen and they are having the effect of reducing the sperm count in males. These estrogen mimics are having the effect of blocking the production of testosterone which explains why the average sperm count in the male ejaculation has dropped by something in the order of 50% in the past fifty years. Finally, with the exponential growth in human civilization, substances in a vast number of commercial products are acting as 'endocrine disruptors' which can disturb normal sexual development. All sorts of products, from plastics, to pesticides, to industrial detergents are causing toxic residues to enter the food chain, and are being ingested by human beings. These toxic substances have similar effects as the hormones that mimic estrogen, and can cause lower sperm count in males, underdeveloped or abnormal genitalia as well as miscarriages etc."

"As a result of these biological or genetic impediments to procreation, the percentage growth rate of the human population is dropping world wide. Human

numbers are actually still increasing dramatically, but the percentage rate of growth is dropping. Morrison argues as a result of this that the human race is likely to peak numerically in about fifty years from now, after which human numbers will plummet with catastrophic consequences for our global civilization. Even total extinction of the human species is put forward as one likely outcome. In addition Morrison predicts an intensification of social problems of all kinds, including wars, aggression and cannibalism, terrorism, and a general rise in perverse and depraved anti-social behaviors as human beings struggle for survival in a degraded and infertile environment exhausted of natural resources. Assuming that we don't actually become extinct, the projected lifestyle and living standards of human beings after the collapse does not present a rosy picture. Indeed the prognosis for the future is downright depressing."

"We humans of course pride ourselves on our intelligence and our technological savvy, and arguably this undeniable advantage that we have over the other species will enable us to continue to survive in a hostile and barren environment, but we will be looking at a different human civilization from the present. No longer will it be a question of humankind growing and prospering by harvesting the bounty of the earth. The harvest will be meager and tainted by biological waste product and discharge. The environment will be toxic, and although no longer capable of supporting human life, will no doubt be a fertile breeding ground for all kinds of vermin with acquired immunity against the rising tide of toxic pollutants and poisonous wastes. We will be fighting for survival in a global garbage dump, the dregs of our former prosperity and irresponsible over-consumption. Although the human race has an immense advantage over the vermin as a result of our intelligence (self-deception would probably be a better word), the lowly insect has already demonstrated itself to be immensely more adaptive and hardy than the magnificent mammal when it comes to survival in a toxic and barren environment. Indeed whatever poison we dish up to them, they always seem to come back and ask for more. We are actually conditioning them to replace us when the time comes in the not too far distant future when these same poisons that we are using to control them are actually killing us."

"Obviously it is impossible to predict with any certainty what will be the future of the human race, but the scenario painted by Morrison certainly can be justified by all current indicators. Our excessive consumption habits are undeniable, so too is our exponential population growth to this point. The depletion of our natural resources the degradation of our environment is only too well documented. All these factors are pointing towards an impending crisis – a crisis which is going to come to a head and be played out in the next one hundred and fifty years. All around us we can see indications that current notions of Growth and Progress, which are constantly being drilled into us like an ideological military tattoo, are simply not sustainable and something has to give. Quite simply a change of approach is necessary, and either we actually use this supposedly wonderful intelligence of ours and figure out how to effect this change rationally and painlessly, or the change will force itself upon us notwithstanding – in which case it is certain to be painful and traumatic, if not downright catastrophic and completely beyond all hope of control."

"It is estimated that about 2000 years ago the human population of the entire world was around the 300 million mark, and for the next 1000 years (which included that period known as the Dark Ages) the global population barely rose a further 10 million.

The exponential growth of the population since then is evidenced by the dramatically decreasing time-span for our numbers to increase a further one billion. The year 1804 AD actually saw us reach the one billion milestone. The second billion was added in 123 years which brings us to 1927. Our third billion was reached in 1960, which took a mere 33 years. By the year 2000 our global population had doubled to the 6 billion mark, which means that it is now taking us a trifling 12-14 years to blow out our numbers by a further billion. Our population is currently around the 6.3 billion mark. Estimates vary as to when our growth is likely to peak. By 2050 our total numbers could be around the 9 billion mark, at which time Africa could have as many as 1.8 billion people, with India the second most populous country at around 1.5 billion, then will come China in third place.”

“The standard explanation for this astronomical growth is that over the past 200 years the mortality rate, that is the rate at which people are dying, has fallen faster than our birth rate, the rate at which people are being born. Quite simply more people are living longer due to improved health care, and the benefits of technology which has helped provide clean water and a more reliable food supply for the less fortunate in the poorer countries. On the other hand the female fertility rate is generally dropping. The fertility rate simply expresses the number of children the average woman will have during her lifetime. If the female fertility rate is 2.1, for example, this means that women on average are having 2.1 children, which is the level necessary for the species to just replace itself.”

“Generally speaking all European and New World developed countries have a female fertility rate which is at or below replacement level, and they currently rely on immigration for population increase. For example, the United States currently has a female fertility rate just on 2.1, that is to say that without any immigrants the population of the United States would remain stable. In fact the population of the United States is still rising quite dramatically because of the large influx of immigrants. It is estimated that around a million people pour into the United States illegally from Mexico each year. During the 1990s almost 25 million people migrated to North America, and this figure does not include refugees. In 1999 almost one and a quarter million refugees migrated to North America, and this figure was down 4.9 percent from 1998. The current Administration in the United States has even recently announced a scaling up of immigration policies.”

“There is a word for immigration policy of this nature which involves a significant influx of migrants from less developed countries being courted by developed countries that have a low female fertility rate. It is called ‘replacement migration’. And as the female fertility rate in developed countries continues to fall, this issue of replacement migration is going to become more and more acute. All developed countries still see it as essential for their continued prosperity and growth that their domestic population (or should I say, their human assets) continue to increase numerically at a robust rate.”

“Generally speaking, under current immigration policies as practised by developed countries, migrants are accepted from developing countries if they have money and assets, educational qualifications or work skills which will make them useful to the host country. Applicants who have none of these attributes are rejected. Ethically speaking, the developed countries should either deny immigration to everyone or they

should let anyone in who wants to come in. By skimming the cream off the top, the developed countries are navigating very murky waters where there are serious racist and discriminatory undercurrents. John West, the famous Canadian fish processing conglomerate used to run an ad on TV 'It's the fish that John West reject that makes John West the best.' And exactly the same sort of slogan applies to the immigration policies of Western developed countries. 'It's the migrants that Uncle Sam rejects that makes Uncle Sam the best.' They are only letting in people of different nationalities and races if they possess certain qualities that will allow them to integrate into the host society (people who come up to the standards and values of the host society), and that is known as racism."

"As the female fertility rate in developed countries continues to decline, in years to come these countries will be siphoning everyone with money, education or work skills out of the developing countries. In effect they will be seeking to maintain their prosperity at the expense of the developing countries. How can the poorer countries ever expect to advance with this constant leeching of all their privileged and talented people by the richer countries."

"Some would say that those who are highly qualified often can not find work in their home country and therefore should be allowed to immigrate to a developed country. If Jeremy Bentham were to reply to this argument he would ask whether current immigration policies bring about the greatest good for the greatest number. Current immigration policies suit the developed countries and the cream in the developing countries who desire to emigrate. At most one and a half billion people. So what about the four and a half billion people, all the masses in the impoverished developing countries, who do not make the cut. Not only are they considered unacceptable to immigrate and are therefore forced to remain in poverty in their country of origin, but their country of origin is being further impoverished by the 'brain drain' of those who come up to Western standards, and who are therefore accepted for immigration."

"Talking about the greatest good for the greatest number, Australia provides a very graphic example of just how completely this principle is being overlooked in debates about the ethics of replacement migration. Australia is a geographically vast Western developed country with a comparatively small human population. Australians enjoys a standard of living as high as anywhere in the world, but as is well known the bulk of the Australian land mass is desert. The Outback as it is called in Australia is sparsely populated, and in recent years there has been a constant flow of outback dwellers into the urban sprawls along the Eastern coastline. As a result the Outback is becoming even more depopulated to the point where small and medium sized outback towns are dying. Quite understandably, Australian doctors are loathe to settle in these outback communities and cater to the health care needs of these people. In fact the outback dwellers are becoming more and more deprived of services of all kinds which city dwellers take for granted, but the problem with a shortage of medical practitioners has become acute. So how does the Australian government attempt to solve this problem. Quite simply by fast-tracking immigration applications by medical practitioners in developing countries who want to migrate to Australia. Any doctor from any poor Third World country is virtually guaranteed immediate immigration approval provided they are prepared to commit to practise medicine in the Outback for a certain period of years. So you have a situation where the poorer countries that already have an acute shortage of

people with this qualification, and where the ratio of doctors to patients could be somewhere in the vicinity of hundreds of thousands to one, their doctors are being enticed by the Australian government to come and practise medicine in the Outback to minister to the health care needs of a mere handful of people by comparison. How can this be right. How can this be just. What gives the Australian government the right to pull doctors out of developing countries where there is a desperate shortage of adequate medical services, simply so that they can come and over-service a few hundred people in some small outback town in the Northern Territory of Australia.”

“There are other ethical issues as well. Poor developing countries have been put to the expense of educating their professionals often right through to tertiary level. The educational expenses of a State, whether it be rich or poor, are pretty much the same. But with current immigration policies, again everything is geared in favor of the rich developed countries and weighted against the poor developing countries. Not only are the rich countries constantly being benefited by a flow of educated and talented people from developing countries, graduates that they were not actually put to the expense of educating, but the developing countries are constantly outlaying to educate their brightest and most promising youthful citizens only to see them immediately apply to depart for fairer shores just as soon as their education is completed. It’s hard to imagine how law makers in the rich countries could possibly satisfactorily explain away the injustice inherent in these policies, but fortunately for them they have never been put to the test because nobody even seems to be asking the question whether there is not in fact something terribly wrong about all this.”

This is elitism pure and simple. There are loud echoes of apartheid. Government legislation which maintains a divide between a minority who consider themselves superior, and a majority whom they consider inferior. That is to say, the laws of no-matter-which developed country that state that only those applicants who have something material to offer the host country, cash or assets or work-skills, shall be allowed in. Those with half a life are allowed to migrate to a developed country to seek a better life, but those people in developing countries with no life at all are not allowed to immigrate to seek a better life.”

“There is absolutely no reason in this day and age for permanent immigration. In fact all the reasons why the practice of permanent immigration has become so entrenched in the public consciousness no longer apply. Generally speaking the practice arose with the discovery of the New World. Here were vast new continents which were underpopulated with ‘savages’ to use the nomenclature of Adam Smith. Virgin new territories which just seemed ripe for colonization by the Europeans. But they were so far away and the means of travel in those days was so primitive, that those who wished to embark on this colonization venture of bringing Western civilization to the wilderness virtually had to commit themselves for life. There was no going back. The journey by sea was so arduous and hazardous that the decision to make a fresh start in the New World really meant turning one’s back on the mother country forever.”

“So much has changed since then. The wonders of modern communication and transportation. One can conduct business in any country simply by accessing the internet. If there are fabulous riches to be made in another country, there is no longer any need to actually go there physically. Actual geographical location is quite immaterial. One can float corporations in other countries, invest in stocks and bonds in a foreign

stock exchange, prospect for gold, gamble in foreign casinos, invest in the property market internationally, keep money reserves off-shore – whatever you like, and never actually get up out of your armchair let alone leave your country of origin. If there is still actually a need for you to go there in person, that's no problem as well. There is literally no place in the world where it takes you longer than 24 hours to be there in person. No destination which involves more than a single day to travel to, nor from which to return. And that with all the hospitality and in-flight entertainment that the airline companies can think of to offer. Well and truly gone are the old days when immigrants undertook a perilous journey by sailing ship or steamer which in some cases could last for months, followed by several further months in a covered wagon facing all sorts of hardships and adventures before they finally reached the new place they had determined to make their own."

"Those days are gone, and so too is the problem for people with relatives and loved-ones on the other side of the world. They can keep in touch with consummate ease. There is no longer any situation where one has to say goodbye to blood relations forever. If you have sons or daughters or aunts and uncles on the other side of the world, you simply pick up the phone and dial the number. If you feel the need to spend some time with them, you simply book a flight and go see them. They likewise can never be any more than a day's travel to come see you. Often these days it can be quicker and more convenient to go see relatives on the other side of the world than it is to visit them in other parts of your own country. With modern technology and communication, no-one, anywhere in the world, has to face the heart-rending prospect of having to part with kith and kin forever."

"What I am suggesting is that the concept of permanent immigration is obsolete. It is a product of a by-gone age and can quite safely be scrapped. If permanent immigration was done away with, it would have the monumental consequence of allowing the populations of all European and New World developed countries to go into natural decline. As I have already explained to you, the female fertility rate in all these countries is either at or below replacement level. In the United States for instance where the fertility rate is actually just on replacement level the population would remain static and wouldn't actually decline at all, at least not for centuries to come. And the wonderful thing about it is that it could all happen naturally. No coercion. No need for propaganda to persuade the people to breed less. A seamless transition which will help us solve so many of the environmental and social problems that are crowding in on us."

"Already there is a widespread practice throughout the world of countries granting temporary visas to foreigners to pay a visit for educational, touristic or cultural exchanges as well as for family connections and sporting reasons. In addition there is also a well established practice of granting temporary visas for people to come and work in a foreign country. Those practices should simply be extended and become the norm for everyone. In many parts of the world it is common practice for workers to find employment temporarily in other countries and they send money home to support their families. A policy of zero permanent immigration would have no impact or bearing on these practices, and there is no reason why such practices can not continue indefinitely. Indeed you will find once I get into the economic theory of Utopia that the opportunities for working in foreign countries on a temporary basis are actually extended."

“A zero permanent immigration policy will still allow full and free intercourse with the peoples of other nations. Anyone can get a visa to come and stay for as long as they like. They can get a visa to work if that’s what they want to do. They can send money home to support their families. The one thing they can not do is apply for permanent citizenship. When their visa expires they will have to leave or apply for a new one. They have no right to come and settle permanently.”

“It is commonly argued that immigration laws are very difficult to enforce (if indeed they are not in fact downright unenforceable) and there are those who would maintain that even if you introduced a zero permanent immigration policy, it wouldn’t actually change anything. There would still be the same flow of illegal immigrants. You would still have the situation where migrants who initially just come to work and send money home will actually form emotional and social ties with the host country, and will be very reluctant to leave when their visa expires. To those arguments I say that the reason why current immigration laws are so ineffectual is that the current laws are unjust and discriminatory. As mentioned earlier the current laws make it easy for migrants with money or work skills to get citizenship, and they brand migrants without those qualifications as illegal. Naturally, discriminatory laws like these are going to be very difficult to enforce. But if you have a situation where all foreigners are treated equally and they all know exactly where they stand from day one, then immigration laws become as easy or as difficult to enforce as any other laws that apply equally to everyone. Anyone who comes into the country knows precisely how long they can stay and precisely on what conditions they can stay, so they can hardly complain when their visa expires that they will be forced to leave if they do not go voluntarily. This is the normal rationale behind the validity of regulatory laws of all kinds, and there is no reason to believe with a level playing ground that immigration laws would be more difficult to enforce than any other laws.”

“Thus far I have tried to explain to you how simple it would actually be for the populations of all developed countries to go into a natural decline. All it requires is a policy of zero permanent immigration, and the low female fertility rate will do the rest. Before we go any further I would like to stress that this process would take place very slowly. In the short term there would be no noticeable change at all, and even in the medium term (say 100 to 150 years) there would be no radical and catastrophic drop in numbers. The process of gradual reduction in numbers would be a seamless transition, and as a result there will never be any possibility of an appreciable drop in overall prosperity or commercial activity. In the case of the United States for instance, where the female fertility rate is sitting right on 2.1, zero permanent immigration would simply mean that the population would remain stable for centuries to come. There would really be no change to speak of whatsoever. The next census, and every census after that would simply reveal that the population of the United States has not increased. The lifestyle and living standards of the average American would barely be affected at all.”

“Having said that, it just so happens that there are some very solid arguments in standard economic theory which would indicate that a stable and a declining population can actually be manipulated to bring about a more equal distribution of wealth for all citizens, and to raise living standards and overall prosperity across the board. That is to say that simply by reversing population trends it is possible to turn any developed country into Utopia. Developed countries are ready for this process right now. The same

principles can be applied to raise the living standards in developing countries as well, but it would be necessary for their populations to stabilize or go into decline before they can take full advantage of the process. However, the developing countries seem to follow the lead of the developed countries, and if the developed countries were to adopt this new attitude to population, it can be predicted with confidence that the poorer developing countries would soon follow suit. What I am suggesting to you is that by reappraising the need for population growth within the framework of standard economic theory, it would be possible for every country on earth to gradually raise their living standards across the board, and for them all to confidently step out on the path leading up to Utopia.”

“So what is the secret. The secret is that there is no secret. All it requires is a reappraisal of standard economic theory – looking at it from the point of view of population reduction. We’re talking here about the basic theory of supply and demand. A free-enterprise economy relies on the tension between the supply and demand of the means of production to remain prosperous. Currently free-enterprise economies rely on population increase to maintain this tension (particularly in relation to real estate). I shall go in some detail into the theories of Adam Smith and John Maynard Keynes presently, but as a matter of commonsense it is not hard to figure out that the real estate market does depend heavily on physical population increase in order to remain buoyant. There has to be a reason to continue to build new houses, and quite clearly there would be no reason for doing so if there was no-one to live in them. A buoyant real estate market requires a strong demand by people wanting to buy new and existing houses, and it also requires a strong demand by people wanting to rent housing. There is not much use owning a house if it is just going to lie vacant. If you can’t sell it and you can’t rent it, well obviously it is going to start costing you money in rates, taxes and upkeep etc. To own property in a depressed real estate market becomes a financial burden, and this is exactly what is happening in the depressed rural areas of many developed countries that are otherwise very prosperous. In the modern world there is a general migratory trend from rural areas to the large cities. Not surprisingly therefore the value of housing is generally depressed in rural areas, and on the contrary in the cities where there is an ever increasing demand for housing, the real estate values are at a premium.”

“This gets back to precisely what I was saying before. One of the core underlying beliefs for a capitalist society borne out of the industrial revolution is this concept that population growth and economic prosperity go hand in hand. The only way for humankind to fully tap the bounty of the earth is to cultivate and populate it. Properties lying vacant and idle for want of people to occupy them is an anathema for capitalists. That is their worst nightmare come to fulfillment. Vacant buildings, idle factories, abandoned farms, deserted streets, dilapidated suburbs, fields lying fallow – these are all the things that capitalists do not want to know about. They have that unmistakable odor about them of lost profits and stagnant markets. To their mind the one and only panacea to avoid all that is robust population growth. But they are wrong. There is another very simple way to avoid all that with population decline. And it is precisely this very simple and effective alternative process that I want to explain to you.”

### **Adam Smith**

“So let’s have a look at what Adam Smith has to say about all this. Adam Smith is, rightly or wrongly, regarded as the father of modern economics. He wrote a seminal book entitled *The Wealth of Nations* which was published in the 1770s. There

are many who dispute his right to be heralded the father of economics. *The Wealth of Nations* is itself an appalling book to read by modern standards, and the mighty Adam Smith is also accused of having plagiarized various French theorists in order to compile this mammoth tome. However after I have summarized his basic argument and his main propositions, I shall also set out what Michel Foucault has to say about him. Generally speaking Foucault deals kindly with him and gives him credit for some innovative thought. If Foucault is prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt, I don't see how I can go past that."

"Although *The Wealth of Nations* purports to be a treatise on economics, the essential merit of it is its sociological underpinnings. By the time *The Wealth of Nations* was published, Smith had already established himself as a moral philosopher with an earlier book entitled *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Smith was able to expand his sociological theories into a comprehensive economic worldview. He looked upon the economy as an entity unto itself which behaved according to its own innate laws, and similarly he regarded humankind as social beings who live and act in concert. Smith was convinced that it was precisely the workings of the economy which was responsible for the structure of our society as well as our moral values. Before we go any further, it will already be apparent to you the relevance and appropriateness of this theory to any discussion about Utopia. Get the economy right, and the economy itself will do the rest in terms of pushing or pulling society ever closer to a state of Utopia. But Smith was also able to demonstrate that economic advancement or growth or progress, call it what you will, does not always and of necessity bring with it positive benefits to society. Not all advancement is good in other words. And from Smith's own theories it will be possible for us to isolate those aspects of growth and progress which lead towards Utopia on the one hand, and on the other hand those aspects of economic advancement which can have a detrimental effect on the common weal."

"Smith was a leading light in the so-called School of Scottish Philosophy. At that time there were several very influential philosophers and thinkers in Scotland who wrote on similar themes, and collectively they make up this school of thought. According to them, there are certain innate 'propensities' in the human makeup. They argued that the Author of Nature had implanted these propensities in mankind, and as a result human society was directed by some divine plan which was ultimately rational, although it was not always readily apparent to us what the ultimate rationale may actually be. There is an interesting comparison to be drawn between this School of Scottish Philosophy and Reg Morrison's book *The Spirit in the Gene* that I mentioned earlier. Morrison himself makes no mention of the Scottish School of Philosophy, but in *The Spirit in the Gene* as well there is an argument that there are two fundamental and contradictory propensities built into our DNA. These propensities are driving us in one direction towards materialistic growth and progress, and at the same time we are driven towards metaphysical spiritualistic type goals which may or may not be always rational, but we are driven in this direction nonetheless. Smith's 'Invisible Hand' and Morrison's 'Spirit' would appear to be one and the same entity."

"Smith considered that we are all actively driven to better our condition in life primarily in order to gain the approbation and admiration of our fellow humans. According to him it is precisely this drive to better our condition that is the productive force from an economic point of view. However he also regarded this drive to better our

condition as being something in the nature of self-deception, in as much as the goals that we think we have of pursuing wealth and social status are rarely realized. Having said that he felt that this self-deception was itself beneficial, because without it we would no longer be actively driven towards a perpetual industry which results in lands being cultivated, cities and commonwealths being founded, artistic and scientific endeavors of all kinds, building and monuments etc etc. Even in his day he was talking about this innate drive in mankind having changed the face of the globe. One wonders how he would have expressed it if he was writing today and could behold the changes wrought by a further 225 years of growth and expansion of all the peoples in all the nations everywhere. It's no longer a case of changing the face of the globe, it's more a case that the face of the globe has become unrecognizable."

"Smith's moral philosophy is pertinent because it is fundamental to his theory that it is the economic activity of individuals pursuing their own self-interest which is responsible for much of the strife and civil discord that we see in the world – in his words 'all the tumult and bustle, all the rapine and injustice, which avarice and ambition have introduced into this world'. He then went on to classify the transgressions of humankind as on the one hand breaches of the rules of morality, which in as much as they do no harm to the well-being of others, are not enforceable by law. Then there are other actions that lack 'propriety' and also have harmful consequences for others, and it is this latter type of impropriety that the law will attempt to prevent and punish. Without this control by the State to prevent every man from avenging himself whenever he considered himself wronged or injured, civil society would not be possible."

"It is characteristic of Smith's thought that human society is being led along by an Invisible Hand that is drawing us inexorably from a 'rude' or primitive state to a civilized state regardless of what may be the conscious intentions and goals of the individuals that comprise that society. The natural and seemingly insatiable wants of the individuals collectively create the industry of humankind. This creates unstoppable productive forces like agriculture and manufacture that are molding us into a civilization, and dictating its characteristics. The result of these productive forces are to be seen in the gradual rise in the standards of living."

"Smith can not be accused of being an idealist. He firmly believed that civil government was instigated in order to provide security in the ownership of property, or in his words that it is 'instituted for the defence of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all'. For him the exercise of power amounted to the same thing as the possession of 'riches' and in any society where there is an unequal distribution of wealth you can expect to find the characteristic pattern of subjugation and authority. However we might take note here that this pattern of civil government being necessary to protect the 'haves' from the 'have-nots' is only inevitable in the familiar, one might say the universal, situation where there is an unequal distribution of wealth. Obviously if we could envisage a society where economic forces have created an equitable distribution of wealth, then there is nothing in the theory of Adam Smith which would deny the possibility that civil government as a repressive tool of the wealthy class could start to recede, and perhaps eventually disappear altogether. Were that to happen then we have clearly made a major leap forward in terms of defining and finding Utopia."

“There was no doubt in Smith’s mind that wealth meant power, that is to say the ability to control others. In his scheme of things those who lacked the means of subsistence (an income from the land or its products) had no alternative but to pay homage to the property owner. Their lot was to render personal service to the landlord. They used their labor as an exchange or barter in order to obtain the means of subsistence. In as much as they owed their maintenance to the bounty of the proprietor, they had no alternative but to obey him, ‘for the same reason that soldiers must obey the prince who pays them’. By drawing this analogy with foot soldiers obeying their warlord he is clearly demonstrating the authority and subservience power game that is at the very heart of economic theory. These economic forces are, according to him, what actually forge our society and determine our notions of morality and justice. It can be seen that we are already in very murky waters when it comes to resolving questions about ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ and about ‘good’ and ‘evil’. It all comes back to the haves and the have-nots. All this of course comes as absolutely no surprise to anyone, but it is important that we get it clear in our minds because we are never going to arrive at a real state of Utopia without somehow channeling these economic forces in the right direction.”

“As a guide for the future, Smith determined that population growth and the gradual increase in agricultural production would bring with it the transformation of the agrarian economy into a manufacturing and service economy. The cultivation of land can not take place ‘without the assistance of some artificers’, that is the need for wheelwrights, tanners, carpenters, masons etc who are city dwellers. As the number of artificers increase and become congregated in cities, you find a commonsense and practical explanation for the development of human civilization that few would care to take issue with. Smith also predicted the gradual dilution of the power of the landed proprietors, because of the alternative source of royal revenue which would be generated in the cities. In fact it would be in the cities where you would see industry flourish. City dwellers in as much as they are not bonded to pay homage to the landed proprietor have a higher degree of personal liberty and autonomy which would see them demanding a security of property in their own right. It was within the context of the city that the full thrust of economic activity would be felt.”

“The development of manufacture on an ever-increasing scale would actually have the effect of stimulating agricultural production even more. In feudal times the great landowners were limited in the ways in which they could spend their wealth, whereas with the advent of the manufacturing industries the landowner quite simply had a wider variety of merchandise that they could buy, and things generally that they could spend their money on. To quote Smith, the growth of manufacture ‘furnished the great proprietors with something for which they could exchange the whole surplus produce of their lands, and which they could consume themselves without sharing it either with the tenants or retainers. All for ourselves, and nothing for the people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the maxim of the masters of mankind’. Here again, it is the problem of this detrimental aspect of economic activity which we must somehow solve if we are ever to see Utopia.”

“We may take hope however, because Smith himself was actually arguing that unbeknown to anybody the Invisible Hand of economic forces was silently at work. Even though the great proprietors were simply gratifying ‘the most childish vanity’ in applying the produce of their lands as exchange for manufactured goods, and even though

the only thing that motivated the merchants and the artificers was ‘turning a penny wherever a penny was to be got’, and even though all of them - the great proprietors, the manufacturers and the artificers – firmly believed within themselves that they were exclusively acting in their own self-interest, in fact the Invisible Hand of economic forces was actually pushing society as a whole, utilizing the folly as well as the industry of the economically active players, to bring about a gradual evolution for the good, and this notwithstanding the mean avarice which was all too evident at a cursory glance. Good outcomes could emerge not only unintentionally but often in spite of contrary intention.”

“Smith considered the final stage of the development of society to arrive when the economy has attained the ‘commercial’ stage. Essentially he had in mind the main features of a modern exchange economy, although he himself mainly confined his argument to a rather limited two-sector scenario, where most commercial activity is either considered to be agricultural production or manufacture. The creation of commodities could be explained in terms of land, labor and capital, and there were three primary forms of monetary return – rent, wages and profit. His argument was still broadly based on the economy being driven by the ‘selfish propensities’ of humankind which were vaguely lumped together collectively as the desire for gain. He attached no real pejorative label to this desire for gain, preferring mainly to acknowledge it as a matter of fact – as a given that would never change. In a famous passage he said, ‘It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest’. And this will always be the case it seems, so any theorizing about an ideal society, a Utopia, will have to take this into account.”

“Generally speaking Smith’s argument is no more complex than this. On the one hand you have self-interest or a desire for gain driving individuals to better their own conditions, and on the other hand you have a justice system providing the essential condition for security of private property (individuals are to be restrained from injuring their fellow citizens either physically or financially). The interplay and tension between these two forces are forging a society in ways that are often not transparent to us – the Invisible Hand at work. Hence ‘unintended social outcomes’ are produced.”

“His discussion about the price of commodities, although evidently it was novel at the time, appears to a modern eye to be rather banal. He talked in terms of the natural price which he defined as that amount which is ‘neither more nor less than what is sufficient to pay the rent of the land, the wages of the labor, and the profits of the stock... according to their natural rates’. The natural price simply means that the producer is receiving just enough to cover his costs of production, and give him a moderate margin of profit. That is to say a production will be just viable – and no more – when the natural price prevails. The natural price differs however from the market price. The market price fluctuates and is determined ‘by the proportion between the quantity which is actually brought to market, and the demand of those who are willing to pay the natural price of the commodity’. Smith argued then that the natural price represented a state of equilibrium, so in circumstances where there is a relative shortage of the commodity in the market, economic forces will dictate that production of the commodity is increased in order to satisfy the demand, and it is the rise of the market price of the commodity which creates this incentive for increased production. Once however production of the

commodity has increased to meet the demand, then the market price of the commodity will tend to revert to the natural price.”

“ In other situations where there is overproduction of a commodity, in other words there is more product than there are consumers willing to buy it at the natural price, this will cause the market price to fall below the natural price. Under these circumstances the product will be sold to consumers who are willing to pay less. Obviously if the price of a product drops there should be more consumers prepared to buy. The extent of the drop in price will also be determined by how important it is for the producers to get rid of the commodity, and this in turn will depend upon whether the commodity is durable or perishable. These forces should clear the product and will therefore bring the supply of the product back to the point where there is just sufficient to meet the demand. The market price would then gravitate back to the natural price, and so on.”

“Significantly, Smith was a very staunch believer in allowing market forces free reign to drive the economy according to the natural balance of industry. He was hostile to government regulations considering them to be violations of natural liberty. Such regulations imposed by the government in effect were an impediment to the work of his Invisible Hand, and were thus running the risk of unnaturally channeling productivity into less beneficial areas. Smith was therefore a bitter critic of the Poor Laws and the Statutes of Apprenticeship which sought to hinder the free movement and the availability of labor. You will find as I get deeper into explaining the consequences of Utopian economic theory that there is a tendency for this dream of Smith’s for regulation to diminish to actually come to pass. In fact this is pivotal to Utopian economic theory. The word regulation is an anathema in a Utopian society, just as it was to Adam Smith.”

“Generally speaking his argument in relation to wages was similar to what he had said about prices. The level of wages depends upon a bargain or contract between parties with conflicting interests. The workers desire to get as much as they can and the employers desire to give as little as possible. There is a tendency therefore on the part of the workers to mobilize into groups to increase their bargaining power, and there is likewise a tendency for the employers to act in concert in order to lower the wages of labor. You find here the ingredients for a constant jockeying for position or even a struggle between the two groups, but it was Smith’s opinion that on balance the employers or masters generally had the advantage in determining the terms of the employment contract. At the time Smith was writing the law actually prohibited the workers from uniting, whereas it placed no such impediments upon the employers combining. So when the supply of labor is abundant the wages of labor will be low, and on the other hand when there is a relative shortage of labor ‘the scarcity of hands occasions a competition among masters, who bid against one another, in order to get workmen, and thus voluntarily break through the natural combination of masters not to raise wages.’ Just as there was a natural price for commodities, there was also a subsistence wage which was the point of equilibrium in the labor market.”

“In this equilibrium situation there is no tendency for the population to increase or decrease, and theoretically all workers are receiving a subsistence wage. This occurs when the supply of labor is just sufficient to meet the demand by the employers for workers. However should the demand for labor drop in any one year, or for a number of years, this will cause the wage rate to fall below subsistence level, and Smith actually

believed that this would result in a fall in population numbers. He talked about a wages fund as a global figure and if this declined to the point where workers were no longer being paid a subsistence wage, the ensuing famine and mortality rate would reduce the number of inhabitants. On the other hand with an 'advancing state' an increase in the global wages fund so that workers were being paid wages at a rate in excess of the subsistence level would actually cause an increase in the level of population."

"Such a theory is fanciful to say the least, and most certainly would not apply in modern developed countries as we know them. It is our experience that it is not the rise and fall of wages above or below subsistence level which will cause population numbers to increase or decrease. On the contrary a rise or fall of population numbers could cause wage levels to go down or up, depending on the resulting fluctuations in the labor market. It is submitted that there can be a correlation between population numbers and wage rates, but Smith's view of the matter was way too simplistic and quite out of touch with experience in the real world. However it is important to set out Smith's view on the matter, because this aspect of population reduction creating a scarcity of labor and thus causing wages to rise, is going to emerge as a pivotal issue in my discussion about Utopia. In point of fact Smith later clarified his own position by arguing that it was the available supply of labor which will decide whether wage rates are high or low. The other determinant was the size of the capital fund available for the purchase of labor, which in broad terms is just another label for the demand for labor."

"This notion of the subsistence wage advanced by Smith is very important in relation to our considerations about Utopia, because it constituted the supply price of labor in the long term, so obviously it is going to have considerable bearing on the material well-being of the citizens in our new society. He reasoned it this way, 'A man must always live by his work, and his wages must at least be sufficient to maintain him. They must even on most occasions be somewhat more; otherwise it would be impossible for him to bring up a family, and the race of such workmen could not last beyond the first generation'. Smith never attempted to define the upper limit for wages, but his subsistence wage was considered by him to be the lower limit. Not only was the subsistence wage the lower limit, but similar to his argument about prices, the labor market was such that the level of wages paid by employers would always tend to gravitate towards it as a 'natural' or equilibrium rate. The essential factor to grasp about this is the concept of the availability of labor. If you could manipulate the economy in such a way that labor is perpetually in short supply, then Smith's argument about the wage rate going up and down caused by fluctuations in the supply of labor quite simply no longer applies. A market where labor is always scarce will see a constant tendency for the wage rate to rise. What we are looking at here is the possibility for all workers to be assured of a wage well in excess of subsistence level, and this is precisely what one would expect in a state of Utopia. Quite simply poverty no longer exists, nor indeed are there workers who are simply eking out a bare existence, and no more. We would expect to find a plentiful wage for all workers."

"Before we get too excited about the prospects, we still must somehow satisfy the other factor mentioned by Smith as a determinant in the level of wages paid for labor. Wages also depend upon the size of the capital fund available for the purchase of labor. Obviously in a situation where this capital fund is shrinking, there will not only be a tendency for wages to fall, but this can also cause a rise in the ranks of the

unemployed in situations where employers are simply no longer able to employ people; or at least to maintain their workforce at its current level. So if the state of Utopia is ever to be found we must also figure out some way to ensure that the capital fund available for the purchase of labor does not decrease. Unquestionably the two fundamental requirements for an ideal state: labor in short supply and the demand for labor remaining static. In such circumstances, just on basic principles, you could expect the wage rate to be on a constant, but very gradual, upward gradient. I will have a lot more to say about this when I deal with the economic theory of John Maynard Keynes. Obviously there can be many variations to this scenario. What happens if the supply of labor falls too sharply, or if the capital fund for the purchase of labor actually increases? These and other situations we will have to consider before we can be sure we have actually attained our ultimate goal of living in Utopia.”

“At this point I would like to stress upon you that this discussion still comes within the basic ambit of Smith’s own theory. The essence of his argument was that in any given (yearly) time period the wages that employers pay for labor may be above or below the subsistence rate or indeed exactly equal to the subsistence rate. This is brought about purely and simply by market forces, with the size of the capital (wages) fund and the level of the working population as the two principal correlated variables. There is nothing particularly complex or mystical about this. All we’ve got to do is manipulate these two variables in such a way as to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth, and you’ve got the best possible and most commonsensical definition of Utopia right here in Smith’s own theory written over 200 years ago.”

“I can already foreshadow one interesting aspect of such an idealistic economy. Smith talked about two groups in opposition to each other in terms of pursuing their own ends, the workers united to get as much as they can and the employers acting in concert to give as little as possible. In his day, as we have seen, Smith felt that the employers had the upper hand. But as Smith himself pointed out, although generally the employers had the advantage because of their legal privileges, ultimately the balance of power between the two opposing groups depended upon their respective bargaining strengths which was in turn determined by the basic principles of supply and demand. In a situation where the supply of labor is restricted and the demand for labor remains constant then you are going to see the balance of power actually shift in favor of the workers. I need hardly tell you the significance of this in Utopia theory. Any Marxists amongst you in the audience will spot it straight away. What would occur is a non-violent and completely seamless revolution of the proletariat in Marxist parlance. And the astonishing thing is that it was actually Smith who foreshadowed Marx in this regard. You will recall that it is central to Smith’s thesis that the Invisible Hand is working in mysterious ways, and society is actually driven by economic forces towards ends that are not only not always foreseen, but may actually be the opposite to what is intended by those who believe themselves to be working to better their own condition. This is certainly something that the Marxists amongst you are going to have to think about good and hard, because Marxist theory is very relevant to any discussion about Utopia, so much so that I am prepared to admit that the ingredients for a Utopian society that I am placing before you would be tainted at the outset if the Marxists did not see merit in it.”

“Marx deserved a mention in this debate, and so now I have mentioned him. It is not necessary for me to deal in any great detail with Marx’s theory however, because

I propose to demonstrate to you that you can construct a watertight theory about Utopia simply by using the theories of Adam Smith and John Maynard Keynes. The enormous influence that Marx has had in political economic theory is really only an aberration in history. Marxism is the product of Smith's Invisible Hand and not vice versa. That is to say that Marxism has come and Marxism will go without Utopia having been reached. The theories of Adam Smith preceded Marx and it is precisely the theories of Adam Smith that will outlive him. If it just so happen that Marx's revolution of the proletariat has been achieved during the way, in a manner not actually foreseen by Marx, then so much the better. But it is the theories of Adam Smith to which we must return in order to get where we want to be – in the best of all possible societies.”

“Smith was concerned to analyse the forces which dictate the average rate of return in any given time period. The level of wages was one of these factors. Another such factor is profit. This, for Smith, represented compensation to the capitalists for the risks they incurred and the trouble they went to in bringing together or combining the factors of production. In his own words, ‘As soon as stock has accumulated in the hands of particular persons, some of them will naturally employ it in setting to work industrious people whom they will supply with materials and subsistence, in order to make a profit by the sale of their work, by what their labor adds to the materials’. The rate of profit is determined by several factors: the quantity of stock available, the volume of business to be transacted, and the continued availability of the outlets for profitable investment. Interestingly Smith felt that there is always a general tendency for the rate of profit to fall, but the contrary tendency seems to be the general trend these days if we take the normal financial media hype as any sort of guide. One gets the impression that the profits generated by corporations listed on the stock exchange are continually increasing. Smith however predicted this tendency for profits to decline because he felt that over time there would be a gradual increase of stock held by entrepreneurs and merchants, and also because it would become increasingly difficult for capitalists to find profitable means for employing new capital.”

“His point about profit declining due to the gradual increase of stock over time has to do with the competition factor, and that is easy to understand. Again in his own words, ‘When the stocks of many rich merchants are turned into the same trade, this internal competition naturally tends to lower its profit; and when there is a like increase in stock in all the different trades carried on in the same society, the same competition must produce the same effect in them all’. As a result of this Smith comes to the rather paradoxical conclusion that this tendency for profit to diminish is therefore the natural effect of prosperity. This coming from the head guru of modern Western capitalism obviously has to be taken seriously. So what is Smith actually telling us. He is telling us in plain and simple words when prosperity increases, profits should fall. Let us assume for a moment that the words that Smith was writing were actually being dictated by the Invisible Hand, and that Smith himself was not actually conscious of the true significance of these words. Under these circumstances, it could well be the case that the time would come when in fact the level of profit for the employer as compared with the rate of wages paid to the workers does tend to level out. For Smith the level of wages was factored into the cost of production which in turn affected the level of profit. So as a matter of commonsense the scenario is quite readily acceptable that there could well come a day when, as a result of wages across the board paid to workers gradually rising, and the

profits being gleaned by employers gradually falling, you will see some sort of equilibrium or parity between the two being reached. Should that day ever come you may even be able to convince yourself that you are living in Utopia.”

“Another indication that Smith may not actually have been conscious of the true significance of his own words, but thanks to the intervention of the Invisible Hand his words were destined to be self-fulfilling nonetheless, can be found in his otherwise incredible assertion that in a declining State (and by declining he was talking about population decline and depressed economic activity as a result), in such a State he felt that there would be a gradual reduction in capital stock and thus a tendency for the rate of profit to increase. Here again presumably he is basing his argument on the fact that, as competitors failed and withdrew from the market, those who were able to hang on and continue trading might hope to expect profits to increase. Certainly in such a State overall prosperity would be falling, and this is a logically consistent corollary to the proposition that profits decrease with rising prosperity - the corollary being that profits increase with falling prosperity. If Smith is right, and given the fact that the profits in modern developed capitalist countries do show a marked tendency to increase, we are led to the rather gloomy conclusion that prosperity must actually be falling in developed countries, that is to say that they are drifting further and further away from Utopia. Just what is the Invisible Hand up to, one may ask.”

“It will be recalled that Smith mentioned another factor which, in his view, has a generally negative effect on the level of profit, namely the difficulty of forever finding profitable ways of employing new capital. He himself suggested that advancing States would generally be able to get around this, and thus reverse the tendency for profits to fall, primarily through military conquests and colonization. Smith was writing before the American War of Independence when the British Empire was at its zenith. Obviously there was no shortage of new investment outlets for capital in those days, and this had a large bearing on his analysis of the situation. The instances that he lists as examples of Britain finding new investment outlets are no longer relevant to us and have no general significance, however it is submitted that this basic assertion that new investment outlets would provide opportunities for increased profit is valid. I ask you simply to bear this in mind at this stage. It just so happens that in a market where labor is chronically in short supply, enormous new possibilities for investment outlets do come into play. I am not going to tell you yet what these new directions are. Given the fact however that there are substantial novel investment outlets, you would find that these new possibilities for investment are tending to increase profits, and at the same time rising prosperity is tending to bring wages and profit into parity. Here again, I would like to suggest to you that, should you be fortunate enough to find yourself in such a society, you could well congratulate yourself that you are living in the best of all possible worlds. But more on this later.”

“We also have to take on board Smith’s theories about rent. This is another one of the forces identified by him which determine the level of average rates of return during any given time period. Rent was defined perfectly simply as the ‘price paid for the use of land’. This price is paid because land is a productive unit - it obviously constitutes the property of individuals - and most significantly it is paid because land is scarce, that is to say there is a constant demand to acquire it. In as much as rent supposedly accrues to the owner independently of any effort on his part, Smith felt that

rent was in the nature of a surplus. Rent comes to the landlords of its own accord as it were, and it is revenue that costs them neither labor nor care. Also rent payments were in the nature of a monopoly price in that they are the highest price available in the circumstances. These actual circumstances of the land included such things as the fertility of the land, and its location.”

“Land used for human food production is also going to yield a rent, according to Smith. He felt that the yardstick for this return of rent was something in the order of one third of the gross produce. And contrary to the situation with profits, rent payments would always increase in the long term because population growth would result in increased use of the available stock. Increased population involves the extension and improvement of land under cultivation which will directly raise the gross produce. The landlord’s share of the produce, that is to say his rent, will therefore increase along with the produce. He therefore introduces a simple linear cause and effect scenario for rent. In any given period the rental paid is proportional to the fixed stock of land used, which in turn depends upon whether population is increasing, decreasing or static. Having said this he also argues that the rent payments will be related to the fertility of the land on the one hand, and also to the prevailing level of both wages and profit. He states that, ‘High or low wages and profit are the causes of high or low price; high or low rent is the effect of it. It is because its price is high or low; a great deal more, or very little more, or no more, than what is sufficient to pay those wages and profit, that it affords a high rent, or a low rent, or no rent at all’. This is what he says and he is supposed to be the economic master. On broad principles he is obviously correct that commercial property as well as agricultural land will yield a higher rent if it is capable of a high gross produce. Whether this also applies to residential property is another story.”

“Certainly there is a lot of commonsense in this argument that rental payments are related to the population function. That is to say not so much the actual level of population, but whether the numbers are increasing or decreasing. This of course is simply restating the classic mantra that population growth and economic growth go hand in hand. The prospect of owning land and there being nobody willing to rent it because of a decline in population numbers, is an anathema for landlords. In such circumstances the price of the property declines as well, which will drive down the level of rent that can be had for it. This is standard theory and, as far as it goes, I can’t argue with it. However, if we could come up with a way where population decline will actually increase the price of land (all sorts of land – commercial, agricultural and residential), and in addition, if we can demonstrate that landlords will actually be able to reap the benefits of that increase in price (the price increase will not simply be a nominal figure added on to an otherwise unsaleable property, the landlord will actually be able to sell the property at the increased price and put the surplus cash in the bank), if we could, as I say, work out a means by which this could be done while the population level is actually declining, then we have unearthed the greatest innovation of all economic theory. An innovation which at this stage only the Invisible Hand and myself know about, and which I am going to share with you very soon now.”

“An important thing to appreciate about Smith’s theory of economics is that it was based on psychological and sociological assumptions. More than this, it is now clear that it is actually based on genetic assumptions. Smith argued that the pursuit of position and wealth was a basic human drive, which from a sociological point of view

becomes the desire to better our condition. In his words, ‘a desire which, though generally calm and dispassionate, comes with us from the womb, and never leaves us till we go to the grave’. Smith was not to know at that stage, because of course DNA had not yet been discovered, but what he was actually talking about is innate characteristics in the human gene. This is brought out in Reg Morrison’s book *The Spirit in the Gene*. Morrison talks about the drive for Growth and Progress which is innate to our DNA, and which he maintains is in direct opposition to an equally powerful genetic drive towards spiritual pursuits. Morrison sets up a never-ending conflict between our materialistic aspirations and our spiritual conceptions, which is the source of much if not all of the mounting problematic which is the human race. There cannot be any doubt however that what Smith refers to as the Invisible Hand molding civilization in often mysterious ways through economic forces, is one and the same entity as this Spirit in the gene that Morrison has identified. If we are to ever arrive at a definitive definition of Utopia, it is going to be necessary for this Invisible Hand or this Spirit to step forward and be recognized. That is to say, it is going to be necessary to clarify exactly where this Invisible Hand or this Spirit has been leading us. Why in Smith’s terms it is doing things which often turn out to be the exact opposite to what was actually intended by the economic players at the time, and why in Morrison’s terms it has turned the human race into a plague species with more than likely disastrous consequences.”

“ Smith says that not only does the drive involve ‘unrelenting industry’, but in addition it is pushing us to make sacrifices that have the support and approbation of our fellow human beings. This notion of making sacrifices, of postponing our pleasure, of saving for a rainy day, is important. This also has to be allowed for in Utopia. Smith says of it, ‘In the steadiness of his industry and frugality, in his steadily sacrificing the ease and enjoyment of the present moment for the probable expectation of the still greater ease and enjoyment of a more distant but more lasting period of time, the prudent man is always both supported and rewarded by the entire approbation of the impartial spectator, and the representative of the impartial spectator, the man within the breast’. Quiet clearly, in Smith’s view anyway, this is a psychological or genetic trait in humankind that is never going to change. He is describing what he considers to be the norm. That is to say the great majority of human beings have these propensities for frugality and postponing the pleasure of the moment, with the conviction that it will be even more enjoyable ten years from now. Therefore our Utopia is going to have to accommodate all these people. And not only just accommodate them, for our society to be truly a Utopia it must go one stage further than this, our society must not only allow these people to gratify their basic urge for frugality and self-sacrifice, but it must also offer inducements to our hoarders to actually succumb to temptation – to live for the moment, to actually seek their enjoyment spontaneously and in the short term. The society itself must be working to reduce the mean-spirited and negative aspects of this innate tendency in human beings. Only such a society would be justified in calling itself the best of all possible worlds. Were it not constantly inducing its citizens to actually indulge in the pleasures that they may enjoy today, then obviously we would not have arrived at the ultimate society, and at some stage in the future there would be yet another book written about Utopia.”

“Another aspect of Smith’s theory that has to be taken into account when constructing a Utopian society is this question of unproductive workers. It is not just a

question of deciding whether we should have such people in our ideal society, the simple fact is that you can't have a Utopia if such people exist. Who are these unproductive workers that Smith is talking about? 'The sovereign with all the officers both of justice and war who serve under him, the whole army and navy, are unproductive laborers. They are the servants of the public, and are maintained by a part of the annual produce of the industry of other people'. Oh, my goodness! These are our beloved public servants that he is talking about! How can we possibly have an idyllic society where there are no public servants, you are no doubt asking. There would be chaos and anarchy. Who is going to collect the taxes? Who is going to pay us our pensions and send us our welfare entitlements. How can we possibly do without an army and navy? What happens if some other countries attack us? A society with no government is impossible, and so it is impossible to have a government and do away with public servants. We may as well stop this discussion right here and now. Any society without public servants and an army and navy can never exist in real life. You can only ever consider a society without these attributes hypothetically, and so a real Utopia here on earth is impossible."

"No, I am not going to stop the discussion right here and now. Because I am here to tell you that such a State is not only possible in practice, but this is precisely where Adam Smith's Invisible Hand is leading us. It is not necessary that these unsavory aspects of current political economies have to disappear at a stroke in order to establish a Utopia. We can construct a society right now, the economic forces of which will be constantly working to reduce the unproductive workers – these servants of the public. This will be a society where the public service is constantly declining. I will have more to say about this when we get to the long term aspects in a Utopian society and the theory of John Maynard Keynes. But I can assure you right now that it is all there in the theory of Adam Smith. It has been there all along in fact. The Invisible Hand is simply taking its own sweet time in manifesting itself. Indeed once you know it all, you will understand that it would have been premature for the Invisible Hand to show itself earlier. Human civilization had to reach a certain stage for the innovation to work. Human civilization has now reached that stage, so the knowledge is forthcoming."

"The predominant concern for Smith was always economic growth. Furthermore he was quite adamant that the 'annual produce of the land and labor of any nation can be increased in its value by no other means, but by either increasing the number of its productive laborers, or the productive powers of those laborers who had before been employed'. A clear statement, you might think. And I don't intend to deny its validity in any way. Evidently in a situation where the population is actually declining numerically you are never likely to see an increase in the number of productive laborers. So for economic growth to continue with declining population numbers we are going to require some means of continually increasing the productive powers of those laborers who had before been employed. It shouldn't be too difficult to come up with some solutions in this area, modern technology being what it is. There is no reason to expect that the advance of technology will ever decline, and so long as technology is advancing at a faster rate than the numbers in the workforce are declining, continued economic growth is not going to be a problem even within the strict guidelines laid down by Smith. In point of fact there are also ways to increase the numbers in the productive labor force even when the population is declining overall. One such means would be to do away with the compulsory retirement age. If you let people work for as long as they want to

work, you will see an increase in the number of productive laborers. So even the first condition laid down by Smith for economic growth is not completely ruled out in a society where numbers of inhabitants are declining. I shall be dealing with this aspect in more detail in due course. Suffice it to say that you will also increase the number of productive laborers if the enormous pool of unproductive labor in modern societies starts to dry up.”

“Probably the most obvious reason for the continued popularity of Smith’s theory has been his unequivocal and strident support for the *laissez-faire* economy. He was opposed to government regulation, period. There is a famous statement by him that, ‘No regulation of commerce can increase the quantity of industry in any society beyond what its capital can maintain. It can only divert a part of it into a direction into which it might not otherwise have gone: and it is by no means certain that this artificial direction is likely to be more advantageous to the society than that into which it would have gone of its own accord’. This is the point that he makes all along about the Invisible Hand. Regulation is futile because there is some underlying logic or principle in the economic forces that are molding society in ways that are not always apparent. This will continue to occur regardless of what governments or politicians try to achieve with regulations. Even though Western developed countries continue to pay lip service to Smith’s *laissez-faire* policies, the reality is that his message has been largely ignored. As a general rule we see more and more regulation by governments in feeble attempts to solve or diminish the perceived problems in our society and our economy, as well as in the natural environment.”

“One such obvious attempt by Western developed countries to solve a problem artificially is to be found precisely in relation to the falling female fertility rate. You see for instance many governments offering monetary inducements to families to have more children. Inducements which are often futile and in some respects counterproductive. In some societies for instance it is not uncommon to see young unmarried teenage girls taking advantage of these monetary inducements and deliberately becoming pregnant in order to guarantee for themselves an income. And becoming pregnant more than once indeed. The simple fact is that monetary inducements have not succeeded in reversing the declining trend in the female fertility rate, and this is why you also see the same developed Western countries aggressively pursuing increased immigration policies which inflate their population numbers artificially with foreigners. Smith’s point is that this simply should not occur. And he is right. This irrational fear that governments have about the population going into decline is just that – irrational. It is brought about because governments and politicians can not actually see the big picture. Their knowledge about the economic forces, and where these forces are leading us, is incomplete. Throughout all these centuries, before and after Smith, only the Invisible Hand has known where we are actually headed. Now I know as well, and very soon now you too shall also know. There is a natural solution to the problem of population decline – a solution which will not only guarantee prosperity across the board, but which will in addition tend to minimize governmental regulation in keeping with Smith’s admonitions.”

“It is important to note also that Smith’s theory has encountered strident criticism. Particularly in relation to his ideas about frugality and saving - foregoing the pleasure to be had from immediate consumption. Smith was of the view that every frugal

man should be looked upon as a public benefactor, and that the tendency of the individual to hoard wealth was somehow contributing to economic growth. The contrary view which was championed by a fellow member of the Scottish School, James Maitland, and later by Robert Malthus, and finally by John Maynard Keynes, has come to be accepted as correct. In this regard Smith seemed to let his moral views cloud his judgment. It is difficult to see as a matter of logic how exhorting the great lords to reduce their extravagant expenditure is going to somehow enhance economic growth. But this is certainly what Smith wanted to see. For instance, he maintained, ‘The expense, too, which is laid out in durable commodities, is favorable, not only to accumulation, but to frugality. If a person should at any time exceed in it, he can easily reform without exposing himself to the censure of the public. To reduce very much the number of his servants, to reform his table from great profusion to great frugality, to lay down his equipage after he has set it up, are changes which cannot escape the observation of his neighbors, and which are supposed to imply some acknowledgement of preceding bad conduct’. An example of Smith’s fuzzy thinking whether from the point of view of logic, of economics, and even of morality.”

“I point this out to you because our model of Utopia must somehow accommodate Smith’s critics in this regard. The critics were all in favor of encouraging consumption. For them a growing economy relied upon exchange. Instead of lauding the level of frugality one must on the contrary encourage expenditure. I shall deal with this in more detail when I come to the theory of John Maynard Keynes. At this stage I will simply say that it is precisely this aspect of encouraging exchange that is the secret to continued prosperity in an economy where population numbers are declining. All we need do is figure out how to guarantee exchange, and we never need worry about declining economic growth, regardless of the level of the population.”

“Most critics accept that the strength of Smith’s theory was his systematic approach to economics as a whole. Smith was at pains to demonstrate that the economy was an ‘imaginary machine’ that was driving society in a precise and mechanistic way towards a goal which was not always foreseeable, and which sometimes appeared to be undesirable. He had an unwavering conviction that the Invisible Hand knew what was going on even if we didn’t, and the soundest approach was a *laissez-faire* acceptance of these forces that were uncontrollable and unalterable in any event. If it turns out that as a result of this theory we do actually end up in Utopia, then this overall approach is most certainly vindicated. If in the other hand the scenario painted by Reg Morrison in *The Spirit in the Gene*, with the human race in plague phase and over-consuming itself towards annihilation, comes to pass, then Smith was wrong, and this Invisible Hand will have demonstrated itself to be a malign force. The word ‘evil’ even comes to mind. The economic forces are leading us to our doom.”

### **Ricardo**

“Michel Foucault has come closer than anyone else in deciphering the workings of the Invisible Hand throughout history, so it will be instructive to see what he has to say about Adam Smith’s contribution to economic thought. In his book which I translate as *Words and Objects*, Foucault gives credit to Ricardo, rather than Smith, for better explaining the historical aspect of economic forces. Foucault maintains that Smith was confused in his theory about the essential characteristics of labor. Smith had used the unit of labor in order to create a consistent measure of the value of different

commodities, but in doing so, he was obliged to assert that labor as an activity of production and labor as a merchandise that can be bought and sold was one and the same labor, and therefore had a constant value. This confusion in Adam Smith's theory had its origin in the preeminence given to the representation: all merchandise represented a certain amount of labor, and all labor could represent a certain quantity of merchandise."

"For Ricardo, just like Smith, labor can certainly be used to compare values of merchandise that passes through the exchange loop. When society was in its infancy, the exchangeable value of objects, that is the rule which determines the quantity of one object which one must give in exchange for another, simply depended on the comparative quantity of labor that was employed to produce the two objects. However, the difference between Smith and Ricardo is in this: for Smith, labor, because it is measurable in days of subsistence wage, is the thing that actually unites all merchandise that can be produced by that labor; for Ricardo, the quantity of labor allows the value of an object to be fixed, not simply because the object is representable in units of labor, but first and foremost because labor as an activity of production is itself the source of all value. Value could no longer be defined, as it was in classical economics under the influence of Smith, arising out of a comprehensive system of equivalences, nor from the capacity that different items of merchandise had to represent each other. If objects are worth as much as the labor necessary to produce them, or if at least their value is proportional to that labor, it is not because labor has a fixed value, constant and exchangeable regardless of place and time, it is because all value owes its origin to labor."

"Effectively labor – that is economic activity – did not make its appearance in the history of the world until the day arrived when humans found themselves too numerous to be able to easily feed themselves from the natural bounty of the earth. Being no longer able to readily find sustenance, some would die, and many more would have died, if they had not applied themselves to cultivating the land. From then on, as the population multiplied, ever widening tracts of virgin forest had to be cleared and cultivated. At any given time throughout history it is the necessity to survive that has caused human beings to work – that is to say they worked to avoid dying. Any population, if it does not find new resources, is destined to perish; and inversely, to the extent that humans continue to multiply, they undertake more extensive, more far-reaching and more difficult work, which is less quantitatively fruitful. The prospect of perishing becomes more and more imminent in just the same proportion as necessary sustenance becomes more and more difficult to access; the labor inversely has to increase in intensity and to become more prolific by all possible means. Thus what renders the economy possible, and necessary, is a perpetual and fundamental situation of scarcity: in the face of nature which is inert and for the most part sterile, the means of subsistence for human beings is continually at risk. It is no longer in the play of representations that is to be found the essential economic principle, but rather in that perilous region where life confronts death."

"Rent from land, where all economists, up to and including Adam Smith himself, saw the sign of the true fertility (fecundity) of the soil, is really tied up with the extent that agricultural labor becomes more and more difficult, and returns less and less. There is a direct relation between the need, due to uninterrupted growth in population, to be continually clearing and cultivating less and less salubrious land on the one hand, and the need for more labor to realize a viable harvest. Either the labor has to be more

arduous, or the amount of land under crop has to increase. The cost of production continues to rise even as the extent of the production continues to decline. This additional effort is necessary and unavoidable however, if one does not want to see people dying of hunger. Rent from land is therefore the effect not of the fecundity of the soil, but on the contrary is a measure of its stinginess. And this stinginess never ceases to become more and more pronounced with every passing season: the population increases, less and less desirable land is put into production, the costs of production rises; agricultural prices rise along with the rent from the land. Finally this pressure of necessity causes the normal salary of the workers to rise, which along with the increased rent payments, will cause the profits of entrepreneurs to fall.”

“This summary by Foucault of Ricardo’s theory is interesting from our point of view because, as we shall soon see, it is precisely this aspect of population growth causing ever increasing exploitation of the available arable land which we will be seeking to reverse in our Utopia. This law of diminishing returns outlined by Ricardo is one of the most obvious problems in modern developed countries everywhere. It is no overstatement to say that the rural sector is in a state of crisis, and has been for quite a long while already. So what is required is some definitive solution to turn this around. We have to somehow thwart Ricardo’s pessimistic interpretation of where Smith’s Invisible Hand is leading us.”

“Foucault tells us that, paradoxically, it is this historical significance introduced into economic theory by Ricardo which makes it possible to theorize the ultimate immobilization or stagnation of History. It can be readily seen that human history and anthropology are inextricably intertwined. You can only have a history (that is labor, production, accumulation, and an upwards movement of real costs) so long as you accept that human beings in their natural state are finite: a finitude which extends well beyond the primitive confines of our species and our immediate physical needs, but which never ceases to accompany, at least clandestinely, all development of human civilization. The more humankind establishes itself in the core of the world, the more we advance in our domination and possession of nature, the more we are also threatened by our own finitude, and the closer we come to our own ultimate demise. Ricardo, the pessimist, maintains that History will not permit the human species to evade or transcend its initial limits – except perhaps in appearance, or by attaching to the word limit a very superficial meaning. But if one considers the fundamental finitude of the human being, one notices that our anthropological situation is always and continually exacerbating our limitations, and making our continued existence more and more problematical, that is to say our History is headed towards an endplay where it comes face to face with its own impossibility.”

“When this happens, we have to accept the fact that there will be nothing left for History to do but to stop, vibrate for a moment on its axis, and then become immobilized forever. And this could occur in one of two ways: either it could slowly and progressively attain and indefinitely stable state that somehow sanctions or justifies its own inexplicable meanderings – it finds that which it has never ceased to be from the beginning; or on the other hand it will attain a point of return where it centers itself on negating or transcending everything that it has appeared to be up to that point.”

“In the first solution (represented by the pessimism of Ricardo), History functions in the face of anthropological determinations, like a huge compensatory

machine; certainly, History resides in human finiteness, but it is to be seen there only in relief and as a positive figure; History allows humankind to overcome the scarcity that drives us on. As this failure or rarity becomes more and more pronounced (you might even call it a bankruptcy), work or labor becomes more intense. Production may go up in absolute figures, but along with it, and for the same reasons, there is a parity increase in the costs of production – that is to say the quantity of work has to increase just to produce the same object. As a consequence the moment will inevitably arise where the work is no longer sustained by the merchandise it produces. The production can no longer make up for this deficit, at which point the scarcity will set its own limits (by a demographic stabilization) and labor will have to adjust itself exactly to basic needs. All supplementary labor will be futile, and the excess population will perish. The fight for survival and the real possibility of perishing will come at each other head on. History will have led humankind up to this endpoint, where we are finally forced to face the dreadful truth of our own finiteness.”

### **Karl Marx**

“In the second solution (represented by Marx) the relationship between History and the anthropological finitude is decoded in the opposite direction. History, here, plays a negative role: it is precisely History in effect that accentuates the pressure of need, which causes the shortcomings and the forfeiture to grow, forcing humans to work and to produce always more, without receiving in return any more than is absolutely indispensable to sustain life, and sometimes even less than that. As a result, over time the product of work accumulates, escaping continually those who actually worked to create it. They produce infinitely more than that portion of value that is returned to them in the form of a salary, and this gives to capital the possibility of purchasing labor anew. Thus we see the never-ending growth of a class of people being dangled on the very precipice of existence – they are caught at the limit of what is barely necessary to sustain life. As a result their condition is forever becoming more precarious as they approach the point where their own existence becomes impossible. The accumulation of capital, the growth both of enterprises and of their capacity, the constant pressure on salaries, the excess of production, all retract the labor market, diminishing its returns and exacerbating unemployment. Driven by misery into the clutches of death, a whole class of people experience, as if for the first time, the true meaning of such things as need, hunger and work. What others attribute to nature or to the spontaneous order of things, they will now recognize to be the result of a history and of the alienation that comes from a finiteness that is anything but natural and spontaneously ordained. It is this truth as to the human essence that will enable them – and they are the only ones who can do it – to seize upon it in order to restore it. This can only take the form of a suppression, or at the very least a reversal, of the history that has unfolded up to now. The revolution that ushers in the dictatorship of the proletariat.”

“Foucault maintains that it is really of no great importance the alternative between the permissiveness of Ricardo, and the revolutionary promise of Marx. Such options represent nothing more than the two possible ways to come to terms with the interaction between anthropology and History, given that the economy is at the base of it with these notions of scarcity and labor. For Ricardo, History fills the chasm that opens as a result of our anthropological finiteness and which manifests itself as a perpetual deficit right up to the point where a definitive stabilization is attained. On the other hand,

according to the Marxist position, History, on dispossessing the worker of his labor, throws into stark relief the positive consequence of our finiteness – the material truth is finally liberated.”

“The essential thing to appreciate is that, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there emerges an intellectual movement that incorporates at one and the same time an historical role for the economy (as maintained in the forms of production), the finiteness of human existence (the relations between scarcity and labor) and the prospect of an end to History – whether it be an indefinite slowing or a radical reversal. History, anthropology and the suspension of the future became a major defining characteristic for 19<sup>th</sup> century thought. It is well known, for example, the role which these themes played in breathing new life and vitality into humanistic thought – the so-called humanities; it is also well known that there was a resurgence in theories about attaining Utopia. In the classical age, Utopia functioned rather like an original dream state: it is only a fresh and naïve world that could assure the ideal deployment of a landscape where everything is in its right place – in perfect harmony with its neighbors, in a peaceful reverie; in this primal light, the representations did not have to become detached from the living tangible entities that they represented. However in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Utopia came to represent the setting of time rather than its dawning. Ultimate wisdom is not to be derived from the original picture, but rather it comes as a serial production, linking past, present and future. The historicity of the economy was clearly indicating that an ending or finality was promised. The anthropological finiteness of the human condition virtually guaranteed this and was the source of fertile speculation as to what possible forms the final Utopia could take.”

“Which finally brings us to the here and now. You have sat there patiently all this time while I have set the scene. Without further delay, I am going to reveal to you the wisdom of the ages. Please prepare yourselves for this revelation however. It is a solution which is so obvious and matter-of-fact that it is astounding that economists have not long since thought of it, and started to apply it. It relates to the most basic and simple of all economic concepts. Literally everyone can understand that if the supply of a product falls, and the demand for that product remains constant, then the price of the product is going to rise. By the same token it's not too difficult to grasp the concept that if the supply of a product remains constant and the demand for the product increases, then here again the price of the product is going to go up. Everyone just assumes that in both these scenarios, a declining population is going to inevitably result in a fall in demand, and so whenever population numbers start to decrease, demand generally is going to fall and take prices along with it in a downwards spiral. It is this assumption that we are going to call into question here tonight.”

“In an economy with a declining population it is possible to maintain the tension between supply and demand by affirmative recycling policy. That is to say real estate (both agricultural and suburban) is taken out of the market and reverted to wilderness. This causes the value of properties that remain in the market to rise. I shall get on to a full explanation of affirmative recycling policy in a moment. What I want you to appreciate from the outset is that the concepts of supply and demand are both totally blind and indifferent as to causes. Market forces are not in the least bit concerned whether it is supply that goes down or demand that goes up. If either of these things occur then the logic of the market will determine a rise in price. So instead of continually

trying to increase the demand for product in order to keep prices rising, why not simply start taking product out of the market, thus reducing supply, which will have exactly the same economic outcome – namely prices will rise.”

“Affirmative recycling policy is simply a way to take the property out of the market in a planned and controlled manner. If you take property out of the market, in other words reduce the supply of this property, then it is inevitable that the prices of property that remains in the market will go up. Not necessarily so, you may say. The price of property that remains in the market will only go up if the demand for the property either remains static or increases. In a situation where the population is declining, that means that the demand for the property is also decreasing. Even if you decrease the supply of property it is not going to cause the price of property to go up if the demand is also falling. At best the prices in such a situation would remain static. To this I reply, not so. The whole point of it is to decrease the supply in relation to the demand. If the demand to acquire property is static, all it will take is a small application of affirmative recycling policy to push prices up; to maintain that tension between supply and demand that I talked about earlier. If on the other hand the demand for property is actually falling as well, then a stronger application of affirmative recycling policy will be necessary. As long as the supply of property is being reduced at a faster rate than the demand, you will still see an upward trend in prices. There is no such thing as absolute supply or demand. It is all relative. In times past, and indeed at the present time, it has always been assumed that the supply of property is a given, and that prosperity therefore requires an ever expanding population to take up this natural supply of property. Recall the attitude towards population in the classical age that Foucault talked about. The State has no wealth except the annual produce of its lands and the industry of its citizens. The wealth of the State can only reach its zenith when the produce of each acre of land, and the industry of each individual citizen has achieved a maximal point. Population growth created wealth in this way, and was thus considered the means for all commercial circulation and exchange. But as it happens, this attitude, although not entirely wrong, is very rudimentary. Obviously it is the tune that humanity has danced to for several thousand years so there must be some truth to it. And therein lies the problem with it. It is the carryover from an earlier age, from a different time. From a time when the number of citizens in any State was relatively small, and the expansive bounty of nature appeared almost unlimited. Nature seemed to be there available for endless exploitation in the name of enhancing economic activity and advancing the human condition. It never even crossed anyone’s mind that you can just as easily enhance economic activity and advance the human condition by actually putting clamps on nature’s bounty and reducing population. Indeed, why would anyone even bother to consider it when there just seemed to be so much land to possess. To discuss such a proposition would be quite ludicrous.”

### **Malthus**

“Even the Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus, who started the overpopulation debate more than 200 years ago, so he was obviously concerned with the issue of too many people and what would eventually happen to them in a finite world, didn’t bother to think about the advantages of controlled population decline. And this notwithstanding the fact that Malthus was a credible economist. John Maynard Keynes, at least, treats him as such, and accords to him the respect that he deserves of having made a major contribution to economic theory. From this point of view Malthus emphasized the

necessity, if we are to have prosperity, of exchange of property and expenditure on commodities. Even if Malthus himself comes across as a mean-spirited and narrow minded, sanctimonious ‘Parson’, to his enduring credit as an economist, he vehemently attacked Smith’s theory about frugality and saving. You will recall that Smith commended this tendency in human nature to forego the pleasure of the moment and to consume spontaneously, and instead to put off the pleasure of consumption to some indeterminate point in the future. This tendency according to Smith was one of the principle linchpins for a robust economy, and the parsimonious man in this miserly accumulation of assets for himself is actually performing a philanthropic role as a public benefactor.”

“Malthus, on the other hand, even though he was talking about population growth, was quite adamant that Smith was wrong on this frugality issue. The notion of the insufficiency of effective demand arrived at a late stage in Malthus’ work, and he puts it forward as a scientific explanation of unemployment. So he was obviously applying his mind precisely to the issue of the relation between population growth on the one hand and its relevance for supply and demand. How strange is it that Malthus should at one and the same time have been arguing that population growth is not a problem because it will adjust itself naturally through famine and massive mortality amongst the poorer classes when the available land can no longer support them, and yet in the same breath to be exhorting the people to go forth and consume. But this is precisely where Malthus is coming from. He was concerned with adequately motivating continued production, and he distinctly maintained that this propensity to hoard and accumulate, which diminished unproductive consumption (that is consumption on luxuries and frivolous commodities), greatly impairs the usual motives of production, and will prematurely check the continuation of prosperity, or the ‘progress of wealth’ as he called it. In his theory, this accumulation brings about a division between labor and profits which will virtually destroy both the motive for and the power of future production. In as much as this will bring about an inability to maintain and employ an increasing population, it therefore had to be ‘acknowledged that such an attempt to accumulate, or that saving too much, may be really prejudicial to a country’. Please retain in your mind this notion of accumulation, because this is precisely what affirmative recycling policy is designed to counter.”

“Here is a direct quotation from Malthus that succinctly states his position. He says that ‘Adam Smith has stated that capitals are increased by parsimony, that every frugal man is a public benefactor, and that the increase of wealth depends upon the balance of produce above consumption. That these propositions are true to a great extent is perfectly unquestionable... But it is quite obvious that they are not true to an indefinite extent, and that the principles of saving, pushed to excess, would destroy the motive for production. If every person were satisfied with the simplest food, the poorest clothing, and the meanest homes, it is certain that no other sort of food, clothing, and lodging would be in existence... The two extremes are obvious; and it follows that there must be some intermediate point, though the resources of political economy may not be able to ascertain it, where, taking into consideration both the power to produce and the will to consume, the encouragement to the increase of wealth is the greatest’. So there you have it, the sum total of the contribution to political economy by Malthus: population growth is going to lead to the laying to waste of agricultural land and natural resources, and will eventually cause famine, pestilence and misery, but everyone should consume more on

unproductive and superfluous commodities in order to maintain the progress of wealth. Smith it will be recalled, maintained that the workings of the Invisible Hand are often inscrutable, and there is certainly an element of inscrutability in the appearance on the scene of the Reverend Thomas Malthus. Be that as it may, the fact is that Malthus is the man who started the overpopulation (without he himself ever mentioning this actual word 'overpopulation') debate, and as we shall see, he did so by hitting upon the essential issues – overpopulation leads to depletion of natural resources and the impoverishment of the people, and that accumulation is also a major impediment to economic prosperity. Enter affirmative recycling policy.”

“All Malthus had to do to get it right, was to start thinking about how to maintain prosperity with population decline. The other necessary ingredients are right there in his theory. He was grasping for something that was so close, and yet remained out of his reach. His problem of course was that he could not extricate himself from the mindset that population growth is always necessary for prosperity. The more people means the more commerce and exchange, and this will generate more wealth for the upper classes. This was the prevailing wisdom at the time, and indeed still is to this day, and it was never questioned. But the fact is that there are more ways than one to counter this propensity to accumulate; there are more ways than one to force people to spend and facilitate exchange, and affirmative recycling policy is just such a way. The secret is to artificially stimulate commerce and exchange so that the dampening effect of population decline will have no impact.”

“So what is affirmative recycling policy? Quite simply land is reclaimed for the purpose of regenerating wilderness. All sorts of land. Agricultural land. Houses in country towns. Houses and apartment blocks in depressed areas in the cities. The State simply offers the proprietor a price which is in excess of the current market value of the land. So the first thing to be noted is that the policy is affirmative, but it is not compulsory. The owner gets offered a price that is in excess of the market value, and has the choice whether to sell or not. The policy works purely through economic forces. Invariably however affirmative recycling policy is targeted towards depressed economic areas, so it means that the owner is being offered a price which could not be obtained by any other means. In addition the owner will be aware that all the neighboring properties are being reclaimed as well, so if the owner chooses not to sell, his/her land will end up being surrounded by wilderness, and the market value of the property will drop to zero. It would be extremely disadvantageous economically for an owner who choose not to sell.”

“The owner is being paid a price that is in excess of the market value of the property which means that any debts or mortgages attaching to the property can be discharged, and the owner will still have money left over to buy a property elsewhere. It will become immediately apparent to you what this means. This is exchange pure and simple. The owner is being offered an inducement to relinquish his/her current asset, and to buy a new one. It is simply a non-coercive method to stimulate consumption. It will also be readily apparent to you that it is an effective method to counter this tendency to accumulate that we have. The owner is offered an inducement to dispose of his/her current holding in exchange for a new one. And they don't just relinquish or lose their current holding – they actually sell it at a profit. The process is designed to create surplus wealth for the individual, which will be channeled elsewhere.”

“An owner whose property is reclaimed will have no alternative but to move to a new area. This is the ultimate and most effective form of economic exchange. A whole district can be reverted to wilderness and all the inhabitants (not just the proprietors), will have to relocate. Non-proprietors can easily be given financial assistance to move to a new area, and the proprietors will actually have the wherewithal to purchase a new property of their choice in a different area. Always remember that we are dealing with a society where the population is actually declining. Affirmative recycling policy is simply a means therefore of mimicking population growth. From the point of view of other areas the situation is exactly the same as if there is in fact population growth. New people are coming to the area to buy. New houses have to be built to accommodate them. New people are coming to the area to rent. From the point of view of the society as a whole there will appear to be no difference from the situation where the population is increasing naturally, and keeping the real estate market and the construction industry buoyant.”

“The State is in the position of being able to fine tune the process as well. For instance in a country where the population is declining sharply and the economy is generally depressed, the State simply has to scale up the affirmative recycling policy to artificially kick-start the economy. The more properties that are recycled, the higher will become the demand for the properties that remain. The properties reclaimed are taken out of the market and reverted to wilderness. To take property out of the market is to reduce the supply of the property. From the point of view of market prices and economic activity, reducing the supply of property has the identical effect of increasing the demand for property. The price of property that remains in the market increases, wealth is generated and consumption and exchange intensifies. Affirmative recycling policy is actually a more certain and effective way of generating wealth for a declining population, than is population growth.”

“This can be seen particularly in relation to rural areas and the agricultural crisis. Currently we find ourselves exactly in the position predicted by Ricardo. Population increase has brought about over-intensive cultivation of arable land. Each year a staggering amount of farmland becomes unproductive due to desertification, dry land salinity etc. This is Ricardo’s law of diminishing returns par excellence. With population increase, agricultural producers have to intensify their efforts to extract the same amount of produce from the land that is becoming less and less productive. In addition we see more and more governmental assistance to farmers, contrary to the advice of Adam Smith. You will recall that Adam Smith was opposed to all forms of governmental intervention, and he was particularly antagonistic to attempts by the State to counter the normal healthy market forces. Governments however, in an attempt to stave off the rural crisis, have allowed Adam Smith’s admonitions against meddling in the economy to go unheeded. In practice, in all Western developed countries we see a complicated hotchpotch system of subsidies and tariffs as well as other restrictive trade practices designed to shelter farmers from the normal operation of market forces.”

“Government intervention is actually serving to confirm Ricardo’s pessimism. Without government intervention, much of the negative outcome that he predicted in relation to agricultural land would not have come to pass, or at least would have rectified itself. If governments had remained loyal to Adam Smith, they would have simply let market forces determine agricultural productivity. So when farmland becomes

over-cultivated and the productivity of the land is reduced, this means that the cost of production for the farmer to extract the same amount of produce from the degraded land will increase. Inevitably there will be a point where it is no longer profitable for that farmer to continue production, and he will fold. With competitors being forced out of the market in this way, the market as a whole is enhanced and stimulated, because the profit of those farmers who remain in the market is increased. If left to normal market forces, the agricultural sector would, generally speaking, still be viable and robust.”

“Government protection has the effect of keeping non-profitable farming operations limping along, thus having a negative effect on the market as a whole. Because non-profitable operations can continue to produce (notwithstanding their non-viability), there is no natural decrease in competition, and as a result the prices of the agricultural produce remains depressed. This has the effect of denying to the farmers who are still economically viable, the increase in profit that would have been their due according to normal economic principles in a free market. Normally they could expect uneconomic farming operations to go bust, competition to be reduced, and they should be banking the returns from a more effective operation. Government protection for the farming community may mean that there are no losers (in the sense that farmers can continue to trade), but by the same token it also means that there can be no winners (except perhaps those farmers who manage to wright the system by one means or another). Overall however, it is submitted that the system that prevails in the rural sector is grossly flawed and unsustainable, and the pessimistic outlook propounded by Ricardo is well and truly vindicated.”

“Globally the production of food has managed to stay ahead of population growth. The past 35 years has seen food production worldwide double what it was. This has been achieved through technological advances – including new crop varieties, increased reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, an expansion of land under irrigation, and advances in mechanization. Generally speaking the world has seen greater yields due to an intensification of farming practices as predicted by Ricardo. This so-called ‘green revolution’ has mainly been driven by demographics – that is the demand created by more mouths to feed. The green revolution, although very effective up to now, is by its very nature unsustainable and destined to slow. Such farming methods, with their heavy reliance on chemical fertilizers, monocultural cropping practices and combining decreased fallow times with more intensive plowing, are quite clearly going to get caught in the not too far distant future by the law of diminishing returns. In fact that time has already arrived. We are already seeing extensive degradation of local water supplies, a decrease in crop diversity, land degradation and erosion at an alarming rate. The decrease in crop diversity has brought with it pests that thrive on the dominant crop strains and are increasingly resilient to pesticides.”

“Ricardo was pessimistic for good reason when we consider the phenomenal increase in the use of chemical fertilizers. Agricultural production may have doubled in the past 35 years, but this has necessitated a 600 percent increase in the use of nitrogenous fertilizer. At the same time the actual area of cultivated land has increased a mere 10 percent. The implications of these figures are clear – there has been a staggering intensification of farming practices in order to just double the yield. As the law of diminishing returns bites more deeply, this situation can only get worse. All the indications are there that the green revolution is not going to keep pace with population

growth over the next 50 to 100 years. We have already seen, say, a 400 percent increase in farming practices generally in order to double the yield over the past 35 years. There is an exponentially adverse factor in the law of diminishing returns, so in order to double the yield again it may require an intensification of farming practices in the order of 1000 percent or more. For anyone to suggest that this can occur is sheer fantasy. We have already seen human activity outstrip nature as the major source of fixed nitrogen in the environment. This brings about a process called entrophication, and the leeching of key nutrients such as calcium and magnesium from the soil. This problem is therefore forever compounding itself. Not to mention the degrading of lakes, wetlands and waterways with toxic algae blooms.”

“The picture is pretty much the same for pasture and grazing lands. Worldwide, grazing land is deteriorating and losing its carrying capacity. The pressure of increasing numbers of mouths to feed has seen a worldwide trend towards Western-style cattle grazing practices, characterized by intensification of beasts per acre, standardization and individual land ownership. This has resulted in a global trend towards the clearing of rain forests to create grazing pasture. At the same time there is increasing pressure on pastoralists from farmers who want to annex pastoral land to plant cash crops for export, such as sugar, palm oil, coffee, and rubber. Generally speaking, the growing demand for meat driven by population growth is outstripping available pastures, which has resulted in more and more livestock being fed on fodder crops instead of grazing. What we are witnessing is an intensification in the production of meat (beef, pork and poultry) through factory farming methods, which themselves exacerbate the environmental problems through concentrated waste products which are difficult and expensive to treat and detoxify. We would certainly be justified if we were, along with Ricardo, to take a pessimistic view of where all this is taking us.”

“The pressure of feeding a growing population has brought about the agricultural crisis. Farmers are cash poor, and are forever facing rising production costs, due to this continual intensification of agricultural practices to compensate for the declining natural productivity of their land. And there is only one solution – especially for developed countries. Or should I say for all countries where the female fertility rate is so low that the population can go into natural decline. The solution is to simply stop this insane push for further population growth. Let the population go into natural decline, and take the pressure off the primary producers. When the demand for agricultural products starts to decline, affirmative recycling policy would be an effective means to actually restore prosperity to the rural sector as a whole. Farmlands are reclaimed for the purpose of regenerating wilderness. The farmer whose property is reclaimed is paid more than market value for his holding, which he could not have obtained by any other means. As more and more farms are reclaimed, those farms remaining would escalate in price because there is less competition, and less farms available for sale. Surely this is a win-win situation for farmers. Those farmers whose land is reclaimed will have the wherewithal to buy a property or a business elsewhere, and start a new life. This simple act of exchange will have obvious benefits for the prosperity of the economy generally. And the farmers who remain in the market enjoy the benefits of less competition and greater profitability for their product. In addition they will see a rise in the value of their farms because the availability (supply) of farms for sale is reduced. Furthermore the conversion of farms to wilderness will take the pressure off the environment generally.

Degraded water supplies, for instance, will be given the chance to recover, the benefits of which will obviously flow on to the farmers who remain in terms of both quality as well as availability.”

“Associated with the rural crisis is the drift to the cities. Human beings worldwide are now predominantly city dwellers. The factors that have brought about this demographic change are primarily economic. Centralized economic activities such as government enterprises and departments, manufacturing, wholesaling and ports cause cities to grow. This city growth brings with it enhanced economic activity, and generates innovative new services as well as an accumulation of skilled labor. Recreational, social and cultural activity of all kinds flourish in the city, and they become communication centers for national and international exchange. Rural workers drift to the cities because of the greater opportunities there offered, and at the same time opportunities to find work in the country are diminishing due partly to mechanization of farming techniques as well as depressed economic activity brought about by the rural crisis. As the countryside becomes depleted of people more and more ancillary businesses have to close their doors. The downward spiral becomes self-perpetuating, and invariably one finds that the prices of houses in the country are much lower than comparable houses in the city for want of people willing to buy.”

“Affirmative recycling policy can provide the same win-win outcome for people who live in small country towns, as I have outlined for the farming community. The prosperity of country town dwellers is normally inextricably tied in with the prosperity of the farmers in the surrounding district in any event. The owners of properties that are reclaimed in those country towns will receive a sufficient price for their property to enable them to buy a comparable property in another country town should they so desire. This in turn would increase the demand for housing in remaining country towns, which in turn would escalate the values of those properties and stimulate local commerce. In this regard, affirmative recycling policy presents a kind of tradeoff situation. Some country towns are reclaimed and reverted to wilderness, but the relocation of those inhabitants to other country towns will actually create a demand for housing in those towns. It would have exactly the same effect as if the urbanization trend were reversed. The construction industry in the country towns that remain is revitalized, and all sorts of ancillary employment opportunities are created. Instead of just a gradual decline in all country towns everywhere, you will witness a situation where some towns disappear, but other towns are actually growing. Growth brings prosperity and an uplift in morale, which itself has a flow-on effect to initiate further progress. The almost universal tale of woe and depression (emotional as well as financial) in rural areas gets to turn a new page.”

“It is not just the rural sector (farmers and small country town dwellers) that will benefit from affirmative recycling policy. It works equally as well in large cities, even the megacities that have grown up in recent times around the world. Let’s be clear what we’re talking about here. We’re primarily dealing with a developed country whose overall population has gone into decline. In circumstances such as this the large cities are actually least affected, because the general urbanization trend normally means that the demand for housing in the big cities remains high, and prices of real estate remain buoyant, notwithstanding a decline in population numbers in other areas. But as we have just seen, affirmative recycling policy will actually create prosperity in rural areas. There

will be new employment opportunities in country towns, and a new vitality and zest for work as well. In such a situation you will actually see a slowing, if not a reversal, of the urbanization trend. There are many who would willingly relocate from a megacity to a country town if they can be assured of finding work when they get there. It is conceivable therefore that a revitalization of the countryside due to affirmative recycling policy will eventually start to have an impact on the large cities as well. When this happens, the large cities will also see the need for affirmative recycling to keep their real estate prices buoyant and maintain prosperity.”

“This need will arise at the precise moment when the population of any given city goes into decline. From that day onwards you are going to see the demand for housing drop and a dampening effect on the construction industry. In the grand city scenario however, there is always an internally generated demand for housing by people wanting to trade up. The price of housing at the top end of the market, that is in the more salubrious and sought after areas, will never falter. As a generalization you are going to see declining population numbers affect the price of housing at the lower end of the market in the less sought after areas. Coincidentally these are normally the areas that are environmentally degraded, if not polluted, and it is often the case that the people living in such areas have a high incidence of respiratory and other health problems as a result of the poor environmental conditions. Affirmative recycling policy is made to order for such a scenario. In a non-obtrusive and a non-coercive manner it would be feasible to reclaim whole suburbs at the lower end of the market. Again the owners are offered a price for their property which is higher than the current market value. It is an offer that an owner would be quite foolhardy to refuse for it would give him/her the opportunity to buy a property and relocate to a more desirable area.”

“Affirmative recycling policy is guaranteed to work because, as you can see, it is actually based squarely in standard economic theory. Fundamental to economic activity is this drive identified by Adam Smith, which seems to be innate in all of us, to improve our condition. And affirmative recycling policy is admirably suited to pander to this drive. The nuts and bolts of the process is to offer proprietors a monetary inducement, or monetary assistance, better, to trade up to a more desirable property. A proprietor who owns a property in a down market area, and who is having difficulty finding tenants, is going to want to trade up every time. Affirmative recycling policy simply gives him the means to do this. Obviously in such circumstances these down-at-heel proprietors are going to find it difficult to sell their property normally, and it would take something in the nature of a miracle for them to realize more than market value for it, and yet with affirmative recycling policy this is what occurs. It is as if the Invisible Hand comes along and waves a magic wand, and presto their property is sold and they have the money to buy a better property elsewhere. This truly is the Cinderella story for property owners in environmentally degraded, down market areas. So not only do you have this generation of perpetual exchange which, as we have seen, is considered essential for prosperity to be maintained, we are also catering to this basic drive in all proprietors to own a better property than the one they already have. Smith rightly theorized that it is self-interest and the need to improve one’s circumstances that keeps the economy humming a merry tune, and affirmative recycling policy lends itself so perfectly to this, it is actually surprising that the very greedy and ambitious amongst us have not already come up with the concept.”

“Okay, so we have ascertained that affirmative recycling policy is made to order for the landlords in down market areas, but what about the tenants – the ones that own no property at all and just pay rent. Is this in some way harsh or repressive to induce the landlords to sell their properties for recycling, and thus put the tenants out in the street. Do we not detect the distinct odor of social injustice. Is this not yet again something that admirably suits the haves, but is going to cause upheaval and misery for the have-nots. But no, we find to our surprise that affirmative recycling policy will be just as advantageous to the tenant as it is to the landlord. Consider the conditions which prevail when affirmative recycling policy is being applied to the disadvantaged areas in the city. The overall population is either static or in a very gradual decline. Affirmative recycling policy has already rekindled economic vitality in the countryside. There are actually country towns that are experiencing an upsurge in inhabitants, and where the local economy has been reborn. So there are actually employment opportunities in the countryside. In addition there has been no decline in prosperity in the city itself. The better areas are still as much in demand as ever. The construction industry is robust in both city and country, and the agriculture sector has been revamped in the country as well. So the tenants in the poor city areas that are being recycled not only will have somewhere to go where they can readily find work, but they will also be assured of the opportunity of improving their condition in life in exactly the same way as being offered to the landlords. This is the opportunity for the poor and downtrodden to actually break the vicious cycle of poverty which they wear like a ball and chain preventing them from cutting loose. The Invisible Hand arrives in the form of affirmative recycling policy and all of a sudden they have somewhere to go and something to do which will improve their condition dramatically. They can relocate to the country, they can move to the better side of town. It doesn't matter where they go, because wherever they go they will be able to find jobs, and start a new chapter in their life. And the truly beneficial thing about it is that it is something that the disadvantaged will be able to achieve themselves. It is not welfare, it is not a handout, it is not charity. All that occurs is that the property in which they are currently tenanted is sold, and they move elsewhere where they are guaranteed to find work. What could be more natural or more socially acceptable than that?”

“So there you have it. This is where Smith's Invisible Hand has been leading us all this time. This mysterious force which has been driving economic progress, often in ways where we step back and ask ourselves – Can this be progress? Or is it the opposite of progress? Is this not really subservience and regimentation in the name of progress? Are we not actually losing something here, rather than gaining? For centuries the future of the human race has been problematical. Witness for example the pessimism of Ricardo, or the revolutionary fervor of Karl Marx. Technological advancement coupled with industrial enterprise and the factory mentality, really has appeared to be leading us to our own destruction. But now all is revealed. The Invisible Hand knew exactly what it was doing, and what is even more surprising, this Invisible Hand is actually a benevolent force. The truth of the matter is that all this time the Invisible Hand has been steadfastly setting up the conditions necessary for us to achieve Utopia.”

“Affirmative recycling policy is the key to it all, and the most extraordinary thing is that the Invisible Hand had to actually push us to plague phase, with all its attendant environmental and social problems, before affirmative recycling policy could actually have the desired effect. There simply would have been no point to affirmative

recycling when arable land and natural resources were bountiful. In times past when human population was insignificant compared to the land mass of the various continents, the question of recycling never came up. Why should it? The produce of the earth appeared to be boundless, so much so that the concern was rather how to fully utilize this seemingly inexhaustible supply. When you have got a growing human population and no concerns about the productivity of the arable land currently under cultivation, the obvious thing is going to be to simply clear more land for cultivation. At some point however people like Ricardo and Marx started sounding warning bells. As the human race started to approach plague phase, it was becoming more and more obvious that this process of perpetual growth and expansion was leading us into an impossible situation.”

“The plague phase has brought with it the other essential ingredient for affirmative recycling to work. Now we have our own DNA actively working to reduce our numbers, and arguably even to drive us to extinction. We have become a threat to evolution itself, and the ‘chemistry of collapse’ that is factored into our biological makeup is seeking to get rid of us so that evolution can continue. Without proactive immigration policies, the populations of all the European and New World developed countries would in some cases stabilize, and in most cases fall. This is what nature wants to happen; this is what our own genes want to happen; and this is what the Invisible Hand wants to happen. Most developed countries seek to defy this in the misguided belief that population reduction will inevitably lead to declining prosperity. They think they know better (notwithstanding the warning of Adam Smith so long ago that the workings of the Invisible Hand are often inexplicable or even contrary to reason), and they seek to artificially inflate population numbers through aggressive immigration policies.”

“Affirmative recycling policy cannot work, or at least cannot work to its optimum level, in an economic region where population numbers are continuing to grow. In such circumstances the demand for housing is continually high and increasing. This is precisely what legislators and policy makers seek to achieve according to conventional economic wisdom. There is no doubt that the price of housing will continue to rise, and the real estate market will remain buoyant, as a result of high demand. Affirmative recycling policy which works on the principle of reducing the supply of housing would only serve to inflate the price of housing even more. Under such circumstances there would actually be people camping in the streets with nowhere to live. The whole point about affirmative recycling policy is to deliberately reduce the supply of housing at a slightly faster rate than the demand for housing is falling. It is designed to mimic population growth. You can’t pursue a policy that mimics population growth, and at the same time have the population growing in fact as a result of immigration policies.”

“It is only for maximum effect, however, that a policy of affirmative recycling requires population reduction in an economic region. In point of fact affirmative recycling can do a lot to revamp the agricultural sector even in a country where the overall population is growing as a result of immigration policies. Immigrants as a general rule choose to settle in the large cities. The reasons for this are mainly economic. The large cities are the economic powerhouses where work is generated and employment opportunities are created. We invariably see the megacities continue to grow, due in part to an influx of immigrants, and also due to the domestic drift of population from the country towns to the cities as a result of the rural crisis and depressed economic activity generally in the country. Affirmative recycling policy in the

countryside would go a long way towards solving the economic woes in the country even while the overall population of the economic region is growing as a result of increasing numbers of city dwellers. This would occur along the lines that I have already outlined and would result in some country towns disappearing and being reverted to wilderness, while at the same time other country towns are getting an economic boost as a result of an influx of cashed-up residents from the towns that are recycled. Affirmative recycling policy, although applied purely in the countryside and thereby achieving the major beneficial effects in the countryside, would actually start to have a positive effect over the entire economic region. With economic activity in the countryside being boosted, you are obviously going to see more employment opportunities in the country and you are going to see the country towns actually growing in size. Dare I use the word 'progress'. You are actually going to find a progressive new attitude in the country towns that are not recycled. It would be reasonable therefore to expect not only that the drift from the rural areas to the cities would at the very least be halted, and possibly even reversed. It is quite possible that you will actually see city dwellers, whether native citizens or new immigrants, choosing the lifestyle alternative of going to live in the country."

"So I have explained the process to you in broad terms, and I have also made the assertion that the Invisible Hand has been leading up to this all along. Effectively I have asserted that although the Invisible Hand has appeared, in the name of progress, to be actually driving us to our own destruction, in fact by driving us into plague phase the Invisible Hand has been covertly setting up the optimum conditions for affirmative recycling policy to work. To demonstrate what I am saying, I am going to pick a country where, on the face of it, it is very difficult indeed to assert that the Invisible Hand is directing us towards the good. If I have really hit upon the conditions to create Utopia, it should be good for all countries. That is to say, I have to demonstrate how it can be done in a real, extant country, the current conditions are such that, without the intervention of affirmative recycling policy, the possibilities of it ever arriving at that ideal state are very remote indeed. For this demonstration I have selected the country called Russia, and the state of its economy at the time of writing, 2003. "

"As I said, if a theory is good, it should be able to solve the hardest problems, and the environmental and social problems in Russia are the hardest by anyone's standards. 15% of Russia consists of ecological crisis zones. The major problems are the declining quality of drinking water, radioactive contamination, air pollution in major cities and industrial centers, household as well as commercial toxic waste disposal and industrial accidents."

"The economy is in a state of depression evidenced by a falling GNP and falling industrial production over the past decade or so. There was some improvement with the rise of oil prices in the year 2000 but in general terms the indicators of a robust economy are all negative. What is seen as the most serious problem for the economic outlook is depopulation. In recent years the population has been declining by almost a million persons a year. The causes of depopulation are said to be a low female fertility rate and a high mortality rate due to a toxic environment, infectious diseases and widespread drug and alcohol abuse."

"With the economy in depression, a robust shadow economy has evolved which accounts for up to 40% of the GNP. Corruption is endemic, one might almost say a way of life. Criminal activities and drug-trafficking are on the increase. There has

been a massive injection of foreign aid monies in an effort to prop up the economy (the US alone since 1992 up to the end of the Clinton administration allocated \$8.2 billion) however it seems that the aid has not been effective largely due to graft and corruption at all levels of government. The monies simply do not go where they are intended.”

“The ailing economy is compounding the country’s environmental problems. Many of the nuclear reactors are obsolete and are not receiving proper maintenance and safety checks because of insufficient funds. Corners are being cut in the treatment and disposal of radioactive and toxic waste. Industry is able to subvert whatever environmental regulations that are in place for waste disposal by bribing local officials. The pipelines to the northern oilfields are not being maintained adequately and in addition they are being tapped into by racketeers which is causing alarming leakage and spillage. In addition, in an effort to obtain sorely needed foreign currency, the government even allows Russia to act as a dumping ground for toxic waste from other European countries.”

“The agricultural sector is in a bad way. Because of the harsh climate and inconsistent rainfall a relatively small portion of the country is available for agriculture. The bulk of the farms are collective farms that are a carryover from the Communist era. These farms are barely functioning as a result of dwindling state subsidies and young people leaving. Older people on the farms find themselves trapped in a subsistence level lifestyle. Private farms and garden plots of individuals, although only approximately 25% of the total agricultural area, account for over half of all agricultural production.”

“All agricultural land is state owned and even the private farms do not have the right to sell or mortgage their land. Approximately a million hectares of agricultural land is lost to soil degradation, erosion, desertification and salinization etc each year. During the 1990s the total land under agricultural production declined by more than one quarter.”

“The government recently passed the Land Code which allows householders and owners of commercial buildings to actually sell and mortgage their land. This was passed with strident opposition from the Communist Party and still does not apply to agricultural land. The government is going to attempt to bring agricultural land under the Land Code sometime in the future. Privatizing land ownership has been hailed as a great step towards economic recovery by the government, however it seems that the average land owner is far from convinced. As they have to pay land tax based on the market value of their land, they regard the reform with suspicion.”

“The main problem here is depopulation. With the population of Russia declining by a million persons a year, the real estate market is going to remain in the doldrums notwithstanding private ownership. There is no joy for a property owner if the value of the property is declining and there is no-one wanting to buy anyway. This coupled with the duty to pay land tax will make the average property owner look upon ownership as a burden.”

“In parts of the major cities property values will no doubt rise but in the smaller cities and country towns the real estate market will remain depressed. For the same reason there is unlikely to be any major demand for new housing, so the reforms will not mean any upturn for the construction sector. For property owners in cities and towns that are so polluted that people are dying prematurely, the situation will remain hopeless.”

“A solution for all these problems would be for the government to adopt an affirmative recycling policy. Foreign aid money should be given specifically to the government to reclaim the cities and towns with the most serious problems of environmental toxicity. All the property owners should be paid not just the market value, but sufficient for them to buy a comparable property in another town, and relocate. They themselves will be completely free to decide where they want to live. This will have the effect of actually increasing the demand for housing in other cities and towns. With the demand for housing rising, the construction sector will also be revitalized.”

“This would be a gradual process. The yardstick would be to decide how many houses would be purchased, and new houses built, directly attributable to a population increase of say 3% per year. In other words the figure would not take into account the normal buying and selling of the existing population. Whatever that figure may be, the government should reclaim that many houses in one of the cities or towns with serious problems. The houses reclaimed are simply demolished and the land reverted to open space wooded parkland.”

“When the government gets around to privatizing agricultural land, the affirmative recycling policy will also be beneficial both to the farmers themselves and the economy in general. Farms with the most serious degradation problems should be reclaimed and reverted to wilderness. The owners of private farms should be paid more than the market value so that they can buy another farm elsewhere if they want to, or can buy a property in the city.”

“Persons on collective farms should be paid sufficient monies to buy a private farm of a size equal to their share of the collective farm. For instance, if the collective farm is 1,000 hectares and there are fifty couples living on the farm then each couple would be paid sufficient to buy a 20 hectare private farm. The real problem with privatizing collective farms has been how to divide up the farm amongst the occupants. Not all land on a farm is suitable for agriculture so some will get good land, and others will get useless land.”

“The affirmative recycling policy outlined above would have numerous beneficial effects both socially and economically. For a start people who live in heavily polluted toxic environments will be able to relocate to places more conducive to their health. With the revitalization of the agriculture and construction sectors, and the real estate market generally, the public economy could regain ascendancy over the shadow economy, and there would be less opportunity for racketeering. Property owners would be much more willing to pay land tax if they could see the values of their properties actually rising. And perhaps most importantly, a government with a robust economy would be able to allocate much more funding to proper safeguards against nuclear catastrophes.”

“I hope that you can see now that affirmative recycling policy really does have something to recommend it. As I have already pointed out, Russia is actually in the ‘too hard’ basket and yet on general principles at least, with sufficient good will and enthusiasm, the problems of that extraordinary country are still solvable. Compared to Russia, applying affirmative recycling policy to any other country would be a breeze. Up to now I have been trying to explain the process primarily according to the basic principles of supply and demand formulated by Adam Smith. There is of course another economist whose reputation is even greater than Adam Smith as being the authoritative

source of Western economic theory. I have already mentioned his name to you in relation to the Reverend Thomas Malthus, and it is now to the theory of our foremost economist that I turn.”

### **John Maynard Keynes**

“John Maynard Keynes explained the main trends which led to his writing his famous work *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money*. In the editorial introduction to this work he says, ‘One of the most important transitions for me, after my *Treatise on Money* had been published, was suddenly realizing this. It only came after I had enunciated to myself the psychological law that, when income increases, the gap between income and consumption will increase, - a conclusion of vast importance to my own thinking but not apparently, expressed like that, to anyone else’s. Then, appreciably later, came the notion of interest being the measure of liquidity preference, which became quite clear in my mind the moment I thought of it. And last of all, after an immense lot of muddling and many drafts, the proper definition of the marginal efficiency of capital linked up one thing with another.’ I have quoted this statement in full to you because we are going to have to satisfactorily grasp the significance of his inspiration, and see how it gels with the added factor that Keynes did not consider in any great detail – namely the specific situation where the population in an economic region is either declining or static.”

“Please note however before we start on his theory of employment, that simply the fact that the population in an economic region is declining or static does not necessarily and inevitably mean that the labor force in that economic region is likewise declining or static. I will have more to say about this in due course, but I would ask you to accept that in a situation where the population is not growing and yet the demand for labor remains high, then for several reasons the labor force will continue to expand. For example, all governmental assistance for unemployed persons will tend to disappear under those conditions, leading ultimately to the situation where there becomes a straightforward classification between the majority of the adult population that is employed, and the minority of persons who because of physical or mental infirmity, are incapable of holding down a job. Obviously the latter will continue to receive a generous infirmity allowance from the State, and this group will include a fair proportion of people who are infirm by reason of old age. All the rest of the adult population, in a situation where the demand for labor exceeds the supply of labor (that is in conditions of full employment) come to be classified as employable for the purpose of assessing the extent of the potential labor force. I shall be dealing with this expanding nature of the work force in detail, and at this stage I ask you to simply accept the general proposition that the labor force does not necessarily go into decline just because the population is starting to decline; certainly not in the short to median term in any event, that is, certainly not in the first 100 years or so.”

“As regards the actual theory of employment itself, Keynes pretty much accepted the postulates of classical economics, but with some reservations. According to classical theory there are two fundamental precepts, firstly, that the wage is equal to the marginal product of labor. The wage of an employed person is equal to the value that would be lost if employment were to be reduced by one unit, which is just another way of saying that the wage of an employed person is equal to the productive value of that labor unit. The second precept is that the utility of the wage when a given volume of labor is

employed is equal to the marginal disutility of that amount of employment. Again this sounds more complex than it actually is. By the utility of wage, Keynes is talking about the real wage, which means that it ultimately depends upon the purchasing or bargaining power of that wage. The marginal disutility of the wage refers to any reason that may cause an employed person, or a body of employed people, to dispute the utility of the wage, and to withhold their labor as a result. The operative words here are ‘when a given volume of labor is employed.’ In the situation that we are looking at where the demand for labor generally is higher than the supply of labor, the marginal disutility factor tends to augment. In other words workers will be able to pick and choose what employment they engage in. They may not be able to withhold their labor indefinitely, but they will certainly be in a position to be employed in an activity that returns to them the best or most useful real wage. By choosing one employment over another, they have made the decision that the employment or employments not chosen have a greater marginal disutility. The reason why the given volume of labor employed is so important is that in a situation of full employment, it is the workers who get to choose between different employment opportunities. Their power to choose is reduced when there is less than full employment, because there is an unemployed pool of persons for whom the marginal disutility of the wages offered is less. In other words they may be prepared to work for the lesser wage.”

“Keynes spoke of four possible means of increasing employment as part of his exposé of classical economics. I need only refer to the first two because they in general terms explain the situation of full employment that we are considering. It has to be remembered that Keynes was writing in a period recently following upon the Great Depression and so naturally he was considering ways and means of increasing employment, and reducing the pool of unemployed persons. The means of increasing employment have no real relevance in a situation where there is already full employment that is going to continue indefinitely. Keynes states that the following are means of increasing employment: An improvement in organization and foresight that diminishes ‘frictional’ employment; a decrease in the marginal disutility of labor, as expressed by the real wage for which additional labor is available, so as to diminish ‘voluntary’ unemployment. Both these conditions are actually satisfied in a situation of full employment, for the simple reason that there is no longer a pool of unemployed persons who reduce the bargaining power of those who are employed. Concepts such as ‘frictional’ employment and ‘voluntary’ unemployment tend to be a product of Marx’s era when there was actually a perceived class struggle.”

“Keynes implicitly recognizes this when he quotes with approval a statement in a letter by Ricardo to Malthus dated October 9, 1820. Ricardo saw no merit in the actual amount of the national dividend in discussions about wealth. Also irrelevant is the actual size of the employable population when determining questions about wealth and prosperity. The essential factor or ‘pure theory’ is to ascertain what determines the actual employment of the available resources, and how the relative values and rewards of their production are distributed. Ricardo states, ‘Political Economy you think is an enquiry into the nature and causes of wealth – I think it should be called an enquiry into the laws which determine the division of produce of industry amongst the classes who concur in its formation. No law can be laid down respecting quantity, but a tolerable correct one can be laid down respecting proportions. Every day I am more satisfied that the former

enquiry is vain and delusive, and the latter only the true objects of the science.’ This is exactly the situation we are looking at here. The size of the population is irrelevant to discussions about wealth, and so to are questions about whether the population is growing or declining. If we can arrive at a situation in a declining population where the rewards of production are better distributed amongst all employed persons, then we have a truer definition of wealth and prosperity, because here precisely in Keynesian terms you will witness an improvement in organization and in foresight and thus diminish ‘frictional’ employment. A better distribution of wealth will always result in less friction between entrepreneur and worker.”

“Keynes draws a distinction between money-wages on the one hand, and real wages on the other. He argued that there was an inverse relationship between changes in money-wages and changes in real wages. So in a situation where money-wages are rising generally, real wages are actually falling. He reasons that in situations where there is widespread unemployment, there is a tendency for money-wages to fall because labor is more willing to accept wage cuts, and in this situation real wages, that is the purchasing or bargaining power of the wage, will rise as a result. It is difficult to dispute this logic that such a relationship between changes in money-wages and real wages actually exists in the world as we know it where populations are growing. This is in fact the deception that stokes the fire of modern capitalism. When there is an available pool of unemployed, the entrepreneurs do (grudgingly) allow money wages to rise. This allows the workers to delude themselves into believing that they have achieved something by fighting hard for a rise in money-wages. In point of fact they have worsened their condition, and the net result of all their struggle and effort is a reduction in the real wage. It is precisely this deception that we must expunge if we are to achieve Utopia, and the best way to go about that is to achieve permanent full employment. In one stroke you have eradicated frictional employment, and the inverse relationship between money-wages and real wages is relegated to the trash heap of history.”

“Take for example the following statement made by Keynes: ‘And the belief in the proposition that labor is always in a position to determine its own real wage, once adopted, has been maintained by its being confused with the proposition that labor is always in a position to determine what real wage shall correspond to ‘full’ employment, ie. the ‘maximum’ quantity of employment which is compatible with a given real wage.’ So you can see that Keynes has no argument with the proposition that labor is in a position to choose its own real wage in the unlikely event society would actually find itself with zero unemployed. It is the existence of unemployed people that is preventing us from achieving Utopia. In the pool of the unemployed foment this concept of frictional employment. This is the term used by Keynes. Marx had another label for the same concept – namely class struggle. Call it what you will, this is the weeping sore that prevents us from calling our society healthy. We shall know that we have achieved Utopia when this sore has healed, and the scar is starting to fade. The remedy is perfectly clear and eminently palatable – put the entrepreneurs in a position where labor gets to determine its own real wage. Erase once and for all the deception that a rise in the money-wage will bring with it a rise in the real wage for labor. That is to say, put labor in the position where it has the upper hand.”

“The definition of involuntary unemployment given by Keynes is rather convoluted. I could quote it to you, but unless you are an experienced economist you are

unlikely to receive the message with any clarity. Although his wording is complex, the concept is perfectly simple. Involuntary unemployment is the opposite of full employment. Full employment occurs when the real wage is such that the marginal disutility of employment disappears. As a matter of commonsense this means that there are no workers who have chosen to withhold their labor rather than work for the money-wage being offered. In such circumstances you have no pool of unemployed, so there is no possibility of workers belonging to that pool involuntarily. In his alternative definition for involuntary unemployment, Keynes seems to state the obvious when he says that, 'An alternative, though equivalent, criterion is that at which we have now arrived, namely a situation in which aggregate employment is inelastic in response to an increase in the effective demand for its output.' This amounts to the proposition that there is no obstacle in principle to arriving and continuing in a situation of full employment. Competition between entrepreneurs for labor has caused the labor market to expand to the point where there are zero persons who are capable of holding down a job, and who are in fact unemployed. Even if the demand for output and product continues to rise, there is no further labor to meet that demand forthcoming from within the economic region. This is precisely the position we want to achieve; and we can achieve it, if only we were to let our population go into decline."

"Fundamental to Keynesian theory is his principle of effective demand. He asserts that, 'When employment increases, aggregate real income is increased. The psychology of the community is such that when aggregate real income is increased aggregate consumption is increased, but not so much as income.' Further on he asserts that the propensity of the community to consume is dependent upon the level of aggregate income, and therefore on the level of employment, and he talks about an equilibrium level of employment that is dependent upon the amount of current investment. He describes this equilibrium level as the point where there is no inducement on employers to change the level of employment either upwards or downwards. It will immediately become apparent that this position is comparable, if not identical, to the situation where the supply of labor has become inelastic. And in fact Keynes states, 'The effective demand associated with full employment is a specific case, only realized when the propensity to consume and the inducement to invest stand in a particular relationship to one another. This particular relationship which corresponds to the assumptions of the classical theory, is in a sense an optimum relationship.' According to Keynes this optimum relationship can be reached 'by accident or design', and he basically asserts that it depends upon a certain level of current investment that can be controlled by interest rates."

"The Keynesian model of a Utopian economy could therefore run something like as follows: a declining population has caused the labor market to become increasingly inelastic to the point where a state of full employment is reached, that is, all persons who are capable of being employed are in fact employed. At that point the inverse relationship between the money-wage and the real wage has disappeared, and the entire community is enjoying an optimum aggregate real income. In such a situation the community's psychological propensity to consume will have also arrived at a maximal point. Aggregate consumption, although it increases, does not increase as fast as aggregate real income, and there remains a gap between the two which from the point of view of the individual represents savings, and from the point of view of the community,

represents a potential for new investment. This potential for new investment can be realized by simply adjusting interest rates to keep effective demand at an optimum maximum. We find then a self-perpetuating economic system where there is no poverty and no losers. Utopia, here we come!”

“Is it really perfect? Or does it just appear perfect because it is a gross simplification? It can’t be perfect, you might say, because with an inelastic labor market set at full employment, you are going to have all sorts of problems caused by a shortage of labor. Entrepreneurs are going to be screaming for workers to meet the demand for product, and if those workers are not forthcoming, the consuming public will be disadvantaged. To this argument, I have several answers.”

“In the first place, we have already seen from Keynesian theory that interest rates are an effective means of adjusting the volume of investment, and will therefore provide an adequate control over the level of effective demand. If, in an inelastic labor market created by full employment, we are actually starting to experience an acute labor shortage, it is possible to dampen effective demand by increasing interest rates, and thus reducing the level of current investment. You will recall that Keynes specifically envisages the situation where, with optimum full employment, the current investment provides an amount of demand which ‘by accident or design’ is exactly equal to the system’s capacity to produce. Through the use of this adjustment mechanism, it is not conceivable that a Utopian economy will ever find itself where an acute labor shortage is actually inconveniencing consumers. It must be remembered that the population is either static or declining so effective demand becomes purely an artificial economic concept. There is no actual physical uncontrollable increase in effective demand due to the pressure of more mouths to feed. Do away with this absolute pressure, and all you are left with is the psychological propensity to consume which is eminently capable of adjustment according to standard Keynesian theory.”

“You are never going to see an acute labor shortage causing wages to inflate out of control. I have already indicated that this process of population reduction is going to make its effects felt very gradually. We are looking at a minimum of 50 years before there will be any significant effects at all. It may happen that simultaneous with the change in policy, the compulsory retirement age is done away with. Not just the compulsory retirement age, but all regulations and incentives and unstated conventions tending to coax or induce mature employed people to retire while they are still capable of participating in the labor market. What also can disappear in the short-term is the so-called redundancy package. Obviously in a situation of full employment, the likelihood of workers becoming redundant and having to be put off is no longer going to be a problem, either to the entrepreneurs or to the workers themselves. With advancing technology there will always be situations where workers are becoming redundant, but in the type of economy that I am attempting to describe, workers who are put off as a result of losing productive effectiveness in one enterprise will readily be able to find work elsewhere. So in the short-term all we are going to see by way of change is a return to the pure principles of Adam Smith. We are going to do away with regulation in the labor market, and put market forces back in the driver’s seat. Keynes refers to ‘an imperfect mobility of labor’ as being one of the principle causes of frictional employment, and this is precisely what our new Utopian economy is going to rectify. As the Utopian state draws ever closer, so too are we going to edge ever closer to a perfect mobility of labor.”

“So in general we are going to free up market forces, and allow them to aid our new society to gradually adjust to the reality of full employment. Although Keynes described full employment as an ‘inelastic’ labor market, the literal significance of the word inelastic never actually arises. What happens in fact is that market forces are continually stretching the labor market even further. Gradually phasing out retirement packages and the old age pension will increase the pool of potential workers substantially, and these people will be potentially available to prevent any critical labor shortage actually occurring in practice. As one would expect in our perfect new society, the stigma of being mature age is going to disappear. No longer will older people be treated as second rate citizens who are expected to vanish from the employment scene just as soon as wrinkles start to appear on their face, or their posture becomes a little stooped, or their gait or speech a little slow. No longer will they be shunned, marginalized or ostracized as if they had some incurable disease, and were a threat to the health, mental or physical, of the younger workers. No longer will their God-given right to work if they want to be taken away just because they have reached a certain arbitrary age, as if they had passed the human equivalent of the ‘use-by’ date, and must therefore be thrown in the trashcan regardless of what condition they are actually in. In our ideal new society mature age people who are in need of work, and are able and willing to work, will be permitted to work for just as long as they want to.”

“While we are on this topic of achieving a perfect mobility of labor as a means of safeguarding our new society against the adverse effects of acute labor shortage, we shall also have to call into question the status of all workers that Smith would have classified as ‘unproductive labor.’ Broadly speaking, as a general group, we need simply refer to them as government bureaucracy, but we will identify certain specific positions and try to determine what will be their fate in a labor market that is becoming increasingly mobile, heading towards perfect mobility. Let us look at teachers (including all tertiary level academics in public universities) employed by the State, we shall also look at tax department personnel, law enforcement personnel, and last but not least, military personnel. There is actually another category of government bureaucrats that we are going to look at, namely persons employed in State sponsored health facilities and public hospitals, but we shall reserve our discussion concerning the fate of these people until we get on to the social implications of a perfectly mobile labor market, ie. full employment.”

“As regards teachers in State run schools and academics in public universities, the economic forces in a Utopian economy will sound their death knell. Their total demise will not occur overnight, but there can be no doubt that by the end of the first century of the new order, State sponsored or subsidized education will no longer exist. Remember that this is after 100 years in a society where the average fertility rate is less than 2 children born to females of childbearing age. The overall population is now in gradual decline, and everybody, and I do mean everybody, who is capable of holding down a job, is in fact employed, or they are sufficiently wealthy to support themselves. And you no longer see workers in a menial occupation and receiving a subsistence level wage. Everybody is employed, and is receiving a real wage that enables them to consume to their heart’s desire, and still have money left over either for saving or investment purposes. In other words, poverty has been eradicated across the board, and the concept itself retains only a historical, and perhaps a slightly sentimental, interest. In

such a society every couple who has children will not only be able to pay, but will be positively desirous, to have their children educated privately. Even today, and in fact at all times, we have seen that those parents who can afford to educate their children privately, invariably do so. There has always been a social stigma attached to public education, and surprising as it may sound, that stigma shall continue in our perfect Utopian society. The public versus private education issue has always tended to separate the rich from the poor. The ability of the rich to actually pay for the education of their own children has consistently been a symbol of their own inflated status in the community, which has also induced many not-so-rich to likewise send their children to private schools in order to enhance their own standing in the community. I have no objections to these social and psychological propensities, and I see no reason why they should not continue to flourish in our Utopian society. What must not exist, if our society is to be Utopia, is for people to have children that they can't afford to educate. These are the people who will disappear in the first 100 years, and will take with them all teachers and academics employed by the State. State schools and public universities will close, and will be recycled to wooded parkland. So as a result of this, you are going to see a gradual drift of state school teachers into the private labor market, thereby tending to increase its elasticity."

"The fate of teachers employed in State run schools in a Utopian economy, is a fair indicator of what is going to happen to government bureaucrats generally. In an economy where there is full employment and an increasingly perfect mobility of labor, you will also see less need for administration and regulation generally. Not only will the entire public education system disappear, but as there is no poverty and no unemployed, so too the need for social security payments and welfare of all kinds will start to shrink. I emphasize the word 'shrink'. The need for some welfare will never disappear completely in a Utopian society. There will always be a small percentage of the population who, as a result of physical or mental infirmity, are incapable of providing for themselves or holding down a job. Accordingly there will remain in any Utopian government a radically trimmed down welfare system to cater for these people. And because you are dealing here with a Utopian society, you may be assured that these people will be catered for generously. However, the number of the completely unemployable will always be relatively small, so they will represent only a minor tax burden for the rest of the citizenry. You can undoubtedly see already what is going to happen to the public service – the millions and millions of government bureaucrats of all kinds who are currently involved in unproductive labor, and have to be paid out of taxation revenue, to put the matter bluntly – they will become redundant (even more redundant than they are at present – as if that were possible!) Their services will no longer be required. Their employment in the public service will cease, and they will become available for employment in the private sector, thus decreasing any likelihood that there can be any acute labor shortage arising in the new order."

"Just these two examples of dismantling the State-run education system and radically restricting welfare entitlements will give you a very good idea as to how much the State's need for taxation revenue will be reduced. They are examples of what is going to happen generally with public administration. Obviously the taxation system itself will start to shrink as well. The tax department will never disappear completely and it is not intended that it should do so. You will see administration in every respect scaled

down to an absolute minimum, but it is not suggested that government will vanish altogether. This is an important point for any of you who intend to follow my speech with other notable Utopian systems that vaguely refer to some idyllic state where government is no longer required. In the economic Utopia that I am proposing, government doesn't become totally unnecessary. Here again I am strictly adhering to the principles laid down by Adam Smith. I have already explained to you that he firmly believed that government was instigated in order to provide security for the ownership of property – indeed he was clear that it was instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor. My Utopian model does away with the dichotomy between rich and poor. There is no longer poor, only varying degrees of rich; and within the varying degrees of rich there is a tendency for a median wealth (the system will tend to make the extremely wealthy less so and the less wealthy more so). There will always remain some need to protect private ownership, but this need will become less and less contentious with every passing century. No more nor less than what one would expect in a Utopian economy.”

“The taxation department therefore rides an ever declining curve towards oblivion, but never actually arrives there. Even if I were to end my speech right now, and sit down, that last statement as to ever-decreasing taxation would probably, on its own and without more, have been enough to convince many of you that my version of Utopia has hit the bulls-eye. A society with ever-decreasing taxation is normally everybody's idea of Utopia anyway. But there are still a few more things I have to explain before I can finish my speech, because no doubt some of you are already asking – ‘What about defense expenditure?’ ‘What about the police force?’ ‘What about health care?’ There are still many government functions that are going to eat up a big chunk of taxation revenue. So I shall go on and deal with these. You are no doubt also saying to yourselves that these are only economic forces that I am talking about. They are not going to have any effect on basic human nature. There is still going to be violent crime – rapes, murders, etc. You probably think I am already starting to drift off into idealism. So I shall have to go on and explain more. The only point I am making at this stage is that the taxation burden on the citizens in a Utopian community will become less and less. This will have two major impacts on the economy. Firstly, hundreds of thousands of unproductive workers in the tax department will be laid off gradually over a long period of time, and these people will become available for employment in the private sector. Secondly, with reduced taxation and a constantly high real wage, workers generally will have more money available for consumption, saving, or investment. Both of which factors will contribute to maintain prosperity, and keep the economy buoyant.”

“While we are on this subject of taxation, I would like to foreshadow a radical change of thinking concerning a policy that has been a major item of government expenditure in the past, and we still see many examples of it at the present time. I am talking about government expenditure on public works specifically to create employment opportunities for unemployed workers. We come across this all the time where governments expend monumental sums of money for the construction of railways, roads, powerhouses, dams etc., not because these works are actually necessary, but simply to boost employment in economically depressed areas. The rationale behind it is based on a multiplier effect of employing a certain number of unemployed workers in times of severe unemployment. Keynes gives an example of it in a hypothetical economy where the employment of 10,000,000 persons represent full employment. If due to economic

depression the actual number of persons employed had fallen to 5,200,000 persons, the employment of an additional 100,000 men on public works will actually cause overall employment to rise to 6,400,000 due to the multiplier effect. Keynes actually had a mathematical formula for it that is not relevant for our purposes. It is only necessary to appreciate the overall concept. 'Thus public works,' says Keynes, 'even of doubtful utility may pay for themselves over and over again at a time of severe unemployment, if only from the diminished cost of relief expenditure, provided that we can assume that a smaller proportion of income is saved when employment is greater; but they may become a more doubtful proposition as a state of full employment is approached.' The idea behind it is of course that the expenditure of these newly employed workers will have a flow-on effect, and create further employment. Also, even if the work performed is actually quite useless and unproductive, the mere fact that these workers are not receiving unemployment relief justifies the expenditure. But essentially it still remains unemployment relief, the only difference being that the unemployed are actually put to work and they receive a salary which is commensurate with a normal wage."

"Keynes goes on to explain that the multiplier effect diminishes as a state of full employment is approached, so much so that the concept of monumental public works to create further employment becomes a futile exercise. In our hypothetical economy where the employment of 10,000,000 persons represents full employment, if say there are already 9,000,000 persons gainfully employed, the employment of a further 100,000 persons on public works will only raise aggregate employment to 9,200,000 persons. In this example Keynes is merely making the point that the multiplier effect encapsulated in his mathematical formula has an increasingly diminished effect as full employment is approached, but the implications for the Utopian economy that I am trying to describe become quite obvious from his example. In our economy where full employment is a permanent feature, there will no longer be any need whatsoever for the government to undertake monumental public works of doubtful utility in order to boost employment figures. A major category of government expenditure will simply disappear. We will see the effects of this in two major avenues: obviously there will be a further reduction in the taxation imposed on the citizenry, and our situation of full employment and perfect mobility of labor will tend to perfect itself as well in the sense that all employment becomes of a productive nature. Another instance of market forces constantly tending to phase out unproductive labor, similar to what will happen to the public service."

"I have already explained to you that taxation will not only diminish, but will continue to diminish at an ever faster rate, in a Utopian economy. Taxation will, however, never completely disappear. This is because the economy relies on an affirmative recycling policy. But even with this head of expenditure, the government revenue necessary to compensate property owners who are fortunate enough to have their property reclaimed, this expenditure, as I say, is merely only replacing a form of expenditure that governments routinely engage in at the present time. Affirmative recycling policy does not create an additional taxation burden for the citizenry, however it does represent an area where the citizens will have to continue to bear the increasingly less onerous obligation to pay some taxation. Let me explain in a little more detail what I am talking about."

"Take the ubiquitous situation in modern developed counties where the government routinely, and seemingly unquestioningly, provides a whole cluster of relief

payments, subsidies and tax concessions to farmers. Let us take a hypothetical country in which the total relief and assistance to farmers, whether by way of direct payments or concessions, amounts to \$X billion per year. The government of this country then sees the light, allows its population to go into decline, and commences a policy of affirmative recycling of rural properties, the mechanics of which I have already explained. The simplest and most radical way that this would occur is for the government to discontinue the relief and assistance to farmers to the tune of \$X billion per year, and instead utilize that \$X billion to compensate the owners of the farms that are reclaimed in that year. This is an unrealistically simple example which is for explanation purposes only. In fact the process will be gradual and will require planning with infinite attention to detail. There are many variables involved – the state of the rural sector, demographics, local geographic and environmental factors. You will gradually see a phasing out of government assistance to farmers, and a phasing in of compensatory payments to the owners of the farms reclaimed under affirmative recycling policy. Above all the process is gradual. The only point I am really trying to make here is that affirmative recycling policy will involve no additional expense to the government, however I do consider that over the decades, centuries even, that affirmative recycling policy is applied, you are going to see a gradual reduction in the number of farms that are reclaimed. In other words the expenditure by the government on affirmative recycling policy will itself decrease, so here again the amount of money that the government will have to raise by taxation will still decline.”

“The example I have given in relation to rural assistance and subsidies will of course apply generally to any industry that is currently in need of government assistance. Say for instance that in a particular country, the government is heavily subsidizing the steel industry. There is an entire medium sized city that has grown up around a gigantic outmoded industrial steel plant, and a very large proportion of the residents are dependent in one way or another on this plant to earn their daily bread. Not only is the government assisting the manufacturing plant itself to keep it from closing down, but in addition, for example, the residents are given rental assistance and taxation incentives to induce them to continue to live there, and keep this town alive. In addition the town has serious problems with lead pollution, and the incidence of lead related health problems is well above the national average. As a result there is an additional burden of the public purse to provide these people with the extra health care, and compensatory payments (including bulk unemployment assistance) for those residents who have become too sick to work. Here you have a perfect candidate for affirmative recycling policy. Nothing has to happen overnight, but the government simply starts phasing out all these forms of assistance both to the steel plant itself and to the residents, and systematically begins reclaiming the entire city, with the most degraded areas taking priority. At some stage the owners of the steel plant itself are paid out and the industrial complex converted to wooded parkland. The city may or may not be completely recycled. Not all the residents will want to move elsewhere, and they may choose to buy another property in one of the less polluted areas of the same city. This will of course boost the construction industry and the real estate market in those local areas. Alternative industries start to revive commercial activity in the city generally. After say 100 years, you could find the city still there in name, but otherwise completely unrecognizable. Public morale is high, the residents are happy and healthy, the environment is pollution free, and not one cent of

government assistance is required to keep the local economy buoyant. In fact the city has been revamped to the point where there is no longer any need for affirmative recycling policy at all. The city now represents zero drain on the public purse, and the need for the government to raise taxation revenue has directly declined to that extent in real terms.”

“I hope you are now starting to get a clearer picture of the core process that operates in a Utopian economy. Essentially the Invisible Hand is aiming at an economy where all labor is productive, where all labor is perfectly mobile, and where taxation is constantly reducing to the minimum that is essential to permit further recycling. Such an economy is simply the blueprint for self-perpetuating prosperity. Not only self-perpetuation, but in addition it is constantly operating to trim and reduce itself; to become an increasingly leaner and more vibrant ball of economic potential. The rate of taxation is constantly reducing, and more importantly it is constantly being monitored and modified to maintain just the right reserve of money available for further affirmative recycling policy. The amount of recycling that is carried out in turn depends upon the desired degree of stimulation that is required for the economy. Normally the aim will be to maintain a slight but significant tension in the real estate market. That is to say that the demand for real estate will always be kept slightly higher than the supply of real estate. The mechanics of it will obviously vary from country to country, and indeed will vary between different regions and times in the same country. This variation will be mainly dependent upon the pace at which the population numbers are declining. A country, for instance, where the population numbers are declining rapidly will have to do comparatively more recycling to keep the real estate market buoyant, and more recycling will require a greater need for taxation revenue to compensate the owners of the properties reclaimed.”

“I shall have more to say about this aspect of reducing taxation rates later on, because obviously in an economy where real income is either static or increasing slightly, and taxation is declining substantially, there is going to be more money available for consumption, saving or investment. The appropriate time to deal with this is when I am discussing the Keynesian theory about interest rates. Right now I want to stay on the topic of the ways and means that unproductive labor will gradually disappear, and how all workers currently engaged in unproductive labor will tend to be reengaged in the private sector as productive labor. The point being that this perpetual shift will, more than anything else, safeguard our Utopian economy from ever experiencing a really traumatic labor shortage. Were it to do so, my argument would fail without further ado, because evidently such an economy could no longer claim to be Utopia. So far, I have demonstrated how State run education, the taxation department and public servants generally will be caught up in this shift to private enterprise. Before I go on to deal with the domestic law enforcement agencies and the personnel in the defense force, I would like to deal briefly with two other very important considerations that will apply in the labor market of our Utopian economy. Where full employment is the norm, economic forces will push the labor market towards automation and outsourcing, and both of these factors will also tend to fill up any major shortfall in the availability of labor.”

“The discipline of robotics is in its infancy, but it is already a very significant factor in our society. In a Utopian economy where there is a high demand for labor and real wages are high across the board, market forces will drive progress in robotics and technology generally to make up for any labor shortage. Also, when real wages are high,

market forces are always pushing to replace human workers with machines. This motivation will not diminish in the slightest in a Utopian economy, in fact it will intensify. You will recall that we are edging ever nearer to a perfect mobility of labor, and to this end automation and robotics have a very important role to play. The major disadvantages of technology and automation disappear when you actually have full employment, because the workers who are made redundant because of it, will be able to find alternative employment with consummate ease. All that remains are the advantages of automation and technology, both in terms of cost-saving and efficiency. The deep future in our Utopian society will see all menial jobs performed by robots (for example, bus and train drivers, airline pilots, waiters and waitresses, secretaries, receptionists, cleaners, multifarious jobs in industry and so on). 300 years from now the entire human workforce will be engaged in professional, service industry, managerial, technical innovation and scientific type jobs. That is to say, jobs that cannot be performed by robots. I shall be having more to say about this when we get on to the Keynesian theory about interest rates and investment, because you can see now that technology and automation will remain a bottomless pit for new investment in our new society. This boundless outlet for new investment is essential to maintain prosperity, and will fulfill the vital psychological and social need for perceived progress.”

“The other trend that we are very familiar with in our current society, and which will certainly continue and probably even intensify (at least in the short term), is outsourcing. In the real world in which we live there is enormous disparity between the standards of living of various countries. A dichotomy between the developed countries and the developing countries is familiar to us all. It can be no coincidence that as a general rule, the female fertility rate in developed countries is low, and in developing countries it remains high. There is some connection between the female fertility rate and the standard of living. Developed countries can make a relatively simple transition to declining population just by discontinuing permanent immigration policies. These richer countries are therefore ready right now to shift to a Utopian economy. However, as I have emphasized on more than one occasion, this shift is not going to occur overnight. For centuries to come, economic forces may still dictate that menial, repetitive tasks requiring manual labor are outsourced to developing countries where labor is cheaper. For an indeterminate period of time you will also see workers from developing countries being permitted to come and work in the wealthier countries on a temporary visa arrangement. The length of time that these carryover factors will continue will depend upon the speed at which the developing countries can follow in the footsteps of the developed countries, and themselves usher in the change to Utopian economic thought. It is my firm belief that developing countries will very quickly adapt to the new order once they can see how easy and natural it is to bring about, and in the medium to long term future, all countries will have declining population, and will have to a greater or lesser extent made the transition. One can only ever speculate about the future, but there is one thing that is certain in principle. If the developed countries choose to make the change to a Utopian economic state, the concept of perfect mobility of labor demands that the workforce and the labor market should transcend national boundaries. Permanent immigration will become a thing of the past, but international mobility of labor will be encouraged and enhanced.”

“The trend towards perfect mobility of labor with full employment, coupled with advancing technology, will tend always to reduce the significance or importance of geographical location. Up to the present time we see a very strong attitude at work where developed countries adopt aggressive policies to recruit and entice immigrants with expertise in certain key disciplines, principally science and technology. In the Utopian scenario that attitude will remain just as robust, it is only the mechanics of it that will change. Permanent immigration ceases, and the trend becomes to engage skilled labor in their country of origin. For example, in our Utopian economy the Professor Emeritus of Arabic studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, could actually be living in a Palestinian enclave in East Jerusalem. The Vice-President in charge of IT for Lloyds of London could actually be living in Dar es Salaam in India. The international marketing department for General Motors in Detroit, Michigan, could actually be based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Already communication technology is so advanced that this new attitude towards the recruitment of labor is workable in practice. As the means of communication and travel continue to improve and become more and more sophisticated, economic forces will tend to make corporations change over to the new recruitment practices, because this new technology can only return a maximum profit if it is actually utilized to the full. The fact that permanent immigration has ceased in our Utopian economy does not mean that intercourse and exchange with the peoples of other countries will cease or decline. On the contrary, you can see that the trend will be for increased international interdependence. Indeed you could not have it any other way and still claim to be capitalizing on a perfect mobility of labor.”

“We now turn to one of the most important aspects of unproductive labor, the so-called defense forces. First and foremost there arises the philosophical question whether it is possible to have a Utopian society that includes military personnel. Surely the mere existence of a standing army maintained by any society must mean as a matter of principle that the social conditions are not ideal. Even if you have a society that from an internal domestic viewpoint has achieved Utopia, that fact alone will be a source of endless problems if it has to rely on a super powerful standing army to defend itself from outside aggression. You could never expect to find a Utopian society living in a fortress, for a fortress by its very nature can also act as a prison. Quite apart from anything else, the ingredient of perfect mobility of labor would be lacking in such a situation, so any argument about having achieved Utopia is stillborn.”

“In point of fact, Keynes himself gives us the clue as to what will happen to military personnel in a truly Utopian society. I am going to take the liberty of quoting liberally from his book, *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money*, because obviously a statement by John Maynard Keynes is going to carry a lot more weight than anything I can say. In his concluding notes on the social philosophy towards which the general theory might lead, he states that ‘The outstanding faults of the economic society in which we live are its failure to provide for full employment and its arbitrary and inequitable distribution of wealth and incomes.’ In these concluding notes he is mainly concerned to summarize his central argument that up to the point where full employment is reached spending should be encouraged, because it will increase the propensity to consume upon which prosperity in a capitalist society depends. However when full employment is reached the propensity to consume does tend to decline naturally relative to real wages. Keynes then goes on to say, ‘I have mentioned in passing that the new

system might be more favorable to peace than the old one has been. It is worthwhile to repeat and emphasize that aspect. War has several causes. Dictators and others such, to whom war offers, in expectation at least, a pleasurable excitement, find it easy to work on the natural bellicosity of their peoples. But, over and above this, facilitating their task of fanning the popular flame, are the economic causes of war, namely the pressure of population and the competitive struggle for markets... But if nations can learn to provide themselves with full employment by their domestic policy (and, we must add, if they can also attain equilibrium in the trend of their population), there need be no important economic forces calculated to set the interest of one country against that of its neighbors. There would still be room for the international division of labor... International trade would cease to be what it is, namely a desperate expedient to maintain employment at home by forcing sales of foreign markets and restricting purchases, which, if successful, will merely shift the problem of employment to the neighbor which is worsted in the struggle, but a willing and unimpeded exchange of goods and services in conditions of mutual advantage.' I really don't see much point in trying to enlarge upon this. Keynes has already said it in essence and there is no necessity for me to repeat it. It is as clear as crystal that he envisages the day when countries have achieved full employment and have stabilized their populations, and as a result there is no longer the incentive nor the need for military conflict. As that day draws ever closer, you should in principle see military personnel being phased out of their current calling and reengaged in the private sector as productive labor."

"Before I deal with the domestic police force, I shall need to briefly explain Foucault's theory about 'disciplines' in his book *Surveillance and Punishment*. He maintains that the classic age saw the birth of a grand political and military strategy according to which the nations engaged their economic and demographic forces. The effect of this strategy at grassroots level was for the State to implement detailed military and political tactics to exercise control over the physical bodies and prerogatives of the individual citizens. The military institution in its totality (standing army, military personnel, military science) spanned the junction between warfare and the noise and mayhem of battle on the one hand, and the ordered and silent obedience of peace on the other. The historians dealing with ideas readily attribute the dream of a perfect society to philosophers and jurists in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but at the same time there definitely was a dream society within the military psyche. The fundamental point of reference according to the military strategists spurned an idyllic state of nature, in favor of the painstakingly subordinated grinding cogs of a machine; in lieu of a voluntary social contract, they espoused permanent coercion, fundamental human rights gave way to endlessly progressive drills, all of which leaves no room for the popular will and instead the goal is the universal docility of automatons."

"This hierarchy of continuous and functional surveillance, says Foucault, was undoubtedly not one of the great technical 'inventions' of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but its insidious extension owes its importance to the new mechanics of power that it brought along in its wake. Disciplinary power became an integrated system, bound up in its interior to the economy, and with goals that were essentially self-fulfilling and self-perpetuating. The disciplines of surveillance organized themselves into a multifaceted, automatic and anonymous power, because, although it is true that surveillance ultimately reposes on individuals, the function of surveillance within the hierarchy acts as a kind of

network of relations and interrelations from top to bottom, and also to a certain extent from bottom to top as well as laterally. The network holds the whole thing together in a complex mesh of forces and effects that are all interdependent; perpetual surveillance over those below, who are in their turn engaged in surveillance. The power base in a hierarchy of surveillance rests in various disciplines, and it can't be specifically identified as a thing, nor can it be transferred as property; it simply functions like a machine. The pyramidal nature of the organization may allow for a chief or leader, but it is the apparatus in its entirety that generates the power and holds the individual permanently suspended in a continuously extended field."

"Within this hierarchy of surveillance that is human civilization, all sorts of disciplines emerged as techniques for regulating and coordinating the multiple strands of communal existence. Their fundamental purpose is to render the exercise of power as effective as possible, economically as well as politically, with minimum obvious, overt disruptive coercion, and therefore achieving maximum discretion and invisibility. An overall economic power grows that is the framework of the apparatus through which social power is exercised, encompassing education, science, military, industrial and healthcare systems. All the various elements of the system grow in pace with each other, driven by the general demographic push of a growing population., which results normally in the membership of the various disciplines multiplying exponentially. With the mushrooming of the individual membership of these disciplines, you simultaneously see the growth of a much more extensive, complex and costly apparatus of production, within which the disciplines can operate."

"Although Foucault refers to the output of disciplines as apparatus of production, he does not use the word production in the same sense that Adam Smith uses it. Disciplines are for the most part composed of unproductive labor, and even though the apparatus of production in disciplines becomes even more ponderous, in actual fact nothing real is produced. Take for instance all the various disciplines that come under the rubric of academic and scientific enquiry. What is produced is a gigantic and ever increasing body of intangible knowledge, which encompasses all the things of the world, and which transcribes them into an infinite and never ending discourse, stating, describing, and establishing the 'facts'. But Foucault says that we shouldn't be misled about this. These techniques are simply a means of giving certain groups power over the individual, and they reproduce in a formal and concentrated form the schema of power-knowledge that is the essence of all disciplines."

"The academic and scientific disciplines, although gigantic, and obviously a major employer of unproductive labor at the present time, are merely one aspect of the entire disciplinary superstructure that operates in society. Other branches include the police system, the judicial system, the prison system which are all directly involved in the process of surveillance and discipline, and in the aggregate are major employers of personnel. The military is also a part of the disciplinary hierarchy and so too is the production of arms and weapons of war. Keynes has already told us that the motivation for countries to wage war against each other is likely to disappear when societies make the transition to a Utopian economy. That of course means not only that standing armies will be dismantled, but so too will go all the ancillary manufacturing apparatus necessary to equip and arm a standing army. Picture if you will the number of people employed in the manufacture of munitions, attack craft, weaponry, transport, barracks, food, clothing

and even entertainment for military personnel. In a society that has made the transition to Utopian economy, a multitude of industries servicing the military will also disappear. These are all people who potentially will become available for employment in the private sector, so you can see that even if a state of full employment has been reached in principle, there can never be any fear that such a situation will become so inelastic as to produce a labor shortage crisis. This incidentally fulfills a major criterion for any society to be ranked as Utopian. It would be a very warped Utopia indeed that still relied on the manufacture of weapons in order to keep its citizens fully employed and its economy prosperous. Such activity has to disappear as a matter of principle, and will in fact do so, not because people have suddenly experienced a profoundly altruistic and pacifist change in their psychological makeup, but because the manufacture of machines and weapons to kill other human beings will become superfluous and not economically viable.”

“We have seen that a key element in the theory of Adam Smith is that the economy acts as an Invisible Hand guiding societies in ways that are not always obvious to the citizens at the time. That means that economic forces are actually instrumental in molding the social values and even the morals of the citizenry. How often have you heard it said that you can’t change human nature. According to the moral philosophy of Adam Smith, this is simply not true. Human nature can and does change, and it is precisely economic forces that have been slowly and subtly directing us all along. Once you accept this, it becomes by no means fanciful to suggest that in a society that has made the transition to Utopian economic conditions, you will begin to see tangible reductions in criminal activity. The mere fact alone that poverty has been eradicated is probably sufficient to explain this. Children are brought up in an environment where they are wanted, their parents are employed and are not short of money, and they have received a good education in private schools at their parents’ expense. Such an upbringing for all children is going to bring about a dramatic reduction in violent crime in succeeding generations. In such a society you would no longer expect the citizens to keep weapons of their own, and indeed we have already seen that the manufacture of weapons and firearms will gradually be phased out. In such an economy both the demand for and the supply of the means to kill one’s neighbor will have disappeared.”

“Please note that I am merely asserting that violent crime will tend to disappear. I am not stating that it will completely disappear, at least not in any foreseeable timeframe. But in point of fact there are countries even today where the incidence of violent crime is very low due mainly to the fact that all the citizens have a very high standard of living. Japan springs readily to mind in this regard, so it is clearly not fanciful or unrealistic to assert that in a Utopian society where the living standards of all the citizens are as high as the people of Japan, you can reasonably expect the incidence of violent crime to have dropped to rates comparable with Japan at the present time. By the same token you could reasonably expect serious crime of a sexual nature to become less of a common occurrence, if not completely disappear. Remember this, a Utopian economy is having a beneficial and uplifting effect on the psychology of the people generally, that is to say that in many subtle ways the people are becoming better adjusted mentally and emotionally. Under such circumstances you will definitely see a reduction in anti-social behavior. It is not suggested that unusual sexual practices will disappear but they are less likely to involve the inclusion of non-consenting partners in circumstances that will make the practices illegal or anti-social. Whether crimes of a

sexual nature will completely disappear in the long term future would only be pure speculation on my part. It is enough for my purposes to state that in a Utopian society they will reduce, and continue to reduce.”

“So too will all incidences of petty crime reduce. In an economy where there is full employment, so everybody is earning an adequate real wage, who is going to be motivated to break into other people’s houses, or hold up gas stations, or mug people in the street. You just don’t do that sort of thing when you’ve got a fulltime job. There would be no point to it. Anyone who is incapable of holding down a fulltime job due to physical or mental infirmity will be receiving a liberal allowance from the State, so there simply won’t be anyone in the society for whom petty crime can be an attraction, or even an option. For it to continue at all would be due rather to mental aberrations than to monetary considerations, and the overall occurrence of it will become insignificant.”

“What happens is that the need for surveillance and discipline gradually disappears in a society with a Utopian economy. People generally tend to become more law-abiding simply for the fact that there are no longer pressing economic inducements for them to break the law. Crimes that are the result of emotion or passion certainly won’t disappear, but even in our present society many of such crimes have extenuating circumstances, and for one reason or another are not considered to be crimes at all. The system necessary to administer criminal justice becomes dramatically scaled down in a Utopian society. All the personnel employed in the police force, the criminal courts, the justice departments, and the prison systems gradually see the opportunities for continued employment drying up. These are all workers who are engaged in unproductive labor within the definition provided by Adam Smith, and they all currently represent a direct drain on the revenues of the State. In our new Utopian society however they will gradually become available for reemployment in the private sector, and the need for the State to collect taxation revenue in order to pay their wages will vanish. Just another example of the general trend that is going to occur throughout the entire public sector of the economy.”

“One specific instance of the surveillance question is the current need for law enforcement for drug-trafficking and substance abuse. Picture if you will the staggering number of people who are engaged worldwide in this totally unproductive exercise of enforcing anti-drug laws. Unproductive, yes, but the revenue necessary to finance this extensive apparatus of surveillance and discipline is phenomenal. A never-ending and essentially futile struggle to prevent an activity which may or may not be harmful to society, but which for political reasons or because of ideological values, has been judged to be outlawed. In addition to which, these costly, though futile, efforts at prevention actually increase the economic incentives for those people engaged in the trafficking and marketing of illicit drugs. The exercise, because it is self-defeating, also becomes self-perpetuating, so the need for a veritable army of personnel engaged solely in the enforcement of drug laws is a classic case of a discipline as exposed by Foucault. Ultimately it achieves nothing apart from existing and growing within the surveillance apparatus. As substance abuse increases, fueled on by the prohibition against using drugs, so too does the necessity for the disciplinary force to control it. All these people engaged in totally unproductive labor, and a direct burden on the exchequer. Surely you could never claim to have found the secret for Utopia if all this narcotics soap opera were to continue. So it is with great triumph and satisfaction that I announce that the whole

anti-drug issue becomes reduced to an insignificant non-issue in a Utopian economy. This is a disciplinary practice par excellence, and what a mercy it is that the Invisible Hand will finally create the conditions for it to disappear. In our new society everyone is financially secure or fully employed, better educated, and they are becoming better adjusted psychologically and emotionally. If they want to take drugs for recreation or relaxation they simply go purchase them at the drugstore. All the people currently engaged in denying them this right are no longer employed in the public sector, and are gainfully reemployed in the private sector. The never-ending drama ends, and liberty and reason returns.”

“A Utopian economy remains committed to the principle of private property, so the legal system can never completely disappear. As was pointed out by Adam Smith more than two centuries ago, the legal system is in place primarily to enforce property rights, so as long as there are these rights to protect, a legal system is going to be required. Property rights are essentially intangible or fictitious, and only exist by virtue of the legal system. It may be anticipated however that a State run system of courts to enforce property rights would no longer be necessary, and would eventually be phased out altogether. Instead you are likely to see a loose and less formal means of resolving property disputes through arbitration and mediation. Such practices are quite common already where a qualified arbitrator is appointed and paid for by the parties themselves to resolve the dispute. These sorts of procedures can be extended to all civil disputes about property, including no doubt family law issues concerning property settlements, alimony and the custody of children in the case of divorce.”

“The broad picture therefore for surveillance and discipline in a Utopian society is a minimal and ever-decreasing police force and criminal justice system, and practically all dispute resolution in civil matters being handled by arbitration and mediation in the private sector. It may be anticipated that the overall savings to the State when these new practices are in full swing would be substantial. More money that the State does not have to raise through taxation, and further streamlining of the public sector. A constant drift of personnel currently engaged in the essentially unproductive exercise of surveillance and discipline gradually being reintegrated into the private sector where their labor becomes productive and privately financed. This slow and unobtrusive dwindling of the public sector in favor of the private sector will safeguard a Utopian economy from acute labor shortage for centuries to come.”

“You will not be too surprised to find that similar processes are at work concerning the publicly funded conglomerate of healthcare services. On general principles, we are now considering a society where there is no poverty, people are either well-to-do or are fully employed, and the physically and mentally infirm are in receipt of a liberal allowance as a matter of right. In other words you are talking about a society where everybody, and I do mean literally everybody, can afford to pick up the tab for their own healthcare. At the very least, everybody will be able to pay for their own private health insurance, however I personally believe that even the need for private health insurance will disappear. When everyone has the means to pay for what they actually require, the healthcare industry will quickly adjust to put normal economic forces of supply and demand back in the driver’s seat. You will again see economic sanity determining the costing for medical procedures. Even people who require one-off expensive treatment will normally be able to finance it themselves in one way or another.

So when people are actually paying for their own operations, the general trend will keep medical services at low and competitive rates comparable with other services. All healthcare providers will be owned and operated privately, and sick people will be able to book into a hospital in much the same way as they currently book a hotel room. Gone will be the mentality that the State must provide basic health care to people who are disadvantaged economically, because such people simply no longer exist.”

“There is another aspect to this healthcare issue as well. I have already explained to you that a major rationale behind affirmative recycling policy is to convert ghettos and toxic urban areas to wooded parkland in cities. The owners of property in these areas will be liberally compensated and will have the wherewithal to buy a property in a more prestigious area. Likewise non property owners who are living in tenements in these areas will have to move to better areas where they will be able to find work and start a new life. I have already briefly told you about the many cities in Russia, for example, where the environment is so toxic that people are actually dying prematurely as a result of health problems caused by pollution. Such conditions make these cities ideal candidates for affirmative recycling policy, and there are plenty of comparable cases in other developed Western countries as well. Look up the statistics for people with respiratory problems caused by air pollution as a result of living in a crowded urban environment, and you will find that these problems are ubiquitous. The combination of affirmative recycling policy coupled with declining population numbers will solve all this. Quite simply you are looking at a situation where there is zero environment or pollution related issues in a Utopian economy, which is precisely what you would expect for it to be calling itself Utopian. In addition, all persons are either well-off or are fully employed and can afford not just basic healthcare but state-of-the-art preventative medical care as well. The assertion can be made with confidence that in a Utopian economy the average life expectancy will increase and people generally speaking will be healthier and happier.”

“The picture of Utopia that I am painting for you is based on the premise that the phenomenal advances in technology and medical science will continue as before. In fact the amount of knowledge to be gleaned concerning the workings of our own bodies is still seemingly boundless. Our current level of expertise can safely be regarded as rudimentary, if not actually embryonic. Medical science has got a long way to go, and in the Utopian economy where there is prosperity across the board, the stage is virtually set for infinite progress. It is not inconceivable, for instance, with advances in genetics that sickness, and perhaps even aging, will become a thing of the past. I’m not going to say any more than this because obviously this is mere speculation on my part. But the fact is that the combination of material prosperity and infinite medical advances do tend to suggest that wonderful things are possible. Astounding things, even...”

“To get back to more mundane issues, the fact is that State funded public health assistance disappears in a Utopian economy. At the present time there are many countries where a large percentage of the national debt has been incurred in this area. This represents a taxation burden on future generations for the healthcare of the current population, which would adequately provide a suitable definition for insanity in any reputable dictionary. It might also be described as reckless and showing a willful disregard for the freedoms and rights of future generations. From a philosophical or ethical point of view it is downright immoral. And yet this is what our upright

politicians, with their less than perfect appreciation of what the Invisible Hand is up to, consider to be fit and proper procedures to pander to the well-being of the electorate that will vote them into power here and now. Personally I would never dare to claim that I had the ingredients for a Utopian society if these financially irresponsible practices were to remain. Fortunately the Invisible Hand is actually of the same frame of mind.”

“It is no coincidence that John Maynard Keynes is the most famous and most influential economist of all times. His economic theory is right on the money, if you will pardon the pun. His major work *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money* actually contains all the necessary theory that will enable us to foreshadow our Utopian economy. Because he was writing in the aftermath of the Great Depression when there was a major unemployment problem, the emphasis of his theory is quite naturally directed towards that issue. But the same principles he espoused to create greater employment in a society where the population is growing, also work to create a Utopian economy in a society where the population is stabilized or declining. For instance, Keynes is quite clear on the fact that it is useless to talk of net output increasing, or greater quantitative numbers of persons employed, when assessing the level of prosperity in an economy. The essential economic forces are relational, that is to say we have to assess the amount of labor applied to a given amount of plant and equipment. Obviously, with this yardstick, a country with a small population can still attain ultimate prosperity simply by ensuring that its workforce is fully employed on its de facto resource and manufacturing base. The actual output of that country may be tiny when compared with a country with a large population and a gigantic plant and equipment, but the latter country will be less prosperous overall if there is a large pool of unemployed labor as well. There is nothing particularly startling about this proposition; it really can be arrived at simply by applying commonsense. What is surprising is the pervasive and enduring attitude that progress always requires numerical growth, whether it be the growth in population numbers, or the growth in the quantity of output, or a real increase in the number of persons actually employed. Overall prosperity can only be obtained by the opposite mentality to what we see at present. Instead of growing we should be looking at scaling back our population to create a greater wealth for all, relatively speaking.”

“Keynes also talks about the relationship between expectation and employment. The business decisions that will induce an entrepreneur to make more capital expenditure is normally based on the expectations of future demand, and therefore the future price of the product at the time when the entrepreneur is ready to supply the product. Evidently, buoyant expectations of increased sale proceeds will induce greater current capital expenditure, and will increase employment in the short-term. This in turn increases consumption in the short-term, and you will find the situation where a mere change of expectation can cause the level of employment to peak in the short-term, which ultimately will decline to a new long-term level. Obviously he is talking about an economy with less than full employment, an elastic labor market, and growing population numbers. Let us for a moment try to put ourselves in the position of an entrepreneur in the Utopian scenario where there is already full employment, the labor market is tending towards inelasticity, and the population numbers are in decline. What would be the expectations of such an entrepreneur? Yes, you guessed it. Or perhaps you didn’t guess it. Maybe you have decided that an entrepreneur in such a situation would have zero inducement to invest further, based on expectations of greater profit. Well, you couldn’t

be more wrong. In fact the expectation of entrepreneurs does not decline in this scenario, nor does the relationship between expectation and employment turn sour. In fact the entrepreneurs' inducement to invest will be even stronger, but it will be directed towards plant and equipment that will decrease employment, not increase employment. In our new Utopian economy any technology, machinery or plant and equipment that can reduce actual employment will be at a premium. In our current economy most of the incentive for technological advancement and innovation comes from the military, but in the Utopian economy of the future the military is actually going to wither away and die. The incentive for technological advancement will be even greater because of the high cost of labor. The principle expectation for increasing sale proceeds for an entrepreneur in a Utopian economy is to invest in laborsaving machinery and technology. This will represent a never-ending and ever-expanding avenue for new investment for entrepreneurs. It will maintain the tension in the labor market that will keep real wages high., but at the same time it is no more than a tension. There is no longer any element of conflict or struggle in the labor market, because full employment and perfect mobility of labor will ensure that employees who are made redundant by technology, will readily find suitable alternative employment.”

“With this factor of employment expectation and its effect on the labor market, I am only concerned with the specific issue of full employment in a Utopian economy. On normal principles, entrepreneurs will of course have other avenues of investment in the expectation of greater sale proceeds at a future time. Even though physical population numbers are declining, that does not invariably mean that the market for a product is shrinking. On the contrary, the market could still actually be expanding for any number of reasons. It must be remembered that prosperity is still rising and relative consumption is up as are real wages for all workers. In addition all the current opportunities and focus on export market markets will remain. There can be an infinite number of reasons why an entrepreneur in a Utopian economy could have the expectation of greater net output, and therefore increased sale proceeds. It can be seen therefore that all the standard inducement for new investment shall remain as well.”

“The difference between savings and investment, as defined by Keynes, becomes crucial for a Utopian economy. Investment has a much tighter meaning in his theory than is suggested by the broad popular use of the word. Normally, when you think of investment, you may be thinking about investing in stocks and bonds, or in real estate, or even investing your money at a fixed rate of interest in the bank. For Keynes however, none of these different ways of placing money actually count as investment which will create employment opportunities. Investment amounts to the net addition of all kinds of capital equipment that is actually involved in production. Keynes adopts the generally agreed definition of saving, namely the excess of income over expenditure on consumption. For our purposes it is sufficient to take these basic concepts to form a pretty clear picture of what is going to occur in a Utopian economy. Please bear in mind at the outset that we are much more concerned now with the activity of workers than Keynes was at the time when he was writing. I have already explained to you that Keynes believed that with full employment, consumption will increase, but not to the same extent as income. That means evidently that the gap between income and expenditure, which is the proportion of income available for savings or investment by the workers, will become greater relatively speaking. The amount of money that

entrepreneurs have for either saving or investment is no longer the only, or even the primary concern. In a Utopian economy with permanent full employment, the aggregate amount of money that the workers have for saving or investment will in all likelihood outstrip the entrepreneurs.”

“We have seen that another major factor at work in a Utopian economy is a reducing taxation burden on the citizens. All forms of taxation are substantially less, and are forever declining. This will also impact on the amount of money that workers have for savings or investment, because reducing taxation inevitably means that their real wages are increasing. You will see that I have loosely (and incorrectly) used the word ‘investment’ in relation to worker activity. By definition, workers can’t invest in the way defined by Keynes. If they are actually investing in capital equipment, they are no longer workers, but have become entrepreneurs. All the workers can have is a variety of different opportunities of placing their excess income, some of these ways being more speculative than others. It matters not whether they place their money in a bank or other financial institution at interest, or whether they buy stocks and bonds or other incorporeal commodities. They may buy real estate or chattels in the expectation that the price of such commodities will rise, or they may even indulge in some form or other of legal gambling. Whatever they do with their savings, it is still circulating, and for the most part it is going to be generating a further increase in their income.”

“From the point of view of the entrepreneurs, the outlook is very promising. The only factor tending to reduce their expectation of increased sale-proceeds is a gradually declining domestic population, that may or may not impact on their product at all. Consumption in the domestic market is still increasing relatively speaking because there is full employment, so there will remain opportunities to increase their share of the domestic market, as well as the export market. We have already seen that there will be a lot of pressure on them to invest in new technology to reduce their wages bill. Overall, the inducement to invest in new capital equipment is just as strong in a real quantitative sense in a Utopian economy, or even stronger, and this notwithstanding the fact that population numbers are actually declining. Entrepreneurs are likewise going to enjoy the advantages of decreased taxation, and the fact that banks and investment houses will have more money available to lend to them, so in every respect it is going to be easier for them to invest in new capital equipment. The old adage that success begets success is just as true for prosperity. Prosperity begets prosperity. This truism deserves to be translated into Latin and posted on the coat of arms of our new society.”

“What makes our economy ideal however, the thing that sets it apart from other economic models, and thus qualifies it for classification as Utopia, is that although prosperity begets prosperity, this does not mean that the economy starts growing exponentially like a snowball rolling down the mountain slope. The factors of containment are well and truly up to the task of preventing uncontrollable expansion or inflation. Real wages do grow in a situation of full employment, but I have gone to some pains already to explain to you that we will never have to confront an acute labor shortage. Competition amongst the entrepreneurs for labor is never so fierce that wage levels skyrocket. There are too many factors that are at the same time freeing up unproductive labor in the public sector for reemployment in the private sector. Likewise the fact that population numbers are in decline does tend to have a containing effect on

rampant growth. In the last resort, the fact that there are fewer mouths to feed should count for something.”

“Although the definition given by Keynes for ‘savings’ and ‘investment’ are separate and distinct, he actually goes to some trouble to explain that the two processes are in fact inextricably interrelated, and that, for example, the simple case of depositing money in a bank is not a one-sided, but a two-sided, transaction, so that those savings actually become the level of investment from an entrepreneurial point of view. He actually argues that savings and investment always reach a parity, and taking his assertion at face value, you therefore have a situation where in a Utopian economy there is a constant inducement to invest from the simple fact that savings will tend to increase. This pressure to invest is inevitable as a result of increasing consumption expenditure (although individual consumption expenditure is increasing, so are individual savings). The physical restraint placed on the system as a result of population numbers declining, coupled with this internally generated pressure to invest, can actually result in a perfectly tuned tautness throughout the entire system; the economy will hum with the resonance of a perfectly tuned musical instrument. You can actually hear in your mental cochlea the tune that the economy is playing – it sounds just like maximal effectiveness. I particularly enjoy the deeply vibrating base tone of minimal waste. When I compare it with the cacophony of spoilage, inefficiency, and conflicting tones and vibrations of loose and broken threads that current economies emit, the lack of harmony can make me almost physically ill. For a long while I was tormented with this wretched economic music being played by the Invisible Hand, and little did I know myself that it was just the orchestra warming up. When the Utopian economy starts to play, it will sound not unlike Ravel’s *Boléro* - an infinite hypnotic consolidation of an exquisitely melodious tune. Whereas at the present time the economy sounds like a 40 car pileup on the Autobahn with Wagner playing in the sound system.”

“As a general rule, Keynes asserted that when the real income of the workers increases, their consumption expenditure also increases, but not so fast as the rise in real wages. He refers to these as being the normal psychological suppositions, but they will however no longer apply in abnormal circumstances where there is an actual change in the propensity to consume in the community. Such an example of abnormal conditions would occur in time of war where the government distributes propaganda seeking to curtail individual consumption. In that case, even though you may have full employment, consumption on domestic goods and services actually decreases. Our Utopian economy is another example of such abnormal circumstances that will actually change the propensity to consume, but in the opposite way to the example given by Keynes above. The propensity to consume increases more than the general theory of Keynes’ would allow for. So the relative gap between income and consumption expenditure will not become as large as Keynes would have us believe. In the Utopian situation, although real income is rising, there are many more situations where salary earners will have to expend their own income on the consumption of goods and services – situations where they may currently be receiving government assistance. No longer, for instance, will workers be able to have their children educated at State expense; no longer will they be able to get medical care for themselves and their family at government expense. In fact all services and assistance that are currently provided by the public sector, in the new order of things the workers themselves will have to pay for at market value. Take public transport for

example. In a Utopian economy all public transport will in fact be run by private enterprise, and there will be no such thing as a fare subsidized by the State. Public transport operators will be seeking to make a fair profit, and will be charging full fare to everybody. So, yes, real income increases in a Utopian economy, and, yes, the workers will also find that the necessity to consume increases almost as much. There are no ‘free lunches’ in a Utopian economy. Workers will have to pay full value for literally everything that they consume, but of course it is no hardship to them for in fact they will be able to afford to do so. Increased real income coupled with reduced taxation will see to that.”

“It goes without saying that in a Utopian economy the practice of government borrowing will cease completely. Keynes expresses the view that ‘pyramid building, earthquakes, even wars may serve to increase wealth’, the rationale being that in depressed times it is reasonable to increase employment, and consequently the propensity to consume, by any means. As a general rule governments even show a ‘preference for *wholly* ‘wasteful’ forms of loan expenditure rather than for *partly* ‘wasteful’ forms, which, because they are not wholly wasteful, tend to be judged on strict business principles.’ Even pure unemployment relief financed by loans have been readily accepted by governments to break a sharp downward trend in economic activity. Public borrowing for such wasteful and unproductive short-term projects can not be justified either in economic theory, nor in commonsense. It is as irresponsible as massive public borrowing to provide healthcare services and even pensions for the current population. In all such cases the money is borrowed and promptly spent, and the government has nothing to show for it except the debt that is a fiscal burden on future generations. It is true that there are still going to be earthquakes in our Utopian society (the Invisible Hand makes no claim to be able to prevent natural disasters), but what you will never see again is the government borrowing large sums of money to spend on unnecessary white elephant type projects purely and simply to put unemployed workers back to work. I also take pleasure in asserting with a measure of optimism, that less and less will you see governments borrowing large sums of money to pay for weapons for the military, and there may even come the day when there are no more wars period, which will require financing from public borrowing.”

“It is interesting to note on this subject of government borrowing to provide weapons and equipment for the military, it only takes a moment of reflection for the sheer absurdity of these practices to be driven home to us. Invariably you find as a result of technological advancement that the weapons are actually obsolete almost even before they are actually delivered, which ushers in a never-ending process of debt increment in order to keep the military stocked with state of the art weaponry. The outdated weapons are discarded often decades before the public debt entered into to purchase them is discharged. Indeed with current practices, public debt in the aggregate never seems to be discharged, it just goes on mushrooming.”

“Two specific outcomes of the Utopian situation need to be noted. In an economy where full employment is the norm and real wages are rising, it is to be anticipated that there will be a relative increase in saving, and therefore there will be a comparable increase in investment funds held by banks and financial institutions. Monumental works will not cease *per se*. You will even see the odd pyramid or Eiffel Tower being built, but if they are built with the aid of privately borrowed funds, one

imagines that they will have to serve some productive (that is revenue generating) purpose. In some cases that may not be too hard to achieve. The pyramids may have been originally conceived as tombs, but over the millennia they have generated untold revenue for Egypt as a wonder of the world. The second outcome is more pedestrian. With no more large scale and endemic public borrowing, you find another instance in our Utopian economy where the taxation burden on the citizens will decline because the government no longer has the perpetual responsibility to pay interest on unproductive debt. Here again, you see the real income of workers rising, resulting in increased saving, and therefore greater investment funds available in the private sector, maybe even for 'productive' pyramid building."

"Some of you may be asking, 'What about roads, bridges and the like?' 'Who is going to be responsible for ongoing public works of this nature in a Utopian society, and where is the money going to come from?' The answer is that I don't know, and quite frankly, I don't care. I am not convinced even that private modes of transport (currently the automobile) has a future. Any opinion I offer on this is mere speculation, for I don't know what is going to happen when the world runs out of oil. Given the fact that there is a declining population, I personally am inclined to expect that technological advances will facilitate sophisticated transport systems for which the users will pay, and which will obviate the need for personal means of conveyance. Even if there is a need for roads and bridges for private vehicles, I have no doubt that these needs can be met by private corporations looking for profit in the normal way."

"Turning to the Keynesian theory of interest, I should like to present you with a direct quotation from his *General Theory of Employment Interest and Money*, to set the mood as it were. Keynes counsels, 'For my own part I am now somewhat skeptical of the success of a merely monetary policy directed towards influencing the rate of interest. I expect to see the State, which is in a position to calculate the marginal efficiency of capital-goods on long views and on the basis of general social advantage, taking an even greater responsibility for directly organizing investment...' The truly significant statement here is the last phrase – 'taking an even greater responsibility for directly organizing investment', and in particular the words 'even greater'. For as you have no doubt by now already divined, this is precisely what occurs in a Utopian society practicing affirmative recycling policy. In point of fact this is the only significant role that remains to the State. All its other functions are gradually stripped away, to reveal a mere administrative kernel that is constantly monitoring and fine tuning the system. As I have already explained to you, just the right amount of tension has to be maintained between supply and demand to keep the curve of prosperity ever so slightly positive. Perfect equilibrium between supply and demand will not do (at least not for the first two or three hundred years) because the optimum situation depends on stretching an inelastic labor market just that little bit more. Without this nuance of expansion, the metaphor of elasticity and inelasticity in the labor market loses its resonance. Be it remembered that we are talking here about a Utopian economy. This is not a case of perpetuating a boom for 10 years or even for 10 decades, this is a case of the economy maintaining its zing for ten thousand years, with the economic prospects on the last day of that epoch just as bright as the initial day. If you don't have this, you can't claim to have found Utopia and there is still something better, a more perfect theory for eternal well-being, just around

the corner. Call it ego if you will, but I really want this speech to close the genre of Utopia books forever.”

“So the kernel of State authority that remains is keeping a close eye on the numbers – the number of people, the number of persons employed, the number of residences, the number of businesses, the number of farms, in short the number of everything in the economy pertaining to production and exchange. The administrative kernel is constantly predicting, and modifying its predictions of, changes in quantitative numbers of all the economic units. It may for instance find that population numbers are declining faster than anticipated, so in the next fiscal period more affirmative recycling will be required, and consequently taxation will have to be increased. This may impact significantly on the real wage of workers in the next fiscal period, and will therefore modify their propensity to consume. And so on.... A never-ending party, where the music never loses its tempo and the dancers are totally absorbed in the pleasure of the moment.”

“Adjustment in interest rates, which encourage or dampen investment, is merely one string in the bow of the administrative kernel that is still called government. In some Utopian societies it may get a lot of use, while in others it may rarely be resorted to, if at all. Any effect that it has will only be one of degree, and its greatest utility will be as a means of fine tuning. The fact is that affirmative recycling policy is a more direct and effective means of encouraging new investment, particularly in real estate, but also in business and commercial enterprise generally. As a general rule the State will be able to maintain the desired level of tension between supply and demand with the affirmative recycling policy alone. In a scenario of rapidly declining population, more affirmative recycling will be necessary to mimic population growth, and so too will it mimic a greater propensity to consume if that is found to be waning. There will also be cases where demand is increasing in relation to supply, and so for a period affirmative recycling may be dispensed with altogether.”

“Interest rates will continue to hold psychological sway over workers and entrepreneurs in terms of their saving and investment decisions. There may well be situations, for example, where the State seeks to lower the levels of savings and increase the workers’ propensity to consume, and a possible way of going about this may be to reduce the level of interest that banks pay to their depositors. In other words all of the conventional Keynesian interest rate dogma will apply equally to a Utopian economy, and will be there available for use, if necessary. Classical economic theory is always there lying in wait, ready to criticize our Utopian scenario that it has all the ingredients for galloping inflation. The availability of Keynesian interest rate theory to stifle this criticism will be a great solace. Obviously, run away inflation is not something that one would care to countenance in the best of all possible worlds, so we would want to get it very clear in our own minds that it could never happen.”

“Most of Keynesian theory about interest rates is quite understandably concerned with economies where there is less than full employment. In the aftermath of the Great Depression the major concern was to find solutions to prevent its recurrence, and Keynes was motivated to take issue with the classical theory on interest rates, precisely on its inadequacy to predict and explain the level of employment. His primary message was that the simplistic formula of classical theory was not to the point. The issue was not whether a decrease in spending will tend to lower the rate of interest, and

an increase in investment to raise it; the essential question was to demonstrate how a decreased readiness to spend will diminish employment regardless of whether or not it increases investment.”

“Keynes actually quotes a passage from Ricardo concerning interest rates in an appendix to his book, to demonstrate how simple and straight forward it is. Ricardo argued that the amount of money that banks lend is quite immaterial in determining the rate of interest. It is the rate of profit that can be made by the employment of capital that determines how much money entrepreneurs borrow for investment. An entrepreneur looks at the amount of profit that can be made from the use of the money, where the rate at which the bank will lend it is obviously factored in, and if the profit is there then the entrepreneur will borrow. If the interest rate on the money is so high that it will make the borrowing of it unprofitable, then of course this will curtail investment.”

“It can be seen that Ricardo is only concerned to argue that the rate of interest primarily affects an entrepreneur’s expectancy of profit – a high rate of interest will lower the expectancy, and a low rate of interest will raise the expectancy. Keynes endorses this view, and then states, ‘Once again the assumption required is the usual classical assumption, that there is always full employment; so that, assuming no change in the supply curve of labor in terms of product, there is only one possible level of employment in long-period equilibrium. On this assumption with the usual *ceteris paribus*, i.e. no change in psychological propensities and expectations other than those arising out of a change in the quantity of money, the Ricardian theory is valid, in the sense that on these suppositions there is only one rate of interest which will be compatible with full employment in the long period. Ricardo and his successors overlook the fact that even in the long period the volume of employment is not necessarily full but is capable of varying, and that to every banking policy there corresponds a different long-period of employment, so that there are a number of positions of long-period equilibrium corresponding to different conceivable interest policies on the part of the monetary authority.’ Clearly, Keynes would be in full agreement that in our Utopian economy where full employment is the norm in perpetuity, the ‘clear-cut’ theory about interest rates provided by Ricardo will be appropriate – that interest rates will be an effective and direct measure for controlling investment without having any bearing on the level of employment. The level of interest rate therefore becomes no more than a subtle way to fine tune the economy; this in addition to affirmative recycling policy which, as we have seen, can also be applied to keep supply and demand exactly in equilibrium. Wild swings in the economy of the kind that Keynes was concerned with are not even a remote possibility in a Utopian society, indeed they are no more than an historical curiosity.”

“Another paragraph by Keynes will underscore his position vis-à-vis Ricardo, in a situation where unemployment is no longer a factor worthy of consideration. ‘It is worth adding that the concluding sentences of the quotation suggest that Ricardo was overlooking the possible changes in the marginal efficiency of capital according to the amount invested. But this again can be interpreted as another example of his greater internal consistency compared with his successors. For if the quantity of employment and the psychological propensities of the community are taken as given, there is in fact only one possible rate of accumulation of capital and, consequently, only one possible value for the marginal efficiency of capital. Ricardo offers us the supreme intellectual

achievement, unattainable by weaker spirits, of adopting a hypothetical world remote from experience as though it were the world of experience and then living in it consistently. With most of his successors commonsense cannot help breaking in – with injury to their logical consistency.’ Ricardo didn’t know it himself, and nor did Keynes, but in fact they were espousing interest rate theory as it would be applied in a Utopian economy. It was actually the Invisible Hand that was directing the pen in their hand. For Ricardo’s world remote from experience where the quantity of employment and the psychological propensities are taken as given, is precisely where we are headed. As a measure of how little Ricardo actually knew about it, his theory actually presents a pessimistic outlook, whereas in point of fact he should have been supremely optimistic. It only takes the one additional consideration of affirmative recycling policy to turn the whole thing around.”

“It is not that their theory or their thinking was defective. The time was simply not right for them to take the final step, and open the door to a Utopian economy. In their day the female fertility rate was high, and the population was continuing to grow. They were looking at a future world where the main problem was to keep the growing numbers employed. The declining female fertility rate brought about by the human race entering plague phase has changed all that. Now the population can and will decline naturally. It is only when we no longer have to worry about constantly finding employment for increasing numbers, that the real possibilities for a Utopian scenario emerge. Take growing population out of the equation, and factor in declining population, and you have a whole new ball game. The ultimate game. Or at least the ultimate refinement of the original game.”

“Let’s take a look at the Keynesian concept of marginal efficiency of capital more closely, because Utopian economic theory comes down precisely to this. The reason for this is quite simple – all the other factors that muddy the waters are taken out of the equation. Full employment is a given, that is to say that it is no longer an issue, and the propensity to consume remains consistently positive relative to the number of consumers, and there is a rising real wage and taxation is reducing. Massive government borrowing for public works is no longer practiced, and government spending generally is constantly being whittled away. State expenditure reduces itself to little more than what is needed for affirmative recycling policy, and to pay disability pensions to those who are incapable of holding down a job for whatever reason. Economic theory in a Utopian economy therefore gets down to a precise monitoring of the marginal efficiency of capital.”

“The concept of marginal efficiency of capital is perfectly straightforward. When an entrepreneur purchases a capital asset, he does so with an anticipation of a return from selling its output. Working against this anticipation is the supply price of the capital asset (including of course the interest rate applicable on money that has been borrowed to purchase it). The marginal efficiency (or effectiveness or utility) of capital is dependent on this relationship between productive yield of the investment, and the supply price of capital, or its replacement cost. This is pretty much commonsense, and I think you can all readily appreciate the pivotal role that affirmative recycling policy, and changes of interest rate, will play in adjusting the marginal efficiency of capital by either impacting on the productive yield of the investment or upon the supply price of the capital asset. These are the two factors that remain under the control of the central

monetary authority exercised by the State. The other key factor that is not directly capable of State intervention is technological advance. As I have already explained to you, there will be a chronic incentive in the private sector for entrepreneurs to replace physical labor with automation on account of the real wages being so substantial (I avoid the use of the word ‘high’ because it becomes meaningless in this context – a ‘high’ has to be related to a ‘low’ and in a Utopian economy with full employment there is no such thing as a low real wage).”

“I shall quote you an interesting passage by Keynes in his observations on the nature of capital, which clearly demonstrates without further explanation on my part that his theory clearly anticipated the Utopian economy as something that could actually come to pass, and then can be sustained indefinitely, through a subtle manipulation of the marginal efficiency of capital. ‘With a given labor force there is a definite limit to the quantity of labor embodied in roundabout processes which can be used to advantage. Apart from other considerations, there must be a due proportion between the amount of labor employed in making machines and the amount which will be employed in using them. The ultimate quantity of *value* will not increase indefinitely relative to the quantity of labor employed, as the processes adopted become more and more roundabout, even if their physical efficiency is still increasing. Only if the desire to postpone consumption were strong enough to produce a situation in which full employment required a volume of investment so great as to involve a negative marginal efficiency of capital, would a process become advantageous merely because it was lengthy; in which event we should employ physically *inefficient* processes, provided they were sufficiently lengthy for the gain from postponement to outweigh their inefficiency.’ So you can see that Keynes envisages a scenario caused by full employment where interest rates and other factors may be used to create a negative marginal efficiency of capital, that is to say such an investment will result in a loss to the entrepreneur, and not a profit. This will certainly have the desired effect of putting a dampener on an economy that may be showing signs of overheating as a result of full employment.”

“Keynes goes on to say, ‘A correct theory, therefore, must be reversible so as to be able to cover the cases of the marginal efficiency of capital corresponding either to a positive or a negative rate of interest; and it is, I think, only the scarcity theory which is capable of this.’ Short of actually nominating affirmative recycling policy, it is difficult to see what more theoretical foundation Keynes could have laid for a Utopian economy. Scarcity theory is just another name for supply and demand, and affirmative recycling policy is all about artificially controlling supply to make a capital asset more scarce. This coupled with control over interest rates, constitutes an awesome tool in the hands of the monetary authority to completely determine the marginal efficiency of capital. With all the other major factors either gone or declining in significance, you may rest assured that economic management in the hands of the monetary authority will become an exact science.”

“As a creature of his times, Keynes wrote, ‘The difficulties in the way of maintaining effective demand at a level high enough to provide full employment, which ensue from the association of a conventional and fairly stable long-term rate of interest with a fickle and highly unstable marginal efficiency of capital, should be, by now, obvious to the reader.’ However, now that affirmative recycling policy and declining population have entered the equation, this statement by Keynes is turned on its head, and

this is what should be by now obvious to you, my listeners here tonight. Now we can talk about the simplicity of maintaining full employment in a situation where the marginal efficiency of capital can be set with precision. For a start, you have a declining or static population so you don't have the perennial need to create new opportunities for employment, and, for seconds, even if the situation were to arise where investment has lagged to the point where workers were actually unemployed and can't find a job, all that is needed is further affirmative recycling of current plant and equipment and the problem is solved almost instantaneously. Taking plant and equipment out of the market (i.e. reducing its supply) will therefore increase the demand for plant and equipment. Lower the interest rate at which entrepreneurs can borrow as well, if necessary, and, hey presto! You have increased the marginal efficiency of capital which will result in new investment. Not only are we no longer fretting about the difficulties of maintaining effective demand, but instead we are perhaps wondering whether a five-year old child could head up the monetary authority, it's just so easy."

"In his sundry observations on the nature of capital, Keynes makes the following statement, 'The absurd, though almost universal, idea that an act of individual saving is just as good for effective demand as an act of individual consumption, has been fostered by the fallacy, much more specious than the conclusion derived from it, that an increased desire to hold wealth, being much the same thing as an increased desire to hold investments, must, by increasing the demand for the investments, provide a stimulus to their production; so that current investment is promoted by individual saving to the same extent as present consumption is diminished. It is this fallacy that it is most difficult to disabuse men's minds. It comes from believing that the owner of wealth desires a capital-asset *as such*, whereas what he really desires is its *prospective yield*.' There it is, straight from the horse's mouth. If any of you still had lingering doubts about the efficacy of affirmative recycling policy, those doubts should by now be swept away along with this perpetual fallacy that Keynes is talking about. If you walk up to an entrepreneur with a fistful of money, and tell him that you are going to buy his plant and equipment and then convert his entire enterprise to pristine wilderness, and that you are going to purchase it from him for more than it is currently worth – do you think he is going to be too upset about that? He knows how many beans make 5, he is aware that by recycling his plant and equipment the relation between supply and demand in that industry will shift, and the price for output (whatever it may be) will rise. The entrepreneur will have already kissed his current capital-asset goodbye, almost before you have finished making your offer to him, and he will already be dreaming about the prospective yield from his next venture. Call it prospective yield, call it anticipation of profit, whatever you call it, this is the essence of capitalism. The capitalist has no sentimental attachment or fondness or loyalty or devotion to the capital-asset, he is only in it for the money, period. So affirmative recycling policy takes this basic trait of the capitalist (a trait of dubious social or moral commendation that even Adam Smith was wont to lament), and turns it to the obvious enhancement of the commonweal. What was, for example, a toxic industrial eyesore or perhaps a desolate degraded rural property becomes a natural attraction. The former owner walks away from it counting his money, while at the same time building castles in the air as to what to do with it. A gain for the environment, a gain for society, and a gain for capitalism. So who's going to complain? You're right, no-one. To have a Utopian economy, you can't just have a win-win situation, you've got to go one further,

and have a win-win-win situation, and that's exactly what you've got with affirmative recycling policy and declining population. Or, at least, that's exactly what you haven't got. You've got no-one to complain."

"Now that you know about affirmative recycling policy, I am going to quote to you a relatively long passage from Keynes' book, and you will see that he has substantially foreseen the possibility of a Utopian economy. 'Let us assume', says he, 'that steps are taken to ensure that the rate of interest is consistent with the rate of investment which corresponds to full employment. Let us assume, further, that State action enters in as a balancing factor to provide that the growth of capital equipment shall be such as to approach saturation point at a rate which does not put a disproportionate burden on the standard of life of the present generation. On such assumptions I should guess that a properly run community equipped with modern technical resources, of which the population is not increasing rapidly, ought to be able to bring down the marginal efficiency of capital in equilibrium approximately to zero within a single generation; so that we should attain the conditions of a quasi-stationary community where change and progress would result only from changes in technique, taste, population and institutions, with the products of capital selling at a price proportioned to the labor, etc., embodied in them on just the same principles as govern the prices of consumption-goods into which capital-charges enter in an insignificant degree. If I am right in supposing it to be comparatively easy to make capital-goods so abundant that the marginal efficiency of capital is zero, this may be the most sensible way of gradually getting rid of the many objectionable features of capitalism. For a little reflection will also show what enormous social changes would result from a gradual disappearance of a rate of return on accumulated wealth. A man would still be free to accumulate his earned income with the view to spending it at a later date. But his accumulation would not grow. He would simply be in a position of Pope's father, who, when he retired from business, carried a chest of guineas with him to his villa at Twickenham and met his household expenses from it as required.' Adjusting the marginal efficiency of capital to zero is simply what I have already explained to you about fine-tuning the economy so there is exactly the right amount of investment to ensure that full employment is sustained indefinitely, and without any significant labor shortage arising. This is done by adjusting interest rates and with affirmative recycling policy."

"Keynes specifically states that in order to attain these conditions of a quasi-stationary community, the population should not be increasing rapidly. It goes without saying that it is even easier to achieve this quasi-stationary community when the population is static or actually declining. Keynes didn't mention this for two reasons. Firstly, he was writing at a time when overpopulation was not a major concern. He had no reason to apply his mind to the possible ways of reducing population and still retaining prosperity. Secondly, a declining population fertility rate was not an issue. Keynes had no reason to speculate on a society where, if left to itself, the population would actually go into a natural decline. At the time that he was writing, population growth was a given, and so his idea of the ideal merely called for the population growth to be gradual. What more can I say? At the time that he was writing, he had precisely stated the conditions necessary to achieve Utopia."

"The art of good speechmaking is to know when to sit down and shut up. I believe I have just about reached that point. The fact is that Keynes also talks a lot about

adjusting the quantity of money that is circulating in the economy. This is obviously another lever that the monetary authority can pull to fine-tune the economy, and thus maintain full employment, and safeguard against any tendency to inflation. I could go on and explain his theories about money in detail, and I would, if I thought it was necessary to advance my argument here tonight. I actually think that it doesn't take my argument much further. Assuming that you are ever going to get this message, you would have got it by now. And by the same token, if you haven't already got the message, then you are never going to get it, and explaining Keynesian theory about the quantity of money in circulation is not going to bring the message home to you at this late point. In the interests of completeness however, I will just read to you the kernel of his quantity theory on money that he enunciates as follows: 'So long as there is unemployment, *employment* will change in the same proportion as the quantity of money; and when there is full employment, *prices* will change in the same proportion as the quantity of money.' In our Utopian economy therefore, the monetary authority will have to keep tabs on the quantity of money in circulation, and some adjustments in this regard *may* be necessary. I have emphasized the word 'may' because it is my personal belief that in the economy I am describing, where the marginal efficiency of capital constantly hovers a fraction above zero as a result of affirmative recycling policy and adjustment of interest rates, the quantity of money in circulation can be left to find its own level. In any event, affirmative recycling policy is itself a means of injecting money into the economy, so to say that the economy needs a further injection of money is simply saying that more affirmative recycling is necessary, and vice versa."

"In conclusion I would just like to make a few points to those amongst you who may have a paranoia about population decline. Some of you can no doubt barely restrain yourselves from jumping up and shouting that population decline will mean that the actual number of persons employed will decline, and that therefore the gross national income, expressed as an actual monetary figure, will decline. I have already gone to great pains to explain to you that the actual gross national income is not in itself a measure of prosperity. The true test for economic progress is the ratio of wealth per capita of population, and in a Utopian economy where the average real wage for all workers is rising, this test for economic prosperity is satisfied. Furthermore, in a society where population numbers are actually falling, it is envisaged that the physical number of persons employed will actually rise as a result of an increased propensity to consume brought about by a higher general level of prosperity. This in turn will cause the demand for labor to rise and this demand will be met by a gradual transition from unproductive labor in the public sector to productive labor in the private sector. In countries like the United States, for example, where the female fertility rate is right on replacement level, the population numbers may never decline. This country could change over to a Utopian economy simply by adopting a policy of zero permanent immigration, and there would never be any decline in the gross national income expressed as a quantitative figure. And when I say 'never', I mean 'never'. Not for the next 10,000 years. In point of fact, this figure would continue to increase because prosperity across the board per capita of population would increase, and so would the propensity to consume. The United States would continue on as a powerhouse of economic activity, just as it likes to think of itself today. The only appreciable change would be that its population ceases to grow."

“Finally there will be some amongst you who will fret about the possibility of the female fertility rate continuing to fall. You may be building up some irrational fear in your mind that the human race may some day actually become extinct. My answer to you is that could never happen as a result of controlled population decline in a Utopian economy. For starters, in a Utopian economy when you have universal prosperity, couples will be able to afford to have more than two children if that’s what they want. They will have to bear every single expense involved in having and rearing children, but they will be able to afford it. I am talking about ‘afford’ in the broadest sense. All children can be brought up in a society where there is peace and security and space for them to grow. Their parents can pay for them to be educated in private schools. If they are sick, their parents can pay for the most advanced medical care available. All the chemical, genetic and social pressures which are currently working to reduce the female fertility rate will be gone. It will be truly be a matter for a couple themselves to decide. You couldn’t claim to have found Utopia and have it any other way.”

“The other reason why a society with a Utopian economy could never become extinct has to do with the Invisible Hand. Suppose for example in the deep, deep future there was a society where population numbers had fallen to alarmingly low levels. This is a society driven purely by economic forces which would mean that the value of a human child, and for that matter the value of a female of childbearing age, would increase beyond measure. Anything that I add to this statement would be idle speculation on my part, so I will merely give you my assurance that the Invisible Hand has already got this scenario well and truly sketched out. Also, as it happens, I saw an announcement not long ago that it will soon be possible for women to have children long after menopause, so there is no telling what wonders medical science has in store for us.”

“Thank you for your attention. And let’s bring on Utopia!”

Tom sat down with very little response from the audience. The people who come to these soirees at Plato’s Cave are all thinking people who, by definition, have their own fixed view on matters such as these, and when Tom sat down, they were all trying to assimilate what he had said, and relate it back to their own worldview.

## ACT 2

The master of ceremonies at Plato's Cave is known to everyone as Bruce. I don't actually know his family name. He is something of a throwback to an earlier time in as much as he is bedecked in a swathe of coarse calico, and he has fitful tassels of hair hovering on his forehead and temples, much as you could imagine Σωκράτης would have looked. Throughout the entire speech from Tom, just related, Bruce was standing motionless on one leg in the back corner of the room, staring at something fascinating in a parallel universe three over. When Tom finally sat down, Bruce stirred himself rather languidly, and then went up to the podium. There was a kind luminescence in his characteristically dark black eyes.

"Well, I would like to thank Tom for that most edifying speech," he said, while still himself staring at that indeterminate point far off in the ether-sphere. "Surely there are others amongst you who would like to give us the benefit of your thoughts on this Utopia revisited theme. Come on now, don't be bashful."

One of the regulars yelled out from the floor that it was after 2:00 in the morning, and maybe we should postpone more speeches on this topic for another night, but Bruce didn't seem to hear him. At that point a fellow called Mervyn, stood up at the table where he was seated, and gestured to Bruce.

"Yes," said Bruce, "Let's hear from Mervyn. I think a bit of classical Utopian theory is just what we need right about now."

Mervyn glanced around the room to gauge the mood of the audience, and as there was no further demurrer to be heard, he went up to the podium. Bruce had already returned to his spot in the back of the room while continuing to contemplate that ethereal outer world, and he was again standing on that same one leg. Bruce is a little bit unusual, but nobody thought much of it. Everyone's attention was focused on Mervyn already.

"I agree with Bruce about Tom's speech" started Mervyn. "Not only was it edifying, but more important it was innovative. I have known for some time about Tom's theory, and I thought he would try to present it tonight. I've therefore prepared a bit of a reply to Tom. I am intending to talk mostly about Plato's views about Utopia, but I've got some good material for you by Friedrich Nietzsche, George Orwell and even Adolf Hitler. Yes, even Adolf himself had something to say about all this. I think before any of us try to make up our minds about Tom's theory, we really must try to relate it back to what has occurred in human history, and figure out for ourselves whether Tom really has come up with something new and exciting."

### Plato

"Plato's imaginary State was called Magnesia. An interesting piece of trivia is that the word 'Utopia' is not of Greek origin. It was actually Sir Thomas Moore, who wrote his own book on the subject, who coined the name Utopia, which literally means 'no place'. The concept of Utopia has provided food for thought for literally thousands of writers and political theorists over the millennia, but notwithstanding no shortage of attempts, no-one, Plato included, has managed to come up with a convincing blueprint for an actual State where the citizens can enjoy optimum happiness. Plato's attempt at it is the most celebrated, not because of any special merit in the actual scheme he develops, but rather because it was written by the founder of Western philosophical thought. Even today, Plato's hypothetical State of Magnesia provides the benchmark by which all other attempts at portraying Utopia can be judged."

“It is in what is generally taken to be the last of his dialogues, *The Laws*, that Plato ponders on this topic. I use the word ‘ponders’ advisedly, because this, the last of his dialogues, reveals a Plato whose optimism displayed in earlier writings had turned to pessimism, and whose idealism had become much more realistic. The dialogue takes the form of a three way conversation between an Athenian, loosely disguised as being Plato himself, and a Cretan (a person who hails from Crete) called Cleinias, and a Spartan called Megillus. These three men supposedly meet up while en route from Cnossos in Crete to the Cave of Zeus in the plain of Nida. The Athenian is the one with all the theories, and his two companions are more or less there as sounding boards. Cleinias, who lives in Cnossos on the island of Crete, announces that his country is attempting to form itself into a colony, and things develop from there. So imagine that it is a summer day in Crete in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. I could tell you what they discussed, but it is better if you could actually be there walking along with them, listening in. It is important that you actually get a feel for the way Plato’s mind actually worked. At the end of my speech I am going to suggest something novel to you about the writings of Plato, and it is necessary for you to actually tag along with the Athenian. By the time you arrive with them at the Cave of Zeus, you are truly going to experience a revelation befitting that sacred shrine.”

<ATHENIAN: I expect you will be quite happy if we spend our time together today in a discussion about constitutions and laws, and occupy our journey in a mutual exchange of views. I’ve heard it said that from Cnossos to Zeus’ Cave and shrine is quite a long way, and the tall trees along the route provide shady resting-places which will be more than welcome in this stifling hot weather. At our age, there is every excuse for having frequent rests in them, so as to refresh ourselves by conversation. In this way we shall come to the end of the whole journey without having tired ourselves out. CLEINIAS: And as you go on, sir, you find tremendously tall and graceful cypress trees in the sacred groves; there are also meadows in which we can pause and rest. ATHENIAN: That sounds a good idea. CLEINIAS: Well then, shall we wish ourselves *bon voyage*, and be off. How fortunate that I’ve fallen in with you and Megillus! I won’t keep you in the dark about my position – indeed, I think that meeting you is a good omen for the future. The greater part of Crete is attempting to found a colony, and has given responsibility for the job to the Cnossians; and the state of Cnossos has delegated it to myself and nine colleagues. Our brief is to compose a legal code on the basis of such local laws as we find satisfactory, and to use foreign laws as well – the fact that they are not Cretan must not count against them, provided their quality seems superior. So what about doing me – and you – a favor? Let’s take a selection of topics we have covered and construct an imaginary community, pretending that we are its original founders. That will allow us to consider the question before us, and it may be that I’ll use this framework for the future state. ATHENIAN: Well, Cleinias, that’s certainly welcome news! You may take it that I for my part am entirely at your disposal, unless Megillus has some objection. CLEINIAS: Splendid! MEGILLUS: Yes, I too am at your service. CLEINIAS: I’m delighted you both agree. Now then, let’s try – initially only in theory – to found our state. ATHENIAN: Well, now, how should we describe our future state? I don’t mean just its name. I’m not asking what it’s called now, nor what it might be called in the future. (This might well be suggested by some detail of the actual foundation or by some spot nearby: perhaps a river or spring or some local gods will give a new state their

own style and title). This is my real question: is it to be on the coast, or inland? CLEINIAS: The state I was talking about a moment ago, sir, is approximately ten miles from the sea. ATHENIAN: Well, what about harbors? Are there any along the coast on that side of the state, or are they entirely absent? CLEINIAS: No, sir. The state has harbors in that direction which could hardly be bettered. ATHENIAN: A pity, that. What about the surrounding countryside? Does it grow anything or are there some deficiencies? CLEINIAS: No, it grows practically everything. ATHENIAN: Will it have some nearby state for a neighbor? CLEINIAS: Absolutely none – that’s just why it’s being founded. Ages ago, there was a migration from the district, which has left the land deserted for goodness knows how long. ATHENIAN: What about plains and mountains and forests? How is it off for each of these? CLEINIAS: Very much like the rest of Crete in general. ATHENIAN: Rugged, rather flat, you mean? CLEINIAS: Yes, that’s right. ATHENIAN: Then the state will have tolerably healthy prospects of becoming virtuous. If it were going to be founded near the sea and have good harbors, and were deficient in a great number of crops instead of growing everything itself, then a great savior indeed and lawgivers of divine stature would be needed to stop sophisticated and vicious characters developing on a grand scale. Such a state would simply invite it. As it is, we can take comfort in those ten miles. Even so, it lies nearer the sea than it should, and you say that it is rather well off for harbors, which makes matters worse; but let’s be thankful for small mercies. For a country to have the sea nearby is pleasant enough for the purpose of everyday life, but in fact it is a ‘salty sharp and bitter neighbor’ in more senses than one. It fills the land with wholesaling and retailing, breeds shifty and deceitful habits in a man’s soul, and makes the citizens distrustful and hostile, not only among themselves, but also in their dealings with the world outside. Still, the fact that the land produces everything will be some consolation for those disadvantages, and it is obvious in any case that even if it does not grow every crop, its ruggedness will stop it doing so in any quantity; if it yielded a surplus that could be exported in bulk, the state would be swamped with the gold and silver money it received in return – and this, if a state means to develop just and noble habits, is pretty nearly the worst thing that could happen to it, all things considered.>

“A major theme in Platos’s work is the denunciation of extreme wealth, and of the corruption and avarice that he perceived to be rife in Athenian society. ‘A man who is seized by lust to obtain money by improper means and feels no disgust in the acquisition, will find that in the event he does his soul no honor by such gifts – far from it: he sells all that gives the soul its beauty and value for a few paltry pieces of gold; but all the gold upon earth and all the gold beneath it does not compensate for lack of virtue.’ We see already from his introductory discussion about Magnesia that he is very concerned to put a cap on trade and industry so as to discourage the citizens from unbridled pursuit of wealth. ‘The chief cause is lust, which tyrannizes a soul that has gone wild with desire. The lust is most usually for money, the object of most men’s strongest and most frequent longing. Because of the innate depravity of men and their misdirected education, money has the power to produce in them a million cravings that are impossible to satisfy – all centering on the endless acquisition of wealth’. Plato even lays it down as a law in the legal code for Magnesia that an avaricious citizen who has let money become an obsession, and who therefore attempts to subvert or corrupt the administration of justice, shall be put to death.”

“This is not to say however, that Plato was opposed to private property and the pursuit of wealth *per se*. He was concerned to promulgate ‘sound laws, and achieve the happiness of those who observe them, by producing for them a great number of benefits. Those benefits fall into two classes, human and divine. The former depend on the latter, and if a city receives the one sort, it wins the other too – the greater include the lesser; if not, it goes on without both. Health heads the list of the lesser benefits, followed by beauty; third comes strength, for racing and other physical exercises. Wealth is fourth – not ‘blind’ wealth, but the clear-sighted kind whose companion is good judgment – and good judgment itself is the leading divine benefit; second comes the habitual self-control of a soul that uses reason.’ Elsewhere he speaks of putting spiritual goods first, followed in order of priority by bodily goods and advantages, and in third place comes goals and honors derived from property and wealth. Let’s eavesdrop on the Athenian and his companions as they saunter along in deep discussion.”

<ATHENIAN: My dear Cleinias, only a small part of mankind – a few highly-educated men of rare natural talent – is able to steel itself to moderation when assailed by various needs and desires; given the chance to get a lot of money, it’s a rare bird that’s sober enough to prefer a modest competence to wealth. Most people’s inclinations are at the opposite pole: their demands are always violent demands, and they brush aside the opportunity to modest gain in favor of insatiable profiteering. The old saying is quite right: it’s difficult to fight against two enemies, especially when they are fundamentally different (as with diseases, for instance, and there’s a lot of other examples). Our present battle is a case in point: it is a battle against two foes, wealth and poverty – wealth that corrupts our souls by luxury, poverty that drives us by distress into losing all sense of shame. So what remedy for this disease will be open to an enlightened community? First, it should keep its trading class as small as possible; second, trade should be made over to a class of people whose corruption will not harm the state unduly; third, some means must be found to prevent those engaging in such activities from slipping too easily into an utterly shameless and small-minded way of life. CLEINIAS: Well, sir, that’s well said.>

“From what Tom has told us in his speech, it would seem that Adam Smith as well, if he was out there walking along with our travelers along the road leading to Zeus’ Cave, would be in complete agreement with the Athenian. Smith also believed that he was expounding a theory that contained a moral element. An economics system was not just about accumulating wealth in the hands of a ruthless and avaricious minority. The Invisible Hand in the economy was actually molding the whole society, and was determining our values, including the basic concepts of right and wrong, good and evil. Let’s start from a point that we can be certain about and logically work back from that. What is certain is that these concepts of right and wrong, good and evil, do in fact exist in our value system. According to the theory of Adam Smith it is the Invisible Hand that is directing our value system, so it must be the Invisible Hand that has given us these concepts to start with. If the Invisible Hand was only concerned with the accumulation of wealth as the *raison d’être* for all economic activity, then why should it even bother itself with right and wrong, good and evil. And more importantly, why should it bother us? Why, even as far back as Plato, should the Invisible Hand be on the one hand driving us to make money, and yet at the same time be imposing this moral embargo that the unbridled pursuit of riches is evil. And why should this embargo apply only to human

beings, and not to all the lesser creatures as well. A squirrel that has stashed away more acorns than all the other squirrels is not evil, nor is the bowerbird that has managed to hoard more bric-a-brac to adorn its nest, nor the dog that has managed to bury more bones than any other dogs in the neighborhood. So it is not Mother Nature herself who is laying this guilt trip on us about excessive accumulation of wealth.”

“The pious and religious amongst you (assuming there are some) will be saying that God came up with this idea of good and evil, and that Adam Smith is wrong in giving the credit for it to the Invisible Hand in the economy. Let’s look briefly at what the Judeo-Christian God has to say about it, because it is the people who worship this God who have managed to accumulate more wealth than all the followers of all the other gods put together (and this notwithstanding the fact that the people who worship the Judeo-Christian God are very much a minority in the world) – why are they the bowerbirds, if you like, of the human race. The extraordinary thing is that their God is actually against the unbridled accumulation of wealth. We are told that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Also one of their commandments laid down by God is that ‘Thou shalt not worship any graven image’. And yet we find in the United States, for example, a graven image of George Washington on the face of the greenback, and we find all the Judeo-Christians in the United States worshipping the greenback, and we find that they make trillions of copies of the greenback and the people greedily hoard and collect them. After spending all their waking hours voraciously scrounging for these greenbacks, at the end of the day (provided no doubt that they have managed to earn, find, borrow, beg or steal some more of them) they piously include in their nocturnal prayers an exhortation to God to bless America. From this we can conclude that it is not the Judeo-Christian God that has introduced this concept that the accumulation of wealth is evil. There is here a logical impossibility. If the Judeo-Christian God exists, and the Judeo-Christians don’t concern themselves with His commandments, which somewhat negates the significance of their God, we are left with the proposition that the Judeo-Christian God could not have been God after all. We therefore have to look elsewhere for an explanation of this moral embargo on excessive wealth.”

“It is much more logical to go with Smith, and conclude that it is the Invisible Hand that has introduced good and evil to protect the rich. I think Tom told us that, for Smith, the exercise of power amounted to the same thing as the possession of riches, and in any society where there is an unequal distribution of wealth you can expect to find the characteristic pattern of subjugation and authority. Smith however doesn’t get himself into the same logical bind as the Judeo-Christians with their God, because he asserts that the Invisible Hand is something that is directing us in mysterious ways. There are no tablets of stone containing prohibitions that are blatantly being disregarded. There is no breach of logic in the proposition that the Invisible Hand in the economy is at one and the same time driving us to accumulate wealth, and saying that it is evil to covet or steal somebody else’s wealth, and that it is evil to greedily appropriate wealth for yourself by fair means or foul. Although conflicts are obviously introduced into this scheme, it is not illogical, provided the Invisible Hand is pushing us towards goals that are not apparent to us. The Invisible Hand must have an altruistic purpose to do it this way, otherwise we could just be squirrels out there scrounging for as many acorns as we can find, and nobody could give a damn.”

“Tom told us that there was no doubt in Smith’s mind that wealth meant power. Wealth gave the possessor of it the ability to control others. In Smith’s day, if you didn’t have the means of subsistence, you had to pay homage to some great landowner. The poor person in his relations with the property owner was in the same subservient position as the foot soldier is to the Prince who pays him in return for absolute obedience. Also Smith said that the justice system was the means of restraining individuals from doing injury to their fellows, either physically or financially, because the people in power needed some means to secure their rights over private property. It may surprise you to learn that Nietzsche said pretty much the same thing in his *Beyond Good and Evil*. ‘To refrain from material injury, material violence, material exploitation, to equate one’s own will with that of another: this may in a certain rough sense become good manners between individuals if the conditions for it are present (namely if their strength and value standards are in fact similar and they both belong to *one* body). As soon as there is a desire to take this principle further, however, and if possible even as the *fundamental principle of society*, it at once reveals itself for what it is: as the will to the *denial* of life, as the principle of dissolution and decay. Life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of the strange and weaker, suppression, severity, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and, at the least and mildest, exploitation. ‘Exploitation’ does not pertain to corrupt or imperfect or punitive society: it pertains to the *essence* of the living being as a fundamental organic function, it is a consequence of the intrinsic will to power which is precisely the will to life.’ So you heard it here first. Nietzsche did little more than plagiarize Adam Smith’s theory, deck it out in more poetic language, and call it *will to power*. I suppose we should give Nietzsche credit for discerning the smell of evil in this will to power. For instance, he said, ‘we think that severity, force, slavery, peril in the street and in the heart, concealment, stoicism, the art of experiment and devilry of every kind, that every evil, dreadful, tyrannical, beast of prey and serpent in man serves to enhance the species ‘man’ just as much as does its opposite.’ So if Tom thinks that we can reduce all this evil, unsavory aspect about human civilization simply by reducing population and adopting an affirmative recycling policy, well, I for one, say ‘Let’s go for it!’ It would certainly have Plato’s blessing, and that’s for sure.”

### Friedrich Nietzsche

“Nietzsche also had a similar attitude towards money as did Plato and Adam Smith. For Nietzsche, ‘An exchange is honest and just only when each of those participating demands as much as his own object seems worth to him, including the effort it cost to acquire it, its rarity, the time expended, etc., together with its sentimental value. As soon as he sets the price *with reference to the need of the other* he is a subtler robber and extortioner. – If money is the exchange object it must be considered that a shilling in the hand of a rich heir, a day-laborer, a shopkeeper, a student are quite different things: according to whether he did almost nothing or a great deal to get it, each ought to receive little or a great deal in exchange for it: in reality it is, of course, the other way round. In the great world of money the shilling of the laziest rich man is more lucrative than that of the poor and industrious.’ You can see that this echoes Plato’s exhortations for the business community to content itself with the opportunity of modest gain rather than the insatiable profiteering that is just as apparent today as it was 2500 years ago when Plato was writing. How can we call ourselves a good society if our most prominent and

successful citizens are robbers and extortioners? The short answer is that we can't, as long as this sort of thing is allowed to continue. Clearly a Utopian society must be a good society, so we must do something about it."

"However we can't really execute those citizens who let the love of money become the obsession of their life, as Plato would have us do. By definition a Utopia can't be formed or sustained by resorting to bloodshed. It's no good to murder all the people with undesirable attributes, and then sit back and say, 'Ah, at last we've achieved Utopia.' I think Tom really has the solution here. If economic forces are acting as an Invisible Hand directing our society, then quite clearly an ideal society could be achieved simply by harnessing these economic forces, and not a drop of blood need be shed. The extremely wealthy would still be there in society occupying pride of place, and the only difference is that we have leveled out the playing field to give equal opportunities to all. Maybe even Nietzsche would have some good things to say about such a society. Now that *would* be something!"

"Although Plato may have been happy about the way economic forces can work to reduce the gap between rich and poor in an ideal society, I'm afraid the same thing cannot be said about the tendency to reduce the role of the military, and the gradual phasing out of the manufacture of arms, that Tom spoke of. As we listen in for a moment to what our travelers are discussing as they repose amongst some tall trees in a sacred grove, you will appreciate that war was a major consideration in those days."

<ATHENIAN: Now , answer me this. You have meals which you eat communally; you have a system of physical training, and a special type of military equipment. Why is it that you give all this the force of law? CLEINIAS: Well, sir, I think that these customs are quite easy for anyone to understand, at any rate in our case. You see the Cretan terrain in general does not have the features of Thessaly: hence we usually train by running (whereas the Thessalians mostly use horses), because our land is hilly and more suited to exercise by racing on foot. In this sort of country we have to keep our armor light so that we can run without being weighed down, and bows and arrows seem appropriate because of their lightness. All these Cretan practices have been developed for fighting wars, and that's precisely the purpose I think the legislator intended them to serve when he instituted them. Likely enough, this is why he encouraged the common meals, too: he observed that when men are on military service they are all obliged by the pressure of events, for their own protection, to eat together throughout the campaign. In this, I think, he censured the stupidity of ordinary men, who do not understand that they are all engaged in a never-ending lifelong war against all the other states. So, if you grant the necessity of eating together for self-protection in wartime, and of appointing officers and men in turn to act as guards, the same thing should be done in peacetime too. The legislator's position would be that what most men call 'peace' is really only a fiction, and that in cold fact all states are by nature fighting an undeclared war against every other state. If you see things in this light, you are pretty sure to find that the Cretan legislator established every one of our institutions, both in the public sphere and the private, with an eye to war, and that this was the spirit in which he gave us his laws for us to keep up. He was convinced that if we don't come out on top in war, nothing that we possess or do in peacetime is of the slightest use, because all the goods of the conquered fall into the possession of the victors. ATHENIAN: You certainly have had a splendid training, sir! It has, I think, enabled you to make a most

penetrating analysis of Cretan institutions. But explain this point to me rather more precisely: the definition you gave of a well-run state seems to me to demand that its organization and administration should be such as to ensure victory in war over the other states. Correct? CLEINIAS: Of course, and I think our companion supports my definition. ATHENIAN: But what about the man who brings harmony to the state? In regulating its life, will he pay more attention to external war, or internal. This ‘civil’ war, as we call it, does break out on occasion, and is the last thing a man would want to see in his own country; but if it does flare up, he would wish to have it over and done with as quick as possible. CLEINIAS: He’ll obviously pay more attention to the second kind. ATHENIAN: One side might be destroyed through the victory of the other, and then peace would follow the civil war; or, alternatively, peace and friendship might be the result of reconciliation. Now, which of these results would you prefer, supposing the city then had to turn its attention to a foreign enemy? CLEINIAS: Everybody would prefer the second situation to the first, so far as his own state was concerned. ATHENIAN: And wouldn’t the legislator have the same preference? CLEINIAS: He certainly would. ATHENIAN: Now surely, every legislator will enact his every law with the aim of achieving the greatest good? CLEINIAS: Of course. ATHENIAN: The greatest good, however, is neither war nor civil war. (God forbid we should ever need to resort to either of them), but peace and goodwill among men. And so the victory of the state over itself, it seems, does not after all come into the category of ideals; it is just one of those things in which we’ve no choice. You might just as well suppose that the sick body which has been purged by the doctor was therefore in the pink of condition, and disregard the body that never had any such need. Similarly, anyone who takes this sort of view of the happiness of a state or even an individual will never make a true statesman in the true sense – if, that is, he adopts foreign warfare as his first and only concern; he’ll become a *genuine* lawgiver only if he designs his legislation about war as a tool for peace, rather than his legislation for peace as an instrument of war. CLEINIAS: What you say, sir, has the air of having been correctly argued. Even so, I shall be surprised if our Cretan institutions, and the Spartan ones as well, have not been wholly orientated towards warfare. ATHENIAN: Well, that’s as may be.>

“So little has changed since Plato’s time concerning our attitude to warfare. Even supposedly peace-loving societies continue their nationalistic propaganda and the glorification of war in a thousand subtle ways. There is still so much truth in the statement by Cleinias that ‘peace’ is really only a fiction, and that all nations are fighting an undeclared war against each other. You only have to look at the state of the world for the past fifty years to see how we are locked into the mindset of perpetual undeclared war. I’m not talking about actual wars, and there has been plenty of those as well, but you have the ongoing ‘cold war’ that continues between capitalist and communist countries. In addition of course now to add a little spice, we have a perpetual war against terror with the people of Islam. An ongoing reason to instill a fighting ethic into the population; we must be forever vigilant to protect ourselves from our enemies, both internal and external.”

“Plato was quite content to accept this as a fact of life that will never change, and quite clearly he saw no logical impediment to founding a Utopian society that was still geared for war. Although Plato paid lip service to never resorting to war (war as a last resort that we hear even today from our rulers as they continue to prepare for war as a

priority), and the ideal of peace and goodwill towards men, he more or less conceived his ideal society as being one where the ruling class is not corrupt so that when the winds of war do actually blow, the people will be united in their loyalty to the State, and will be willing to fight and die for a just cause. Let's listen in some more on the conversation between our wayfarers as they set out again on their walk to Zeus' Cave, after having rested and taken refreshment in the sacred grove. (Interestingly you will see they talk about the less than ideal situation in Persia, which these days is known as Iraq where the less than ideal situation continues. I wonder if the current occupation forces are any better than those ancient rulers)."

<ATHENIAN: We maintain that if a state is going to survive and enjoy all the happiness that mankind can achieve, it is vitally necessary for it to distribute honors and marks of disgrace on a proper basis. And the proper basis is to put spiritual goods at the top of the list and hold them – provided the soul exercises self-control – in the highest esteem; bodily goods and advantages should come second, and third those said to be provided by prosperity and wealth. If a legislator or a state ever ignores these guidelines by valuing riches above all or by promoting one of the other inferior goods to a more exalted position, it will be an act of political and religious folly. Shall we take this line, or not? MEGILLUS: Yes, emphatically and unambiguously. ATHENIAN: It was our scrutiny of the political system of the Persians that made us go into this business at such length. Our verdict was that their corruption increased year by year, and the reason we assign for this is that they were too strict in depriving the people of liberty and too energetic in introducing authoritarian government, so that they destroyed all friendship and community of spirit in the state. And with that gone, the policy of the rulers is framed not in the interests of their subjects the people, but to support their own authority: let them only think that a situation offers them the prospect of some profit, even a small one, and they wreck cities and ruin friendly nations by fire and sword; they hate, and are hated in return, with savage and pitiless loathing. When they come to need the common people to fight on their behalf, they discover the army has no loyalty, no eagerness to face the danger and fight. They have millions and millions of soldiers – all useless for fighting a war, so that just as if manpower were in short supply, they have to hire it, imagining that mercenaries and foreigners will ensure their safety. Not only this, they inevitably become so stupid that they proclaim by their very actions that as compared with gold and silver everything society regards as good is in their eyes so much trash. MEGILLUS: Exactly.>

"The key to Plato's version of Utopia is to train children from a very tender age in a rigid state controlled education system. He goes into great detail as to what they should and should not be taught, and covers a wide range of topics which go far beyond the 'reading, writing and arithmetic' type subjects that we would normally choose for a school curriculum. Plato is concerned with the development of the 'whole man' through education, with a view to turning out adults that are unquestioningly obedient to a set of divinely decreed and unchangeable moral and social norms. The Athenian expounds in great detail to his traveling companions on such topics as good manners and how children should spend their leisure time, but I will let you be privy to just one small excerpt of their conversation on this subject of education, so you may judge for yourself whether he is really talking about peace and goodwill towards men."

<ATHENIAN: So now let's summon once again the official that has the hardest job of all – the Director of Children. He'll be in charge both of music and of physical training, so he won't get much time off. CLEINIAS: How then will a man of his advancing years be able to supervise so much? ATHENIAN: There is no problem there, my friend. The law has already given him permission, which it will not withdraw, to recruit as assistant supervisors any citizens he may wish, of either sex. He will know whom to choose, and a sober respect for his office and a realization of its importance will make him anxious not to choose wrongly, because he'll be well aware that only if the youngest generation has received and goes on receiving a correct education shall we find everything is 'plain sailing', whereas if not – well it would be inappropriate to describe the consequences, and as the state is young we shall refrain from doing so, because simply to mention evil would be to tempt fate. Well then, on these topics too – I mean dances and the entire range of movements involved in physical training – we have already said a great deal. We are establishing gymnasia for all physical exercises of a military kind – archery and deployment of missiles in general, skirmishing, heavy-armed fighting of every variety, tactical maneuvers, marches of every sort, pitching camp, and also the various disciplines of the cavalryman. In all these subjects there must be public instructors paid out of public funds; their lessons must be attended by the boys and men of the state, and the girls and women as well, because they too have to master all these techniques. While still girls, they must practice every kind of dancing and fighting in armor; when grown women, they must play their part in maneuvering, getting into battle formation and taking off and putting on weapons, if only to ensure that if it ever proves necessary for the whole army to leave the state and take the field abroad, so that the children and the rest of the population are left unprotected, the women will be at least able to defend them. On the other hand – and this is one of those things we can't swear is impossible – suppose a large and powerful army, whether Greek or not, were to force a way into the country and make them fight a desperate battle for the very existence of the state. It would be a disaster for their society if its women prove to have been so shockingly ill-educated that they couldn't even rival female birds, who are prepared to run every risk and die for their chicks fighting against the most powerful of wild animals. What if, instead of that, the women promptly made off to the temples and thronged every altar and sanctuary, and covered the human race with the disgrace of being by nature the most lily-livered creatures under the sun? CLEINIAS: By heaven, sir, no state in which that happened could avoid disgrace – quite apart from the damage that would be caused. ATHENIAN: So let's lay down a law to the effect that women must not neglect to cultivate the technique of fighting at any rate to the extent indicated. These are skills which all citizens, male and female, must take care to acquire. CLEINIAS: That gets my vote, at least.>

“In case you're wondering, the Athenian does go on to describe in some detail the difference between decent and disreputable dancing for the benefit of the Director of Children. Decent dancing is 'a representation of movements of graceful people, and the aim is to create an effect of grandeur', while disreputable dancing on the other hand 'imitates the movements of unsightly people and tries to present them in an unattractive light.' He describes several subdivisions of both kinds of dancing. “The first subdivision of the decent kind represents handsome courageous soldiers locked in violent struggles of war... It depicts the motions executed to avoid blows and shots of all kinds

(dodging, retreating, jumping into the air, crouching); and it also tries to represent the opposite kind of motion, the more aggressive postures adopted when shooting arrows and discharging javelins and delivering various kinds of blows. In these dances, which portray fine physiques and noble characters, the correct posture is maintained if the body is kept erect in a state of vigorous tension, with the limbs extended nearly straight. A posture with the opposite characteristics we reject as *not* correct.’ The Athenian goes on to describe a dance of peace which is the other subdivision of decent dancing, and he specifically excludes ‘*Bacchic* dances and the like, which (the dancers allege) are a ‘representation’ of drunken persons they call Nymphs and Pans and Sileni and Satyrs, and which are performed during ‘purifications’ and ‘initiations’.’ This latter type the Director of Children need not concern himself with.”

“Plato clearly wanted to create an ideal society, but the main problem with it is that the people were expected to behave and think in a way that he considered to be good, and they were to be strictly prohibited from behaving in a way that they themselves may personally consider to be good. And from a very tender age they were to be taught a very rigid version of what is considered to be good. He more or less thought the ideal was a rigidly disciplined military society that never went to war, but could at a moment’s notice. ‘Military service is a subject on which we need to give a good deal of advice and have a large number of regulations. The vital point is that no-one, man or woman, must ever be left without someone in charge of him; nobody must get into the habit of acting alone and independently, either in sham fighting or the real thing, and in peace and war alike we must give our constant attention and obedience to our leader, submitting to his guidance even in tiny details. When the order is given we should stand, march, exercise, wash, feed, stay awake at night on duty as guards or messengers, and even in the midst of dangers not pursue or yield without a sign from our commander. In short, we must condition ourselves to an instinctive rejection of the very notion of doing anything without our companions; we must live a life in which we never do anything, if possible, except by combined and united action as members of a group. No better or more powerful or efficient weapon exists for ensuring safety and final victory in war, and never will. This is what we must practice in peacetime, right from childhood – the exercise of authority over others and submission to them in turn. Freedom from control must be uncompromisingly eliminated from the life of all men, and of the animals under their domination.’ So you can see that this scheme by Plato to establish a Utopian society really only amounts to a Fascist setting out his version of the society he wants to control. And characteristic of Fascists, he truly believed that he was planning for the good of society. For instance, he says, ‘Those fine men who safeguard the whole state either by exploits of valor or by military expertise must be accorded honor – but honor of the second rank, because the highest honor should be given first and foremost to those who have proved conspicuously conscientious in respecting the written regulations of the good legislator.’ You could sum up Plato’s attitude with the proposition that people should be controlled for their own good and for the good of society as a whole. And you can see that the war mentality would prevail, both in glorification of acts of valor and adulation of veterans. The fact is that Plato’s attitude has become the norm in Western society.”

“Does Tom really expect us to believe that we can change human nature, or rather that human nature can change of its own accord? I think we can all pretty much

agree that the conditions necessary to have an ideal society should occur spontaneously. In other words the exact opposite to the approach that Plato was advocating two and a half thousand years ago. Essentially what Tom is telling us is that human nature can indeed change if we create the economic conditions that will generate prosperity across the board. There must be no poverty and nor, presumably, must there be excessive wealth. If this can be achieved purely through economic forces and where there is absolutely no coercion, then I suppose over a long time span you would see a gradual reduction of crime in the society, and of social problems generally. Tom is not saying that the need for laws will disappear completely. What he is saying is that breaches of the law will tend to diminish. The laws will still be valid and enforceable, and if anyone does suffer an injury then evidently they will have the wherewithal to engage lawyers to enforce their rights. Affluent people tend to be more aware of their rights, and when there are no financial disparities in the population, I think it would be reasonable to assume that the enforcement of rights as between citizens could become self-regulatory.”

“The real problem for Tom’s theory is obviously that societies do not exist in perfect isolation. There was a lot of hardheaded pragmatism in Plato’s theory because it was inevitable in his day that any society you set up is going to be attacked by marauding forces from without. That was a fact of life then, and the mentality of most people to this day is pretty much the same. Here again, Tom is not advocating that the defense force of any nation will be dismantled in the short-term. Say 300 years from now if all the nations of the world have adopted Tom’s economic policies, and all the populations are either static or reducing, then in that extremely unlikely event, I suppose the risk of external attack would be minimal. There would no longer be any need for the nations to maintain a standing army, and peace and harmony amongst all the nations could actually come to pass. Maybe you would see an international body being set up, that all the nations of the world belong to and contribute to, and which maintains a global peacekeeping force to enforce the rights as between participating nations. This of course is the best case scenario, and it is very, very unlikely in practice that you are going to get all the nations to meekly fall in line with this new approach that Tom is so enthusiastic about.”

“Even at the national level you are going to have the problem of citizens who, for whatever reason, are not prepared to obey the ruler. It will be instructive to see how Plato intended to deal with these problems. He intended that Magnesia should have exactly 5040 citizens. Each citizen was the head of a family, including slaves, and each owned a farm, so that each domestic household was self-supporting. Plato actually thought that in an ideal society there should be communism pure and simple – ‘a community of wives, children, and all property, where the notion of ‘private property’ will have been by hook or by crook completely eliminated from life.’ But as he could see that this was not feasible in practice, he opted for this notion of limited private property where each citizen could maintain his household in modest comfort. He proposed a very complicated and impractical method of dividing the farmland amongst the citizens themselves so that each could have a holding of comparable quality and value. In addition he proposed that each citizen had to bequeath his farm to his *favorite* son in order for the number of citizens in Magnesia to remain exactly 5040 forever. I won’t go into Plato’s suggestions as to what would happen to all the rest of citizen’s children who are disinherited, but let me assure you that there is here fruitful ground for hatred and strife to flourish.”

“The Athenian expounds at length to his two companions concerning the citizens he wants to inhabit Magnesia, and his attitude towards the purging of society of undesirables. It is on this topic that anyone with a hankering to set up an ideal society starts to hit rocky ground, and you will see that the Athenian is no exception, as our three benevolent theorists start to consider the selection of citizens while they stroll along without a care in the world.”

<ATHENIAN: But before all that, here are some further points to notice. Anyone who takes charge of a herd of animals – a shepherd or cattle-man or breeder of horses or what have you – will never get down to looking after them without first performing the purge appropriate to his particular animal-community: that is, he will weed out the unhealthy and inferior stock and send it off to other herds, and keep only the thoroughbreds and the healthy animals to look after. He knows that otherwise he would have to waste endless effort on sickly and refractory beasts, degenerate by nature and ruined by incompetent breeding, and that unless he purges the existing stock these faults will spread in any herd to the animals that are still physically and temperamentally healthy and unspoiled. This is not too serious in the case of lower animals, and we need mention it only by way of illustration, but with human beings it is vitally important for the legislator to ascertain and explain the appropriate measures for each case, not only as regards a purge, but in general. To purge a whole state, for instance, several methods may be employed, some mild, some drastic, and if a legislator were a dictator too he'd be able to purge a state drastically, which is the best way. But if he has to establish a new society and new laws without dictatorial powers, and succeeds in administering no more than the mildest purge, he'll be well content even with this limited achievement. Like drastic medicines, the best purge is a painful business: it involves chastisement by a combination of 'judgment' and 'punishment', and takes the latter, ultimately, to the point of death and exile. That usually gets rid of the major criminals who are incurable and do the state enormous harm. The milder purge we could adopt is this. When there is a shortage of food, and the underprivileged show themselves ready to follow their leaders in an attack on the property of the privileged, they are to be regarded as a disease that has developed in the body politic, and in the friendliest possible way they should be (as it will be tactfully put) 'transferred to a colony'. Somehow or other everyone who legislates must do this in good time; but our position at the moment is even more unusual. There's no need for us here and now to have to resort to a colony or arrange to make a selection of people by a purge. No it's as though we have a number of streams from several sources, some from springs, some from mountain torrents, all flowing down to unite in our lake. We have to apply ourselves to seeing that water, as it mingles, is as pure as possible, partly by drawing some of it off, partly by diverting it into different channels. Even so, however you organize a society, it looks as if there will always be trouble and risk. True enough: but seeing that we are operating at the moment on a theoretical rather than a practical level, let's suppose we've recruited our citizens and their purity meets with our approval. After all, when we have screened the bad candidates over a suitable period and given them every chance to be converted, we can refuse their application to enter and become citizens of the state; but we should greet the good ones with all possible courtesy and kindness. CLEINIAS: Well said, sir. I must follow your advice.>

“If Plato advocates the use of purges to keep a perfect society perfect, then evidently we must be asking ourselves the question whether this must always be the case.

You will note in addition, in the case of Magnesia, that many of the factors mentioned by Tom, namely a static population, no great divide between rich and poor, and no unemployment, are also present. Indeed in Magnesia there is no poverty at all. Any person who doesn't work is a member of a family of one of the citizen farmers and wants for nothing. Yet the Athenian was clearly of the opinion that the initial 5040 citizens would have to be selected with care, and once the society was established there would be the need for purges from time to time to rid Magnesia of 'undesirables'. To get rid of major criminals who are incurable and can do enormous harm to the state, it will be necessary to put them to death. In times of food shortage, anyone who starts talking insurrection because they are starving, will be transported to a penal colony. Their readiness to rebel diagnoses them as a disease in the body politic. The Athenian leaves us in little doubt that if he was the legislator in Magnesia, he would be purging political dissidents of all kinds."

### George Orwell

"There appears to be something more in human nature than a simple drive to better our condition which, according to Adam Smith, induces us to engage in economic activity of all kinds. Nietzsche called it a will to power and it seems that in the last resort Adam Smith himself recognized that wealth was power. I don't think Tom realizes that there is actually a dark side to human nature that craves power and war, even as they are speaking freedom and peace. To quote from the preface to George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, 'One of the peculiar phenomena of our time is the renegade Liberal. Over and above the familiar Marxist claim that 'bourgeois liberty' is an illusion, there is now a widespread tendency to argue that one can only defend democracy by totalitarian methods. If one loves democracy, the argument runs, one must crush its enemies by no matter what means. And who are its enemies? It always appears that they are not only those who attack it openly and consciously, but those who 'objectively' endanger it by spreading mistaken doctrines. In other words, defending democracy involves destroying all independence of thought. The argument was used, for instance, to justify the Russian purges. The most ardent Russophile hardly believed that all of the victims were guilty of all the things they were accused of: but by holding heretical opinions they 'objectively' harmed the regime, and therefore it was quite right not only to massacre them but to discredit them by false accusation.' It is interesting that this preface to *Animal Farm* was itself suppressed at the time the book was published."

"Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* specifically satirizing Russian Communism, but at the time the powerful elite in Britain were actually pro-Russia and they didn't want to hear any criticism about Stalin, because they needed Russia as an ally to fight Nazi Germany. Just prior to this Stalin and Hitler were actually allies, but then they turned against each other, and Britain sought to woo Stalin as an ally against Hitler. This was the state of play of the different maneuverings of the power cliques at that time, but the point Orwell was trying to make is that, although the actual names of the power elites in the different countries may change, the essential human activity of creating and breaking power alliances goes on forever. At that particular time the press in Britain were concerned to censor any adverse reference to Joseph Stalin, but I'm going to read you a further quote from Orwell's Preface and replace references to Britain where they appear with references to the United States of America, and you can decide for yourself whether his observations are still relevant today. 'The sinister fact about literary censorship in the

United States is that it is largely voluntary. Unpopular ideas can be silenced, and inconvenient facts kept dark, without the need for any official ban. Anyone who has lived long in a foreign country will know of instances of sensational items of news – things which on their own merits would get the big headlines – being kept right out of the American press, not because the government intervened but because of a general tacit agreement that it wouldn't do to mention that particular fact. So far as the daily newspapers go, this is easy to understand. The American press is extremely centralized, and most of it is owned by wealthy men who have every motive to be dishonest on certain important topics. But the same kind of veiled censorship also operates in books and periodicals, as well as in plays, films and radio. At any given moment there is an orthodoxy, a body of ideas which it is assumed that all right-thinking people will accept without question. It is not exactly forbidden to say this, that or the other, but it is 'not done' to say it, just as in mid-Victorian times it was 'not done' to mention trousers in the presence of a lady. Anyone who challenges the prevailing orthodoxy finds himself silenced with surprising effectiveness. A genuinely unfashionable opinion is almost never given a fair hearing, either in the popular press or in the highbrow periodicals.' Although the United States at this present time calls itself a democracy, the fact is that it is an oligarchy, and the power elite that heads up this oligarchy is this body called the military-industrial complex. Although Orwell was satirizing Russia, you will find that all or most of his observations are pertinent to the situation in the United States at the present time."

"In his Preface to *Animal Farm*, Orwell asks 'how much of the present slide towards Fascist ways of thought is traceable to the 'anti-Fascism' of the past ten years and the unscrupulousness it entailed?' The fact is that Nazi Germany had pretty much the same relationship with Communist Russia, as the United States had. At the time Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* (around 1922-1923) he loathed Marxists just as much as he loathed Jews. Then at the beginning of the Second World War it served his purposes to enter into a non-aggression pact with Communist Russia, because he was at that stage conducting his war effort on the western front towards France and Britain. Then he without warning attacked Russia and reverted to his original hatred of the Communists. In the same way the United States was originally hostile towards the USSR, then it formed an alliance with the USSR to defeat Hitler, and once that was achieved it reverted to hatred towards the USSR. Gradually and surreptitiously throughout the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a Fascist oligarchy has cemented its power in the United States. All the while indoctrinating the people that war is necessary to preserve freedom, the military-industrial complex has geared the US economy up for wholesale production of weapons of mass destruction."

"*Animal Farm* is a light and satirical story loosely based on the events in Communist Russia, and it is hard to imagine these days that Orwell has so much trouble getting it published. The fact is however that at the time he wrote it, the 'free' world was trying to court Joseph Stalin and they didn't want to do anything to upset him. The animals on the farm see themselves exploited and tyrannized by Farmer Jones, so they revolt and expel him from the farm. To start with they are full of ideals, and they paint up on the barn wall seven commandments setting out the essentials of the new order. Animals that have four legs, or have wings, are good, and creatures that go on two legs, i.e. humans, are evil. The four-legged animals were prohibited from doing human type

things like wearing clothes, sleeping in beds, drinking alcohol, and killing each other. Above all, the seventh and final commandment was that 'All animals are equal.' The revolution was led by two pigs, Napoleon and Snowball, however Napoleon firstly eradicates Snowball so that he can have absolute power, and the pigs proceed to set up an oligarchy on the farm. The pigs become the power elite that exploits the other animals just as Farmer Jones had done. The pigs learn to walk on two legs, and they wear Jones' clothes and set themselves up in the farmhouse sleeping in the human beds. They firstly drink all of Jones' stash of alcohol and then they learn to brew it themselves. The pigs conduct several brutal purges of the other animals with the aid of a pack of vicious dogs that Napoleon had trained from when they were puppies. Even other pigs who were suspected of disloyalty had their throats ripped out by the dogs. The pig oligarchy enters into mercenary dealings with outside humans in breach of the seven commandments, and when Boxer, the draught horse, that had given his all for the revolution and had worked like a slave for the leader, became too old to work, he was callously sold to be slaughtered at the local glue factory. As the pigs broke one commandment after another, the original commandments were subtly changed on the barn wall so as to create an exception for the pig oligarchy. Finally the seventh and most important commandment that all animals are equal was modified to read 'All animals are equal but some are more equal than others.' By this time the pigs were acting and looking just like human beings, and the rest of the animals were being exploited and tyrannized just as badly, or perhaps even worse, than when Farmer Jones was in control."

"Throughout the whole story the other pig, Snowball, who had originally been the co-leader of the revolution, was depicted by the pig oligarchy propaganda as the ultimate enemy of their society who was to blame for everything that went wrong. The pigs were able to drive the other animals on to even greater efforts and make them submit to ever increasing hardship and deprivation, by constantly instilling in them a fear and hatred for the traitorous Snowball, as well as for the human beings external to the farm. Snowball, of course, as soon as he was expelled from the farm, had immediately entered into an evil alliance with the human neighbors, and from then on the pig propaganda depicted the evil alliance as being the source of all their woes and misfortunes, thus distracting the animals' attention from the fact that they were being exploited by the pigs themselves. The pigs were cunning enough to realize that the power to dominate other animals actually depended upon them having someone to hate and revile; this coupled with the constant threat of an external attack by the humans who wanted to regain control of the farm. So if the animals loved peace and freedom they had to hate Snowball and the humans."

"The point of the story is of course that in any society, no matter how idealistic it may be, there is always going to be a group of pigs that will seek to grab hold of the reins of power, and will seek to exploit the docile masses for their own gain. Tom seems to think that if the economy is manipulated in such a way that everyone is prosperous and employed, that this alone, over a long period of time, perhaps even centuries, will gradually change human nature to the point where everybody will become law abiding, upright and respectable. He didn't actually say it, but maybe he has in mind modern day Japan, where there is a very low crime rate, which perhaps can be attributed to the fact that the people of Japan are very prosperous, and there is a very high standard of living. This may be true of violent crime, but one suspects that Japan is also controlled

by a wealthy elite, and that corporate crime and unscrupulous business dealings are just as prevalent in that country as in any other. The people of Japan may appear to be more docile, but this may be because the ethic of blind and unquestioning obedience to an elite faction in society is already so strongly ingrained in them that subservience to their superiors is more or less second nature to them. Japan has a low female fertility rate, there is prosperity across the board, they have very little immigration and their population is static. These are all the ingredients that Tom requires to create an ideal society. The Japanese are living in a Utopia right now, and yet I see nothing to suggest that their high standard of living is actually working to change their psychological makeup. Whatever the powerful elite is that runs that country is not going into any decline as far as I know. I'm not saying that the power elite in Japan is better or worse than in any other country, but you can bet your boots that there is one. Still if all the countries in the world had a standard of living as high as Japan, and if all the countries in all the world had a static population like Japan, it is probably true, as Tom suggests, that there would be no more wars. That alone, without more, would be a fabulous advancement for the human race."

"In Orwell's great work, *1984*, he gives us a satirical taste of the sinister undercurrents in political society. In the story the world had become polarized into three superpowers, Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia. Each of these superpowers are oligarchies run by an all-powerful elite, and although the precise details of their ideology may vary, the essential philosophy of power was identical. In Oceania, where the novel is set, there is a symbolic leader, Big Brother, to whom everyone must show unquestioning obedience or they will be vaporized. The essential point of the novel is that the power elites operate in a continual state of warfare which they need to whip up the masses into a frenzy of hatred for the enemy, and a corresponding all-consuming love and obedience to Big Brother. At any one time Oceania will be at war with Eurasia, and have an alliance with Eastasia, or will be at war with Eastasia and be allied to Eurasia. The reasons for the wars were all lies, and the actual name of the enemy could change in mid-sentence in unrelenting discourse of propaganda coming from the Party. The hatred of the people would continue unabated with just the name of the enemy changed in their vitriolic ranting and raving. Because all the indoctrination was based on lies, it was necessary for the Party to be systematically erasing all records of the past so that no-one could ever know what was actually the truth. Everyone was under constant surveillance by the Thought Police, and if you showed even the merest indication that you were questioning the truth of the propaganda, you would be arrested without warrant by the Thought Police and taken to be tortured and executed in the Ministry of Love."

"The government in Oceania was totalitarian where a single party held absolute power, and the propaganda was extreme in the sense that the people were expected to believe the exact opposite of the truth. For instance, they were indoctrinated into believing that 'War is Peace' and 'Freedom is Slavery'. Obviously in real life governments are much more subtle than this, but the point that Orwell was trying to make was that modern Western democracies actually adopt similar methods without anyone really being aware that they are similarly being indoctrinated into blind obedience to a power elite. For instance, in the United States Big Brother becomes Uncle Sam, the Thought Police are the FBI and the CIA, and the Ministry of Love is the Department of Homeland Security. All the mass media is owned by members of the power elite, and they are careful that the people should only hear a certain message. The people are led to

believe that war is necessary to maintain peace, and they are enslaved into unquestioningly accepting the necessity for a massive military force and authoritarian surveillance methods for the sake of preserving their freedom. For decades the propaganda machine was spewing out hatred for Communist Russia and the government was actually allied to Saddam Hussein. Then all that changed and Russia became an ally, and the people were expected to hate Saddam Hussein so that they could declare war on Iraq. Now it was Muslims who could be arrested without warrant and taken to the Department of Homeland Security to be tortured and executed. The hate apparatus painstakingly set up by the power elite had gone off in a new direction. All of a sudden it was necessary to attack Iraq, in order to preserve peace and freedom. Lies, lies, lies that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and that he was intending to use them against America. I am not here specifically trying to oppose the war in Iraq. I merely want to point out the similarities between actual situations in the real world and the hypothetical and unrealistic regime in Oceania. Orwell intended *1984* as a send up of all aggressive and manipulative power elites in any country. I don't think that Tom has convinced us that this aspect of human society will change simply by introducing a Utopian economy."

"Let's have a look at the economic reasons why it was always necessary for the power elite in Oceania to wage war in the name of peace. We may find that these reasons bear an uncanny resemblance to the economic reasons for real-life wars. According to the explanation given by the internal archenemy of Oceania in his 'underground' book that he wrote in opposition to Big Brother, 'The problem was how to keep the wheels of industry turning without increasing the real wealth of the world. Goods must be produced, but they must not be distributed. And in practice the one way of achieving this was by continuous warfare. The essential act of war is destruction, not necessarily of human lives, but of the products of human labor. War is a way of shattering to pieces, or pouring into the stratosphere, or sinking in the depths of the sea, materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable, and hence, in the long run, too intelligent. Even when weapons of war are not actually destroyed, their manufacture is still a convenient way of expending labor power without producing anything that can be consumed... War, it will be seen, not only accomplishes the necessary destruction, but accomplishes it in a psychologically acceptable way. In principle it would be quite simple to waste the surplus labor of the world by building temples and pyramids, by digging holes and filling them up again, or even by producing vast quantities of goods and then setting fire to them. But this would provide only the economic and not the emotional basis for a hierarchical society. What is concerned here is not the morale of the masses, whose attitude is unimportant so long as they are kept steadily at work, but the morale of the Party itself. Even the humblest Party member is expected to be competent, industrious and even intelligent within narrow limits, but it is also necessary that he should be a credulous and ignorant fanatic whose prevailing moods are fear, hatred, adulation and orgiastic triumph. In other words it is necessary that he should have the mentality appropriate to a state of war. It does not matter whether the war is actually happening, and, since no decisive victory is possible, it does not matter whether the war is going well or badly. All that is needed is that a state of war should exist. The splitting of the intelligence which the Party requires of its members, and which is more easily achieved in an atmosphere of war, is now almost universal, but the

higher up the ranks one goes, the more marked it becomes. It is precisely in the Inner Party that war hysteria and hatred of the enemy is strongest... All members of the Inner Party believe in this coming conquest as an article of faith. It is to be achieved either by gradually acquiring more and more territory and so building up an overwhelming preponderance of power, or by the discovery of some new and unanswerable weapon. The search for new weapons continues increasingly, and is one of the very few remaining activities in which the inventive or speculative type of mind can find an outlet... But in matters of vital importance – meaning, in effect, war and police espionage – the empirical approach is still encouraged, or at least tolerated. The two aims of the Party are to conquer the whole surface of the earth and to extinguish once and for all the possibility of independent thought. There are therefore two great problems which the Party is concerned to solve. One is how to discover, against his will, what another human being is thinking, and the other is how to kill several hundred million people in a few seconds without giving warning beforehand. In so far as scientific research still continues, this is its subject matter. The scientist of today is either a mixture of psychologist and inquisitor, studying with extraordinary minuteness the meaning of facial expressions, gestures and tones of voice, and testing the truth-producing effects of drugs, shock therapy, hypnosis and physical torture; or he is a chemist, physicist or biologist concerned only with such branches of his special subject as are relevant to the taking of life. In the vast laboratories of the Ministry of Peace, and in the experimental stations hidden in the Brazilian forests, or in the Australian desert, or on the lost islands of the Antarctic, the teams of experts are indefatigably at work. Some are concerned simply with planning the logistics of future wars; others devise larger and larger rocket bombs, more and more powerful explosives, and more and more impenetrable armor plating; others search for new and deadlier gases, or for soluble poisons capable of being produced in such quantities as to destroy the vegetation of whole continents, or for breeds of disease germs immunized against all possible antibodies; others strive to produce a vehicle that shall bore its way under the soil like a submarine under the water, or an airplane as independent of its base as a sailing ship; others explore even remoter possibilities such as focusing the sun's rays through lenses suspended thousands of kilometers away in space, or producing artificial earthquakes and tidal waves by tapping the heat of the earth's center.' I shall leave you to decide how much all of this rings true for the United States as we know it today. Orwell wrote his book over 60 years ago now, and he mentioned suspending lenses out there in space which even comes fairly close to the Star Wars project. A very strong case can be made out that all human industry is ultimately concerned with war, and specifically the making of more and more awesome weapons to kill other human beings; and that peace is merely interludes between the real business of human beings which is warfare.”

“This current war in Iraq is a textbook case of why war happens, and will always happen. The government lied to the people for the reasons for the war. The propaganda machine went into overdrive that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction that he intended to use against the US. It was therefore necessary to attack him before he could attack the heartland. The security of the free world was at stake. No mention at this stage of Iraq's enormous oil reserves which were just sitting there waiting to be plundered. When the masses had been whipped into a suitable state of fear and hatred, the US and its allies attack with all the firepower at their disposal. They

completely devastate the country. Roads, buildings, factories, anything of strategic value are all reduced to rubble – taking care, of course, not to damage any of the oil industry infrastructure. But everything else had to be destroyed right at the outset. A massive display of overkill right from the start is the best way to overwhelm the enemy and ensure that the war will be quick. Even better was the fact that Iraq was in fact disarming at the time the blitzkrieg went in. In this regard its always best to attack a country that is hopelessly inferior in terms of firepower. From the point of view of the aggressor it makes it an even more routine exercise in destruction.”

“So the enemy is routed in few weeks, and the occupying force may then go into overdrive pumping out the oil and selling it just as quickly as they can. The revenue from all the oil is now necessary for the ‘reconstruction’ of the country. This means of course letting out billion dollar contracts to all the corporate pirates in the ruling elite. The whole exercise turns out to be a simple play to enrich the wealthiest strata of the military-industrial complex. The US military destroys Iraq and then US industry rebuilds it again. Pretty neat. And all paid for by pumping Iraq’s oil reserves dry. With the added bonus that flooding the global market with Iraq’s oil at bargain basement prices will also serve to keep gas prices low at the gas pump back home in the heartland. This is important to keep the masses happy. There’s nothing that makes them more disgruntled than high gas prices. So you see in point of fact ‘War is Peace’ just as the slogans in Oceania state. The war in Iraq is keeping Corporate America happy because they are making billions of dollars from lucrative reconstruction contracts, and it is keeping the masses happy because they have lower gas prices at the gas pump. And a happy country is a peaceful country. The fact that tens of thousands of innocent Iraqi citizens had to die or suffer horrible wounds from the bombardments, and the fact that thousands more Iraqis had to face torture and abuse in the detention centers, and the fact that the country is being plundered of the only natural resource of any value, is a mere bagatelle that is hardly worth mentioning. This is the price that we have to pay for peace.”

### **Adolf Hitler**

“In his speech, Tom referred to some statements by Michel Foucault that, for the capitalists, population growth is an essential factor in power politics. An increasing population obviously entails increasing consumption, which needs increasing exploitation of the land, and all this is very good for an ego hooked on power. If this is truly the way that those with will to power think, then one would expect to find these sentiments expressed by one of the greatest egos of all times, namely Adolf Hitler. As it happens there is a long passage in *Mein Kampf* dealing precisely with these issues. I think it’s important that I read it to you without any abridgement so that you may know exactly how a fanatic thinks.”

<ADOLF HITLER: It could not have been other than the wish to secure the future of the Reich better than if it were to depend exclusively on its own resources. But the future of the Reich would not have meant anything else than the problem of securing the means of existence for the German people.

The only questions therefore were the following: What shall the life of the nation assume in the future – that is to say within such a period as we can forecast? And by what means can the necessary foundation and security be guaranteed for this development within the framework of the general distribution of power among the

European nations? A clear analysis of the principles on which the foreign policy of German statecraft were to be based should have led to the following conclusions:

The annual increase of population in Germany amounts to almost 900,000 souls. The difficulties of providing for this army of new citizens must grow from year to year and must finally lead to a catastrophe, unless ways and means are found which will forestall the danger of misery and hunger. There were four ways of providing against this terrible calamity:

(1) It was possible to adopt the French example and artificially restrict the number of births, thus avoiding an excess of population.

Under certain circumstances, in periods of distress or under bad climate conditions, or if the soil yields too poor a return, Nature herself tends to check the increase of population in some countries and among some races, but by a method which is quite as ruthless as it is wise. It does not impede the procreative faculty as such; but it does impede the further existence of the offspring by submitting it to such tests and privations that everything which is less strong or less healthy is forced to retreat into the bosom of the unknown. Whatever survives those hardships of existence has been tested and tried a thousandfold, hardened and rendered fit to continue the process of procreation; so that the same thorough selection will begin all over again. By this dealing brutally with the individual and recalling him the very moment he shows that he is not fitted for the trials of life, Nature preserves the strength of the race and the species and raises it to the highest degree of efficiency.

The decrease in numbers therefore implies an increase of strength, as far as the individual is concerned, and this finally means the invigoration of the species.

But the case is different when man himself starts the process of numerical restriction. Man is not carved from Nature's wood. He is made of 'human' material. He knows more than the ruthless Queen of Wisdom. He does not impede the preservation of the individual but prevents procreation itself. To the individual, who always sees only himself and not the race, this line of action seems more humane and just than the opposite way. But, unfortunately, the consequences are also opposite.

By leaving the process of procreation unchecked and by submitting the individual to the hardest preparatory tests in life, Nature selects the best from an abundance of single elements and stamps them as fit to live and carry on the conservation of the species. But man restricts the procreative faculty and strives obstinately to keep alive at any cost whatever has once been born. The correction of the Divine Will seems to him to be wise and humane, and he rejoices at having trumped Nature's card in one game at least and this proved that she is not entirely reliable. The dear little ape of an all-mighty father is delighted to see and hear that he has succeeded in effecting a numerical restriction; but he would be very displeased if told that this, his system, brings about a degeneration in personal quality.

For as soon as the procreative faculty is thwarted and the number of births diminished, the natural struggle for existence which allows only healthy and strong individuals to survive is replaced by a sheer craze to 'save' feeble and even diseased creatures at any cost. And thus the seeds are sown for a human progeny which will become more and more miserable from one generation to another, as long as Nature's will is scorned.

But if that policy be carried out the final results must be that such a nation will eventually terminate its own existence on this earth; for though man may defy the eternal laws of procreation during a certain period, vengeance will follow sooner or later. A stronger race will oust that which has grown weak; for the vital urge, in its ultimate form, will burst asunder all the absurd chains of his so-called human consideration for the individual and will replace it with the humanity of Nature, which wipes out what is weak in order to give place to the strong.

Any policy which aims at securing the existence of a nation by restricting the birth-rate robs that nation of its future.

(2) A second solution is that of internal colonization. This is a proposal which is frequently made in our time and one hears it lauded a good deal. It is a suggestion that is well-meant but it is misunderstood by most people, so that it is the source of more mischief than can be imagined.

It is certainly true that the productivity of the soil can be increased within certain limits; but only within defined limits and not indefinitely. By increasing the productive powers of the soil it will be possible to balance the effect of a surplus birth-rate in Germany for a certain period of time, without running any danger of hunger. But we have to face the fact that the general standard of living is rising more quickly than even the birth rate. The requirements of food and clothing are becoming greater from year to year and are out of proportion to those of our ancestors of, let us say, a hundred years ago. It would, therefore, be a mistaken view that every increase in the productive powers of the soil will supply the requisite conditions for an increase in the population. No. That is true up to a certain point only, for at least a portion of the increased produce of the soil will be consumed by the margin of increased demands caused by the steady rise in the standard of living. But even if those demands were to be curtailed by the narrowest limits possible and if at the same time we were to use all our available energies in the intenser cultivation, we should here reach a definite limit which is conditioned by the inherent nature of the soil itself. No matter how industriously we may labor we cannot increase agricultural production beyond this limit. Therefore, though we may postpone the evil hour of distress for a certain time, it will arrive at last. The first phenomenon will be the recurrence of famine periods from time to time, after bad harvests, etc. The intervals between the famines will become shorter and shorter the more the population increases; and, finally, the famine times will disappear only in those rare years of plenty when the granaries are full. And a time will ultimately come when even in those years of plenty, there will not be enough to go round; so that hunger will dog the footsteps of the nation. Nature must now step in once more and select those who are to survive, or else man will help himself by artificially preventing his own increase, with all the fatal consequences for the race and the species which have already been mentioned.

It may be objected here that, in one form or another, this future is in store for all mankind and that the individual nation or race cannot escape the general fate.

At first glance, that objection seems logical enough; but we have to take the following into account:

The day will certainly come when the whole of mankind will be forced to check the augmentation of the human species, because there will be no further possibility of adjusting the productivity of the soil to the perpetual increase in the population.

Nature must then be allowed to use her own methods or man may possibly take the task of regulation into his own hands and establish the necessary equilibrium by the application of better means than we have at our disposal today. But then it will be a problem for mankind as a whole, whereas now only those races have to suffer from want which no longer have the strength and daring to acquire sufficient soil to fulfill their needs. For, as things stand today, vast spaces still lie uncultivated all over the surface of the globe. Those spaces are only waiting for the ploughshare. And it is quite certain that Nature did not set those territories apart as the exclusive pastures of any one nation or race to be held unutilized in reserve for the future. Such lands awaits the people who have the strength to acquire it and the diligence to cultivate it.

Nature knows no political frontiers. She begins by establishing life on this globe and then watches the free play of forces. Those who show the greatest courage and industry are the children nearest to her heart and they will be granted the sovereign right of existence.

If a nation confines itself to internal colonization while other races are perpetually increasing their territorial annexations all over the globe, that nation will be forced to restrict the numerical growth of its population at a time when the other nations are increasing theirs. This situation must eventually arrive. It will arrive soon if the territory which the nation has at its disposal is small. Now it is unfortunately true that only too often the best nations – or, to speak more exactly, the only really cultured nations, who at the same time are the chief bearers of human progress – have decided, in their blind pacifism, to refrain from the acquisition of new territory and to be content with ‘internal colonization’. But at the same time nations of inferior quality succeed in getting hold of large spaces for colonization all over the globe. The state of affairs which must result from this contrast is the following:

Races which are culturally superior but less ruthless would be forced to restrict their increase, because of insufficient territory to support the population, while the less civilized races could increase indefinitely, owing to the vast territories at their disposal. In other words: should that state of affairs continue, then the world will one day be possessed by that portion of mankind which is culturally inferior but more active and energetic.

A time will come, even though in the distant future, when there can be only two alternatives: Either the world will be ruled according to our moderate concept of democracy, and then every decision will be in favor of the numerically stronger races; or the world will be governed by the law of natural distribution of power, and then those nations will be victorious who are of more brutal will and are not the nations who have practised self-denial.

Nobody can doubt that this world will one day be the scene of dreadful struggles for existence on the part of mankind. In the end the instinct of self-preservation alone will triumph. Before its consuming fire this so-called humanitarianism, which connotes only a mixture of fatuous timidity and self-conceit, will melt away as under the March sunshine. Man has become great through perpetual struggle. In perpetual peace his greatness must decline.

For us Germans, the slogan of ‘internal colonization’ is fatal, because it encourages the belief that we have discovered a means which is in accordance with our innate pacifism and which will enable us to work for our livelihood in a half-slumbering

existence. Such a teaching, once it were taken seriously by our people, would mean the end of all effort to acquire for ourselves that place in the world which we deserve. If the average German were once convinced that by his measure he has the chance of ensuring his livelihood and guaranteeing his future, any attempt to take an active and profitable part in sustaining the vital demands of his country would be out of the question. Should the nation agree to such an attitude then any really useful foreign policy might be looked upon as dead and buried, together with all hope for the future of the German people.

Once we know that the consequences of this 'internal colonization' theory would be we can no longer consider as a mere accident the fact that among those who inculcate this quite pernicious mentality among our people the Jew is always in the first line. He knows his softies only too well not to know that they are ready to be the grateful victims of every swindle which promises them a gold-block in the shape of a discovery that will enable them to outwit Nature and thus render superfluous the hard and inexorable struggle for existence; so that finally they may become lords of the planet partly by sheer *dolce far niente* and partly by working when a pleasing opportunity arises.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that any German 'internal colonization' must first of all be considered as suited only for the relief of social grievances. To carry out a system of internal colonization, the most important preliminary measure would be to free the soil from the grip of the speculator and assure that freedom. But such a system could never suffice to assure the future of the nation without the acquisition of new territory.

If we adopt a different plan we shall soon reach a point beyond which the resources of our soil can no longer be exploited, and at the same time we shall reach a point beyond which our manpower cannot develop.

In conclusion, the following must be said:

The fact that only up to a limited extent can internal colonization be practised in a national territory which is of definitely small area and the restriction of the procreative faculty which follows as a result of such conditions – these two factors have a very unfavorable effect on the military and political standing of a nation.

The extent of the natural territory is a determining factor on the external security of the nation. The larger the territory which a people has at its disposal the stronger are the natural defences of that people. Military decisions are more quickly, more easily, more completely and more effectively gained against a people occupying a natural territory which is restricted in area, than against States which have extensive territories. Moreover, the magnitude of a natural territory is in itself a certain assurance that an outside power will not hastily risk the adventure of an invasion; for in that case the struggle would have to be long and exhausting before victory could be hoped for. The risk being so great, there would have to be extraordinary reasons for such an aggressive adventure. Hence it is that the territorial magnitude of a State furnishes a basis whereon the national liberty and independence can be maintained with relative ease; while, on the contrary, a State whose territory is small offers a natural temptation to the invader.

As a matter of fact, so-called national circles in the German *Reich* rejected those first two possibilities of establishing a balance between the constant numerical increase in the population and a national territory which could not expand

proportionately. But the reasons given for that rejection were different from those which I have just expounded. It was mainly on the basis of certain moral sentiments that restriction of the birthrate was objected to. Proposals for internal colonization were rejected indignantly because it was suspected that such a policy might mean an attack on the big landowners, and that this attack might be the forerunner of a general assault against the principle of private property as a whole. The form in which the latter solution – internal colonization – was recommended justified the misgivings of the landowners.

But the form in which the colonization proposal was rejected was not very clever, as regards the impression which such rejection might be calculated to make on the mass of the people, and anyhow it did not go to the root of the problem at all.

Only two further ways were left open in which work and bread could be secured for the increasing population.

(3) It was possible to think of acquiring new territory on which a certain portion of the increasing population could be settled each year; or else

(4) Our industry and commerce had to be organized in such a manner as to secure an increase in the exports and thus be able to support our people by the increased purchasing power accruing from the profits made on foreign markets.

Therefore the problem was: A policy of territorial expansion or a colonial and commercial policy. Both policies were taken into consideration, examined, recommended and rejected, from various standpoints, with the result that the second alternative was finally adopted. The sounder alternative, however, was undoubtedly the first.

Therefore the only possibility which Germany had of carrying a sound territorial policy into effect was that of acquiring new territory in Europe itself. Colonies cannot serve this purpose as long as they are not suited for settlement by Europeans on a large scale. In the nineteenth century it was no longer possible to acquire such colonies by peaceful means. Therefore any attempt at such a colonial expansion would have meant an enormous military struggle. Consequently it would have been more practical to undertake that military struggle for new territory in Europe rather than to wage war for the acquisition of possessions abroad.

Such a decision naturally demanded that the nation's undivided energies should be devoted to it. A policy of that kind which requires for its fulfillment every ounce of available energy on the part of everybody concerned, cannot be carried into effect by half-measures or in a hesitating manner. The political leadership of the German Empire should then have been directed exclusively to this goal. No political step should have been taken in response to other considerations than this task and the means of accomplishing it. Germany should have been alive to the fact that such a goal could have been reached only by war, and the prospect of war should have been faced with calm and collected determination.

The whole system of alliances should have been envisaged and valued from that standpoint. If new territory were to be acquired in Europe it must have been mainly at Russia's cost, and once again the new German Empire should have set out on its march along the same road as was formerly trodden by the Teutonic Knights this time to acquire soil for the German plough by means of the German sword and thus provide the nation with its daily bread...

We, National Socialists, must stick firmly to the aim that we have set for our foreign policy; namely, that the German people must be assured the territorial area which is necessary for it to exist on this earth. And only for such action as is undertaken to secure those ends can it be lawful in the eyes of God and our German posterity to allow the blood of our people to be shed once again. Before God, because we are sent into this world with the commission to struggle for our daily bread, as creatures to whom nothing is donated and who must be able to win and hold their position as lords of the earth only through their own intelligence and courage. And this justification must be established also before our German posterity, on the grounds that for each one who has shed his blood the life of a thousand others will be guaranteed to posterity. The territory on which one day our German peasants will be able to bring forth and nourish their sturdy sons will justify the blood of the sons of the peasants that has to be shed today. And the statesmen who will have decreed this sacrifice may be persecuted by their contemporaries, but posterity will absolve them from all guilt for having demanded this offering from their people.

Here I must protest as sharply as possible against those nationalist scribes who pretend that such territorial extension would be a 'violation of the sacred rights on man' and accordingly pour out their literary effusions against it. One never knows what are the hidden forces behind the activities of such persons. But it is certain that the confusion which they provoke suits the game our enemies are playing against our nation and it is in accordance with their wishes. By taking such an attitude these scribes contribute criminally to weaken from the inside and to destroy the will of our people to promote their own vital interests by the only effective means that can be used for that purpose. For no nation on earth possesses a square yard of ground and soil by decree of a higher Will and in virtue of a higher Right. The German frontiers are the outcome of chance, and are only temporary frontiers that have been established as a result of political struggles which took place at various times. The same is also true of the frontiers which demarcate the territories on which other nations live. And just as only an imbecile could look on the physical geography of the globe as fixed and unchangeable – for in reality it represents a definite stage in a given evolutionary epoch which is due to the formidable forces of Nature and may be altered tomorrow by more powerful forces of destruction and change – so, too, in the lives of nations the confines which are necessary for their sustenance are subject to change.

State frontiers are established by human beings and may be changed by human beings.

The fact that a nation has acquired an enormous territorial area is no reason why it should hold that territory perpetually. At most, the possession of such territory is a proof of the strength of the conqueror and the weakness of those who submit to him. And in this strength alone lives the right of possession. If the German people are imprisoned within an impossible territorial area and for that reason are face to face with a miserable future, this is not by the command of Destiny, and the refusal to accept such a situation is by no means a violation of Destiny's laws. For just as no Higher Power has promised more territory to other nations than to the German, so it cannot be blamed for an unjust distribution of the soil. The soil on which we can live was not a gift bestowed by Heaven on our forefathers. But they had to conquer it by risking their lives. So also in the future

our people will not obtain territory, and therewith the means of existence, as a favor from any other people, but will have to win it by the power of a triumphant sword.

Today we are all convinced of the necessity of regulating our situation in regard to France; but our success here will be ineffective in its broad results if the general aims of our foreign policy will have to stop at that. It can have significance for us only if it means to cover our flank in the struggle for that extension of territory which is necessary for the existence of our people in Europe. For colonial acquisitions will not solve that question. It can be solved only by the winning of such territory for the settlement of our people as will extend the area of the motherland and thereby will not only keep the new settlers in the closest communion with the land of their origin, but will guarantee to this territorial ensemble the advantages which arise from the fact that in their expansion over greater territory, the people remain united as a political unit...

We National Socialists have to go still further. The right to territory may become a duty when a great nation seems destined to go under unless its territory be extended. And that is particularly true when the nation in question is not some little group of negro people but the Germanic mother of all the life which has given the cultural shape of the modern world. Germany will either become a World Power or will not continue to exist at all. But in order to become a World Power it needs that territorial magnitude which gives it the necessary importance today and assures the existence of its citizens.

Therefore we National Socialists have purposely drawn a line through the line of conduct followed by pre-War Germany in foreign policy. We put an end to the perpetual Germanic march towards the South and West of Europe and turn our eyes towards the lands of the East. We finally put a stop to the colonial and trade policy of pre-War times and pass over to the territorial policy of the future.>

“Hitler actually wrote a second book that was not published during his lifetime where he expounded further on this policy of ‘Lebensraum’. The word literally means room for living for the German people. The book does not really advance his argument beyond what I have already read to you from *Mein Kampf*, however I will quote to you one small passage. ‘As much as some peoples at certain times had an interest in defining the existing territorial distribution as unalterable and binding for all future generations, because it corresponded with their interests, other peoples in such a situation were able to see only something entirely human – which at that moment was to their disadvantage and therefore must be changed using all possible applications of human strength. Anyone who wishes to permanently banish this struggle from the earth might end the fighting between men, but he would thereby also eliminate the highest driving force for their development, just as when in civic life he wishes to perpetuate forever the wealth of certain people or the size of certain businesses and would for that purpose halt the free play of market forces – competition. The result would be a catastrophe for the people.’ So there you have it straight from the mouth of a megalomaniac (Hitler dictated all his books). War is not only necessary so that expanding national populations may have the room to spread out, but also without this struggle the human race could not develop. This statement can however be taken as a confirmation of Tom’s theory in as much as Hitler specifically admits that if you

eliminate the need for territorial expansion due to population growth, you will effectively eliminate war as a perpetual human pastime.”

“For Hitler it was all about competition, and ultimately of course his conduct can be fully explained by Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’. Hitler was driven to compete and succeed. But megalomaniacs can’t get anywhere if they just keep repeating over and over ‘I want power’, ‘I want power’. They need a platform, a policy. They need some tangible reason why the people should follow them to slaughter the people and destroy the civilization of some other nation, and to be slaughtered and destroyed in their turn. As *Mein Kampf* and Hitler’s unpublished second book demonstrate, this concept of Lebensraum is the most plausible and reasonable argument that you can put forward in order to go to war. So it is undoubtedly true, what Tom says, that if we can eliminate the Lebensraum concept from human thought then there will be no more war, because megalomaniacs will no longer have the convenient hook to hang their ego on. Instead of being taken seriously, they will simply be diagnosed as mentally ill, and sent off to a sanatorium for shock therapy. Having said that, it is clear that not all wars are fought over Lebensraum. This current war in Iraq for instance. I don’t think the Bush administration has ever suggested they wanted Iraq as living space for their expanding population. But it does still get back to population in that the US is by far the greatest consumer of natural resources in the world, and so it is inevitable that they will be looking to go to war in order to exploit the natural resources of other countries. If their population ceased to grow, maybe they would become less rapacious. Although, I doubt it.”

“Tom has explained to us that all developed Western countries would in fact go into population decline, or at least their population would become static, if they adopted a policy of zero permanent immigration. You will recall that Tom was advocating a system of temporary visas where foreigners can come pay a visit for any legitimate reason (including work visas if that’s what they want), but when the visa expires they must leave, or apply for an extension of the visa. Our three wayfarers, slowly sauntering along under the Cretan sun, are in fact just about to touch on this very topic, so we will go back and listen in on their words of wisdom.”

<ATHENIAN: Anyone who wishes may come and live in the state on specified conditions. (a) There will be a community of foreigners open to anyone willing and able to join it. (b) The alien must have a skill and (c) not stay longer than twenty years from the date of registration. (d) He need pay no alien-tax on any purchase or sale. (e) When his time has expired, he is to collect his possessions and depart. (f) If during this period he has distinguished himself for some notable service to the state, and is confident he can persuade the council and the assembly to grant his request for an official extension of his stay, either temporarily or for life, he should present himself and make out his case; and he must be allowed to enjoy to the full whatever concessions the state grants him. (g) Children of resident aliens must be craftsmen, and (h) their period of residence must be deemed to have started when they reach the age of fifteen. On these conditions they may stay for twenty years, after which they must depart to whatever destination they like. If they wish to stay longer, they may do so provided they obtain permission as already specified. (i) Before a departing alien leaves he must cancel the entries that he originally made in the records kept in the custody of the officials. CLEINIAS: That’s quite right. MEGILLUS: No doubt about it.>

“You can see that Plato was essentially in agreement with Tom on this point. However if Tom was there walking along with these sages, I think he would possibly point out to the Athenian that you can’t have exceptions to a law so that some people can receive preferential treatment, and not others. Tom would no doubt have his no permanent immigration policy applying to everyone without exception. As soon as the law starts to allow some aliens to get special permission to stay permanently, that’s when you get into problems with all immigration policy. As Tom points out, there is no injustice about having a rule that aliens may come for a specific period of time, for work or for whatever reason, and when that time expires they must leave. No reasonable person should have any problem accepting that, provided they can see that this rule applies to all aliens. They can know right from the outset that there is no chance that they will be allowed to remain permanently.”

“Tom touched on the point that with such an immigration policy, the developed countries would be forced to do more to create jobs in the developing countries. Otherwise the push from the developing countries would be too great by foreigners wanting to come to work in developed countries. I think this is a good point, and I think that in fact the developed countries would have to completely rethink the whole question of providing aid to the developing countries. The current practice of lending huge sums of money to the poorer countries is based on the same capitalist rationale as the war in Iraq. In Iraq of course the capitalists first destroy the country, then they move in there and pump out the oil to pay for its reconstruction, that is to say the oil revenue finances the billion dollar contracts for the Western industrialists. Aid to developing countries is based on the same principle. The only difference is that the government of the country has to pay back the debt with interest, whereas in the Iraq situation the payment is generated from the direct sale of Iraq’s oil. The amount of the loan is used to finance billion dollar contracts for Western industrialists who provide whatever the equipment may be that the poor country supposedly can’t do without. It is the industrialists who make the profit, the government of the developing country is left with a loan to pay off with nothing to show for it. The actual poor people in the debtor country receive nothing from it. And a sizeable slab of the money leant ends up in foreign bank accounts of corrupt bureaucrats and government officials.”

“Invariably the projects that these loans are supposed to finance are of the ‘white elephant’ type, and are of no real use to the developing country. More often than not they are simply loans to finance the purchase of Western manufactured arms and weapons. There was a documentary entitled ‘Our Friends at the Bank’, which was about the World Bank lending the government of Uganda money to buy US and British made weapons. The document depicts the game that is played with corrupt Ugandan officials, expensively dressed and wearing Swiss Rolex watches, entering into these negotiations for the loan in plush offices in tall gleaming skyscrapers in Washington, D.C., and then the camera pans to the desperately poor people of Uganda, all bearing some scar or loss of limb from the violence that has ravaged that country (and those are the lucky ones who are actually still living). And now the World Bank is going to ‘aid’ this country in the form of a further debt burden in order that it may buy further weapons to continue the appalling carnage. The final destination for the money leant is back in the hands of the Western industrialists manufacturing the weapons, and so effectively the whole exercise has been to generate profit for them.”

“Let me tell you about another inspired scheme that came to my attention. This is a perfect example of how aid to developing countries works. You will all remember the so-called ‘Millennium Bug’. With the new millennium approaching an urban legend grew up that when the clocks clicked over to the year 2000 all the computer networks would shut down, and that there would be widespread chaos and disruption throughout the world. In order to save Malaysia, which is a country teetering on bankruptcy anyway, one of the international aid agencies lent the Malaysian government a half a billion dollars in order to upgrade all their computer systems throughout the country. This meant all new hardware, all new software, all new networks. Nothing was spared so that Malaysia could have state of the art technology that would withstand the devastation of the Millennium Bug. Of course all this brand new equipment and technology had to be purchased from the major Western computer hardware manufacturers and the information technology giants in Silicon Valley. This meant fabulously lucrative supply contracts for them which the Malaysian government could now pay for with all this borrowed money. So the new millennium ticked over, and everyone in Malaysia held their breath. Would the sophisticated new computer infrastructure be able to cope with the task of registering a date in the new millennium. I personally know people involved in this who spent the night in a fortified bunker with a bunch of top ranking government officials. This intrepid group was to be the emergency command center for the country should the computer systems not be up to the task. The rest you know about. Nothing happened. Nothing at all. No computers anywhere in the world registered the slightest glitch. In that bunker champagne corks were popping, and the bubbly relief was flowing freely. The only real change so far as Malaysia was concerned was that come daylight on the first day of the new millennium the government owed a further half a billion dollars which was added to its national debt. And various high-rollers in Silicon Valley were half a billion dollars richer. A most satisfactory way to start off the new millennium (for them at least).”

“The point I am trying to make, in support of Tom, is that, should the developed countries adopt a new policy of zero permanent immigration, they will be forced to actually give effective aid to the poorer countries; aid that will actually reach the poverty stricken at grass roots level, and which will hopefully, over a period of time, start to improve the overall standards of living in these poorer countries. Ultimately Tom’s vision of Utopia could only work if all the countries in the world enjoy comparable standards of living. If not, the poorer countries, where the actual population mass is continuing to grow, will resent the affluence and the isolationist policies of the wealthy countries. Resentment leads to aggression, so if the wealthy countries do nothing about giving effective aid, they will have to continue to develop weapons of mass destruction and maintain standing armies, to safeguard themselves against possible attack. As Tom quite rightly points out, no society can claim to have attained Utopia if it is still facing the possibility of military aggression from without.”

“There has to be a radical rethink about the whole notion of aid to the poorer countries. Tom has already quoted to us some of the theory of Michel Foucault. As it happens I have read his book *The Birth of the Clinic*, and I would like to suggest to you that in this book can be found the solution to our problem. A more effective way to give aid to the poor in developing countries (i.e. money that actually reaches them) is through health strategies. The World Health Organization (WHO) should be given the brief to

provide state of the art medical facilities to all the people in the world who are in poverty. A medical clinic should be built in every village, every hamlet, and of course thousands of clinics in large towns and cities.”

“In his book, Michel Foucault outlines the history of the medical profession in France in particular, and in the developing countries in general. For Foucault, however, history is not a sequence of events and dates. He is more interested in the history of ideas. The reason why I bring this up is that the same rationale advanced in the reform movement of the medical profession 200 years ago in France to provide medical care for the poor in France, can now be advanced to provide medical services for the poor in the developing countries.”

“Foucault’s theory is famous because he demonstrates that ideas throughout history actually change. And right now Western developed countries find themselves in a situation where the ideas that have been in vogue for the past 200 years have to change. Developed countries have to change their immigration policies. These policies are elitist and unjust, and the environment of all developed countries cannot tolerate further population growth. At the same time that they change their immigration policies, however, it will be necessary and appropriate for them to change their ideas concerning aid to developing countries.”

“Foucault makes the point that the way the medical profession has evolved in Western society is virtually synonymous with the development of society itself. The way the sick and needy are maintained and protected, the practice of exclusions and ostracisms, the reactions to the fear of death, the rejection or the amelioration of misery, the attempt to cure illness or let it run its natural course, speak volumes concerning the institutions, values, politics, ideals and economic advancement of a society. What has happened for developed Western society can also happen for developing countries with our help.”

“After the French Revolution there was a genuine revolutionary spirit which sought to alleviate the misery and suffering of the poor as part and parcel of the Revolution itself. From this point of view the Revolution was not a success while there was still the suffering characteristic of the Ancien Régime. In addition to this, the industrial revolution brought with it a zeal to improve the medical facilities for the poor if for no other reason than to avoid the risk of subversive movements forming amongst the lowly and dispossessed.”

“After the Revolution, Ecoles de Santé (Schools of Health) were created in 9 cities in France. But these early attempts failed for want of a new model of how to teach and practice medicine for the new society. Out of this failure however, arose the concept of the clinic. Or at least what was rediscovered was the original Greek ideas of Hippocrates dating from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. In those days the art of medicine virtually taught itself in the presence of the ailing object, and the young people learnt the science of medicine at the bedside of the patient. The clinic is the vanguard of medical knowledge which engenders an uninterrupted uniformity of medical practice throughout the centuries. It was not necessary to invent it, but simply rediscover it.”

“The clinic is only concerned with instruction, in the strict sense of the word, which is given by the doctor to his/her students. It is not itself an experience, but the condensation of earlier experience. The doctor indicates to the students the order in which the objects must be observed, so as to be better perceived and etched in the

memory. The doctor concentrates their learning by giving them the benefit of his/her own experience and knowledge.”

“At these clinics in France they had courses for doctors, surgeons and pharmacists. They took in students of good behavior, pure morals, who loved the Republic and hated tyrants, and who had some grounding in culture and had some scientific knowledge which would serve as a preliminary to the art of healing. After 3 years of attendance at the clinic, they would become officers of health (paramedics). If they went on and attended for 6 years, they would become doctors in their own right.”

“Generally it was given over to the municipalities to set up these clinics, and it is suggested that this is exactly the sort of thing that should now be done in all the villages, hamlets, towns and cities in the developing world. Set up these clinics where young people can come and be paid to train in the art of healing. It is a perfect means of injecting money into the poverty stricken areas at grass roots level. It will provide much needed employment opportunities, and these young people will not only receive an income, but will receive an education and be trained in a career. In addition to which, they will be actually given the expertise to go out and look after their own.”

“Because the money is being injected at grass roots level, the corrupt bureaucrats will not be able to get their hands on it, and with all the ancillary jobs and service contracts that the creation of these clinics would entail, the whole program cannot fail to raise living standards and literacy standards generally.”

“The Revolution in France has not ended. It ushered in a new evolutionary period for the human race. In conjunction with the industrial revolution, the developed countries led the way to a new era of prosperity. But now the numerical size of the populations of the developed countries have reached the point where they have to close their doors to immigrants from developing countries. I agree with Tom on this point.”

“Even more importantly, we are now a global village. Exactly the same reasons now apply which will force the developed countries to actually make serious efforts to alleviate the misery and suffering in the developing countries. If there remain sick people anywhere in the world, then the Revolution has not been a success. By the same token, the wealthy developed countries cannot simply close their doors and ignore the poverty and suffering in developing countries. Large groups of underprivileged people breed subversive activity. Poverty and suffering in the poor countries will not simply go away. If the developed countries were to simply ignore it, the hostility will grow like a cancer in the global corpus.”

“If you take Tom’s ideas for a Utopian economy in developed countries, and combine it with a new attitude towards giving effective aid to the developing countries, then you could very well see a gradual closing of the gap between the rich nations and the poor nations. And it could well be that as this gap started to close, the developing countries would more and more be able to convert their own economies to Tom’s Utopian principles. If this could happen then the great divide between the rich and the poor societies would tend to narrow even more rapidly. Tom’s vision where all the nations in the world are Utopian societies with a static or declining population could possibly become a reality. I say ‘possibly’ so as not to alarm anybody, because I know that for many people the prospect of a truly happy and peaceful world is the thing they dread the most.”

“Tom brought up another interesting aspect about Utopian theory with the assertion that law enforcement and surveillance would wither away. I think he imagines a society where there would still be laws, but because all the citizens are gainfully employed, and well educated, and prosperous and happy, the incidence of criminal activity would become minimal, if not insignificant. Obviously Tom is not suggesting that this ultra idealistic state would occur overnight, or indeed perhaps in the next 150 years. I think all he is suggesting is that the situation would be created where the people become less and less likely to commit crimes. I’ve got some ideas about this myself, but before I enlarge upon them, I think we should check back with our three sages on the isle of Crete. They might be weary by now, for their journey has been long, but I am sure that on the subject of the rule of law, the Athenian will have much to say.”

<ATHENIAN: What about pretending the fiction that a benevolent dictator is in control is true of your state, Cleinias, and having a shot at making up its laws? Like children, we old men love a bit of make-believe. CLEINIAS: Yes, what are we waiting for? Let’s get down to it. ATHENIAN: Let us therefore summon God to attend the foundation of the state. May he hear our prayers, and having heard, come graciously and benevolently to help us settle our state and its laws. CLEINIAS: May he come indeed. ATHENIAN: Well now, what political system do we intend to impose on the state? CLEINIAS: Please be a little more explicit about what you really mean by that question. Do you mean we have to choose between a democracy, an oligarchy, and an aristocracy? Presumably you’re hardly contemplating a dictatorship – or so we’d think, at any rate. ATHENIAN: Well then, which of you would be prepared to answer first and tell us which of these terms fits the political system of your homeland? MEGILLUS: Isn’t it right and proper for me to answer first, as the elder? CLEINIAS: Perhaps so. MEGILLUS: Very well. When I consider the political system in force at Sparta, sir, I find it impossible to give you a straight answer: I just can’t say what one ought to call it. You see, it really does look to me like a dictatorship (it has the ephors, a remarkably dictatorial institution), yet on occasions I think it gets very close to being run democratically. But then again, it would be plain silly to deny that it is an aristocracy; and there is also a kingship (held for life), which both we and the rest of the world speak of as the oldest kingship of all. So when I’m asked all of a sudden like this, the fact is, as I said, that I can’t distinguish exactly which of these political systems it belongs to. CLEINIAS: I’m sure I’m in the same predicament as you, Megillus. I find it acutely difficult to say for sure that the constitution we have in Cnossos comes into any one of these categories. ATHENIAN: And the reason, gentlemen, is this: you really do operate constitutions worthy of the name. The ones we called constitutions just now are not really that at all: they are just a number of ways of running a state, all of which involve some citizens living in subjection to others like slaves, and the state is named after the ruling class in each case. But if that’s the sort of principle on which your new state is to be named, it should be called after the god who really does rule over men who are rational enough to let him. CLEINIAS: What god is that? ATHENIAN: Well, perhaps we ought to make use of this fiction a little more, if we are going to clear up the question at issue satisfactorily. CLEINIAS: Yes, that will be the right procedure. ATHENIAN: It certainly will. Well now, countless ages before the formation of the states we described earlier, they say there existed, in the age of Cronus, a form of government and administration which was a great success, and which served as a blueprint for the best run

of our present-day states. CLEINIAS: Then I think we simply must hear about it. ATHENIAN: Yes, I agree. That's just why I introduced it into the discussion. CLEINIAS: You were quite right to do so, and seeing how relevant it is, you'll be entirely justified in giving a systematic account of what happened. ATHENIAN: I must try to meet your wishes. The traditional account that has come down to us tells of the wonderfully happy life people lived then, and how they were provided with everything in abundance and without any effort on their part. The reason is alleged to be this: Cronus was of course aware that human nature, as we've explained, is never able to take complete control of all human affairs without being filled with arrogance and injustice. Bearing this in mind, he appointed kings and rulers of our states; they were not men, but beings of a superior and more divine order – spirits. We act on the same principle nowadays in dealing with our flocks of sheep and herds of other domesticated animals: we don't put cattle in charge of cattle or goats in charge of goats, but control them ourselves, because we are a superior species. So Cronus too, who was well-disposed to man, did the same: he placed us in the care of the spirits, a superior order of beings, who were to look after our interests – an easy enough task for them, and a tremendous boon to us, because the result of their attentions was peace, respect for others, good laws, justice in full measure, and a state of happiness and harmony among the races of the world. The story has a moral for us even today, and there is a lot of truth in it: where the ruler of a state is not a god but a mortal, people have no respite from toil and misfortune. The lesson is that we should make every effort to imitate the life men are said to have led under Cronus; we should run our public and private life, our homes and our cities, in obedience to what little spark of immortality lies in us, and dignify this distribution of reason with the name of 'law'. But take an individual man or an oligarchy, or even a democracy, that lusts in its heart for pleasure and demands to have its fill of everything it wants – the perpetual unsatisfied victim of an evil greed that attacks it like the plague – well, as we said just now, if a power like that controls a state or an individual and rides roughshod over the laws, it's impossible to escape disaster. This is the doctrine we have to examine, Cleinias, and see whether we are prepared to go along with it – or what? CLEINIAS: Of course we must go along with it. ATHENIAN: You realize that some people maintain that there are as many different kinds of laws as there are of political systems? (And of course we've just run through the many types of political systems there are popularly supposed to be.) Don't think the question at issue is a triviality: it's supremely important, because in effect we've got back to arguing about the criteria of justice and injustice. These people take the line that legislation should be directed not to waging war or attaining complete virtue, but to safeguarding the interests of the established political system, whatever that is, so that it is never overthrown and remains permanently in force. They say that the definition of justice that measures up to the facts is best formulated like this. CLEINIAS: How? ATHENIAN: It runs: 'Whatever serves the interest of the stronger'. CLEINIAS: Be a little more explicit, will you? ATHENIAN: The point is this: according to them, the element in control at any given moment lays down the law of the land. Right? CLEINIAS: True enough. ATHENIAN: 'So do you imagine,' they say, 'that when a democracy has won its way to power, or some other constitution has been established (such as dictatorship), it will ever pass any laws, unless under pressure, except those designed to further its own interests and ensure that it remains permanently in power? That'll be its main preoccupation, won't it?'

CLEINIAS: Naturally. ATHENIAN: So the author of these rules will call them ‘just’ and claim that anyone who breaks them is acting ‘unjustly’, and punish him? ATHENIAN: So this is why such rules will always add up to ‘justice’. CLEINIAS: Certainly, on the present argument. ATHENIAN: We are, you see, dealing with one of those ‘claims to authority’. CLEINIAS: What claims? ATHENIAN: The ones we examined before, when we asked who should rule whom. It seemed that parents should rule children, the elder the younger, and the noble those of low birth; and there was a large number of other titles to authority, if you remember, some of which conflicted with others. The claim we’re talking about now was certainly one of these: we said, I think, that Pindar turned it into a law of nature – which meant that he ‘justified the use of force extreme’, to quote his actual words. CLEINIAS: Yes, those are the points that were made. ATHENIAN: Now look: to which side in the dispute should we entrust our state? In some cities, you see, this is the sort of thing that has happened thousands of times. CLEINIAS: What? ATHENIAN: When offices are filled competitively, the winners take over the affairs of the state so completely that they totally deny the losers and the losers’ descendants any share of power. Each side passes its time in a narrow scrutiny of the other, apprehensive lest someone with memories of past injustices should gain some office and lead a revolution. Of course, our position is that this kind of arrangement is very far from being a genuine political system; we maintain that laws which are not established for the good of the whole state are bogus laws, and when they favor particular sections of the community, their authors are not citizens but party-men; and people who say those laws have a claim to be obeyed are wasting their breath. We’ve said all this because in your new state we aren’t going to appoint men to office because of his wealth or some other claim like that, say strength or stature or birth. We insist that the highest office in the service of the gods must be allocated to the man who is best at obeying the established laws and wins *that* sort of victory in the state; the man who wins the second prize must be given the second rank in that service, and so on, the remaining posts being allocated in order on the same system. Such people are usually referred to as ‘rulers’, and if I have called them ‘servants of the laws’ it’s not because I want to mint a new expression but because I believe that the success or failure of a state hinges on this point more than on anything else. Where the law is subject to some other authority and has none of its own, the collapse of the state, in my view, is not far off; but if law is the master of the government and the government is its slave, then the situation is full of promise and men enjoy all the blessings that the gods shower on a state. That’s the way I see it. CLEINIAS: By heaven, sir, you’re quite right. You’ve the sharp eye on an old man for these things. ATHENIAN: Yes, when we’re young, we’re all pretty blind to them; old age is the best time to see them clearly. CLEINIAS: Very true.>

“Plato therefore sets up a mythical age before recorded history, the age of Cronus, where living conditions were remarkably similar to what Tom described to us in his speech earlier. Everyone is prosperous and happy, and there are no wars. According to the Athenian, the states were run by rulers with a divine spirit, and this is why they were able to hold themselves above the greed, arrogance and injustice that has been the hallmark of ruling elites in the oligarchies that we know today. Then you have the theory of Adam Smith that there is a divine purpose behind economic forces. According to him, the Invisible Hand in the economy is not only pushing us to better our material conditions, but it is actually directing us and forming out society in ways that may not be

obvious, and at times may not seem either good or desirable. At this point ruling elites are firmly established in the various States, and there appears to be no end to avarice, arrogance and injustice. The whole of recorded history appears to be little more than a long tale of woe, conflict and strife. In recent times comes *The Spirit in the Gene* by Reg Morrison where he argues that there are two fundamental genetic motivations behind human behavior, a drive towards Growth and Progress on the one hand, and a drive towards Spiritualism on the other. As the title to his book suggests, there is a Spirit in our DNA that is prodding us in these contradictory directions. The materialistic side of this Spirit has been so strong that it has pushed the human race to plague phase (exponential population growth, destruction of the environment, annihilation of the other species, over consumption of natural resources), and at the same time our spiritual nature accounts for the great religions of the world, and all sorts of extremist and irrational behavior by fundamentalist sects.”

“Those who are motivated by our materialistic urge for Growth and Progress are accusing the fundamentalist religions of being irrational and anti-social in their increasingly violent and fanatical anti-materialistic attacks on our marvelous human civilization. And yet this materialistic civilization is itself impossibly irrational in that it has brought the human race to the brink of environmental and ecological disaster, and the very real possibility that we have become marked for extinction as a plague species. You have the materialists accusing the fundamentalists of being evil because of their attacks against Western society, and you have the fundamentalists accusing the materialists of being evil because of their obsession with money and the trappings of wealth, and paying too little attention to their spiritual side.”

“Morrison therefore sets up a value system or yardstick by which all human behavior and attitude can be judged. Human activity is either evolutionary correct or evolutionary incorrect, depending on whether it is directed towards spiritual ends, or whether it is directed towards materialistic ends. From a cosmic point of view, it cannot be demonstrated that there is ‘good’ and ‘evil’. However it can quite clearly be demonstrated that there is behavior that is evolutionary correct, and on the other hand behavior that is evolutionary incorrect. According to this yardstick, therefore, the pro-growth lobby, the family values lobby, the go-forth-and-multiply lobby, although they shout from the rooftops they are ‘good’ and ‘righteous’, are in point of fact evolutionary incorrect because they are working in favor of our materialistic urges.”

“It seems to me that Plato, Adam Smith and now Reg Morrison may be all talking about one and the same thing. This divine character Cronos, the Invisible Hand, and the Spirit in our DNA are one and the same. If this is correct it means that our genes are not just a mindless biological substance from which protein is synthesized as the building blocks of our cells. That there is actually a divine intelligence in our genes which is directing all life on this planet. It is not just directing human civilization, but the lives and behavior of all species. Evolution is itself divinely directed from within. If this is correct, it is not really appropriate to talk about the Spirit in our genes. Our genes are in fact in the nature of an intelligence, and therefore DNA *is* the Spirit. There is an obvious analogy to be drawn here with the Hindu Inner Self. But it matters not what you call it – Cronos, Invisible Hand, Spirit in the Gene, Inner Self or God. The point is that it is divine, and that we are created and we are acting according to its rules.”

“The implications of this finding for moral philosophy, and our obligations to obey the law are immense. However, the hour is very late, and if I attempted to engage in any long winded discussion on all the various schools of thought and religions, I would most certainly send half of you off to sleep. I just want to touch briefly on one line of thought that has already come very close to providing the answer. I recently read a book entitled *What is Man?* which was co-authored by Luc Ferry, the Minister for Education in France, and Jean-Didier Vincent, a noted neurobiologist and philosopher. In this book Luc Ferry discusses the evolutionist ethic which has been championed by Michael Ruse, a colleague of E.O. Wilson with his Sociobiology. The central theme of all evolutionist ethics is that human morals are a product of evolution. All human sociable characteristics are determined by evolutionist ethics, and in particular morality (a sense of right and wrong, as well as obligations) has to be explained in these terms. Michael Ruse had proposed two principle groupings of our moral makeup, a ‘normative ethic’ and a ‘meta-ethic’. The normative ethic corresponds to the actual content of evolutionist ethics – to protect nature, to practice goodwill and solidarity rather than hostility and warfare, to work towards the common good as much as possible as well as social harmony and fostering equality, to avoid violence as a means of solving disputes etc. Then there is the meta-ethic which is said to resolve the ultimate question about all normative philosophy, namely what gives the right to authorize one course of conduct as being good, and prohibit another course of conduct as bad. Why, for example, should we promote the well being of the entire human race, rather than the inverse if that happens to be to our own self-interest. Why choose the politics of liberty and equality, if I can reap more personal benefits in a world where inequality reigns supreme. Why choose peace, when more profit can be had from a successful war? Meta-ethics deals with the legitimacy or justification for the content of the normative ethics.”

“Luc Ferry sets about to criticize the logic of this evolutionist ethic. The principle thesis of the normative ethic of evolutionist flavor is that altruism would have been selected in the natural history of our species. He accepts that Michael Ruse had taken the precaution of distinguishing, at least in the early stages, two forms of altruism: a biological altruism and an ethical altruism. The former does not entail any conception of moral values. It is, one could say, guided purely and simply by instinct, or natural urges. In order to explain how a worker ant, for example, devotes itself to bringing food to the lava or to the queen, it is certainly not necessary to suppose that it is acquainted with knowledge of the Evangelist or of *The Critique of Practical Reason* of Immanuel Kant. Everything leads us to believe on the contrary that it performs this act of devotion without reflection, instinctively, because it is the natural law of its species. Objectively however, its behavior is none the less, in an analogical sense, ‘altruistic’. An ethical altruism, on the other hand, presupposes, as one sees for example in the charitable acts of a Mother Theresa, that the individual has consciously chosen certain values as a guide to action. What the evolutionist ethic fundamentally affirms is these two things: firstly, that these two forms of altruism are not as far apart as they may appear at first sight. Because notwithstanding the ideology of sacrificial devotion of Mother Theresa, it proves to be in the final analysis, totally useful for the survival of a species, which in the absence of such cooperation, would have undoubtedly already disappeared. To make us biologically altruistic, nature has provided us with thoughts that are literally altruistic. We have innate dispositions, not simply to be social, but also to be authentically moral. The

morality is not therefore simply nature's ruse, a means that it utilizes in order to ensure our survival. Whence comes the second affirmation: altruistic morals would ultimately have been selected by evolution, as a form amongst others of successful adaptation."

"Ruse asserts that his propositions concerning altruism are based in empirical reality, and have nothing to do with abstract speculation. In other words he seeks to instill in his readers the idea that this new morality would have in some fashion, if not an actual foundation, at least a scientific legitimacy. Luc Ferry takes objection to this proposition. He states that it certainly does not prove, at the end of this millennium (when the book was published), that altruism has been selected by history. If Ruse was not actually living the life of a university professor in a country that is itself highly pacifist (Ruse actually lives in the United States!), but instead Ruse had been an unfortunate Tutsi during the recent massacres perpetrated in Rwanda, it would have been quite simply impossible for him to sustain such a thesis. Luc Ferry feels that these affirmations by Ruse are biased, and are therefore questionable. In effect Ferry dismisses his assertions as being 'romantic' and naïve, when, for example, Ruse says that even only two or three decades ago, the general belief was that nature is little more than a bloody battle for existence, the fierce reign of claw and tooth. However one must now recognize how profoundly a social behavior permeates the organic world, and that this phenomenon is explicable with good reason. In nature one often obtains much more by cooperation, than by conflict. Balderdash! Says Luc Ferry."

"The best that you can say about Ruse's propositions, according to Ferry, is that they don't negate the idea that an altruistic morality and pacifist politics are, not a product of nature, but rather a slow, difficult and uncertain victory by the democratic culture over nature which, external to us as well as internal to us, has virtually nothing which is *a priori* altruistic. When one looks at the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with its unbelievable amount of genocides, wars and massacres, one certainly can't peremptorily cut short this debate in favor of a naturalistic optimism that has scientific legitimacy."

"These evolutionist ethics hit another stumbling block which to the eyes of Luc Ferry, are even more difficult to explain away. If altruism had really been selected by the natural history of our species, how do you interpret the ethical conflicts, those that Max Weber called 'the war of the Gods', in evolutionary terms, in as much as they can occur in the same epoch, and can erupt in the heart of the same community. How do you explain, for example, as was sometimes the case in reality, that one family member chooses to be pacifist, nonviolent, while another joins the Resistance, and a third supports the collaboration? One can be Zen Buddhist, the second a partisan republican in favor of equality, and the third a national socialist espousing the Nazi values of warfare and hierarchy: is it possible to say seriously that these ethical differences are linked to the history of evolution? And how can you maintain that they have no influence on the dispersion of altruism. There are serious reasons to think that right and wrong, or altruism and its opposite, are options permanently open to human beings, which could not be the case if evolution had really selected the one over the other, the position taken by evolutionist ethics. Even if, for the sake of argument, you accept that globally speaking, evolution is leading us towards moral altruism (and disregard all the catastrophes of humanity that have so heavily pockmarked the 20<sup>th</sup> century), it is still only a question of a factual observation that the ethical evolutionists are making, and it is still not in the nature of a normative value that induces us towards altruism as a prescription. And in

any event, why should we choose it as a sort of prescription, if it had really been selected by evolution anyway?"

"Nor does Luc Ferry agree that the meta-ethic proposed by Michael Ruse delivers the foundation claimed of it as being empirically based in scientific knowledge. In effect this evolutionist meta-ethic does not adequately resolve the problem introduced by Hume back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. From the simple consideration of what *is*, it is impossible to infer what *should be*. Even if the evolutionist ethic was able to demonstrate scientifically that altruism has been selected by our natural history, and has developed for us this evolutionist normative ethic, that still does not resolve Hume's point that we don't have to infer from that a moral obligation on us to obey these norms or values. We still have the choice not to follow the norm, and no-one has the right to tell us it is bad or evil. Even if, for example, medical science has determined in a totally convincing fashion that the consumption of tobacco will have a negative impact on our health (which is the case), it still has to resort to an intermediate consideration to draw the necessary prescriptive conclusion. It is necessary in effect that we have to give some value to good health in order for the results of scientific research to generate a *Thou must not*. It goes without saying that this is practically always what occurs with normative prescriptions. This is so evident that it makes us forget that in truth it is always *the subjectivity* (an 'I' or a 'we') that decides in the last instance whether to value or to devalue such and such an attitude. In the absence of such a subjective decision, the imperative that one claims to draw from science always remain hypothetical, because they can never get out of the framework of a formulation of the type: 'If you don't want to have health problems, *then* give up smoking'. But when it's all said and done, it remains possible, at least in this kind of prescription concerning the well-being of the individual, to have other values than the preservation of oneself, and to prefer for example a short happy life over a long and dull one."

"Hume's argument has to be considered for any project involving a scientific foundation for ethics: to affirm that contemporary science teaches us that altruism would have been selected by evolution, admitting even that it is true, in no way legitimizes it from the point of view of morality. One could, for example, observe the fact in question (on admitting always that it is one), and deplore it in the name of different value systems, or further, more simply and more logically, draw from it a completely neutral conclusion, without any pretension to normative morality of the following type: the human beings are a species that found it necessary to have recourse to solidarity to survive. That necessity, vital for them, gives them the illusion that it is a question of 'normative morality', and of 'good' and 'evil', whereas in truth it is simply a question of utility and inutility, of life or death. What they take for high and noble morals does not in reality have more normative value than no matter what mode of adaptation by squid, elephants or toads."

"To the question why does one have to favor the well-being of the human species, here the response of the theoretician of evolutionist ethics is simply that one *has a duty* to do it because man is the product of evolution, and on the basis that we are a product of evolution, it is a *good thing* to do it. Luc Ferry underscores his response – magnificent tautology! Any reader of good faith will detect a significant shift: why talk of 'duty' and of 'good thing' if it is a question of a necessity or a fact? If evolution had really selected altruism, why *must* the practice of altruism be represented as an imperative? It would be an instinctive behavior, common to all the normal members of

the same species, and that's that, and the morality of human beings would resemble in every respect the habits of animals. Luc Ferry provides his own response to the question why does one have to favor the well-being of the human species. He says simply because altruistic behavior has been or will be soon definitely selected by evolution because the survival of that particular species of living beings that are human is better assured that way than otherwise. Period."

"What is singular about the evolutionist ethic as per Michael Ruse is that he is perfectly aware of the difficulties. As he admits himself with laudable honesty, to the question of the justification of norms: <in fact, I have nothing at all to offer – at the meta-ethic level we are heading towards the idea that the normative ethic has no foundation>. One could think that it is not grave that a morality without foundation is possible, that norms and values can still subsist as such even if they are not well founded. But Ruse here is more rigorous than most of his materialist colleagues. He perfectly understands that in the absence of justification, the norms become illusory. A real illusion, certainly, and necessary for the survival of the species, but an illusion nonetheless in the sense that we should be convinced that what we take for the good is objectively the good, and doesn't simply involve an unpredictable adaptation amongst other possible outcomes. As Ruse very well sees it, <the essential for morality, understood as normative morals, is that it can only function on the condition that we have an absolute belief in it>. Yet evolutionism, explicitly this illusion of the genes: <Just as soon as one sees that the normative ethic is simply an adaptation put into place by natural selection to make us social beings, one can see as well all the naivety involved in thinking that morality (that is to say normative morality) possesses a foundation. Morality is rather a collective illusion of the genes, put into place to render us altruistic. Morality as such has no stature more justificatory than no matter what adaptation such as our eyes, our hands or our teeth. It is simply something that has biological value, and nothing more. Nothing less as well, evidently.> Ruse therefore has to concede that the ultimate conclusion of his evolutionism is ethical skepticism: <We think that the norms of ethics are true objectively because our biology makes us think very precisely that. But from what our biology makes us precisely think, we can not deduce that it is truly so.>"

"The problem, unfortunately, is that morality wants to be intrinsically normative – in which it finds itself, according to evolutionism and more generally for coherent materialism, in the grip of an illusion. (Ferry defines materialism as the position that consists of postulating that mental life is both *produced* and *determined* by matter, i.e. by nature and history). One can say anew that it is of little consequence, that the essential is that this normative illusion is real, that it works. All very well: but from which point of view will the essential be satisfied? From the survival of the species? But in what way is that survival more 'moral' than the contrary? That our survival is more useful for us Luc Ferry concedes willingly, but since when have we become so stupid as to confuse utility with morality? Take for example homosexuality, occurring generally throughout the species, this would no doubt be harmful because it could possibly result in our species dying out: in what way would that be a moral objection against homosexuals? And inversely, does there not exist an infinite number of behaviors that the individual can judge subjectively to be useful, and which have nothing whatsoever to do with morality?"

"All this, Ruse seems to be aware of, but he doesn't dare draw frankly all the conclusions from the fundamental assertion according to which morality is only a fact

amongst others, and nothing more. The same reticence is to be found in him when it comes to evoking the question of determinism, and for the same reasons: everything leads evolutionist ethics to the conclusion that we are what biology has made of us, and therefore thoroughly determined, even in our apparent margins of liberty, by nature and our history. But to concede that is discomfiting, because it is contrary to all our best felt 'intuitions'. Whence comes the necessity, here as well, of an ambiguous discourse..."

"Ferry gives a glaring example touching the central theme of altruism. Sometimes Ruse affirms that the distinction between 'biological altruism' and 'ethical altruism' is crucial, which tends to lead us into thinking that we human beings can, as distinct from the animals, choose certain values rather than others independently of their biological nature. At other times on the contrary, he does not hesitate to merge the second altruism into the first. Why? Because truth be known, his point of departure is the naturalist and materialist conviction that evolution has made of us these physical creatures determined just as we are, like it has made us social beings determined just as we are, and that there has clearly been a retroaction between these two evolutions – which in truth has resulted in the emergence of one only. Because more and more specialists in the social sciences and in biology are unearthing solid proofs suggesting that humans are strongly motivated by biological tendencies of which the field extends right up to sociality. Which is why, in evoking the 'social contract' in his normative evolutionist ethics, Ruse can calmly declare that it is not really a question of a contract freely entered into, but is rather a contract that is imposed upon us by our genes. We are in this moral situation because, given our condition as a species, our lot is better this way than if we had tried to struggle on all alone. It is readily accepted that Ruse, like all intelligent materialists, insists on the fact that this naturalistic determinism must not be conceived as tight and rigid: there is a margin of indetermination in human conduct. And then he is forced immediately to add that this margin is itself provided for and determined by nature herself."

"Luc Ferry asks us to understand him well. He does not in any way deny the right of anyone to adopt a materialistic and deterministic philosophy. He simply wishes to make the point that one can not have one's cake and eat it, and it is necessary to be aware of the fact that, if you want to be a logically consistent materialist, this philosophical position is on the one hand incompatible with the idea of a non-illusory normative ethic, and on the other hand that determinism is in no way a *scientific* position, but rather a metaphysical concept, and as such remains contestable."

"I have presented this small excerpt from Luc Ferry's book because it presents the essential enigma that science and philosophy are attempting to resolve – to what extent is our social behavior and our value systems determined by our genes. Neither discipline can provide any definitive answer and so the debate rages back and forth. The literature on this topic is vast and I can not even hope to cover it here tonight. So I will attempt to limit myself to the principle points made by Luc Ferry. If there is a divine intelligence in our DNA that has set up all life on this planet then it becomes readily apparent that it is responsible for all our behavior, both good and bad, violent and pacifist, social and anti-social, altruistic and non-altruistic. And this is what has caused our normative ethics to evolve in the way they have. The divine intelligence is at one and the same time creating the behavior and is instilling in us an awareness of the appropriateness or the utility of this behavior. The normative evolutionist ethics that Luc

Ferry denounces as illusory, are not therefore illusory at all. They are in effect divinely decreed prohibitions, exactly as they claim to be. Through them the divine intelligence is molding us into beings which are forever evolving towards the good. In order for us to be conscious of this development, it becomes necessary for us to know what behavior is the opposite of good, that is to say behavior that is bad or evil. So in answer to Luc Ferry, in any situation where we are confronted with the possibility of acting in an altruistic or a non-altruistic way, whichever way we choose to go, we have made a moral choice. This is not simply a question of choosing altruism because of its utility as tending to ensure the survival of the species. To do an altruistic act is to do a good act as determined by the normative value system instilled in us by the divine intelligence in our genes.”

“In the same way, as Reg Morrison asserts in *The Spirit in the Gene*, the divine intelligence in our DNA has set up in us this dichotomy between a materialistic drive towards Growth and Progress and a spiritualistic drive towards metaphysical goals and abstract values. It would not be that difficult to account for all human behavior in terms of these two contradictory drives. It is the materialistic drive which has driven the human race to plague phase, and it is the spiritualistic drive which has engendered in us an awareness of the divine, and has created the normative value that an obsessive accumulation of material wealth is bad. Again in answer to Luc Ferry, we find that there is not just a divine intelligence in our DNA which is causing us to evolve with these contradictions, that we actually have to look upon our DNA as evolution itself. There is *only* evolution. And nothing else. So if we find ourselves in plague phase where the future of our species is actually in doubt, it follows that any behavior that tends to lessen or ameliorate our plague condition is morally correct behavior. Not just evolutionary correct, but *morally* correct. We are not expected to choose this behavior for its utility, as tending to ensure the survival of the species, we are expected to choose it because it is morally wrong to do anything that could put the divine process of evolution in jeopardy.”

“The main issue with morality is how do you determine *objectively* right from wrong. Most religions lay it down that God has declared such and such a conduct to be right or wrong and it is our duty to obey these commandments. But once you accept that the divine intelligence is within us, directing our every thought and action, there is no longer the requirement for morality to be objective. It is actually impossible as a matter of logic for it to be. Morality becomes the code of conduct that evolves in the spiritual side of our nature which enables us to appreciate goodness, and to abstain from its opposite. The divine intelligence is in all DNA so evidently every conception of good in every religion practised by mankind has this divinely inspired moral element. What we have to accept therefore is that there is a moral order, and that it includes everybody’s version of good, where the notion of what is good is itself caught up in the evolutionary process. It is not us that is evolving, it is the divine intelligence in our genes that is evolving through us.”

“The materialistic drive that comes from our genes is responsible for all the economic activity of the human race. When Adam Smith talks of an Invisible Hand in the economy that is directing our social behavior and our value systems, he is obviously talking about this divine intelligence which is our DNA. According to Smith the Invisible Hand is always pushing us on to better our condition materially, and as it is creating our value systems as well, then it must be the Invisible Hand that is responsible

for our innate conviction that an obsessive preoccupation with wealth is bad or evil. So if the ultimate phase of economic activity is this Utopian economy that Tom outlined to us in his speech earlier tonight, it could very well be the case that the Invisible Hand really does intend for the human race to live in a society that is continually perfecting itself both in terms of our overall material condition, but also in terms of our social interactions and behavior. Tom believes that, if we switch to a Utopian economy, over a gradual period of time many of our social problems will reduce, and even that there will come a time when there is no longer any warfare as between nations. It is not readily apparent why there should be less incidence of crime and violence simply because there is prosperity everywhere throughout the land, but once we appreciate that our DNA is a divine intelligence that is directing us towards the good, then Tom's claims for a Utopian society have to be more than idle fantasy. I guess ultimately it gets down to a leap of faith."

"Thank you for hearing me out."

Mervyn went back to his table and sat down. There was some frenetic applause for a few moments, then Bruce arrived back at the podium in a high state of jubilation. He was doing a weird jig from one foot to the other, and he was tenaciously tearing at a tassel of hair on his right temple as he spoke.

"I have had this conviction for a long while that the DNA is divine," Bruce shouted over the applause. "Then some time ago I was in Paris, and I went to some lectures at the Institut Catholique de Paris. The lectures were on the *The Metaphysical Concept of Production* in Heidegger's interpretation of Plato. They were given by Professor Stanley Rosen who is a world-renowned expert on Heidegger and a classics scholar. Well the prof in his lectures came up with this observation that the famous cave analogy in Plato's *Republic* is a reference to a substratum. I was astounded by this for I had never before seen anyone refer to Plato's cave as a substratum. But once Prof Rosen pointed it out, it became immediately apparent to me that Plato must be talking about the divine intelligence in our DNA. That the cave analogy is a reference to the nucleus of the living cell, where the human genome is located. Let me just read you one or two passages from the *Republic* and you will see what I mean."

<'Next, then,' I said, 'take the following parable of education and ignorance as a picture of the condition of our nature. Imagine mankind as dwelling in an underground cave with a long entrance open to the light across the whole width of the cave; in this they have been from childhood, with necks and legs fettered, so they have to stay where they are. They cannot move their heads round because of the fetters, and they can only look forward, but light comes to them from the fire burning behind them higher up at a distance. Between the fire and the prisoners is a road above their level, and along it imagine a low wall has been built, as puppet showmen have screens in front of their people over which they work their puppets.'

'I see,' he said.

'See, then, bearers carrying along this wall all sorts of articles which they hold projecting above the wall, statutes of men and other living things, made of stone or wood and all kinds of stuff, some of the bearers speaking and some silent, as you might expect.'

'What a remarkable image,' he said, 'and what remarkable prisoners!'

‘Just like ourselves,’ I said. ‘For, first of all, tell me this: What do you think such people would have seen of themselves and each other except their shadows, which the fire cast on the opposite wall of the cave?’

‘I don’t see how they could see anything else,’ said he, ‘if they were compelled to keep their heads unmoving all their lives!’

‘Very well, what of the things being carried along? Would not this be the same?’

‘Of course it would.’

‘Suppose the prisoners were able to walk together, don’t you think that when they named the shadows which they saw passing they would believe they were naming things?’

‘Necessarily.’

‘Then if their prison had an echo from the opposite wall, whenever one of the passing bearers uttered a sound, would they not suppose that the passing shadow must be making the sound? Don’t you think so?’

‘Indeed I do,’ he said.

‘If so,’ said I, ‘such persons would certainly believe that there were no realities except those shadows of handmade things.’

‘So it must be,’ said he.

‘Now consider,’ said I, ‘what their releases would be like, and their cure from these fetters and their folly; let us imagine whether it might naturally be something like this. One might be released, and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck around, and to walk and look towards the firelight; all this would hurt him, and he would be too much dazzled to see distinctly those things whose shadows he had seen before. What do you think he would say, if someone told him that what he saw before was foolery, but now he saw more rightly, being a bit nearer reality and turned towards what was a little more real? What if we were shown each of the passing things, and compelled by questions to answer what each one was? Don’t you think he would be puzzled, and believe what he saw before was more true than what was shown to him now?’

‘Far more,’ he said.

‘Then suppose he were compelled to look towards the real light, it would hurt his eyes, and he would escape by turning them away to the things which he was able to look at, and these he would believe to be clearer than what was being shown to him.’

‘Just so,’ said he.

‘Suppose, now,’ said I, ‘that someone should drag him thence by force, up the rough ascent, the steep way up, and never stop until he could drag him out into the light of the sun, would he not be distressed and furious at being dragged; and when he came into the light, the brilliance would fill his eyes and he would not be able to see even one of the things now called real?’

‘That he would not,’ said he, ‘all of a sudden.’

‘He would have to get used to it, surely, I think, if he is to see the things above. First he would most easily look at shadows, after that images of mankind and the rest in water, lastly the things in themselves. After this he would find it easier to survey by night the heavens themselves and all that is in them, gazing at the light of the stars and moon, rather than by day the sun and the sun’s light.’

‘Of course.’

‘Last of all, I suppose, the sun; he could look on the sun itself by itself in its own place, and see what it is like, not reflections of it in the water or as it appears in some alien setting.’

‘Necessarily,’ said he.

‘And only after all this he might reason about it, how this is he who provides seasons and years, and is set over all there is in the visible region, and he is in a manner the cause of all things which they saw.’

‘Yes, it is clear,’ said he, ‘that after all that, he would come to this last.’

‘Very good. Let him be reminded of his first habitation, and what was wisdom in that place, and of his fellow-prisoners there; don’t you think he would bless himself for the change, and pity them?’

‘Yes, indeed.’

‘Then again,’ I said, ‘just consider; if such a one should go down again and sit on his old seat, would he not get his eyes full of darkness coming in suddenly out of the sun?’

‘Very much so,’ said he.

‘And if he should have to compete with those who had been always prisoners, by laying down the law about those shadows while he was blinking before his eyes were settled down – and it would take a good long time to get used to things – wouldn’t they all laugh at him and say he had spoiled his eyesight by going up there, and that it was not worthwhile so much as to try to go up? And would they not kill anyone who tried to release them and take them up, if they could somehow lay hands on him and kill him?’

‘That they would!’ said he.

‘Then we must apply this image, my dear Glaucon,’ said I, ‘to all we have been saying. The world of our sight is like the habitation in prison, the firelight there to be the sunlight here, the ascent and the view of the upper world is the rising of the soul into the world of mind; put it so and you will not be far from my own surmise, since that is what you want to hear; but God knows if it is really true. At least, what appears to me is, that in the world of the known, last of all, is the idea of the good, and with what toil to be seen! And seen, this must be inferred to be the cause of all right and beautiful things for all, which gives birth to light and the king of light in the world of sight, and, in the world of mind, herself the queen produces truth and reason; and she must be seen by one who is to act with reason publicly or privately.’>

“There is in this passage a fairly clear allegory of something going on down below in the cave that sets up reality as we know it, and that we should not be fooled by the world of appearances into believing that what we see is actually real. Heidegger, however, had apparently accused Plato of being unconscious of the true significance of his own words. Prof Rosen went on in his lectures to enlarge on the Platonic theory of artifacts, and he informed us amongst other things that the theory could essentially be encapsulated in the statement that ‘the cow exists because of the idea of a cow’. The good professor asked us what we should make of this statement. And he then said that Plato could not be referring to the DNA because obviously DNA is not ‘ideas’. When the lecture was over I took issue with him on this. I told the prof that he had made a fundamental error when he said that DNA is not ideas. Ideas are in fact intelligence. And DNA is in its nature nothing but intelligence. The intelligence of a computer comes

from its software, and the DNA is very evidently the software that is responsible for the workings of the brain. When Plato says that the cow exists because of the idea of a cow, he is clearly referring to the divine intelligence in the DNA which sets up all life. I then became a little melodramatic and I told the good professor that I wanted to make the same complaint against him that Heidegger had made about Plato – that he was completely unconscious of the true significance of his own words.”

“I am going to rename Plato’s Cave to Zeus’ Cave. The writings of Plato is divine text. Our DNA is the divine intelligence. It resides in the nucleus of all living cells and it sets up all life. It’s not right to call it Plato’s Cave because it’s not really his cave at all. It’s the cave where God resides. It is Zeus himself who is in our DNA. The nucleus of the living cell is Zeus’ Cave. At last God has revealed himself to us. If it hadn’t been for Prof Rosen I never would have known that Plato is a divine text. You see I knew that Eastern religion was quite clear that God resided in the substratum, and I knew that in Quantum Physics there is a substratum beneath the physical world. The one missing piece in the jigsaw puzzle was Western philosophy and religion. How could it be that there was no substratum in Western philosophy and religion. Even Freud didn’t pick the fact that Plato’s Cave is a substratum. If anyone in the West was going to tip to it, you would think that Freud would. But he didn’t. And then Prof Rosen comes up with this wonderful statement. And he said it so matter of fact. He had no idea himself about the true importance of that statement. All the jigsaw puzzle just fell into place right before my eyes. God, through Plato, had told the West right from the start that he is in the substratum. All these millennia the West simply misinterpreted Plato.”

Bruce kept on jabbering excitedly in this vein, and he was starting to ramble. I had heard enough, so I decided to leave. It had been a very long night. Plato’s Cave is actually a cellar, and when I walked up the stairs and threw open the door, my eyes were dazzled by the brightness of a new day. Everything seemed to be luminescent, even the trashcans, and the iron grates in the curb, and the manholes in the pavement. The black asphalt of the roads seemed to be reflecting the bright sunlight and had taken on a golden hue. I said to myself that I had better go home and write all this down while I can still remember it.