

RUNNYMEDE GAZETTE

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EDITORIAL

MULTICULTURE OR MONOCULTURE?

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MULTICULTURE OR MONOCULTURE?

THE KALERGIST AGENDA

The editorial on Coudenhove-Kalergi in the February edition was (intentionally) an instalment of a work in progress. Kalergi, and his latter-day acolytes, raise all manner of difficult, interlocking questions, none of which can be addressed with any brevity.

His super-elitism requires little further comment (unless anyone wishes to initiate such a debate at this time?). For the moment, at least, I will also leave aside his eugenic ideas, his naked contempt for ordinary people and their cultures, and his notion of a new ruling 'aristocracy' constructed from the natural hereditary aristocracy of Europe combined with what he terms the Jewish 'spiritual aristocracy'. Again, those are perhaps a matters for another time.

Two of his ideas are more pressing. Firstly, in the context of the plebiscite over the European Union, is his vision of a world governed by five or six continental mega-states. As regards that matter I offer only the following comments.

I have said before that the self-serving mythology of the EU ... little of which stands up to close scrutiny ... often, like the fakir's cobra, has the capacity to hypnotise many intelligent, politically aware and well-intentioned people. So some forbearance might be needed for those who have become thus mesmerised by the 'European Project'.

All that said, those that have fallen under this spell and who advocate governance by supranational oligarchy ... some leading luminaries of the Green Party are typical (including a good volume of starry-eyed rhetoric views of some wondrous, perfect European Union which go way beyond the delusional) ... whilst almost in the same breath have the sheer nerve and effrontery to be heard yapping about 'localism', 'democracy' and 'empowerment'. The Kalergist agenda is the absolute antithesis of any of those.

Second is Kalergi's view that the human race of the future, starting with Europe, will become a single homogeneous, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic monolith.

One of the most vociferous contemporary Kalergists is Peter Sutherland, UN Special Representative for International Migration. His remaining CV places him at the pinnacle of the global super-elite ... former Irish Attorney General, Chairman of BP, EU Commissioner, Founding Director of the World Trade Organisation, former Chairman of

Goldman Sachs, and a seriously big wheel in Bilderberg and the Trilateral Commission.

The Patrick Wood item fills in some more about Sutherland and his views on international mass migration.

Some might be tempted to describe the Wood article as 'racist', because to be opposed to mass migration or so-called 'multiculturalism' seems now to be defined as 'racist'. Indeed in many quarters of the so-called 'progressive' chattering classes questions as to who or what is or is not a 'racist' has reached a form of obsessive mass hysteria taken beyond fever pitch.

Political labels exist to mislead and to bamboozle. There is every likelihood that any claim to be 'democratic', 'inclusive', 'just', 'secure', 'non-judgemental', 'egalitarian', 'sustainable', 'diverse' ... the list goes on ... will turn out to be the exact inverse. No statement or label in politics can be verified until it has been held up to the mirror.

So it is with 'multiculturalism'. The idea is superficially laudable ... that by churning vast numbers of people of radically different cultural, ethnic, religious backgrounds together into some huge alphabet soup we create understanding and harmony.

But so often the laudable objective acts as the Trojan Horse for deeper agendas. The constituents of a soup ... the herbs, vegetables, meats do not retain their individual flavours. They all combine to create a completely new flavour.

Thus when Kalergists talk of 'multiculturalism', 'diversity' and so forth, the ultimate intention is the precise opposite ... to construct a global monoculture, and, in doing so, to engage in cultural, ethnic and eugenic engineering on a stupendous scale.

In former times migration was a slow, evolutionary process. For example, since before Roman times a small trickle of immigrants from the African continent have been arriving on these shores. Since then we have seen Danes, Normans, Huguenots and Jews. But in all of these cases the numbers have been tiny compared to the resident population, and arrivals often spread over decades. Now we can expect the inward migration of the entire second millennium on the space of a couple of years.

It is all very well for Sutherland and his fellow Kalergists to claim that European states 'need' immigration because of their own declining birth rates. Aside from the question this raises of unending exponential growth (important, but not in the remit of this editorial), the outcome of migration on its present scale means that states such as Sweden, Germany, Britain and Holland will, after a couple of generations, cease to be culturally and ethnically Sweden, Germany, Britain and Holland.

But such a destruction of human diversity, identity and individuality is exactly the point of the Kalergist programme. It must be remembered that the prime objective of globalists such as Sutherland is to construct an entirely uniform, homogenous world where agriculture will be a chemical prairie stretching from Sydney to Stockholm, cash will be history, and biometric mass surveillance ubiquitous.

WHAT IS A RACIST?

The term is often bandied around like some mud pie slinging contest but seldom defined with even a modicum of precision. I will fill that gap with a definition.

In my view there are three types of racist. Firstly, the Supremacist who believes there is an inherent biologically determined superiority in a particular ethnic, national or cultural community. Secondly, the Manichean who believes that a particular community harbours some evil or occult power (sometimes this concept extends to economic or sexual factors), which can be turned against the host community. Thirdly,

there is the snob.

That might be a good common sense definition. But in the last two or three decades, a fourth definition has arisen ... that a 'racist' is a person who is not a fully committed, signed up adherent to the Kalergist programme and who believes in the destruction of human cultures and ethnicities in general, and their own in particular.

THE NEW 'WORLD-PERSON'

Again the argument is that if we can generate some new breed of globalised world-person, with no roots, allegiance or identity, human conflict will be eliminated.

Any home Derby between Arsenal and Spurs or Sunderland against Newcastle might aver the contrary. More to the point, multi-ethnic entities ... Rwanda, former Yugoslavia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the partition of the Indian sub-continent, Southern Sudan, the Soviet Union, Burma, Iraq ... the list is a long one ... tend to disintegrate bloodily. The track record is worryingly bad.

There are further snags. By my common sense definition, probably only 10% of people in this modern era are truly racist. But Kalergist definition, on the other hand, implies that merely by demonstrating a natural preference for one's own kith and kin, or of a desire for an exclusive space which they can call 'home', defines a person as a 'racist'. By that token probably 90% of the human race are still 'racists'.

Furthermore an individual with no sense of identity ... of roots, clan, tribe, nation, call it what you will ... of *belonging*, is as close as makes no difference to a definition of a psychopath. So in order to eliminate psychopathic behaviour we have to create a new breed of psychopaths! At that point the argument turns full circle.

For sure, apropos of John Kozy's item on the 'stupidity of belief' there is a certain absurdity to the fragmentation of the human race into such a vast number of tribes.

But is this not a genuine diversity to be treasured and nurtured? Might this not be a mirror reflection of the deeper natural diversity of the planet (which the globalists are also intent to destroy)? Could it be that the world has simply got too big, too fast and too overwhelming, that the amount of stuff and people being shunted to and fro across the planet every day has gone beyond even madness? Could it be that a slower, calmer, less mobile world, might also be a more convivial one?

And of course there is always the question of mandate. As so often, the Kalergist programme has been foisted by a self-appointed elite, with the question unasked and unanswered. Any comments or arguments will be more than welcome.

Readers will note that this edition of the *Runnymede Gazette* is a little shorter than normal. This is because the European Plebiscite material, of which there is ... understandably ... a considerable mass, will feature in two, possibly three, special editions between now and polling day.

Frank Taylor

FOSTERING COMPLIANCE AND OBEDIENCE: THE CONSEQUENCE OF MASS SURVEILLANCE

Press For Truth; via Critical Thinking

It wasn't until the Edward Snowden leaks in 2013, that the world finally had a confirmation about the mass surveillance that the United States was conducting. Thanks to the leaked revelations, the public finally got a glimpse into the inner-workings of the world's most impressive spying apparatus. Although we were told that the spying was needed and was established in order to catch terror plots, we find that the mass NSA phishing expedition has failed quite miserably at achieving its intended goal. However, it has worked effectively in another chilling manner and that is by way of silencing minority opinions.

According to a recent study which was published in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, it was found that knowledge of government surveillance has the ability to cause people to self-censor their dissenting opinions online. The study demonstrates the silencing effect of mass surveillance, also referred to as the "spiral of silence" which is a phenomenon where people suppress unpopular opinions in order to fit in and avoid social isolation.

There are many people around these days who are willing to regurgitate the argument that "you don't need privacy unless you've got something to hide," but those people take a self-deprecating stance and ignore the damage that can be inflicted from mass indiscriminate surveillance systems. Those who say that privacy doesn't matter, don't actually believe that line of thinking when it comes to their own lives. They themselves surely lock their doors, use passwords for their e-mails, social media accounts, banking, and they take a number of different steps to ensure the privacy of their own communications and personal life details. Yet they can sometimes be found trying to perpetuate the notion that others should willingly surrender their privacy.

Privacy is dying and some say it is even dead altogether; or at least privacy as we used to know it. A group of Harvard professors at the World Economic Forum assembled just last year to discuss the notion of how society has abandoned individual privacy. "Privacy as we knew it in the past is no longer feasible... How we conventionally think of privacy is dead," said Margo Seltzer, a computer professor in computer science at Harvard University. The professors assert that the genetic information will also be more incorporated into the public sphere. And they predict that violations to privacy are going to become much more pervasive than they already are. "It's not whether this is going to happen, it's already happening... We live in a surveillance state today," said Seltzer.

Fortunately, not everyone is so excited or willing to surrender their natural right to privacy. Those who value personal privacy insist that all of us make judgements and comments every single day to our close friends, loved ones, and acquaintances, that we would be mortified for the rest of the world to learn. People can very easily in words claim that they don't value their privacy or that we shouldn't as a society, but the actions of those same people actually negate the authenticity of their claims and beliefs. It is well known that it is the goal of those in power to make it so that every single form of human communication is monitored in some way or another, and so that those communications are never beyond their reach.

When we are in a state where we can be monitored, where all of our communications can be watched, our behavior changes dramatically. We end-up policing ourselves and becoming much more conformist. As the study mentioned above found, the mass spying will illicit compliance and help to foster the rejection of minority opinions. The range of behavioral options that we consider when we think we are being watched severely reduces; this is just a fact of human nature.

Now we find out that this metadata is no longer going to be used just for terror threats to national security, but that it will also potentially end-up in the hands of domestic law enforcement for police to use on a regular basis. Privacy and legal advocates repeatedly remind us that these spying programs are grossly lacking adequate oversight. Former NSA directors themselves have come out and exposed the truth behind these programs, going so far as to say that the NSA "duped the public" into accepting these atrocities. They also go even further in admitting the hard truth that citizens shouldn't have to sacrifice liberty for security and they warn that bulk data collection is not only useless but it's dangerous as well.

Follow Dan Dicks: Facebook Twitter Instagram; See more at: <https://pressfortruth.ca/top-stories/consequence-mass-surveillance/#sthash.iLM1HnNn.dpuf>

MULTICULTURAL DESTRUCTION OF THE NATION STATE

Patrick Wood; via Sonya Porter

Depending on where you live and how sensitive you are to the global mass-immigration crisis, your reaction to it will be somewhere between head-scratching and shell-shocked incredulity. The purpose of this report is to give you some concrete evidence about where these policies originated and to what ends they were created.

A major player is Peter Sutherland, who in past years has served as the Director-General of the World Trade Organization, as Chairman of Goldman Sachs International, as EU Commissioner, as Chairman of BP and Chair of London School of Economics Council, among other things. Most importantly, however, he is the European Honorary Chairman of the elitist Trilateral Commission. His relevance to this article is that in 2006 he was appointed by the United Nations' to be the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration.

Needless to say, whatever comes out of Sutherland's mouth is certifiably representative of official policy of the Trilateral Commission and the global elite at large. In fact, he is one of the most respected policy-makers in the world, and many consider him to be the "father of globalization".

The migration crisis in Europe came to global attention in the fall of 2015. Headlines like these were seen in the European press:

Mass immigration is on the verge of destroying Europe (Nov. 6, 2015)

We're doomed: EU chief fears union will collapse over migrant crisis (Sep.24, 2015)

Merkel stands ground on refugees as 1.5 million seen coming (Oct. 5, 2015)

Sweden first opened its doors to Muslim immigrants in the 1970s. The trickle of migration was slow at first, but increased over the decades as turmoil in the Mideast produced more refugees. Today, Sweden's culture is as much Islamic as it is Swedish. Muslims have steadfastly refused to assimilate into Swedish culture, and now the nation is paying a high social price for their naivety: It has become the rape and gang-rape capital of the West.

In spite of the European crisis, Sutherland wrote in late 2015,

"Human mobility benefits not only migrants and their families, but their countries of origin and destination as well... No other force—not trade, not capital flows has the potential to transform lives in the sustainable, positive ways and on the scale that migration does."

Since his 2006 appointment to the UN, Sutherland has stumped this message across Europe with great fanfare. With the combined weight of the UN behind him, governments were persuaded to further open their borders to immigration. A growing multicultural society, he claimed, was the only pathway to sustainable development.

Sutherland is the leading apologist for federalism in Europe; that is, dissolving national borders completely and simply merging all cultures into one big happy family. The obvious shortcomings of these policies have not deterred Sutherland – or the UN – from stating that more migration, not less, is the answer to the current crisis. At the peak of the migration crisis in November 2015, and just after the horrific Paris terrorist attacks, the headline appeared, UN warns Europe against 'backtracking' on migrant commitments. Really? The article scolded European leaders:

"The United Nations on Tuesday urged states not to "backtrack" on pledges made to host migrants and refugees, including from Syria, in the wake of the attacks in Paris. Multiple UN agencies issued a warning to European leaders who might use the tragedy to advance anti-migrant policies.."

A spokesman for the UN rights agency, Rupert Colville, described calls for a crackdown on migrants as "very, very stupid."

"It's really pretty disgusting how extreme anti-immigrant politicians and media commentators have jumped on this attack to push their existing agendas. That is really pretty obscene actually, given what happened in Paris," Colville told reporters.

It is not surprising that migration is now included as an official part of the UN's 2030 Agenda that created the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in November 2015. Sutherland addressed this in his report, *Migration Is Development: How Migration Matters to the Post-2015 Debate*:

"The post-2015 debate so far has underlined the need to strengthen global partnerships, and, in light of the evidence highlighted above, human mobility has been mentioned in the same context as trade, transfer of technology, and other developmental forces."

Goal 10.7 of the SDGs reflects this to "Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies."

In *Migration is Development*, Sutherland wrote,

"...there is no greater symbol of the world's growing interdependence than the movement of people. If we can make meaningful economic progress in the coming generations, one of the pivotal reasons will be that people are allowed to move more freely. Advanced countries, with their adverse demographic trends, need migrants, as do developing countries — not only for migrants' economic contributions, but also for the social and cultural diversity that they bring."

Sutherland's use of the word "interdependence" will be remembered by early students of Trilateral Commission literature from 1973 onward. While the Commission may not have invented this word, they certainly popularized it in the context of globalization. However, there was never any demand or need for interdependence among nations, but Commission doctrine insisted that it was a given fact of life and that nations were going to necessarily meld together.

In summary, this is where modern migration policies have come from. Open borders and unlimited mobility of foreigners are in. Immigration restrictions of any sort are out.

By now, you should not be surprised to realize that the policies seen in Europe are identical to those seen in the United States, especially with respect to the border with Mexico. Even when Congress has legislated wall-building and approved funding, the Executive Branch of government has flatly refused to comply, and we are left with an open-sieve border that has allowed millions of undocumented persons to enter. Such has not been a partisan issue, because Republicans have been just as complicit as Democrats in shunning border controls.

Sutherland and his fellow Trilateral Commission cronies in Europe were primarily responsible for the creation and advancement of the European Union system of governance. The Commission has exerted a similar hegemony in the United States since the election of Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale in 1975, both of whom were Trilaterals. Subsequent Trilaterals include George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Al Gore and Dick Cheney. Obama is not a member but he is surrounded by Trilaterals. Economic and trade policies have been dominated by Trilateral members: nine out of twelve U.S. Trade Representatives since Carter have been members of the Commission. Six out of eight World Bank Presidents have been members.

Finding the same migration policies in two different parts of the world strongly suggests a single source, namely, the Trilateral Commission. For further information, please read *Technocracy Rising: The Trojan Horse of Global Transformation*, where I have thoroughly documented the unmistakable connections between the Trilateral Commission and the UN's Agenda 21/Sustainable Development, as well as its connections to Technocracy.

Patrick Wood is Editor-in-Chief of Technocracy.News and author of Technocracy Rising: The Trojan Horse of Global Transformation.

'Wherever there is a great property, there is a great inequality. For one very rich man there must be at least five hundred poor, and the affluence of the few supposes the indigence of the many.'

Adam Smith; The Wealth of Nations; thanks to Dave Dewhurst

“THE STUPIDITY OF BELIEF”: THE INNER POLITICS AND NATURE OF MANKIND HAVE NOT CHANGED IN 7,000 YEARS

John Kozy; Global Research

Oh, How primitive we are still!

Around 1600, when Europeans began to use the methods of learning that are now called scientific, Galileo peered at the moon. In 1969, a man walked on the moon. In fewer than 400 years, people went from peering at the moon to walking on it.

Scientific knowledge works. Yet beliefs, claims that are not and often can never be known, have caused human beings to kill each other in wars at least since the first city states were organized around 4,000 BCE. The people who lived in these states believed that their cities were protected by patron deities and when the cities went to war, the war was thought of as fought for or even by the deities themselves. Ever since, war has always had a religious aspect. Armies have always gone into battle believing god was on their side, even when two peoples who claimed to believe in the same god fought each other. The absurdity of that seems to have always eluded people. It is noteworthy that even today the leaders of nations ask their patron deities to bless their countries.

The American president, for instance, always asks god to bless America, never the American people. Gods, it seems, only protect states, not their peoples who are decimated in wars for the sake of their nations. Remember John F. Kennedy’s “ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” Throughout human history, people, like soldier ants, have always existed to preserve the state rather than visa versa. So here we are, seven millennia since the founding of city states, still acting just like the pagans of Mesopotamia. For seven millennia of belief guided human history, the progress of human nature has stood still!

I have written previously that mankind is credal rather than rational and that ideology (creed, dogma, belief) is a lie that will not die. Religious beliefs certainly exhibit those characteristics. The primitive nature of religion is also evident. In the Ancient World, religious rites were practices to propitiate gods. Today they are used to dispatch dead souls to their rightful places in eternity. The funerals of Antonin Scalia and Nancy Reagan are examples of rites that date at least as far back as the Roman Empire. It is clear that the conventional notion is that religious belief is a “higher” virtue. Those with it are considered to be better than those without it. This notion persists despite the large number of logical absurdities that have been identified in religious doctrines and other creeds. Remember Tertullian’s Credo quia absurdum—“I believe because it is absurd.”

Despite this history, people seem to be addicted to creeds. In the United States of America, whose Constitution prohibits the Congress from adopting a state religion, officials still commonly speak the language of belief—“In God we trust,” “one nation under God,” and “God bless America.” Yet religious Americans worship multiple gods. Freedom of religion is a constitutional right. So the word ‘god’ in these expressions has no definitive denotation. The God of the New Testament is incompatible with the God of the Torah. Americans seem oblivious to the fact that a sentence containing a substantive with no denotation is utterly meaningless, and any connotation it possesses is entirely subjective.

The French, during the Revolution of 1789, sought to destroy the Catholic religion specifically and religion in general. But in 1801, Napoleon signed an agreement with Pope Pius VII marking an end to the attempt. Similarly, during the First World War, Orthodox Russian prelates carried holy icons through the trenches before battles begging God to bring victory in coming battles only to see the Russian army annihilated instead. So when the Russian Revolution occurred in 1917, the newly created Union of Soviet Socialist Republics banned religion and locked the doors to all churches. Yet in 1991, when the USSR was transformed into the Russian Federation, the church doors were unlocked and the Russian people flocked to churches to resume their faith in the Orthodox Church. Similar attempts to promote the eradication of religious belief are going on in China with little success. What accounts for this persistence of credology?

In fact, this persistence is so strong that it is commonly considered to be virtuous. The admonition, “Stand up for your knowledge” is never heard, but “Stand up for your beliefs” is common. Yet if beliefs are claims that are not known to be true or cannot ever be known to be true, the admonition advises people to maintain and flaunt their ignorance. Creedology is an attribute of utter stupidity. Still creeds seems to be what human beings live by.

Any nation’s “way of life” is defined by its creeds—religious, political, economic, social, educational. No one has ever shown that any of these creeds is better than the others. As a matter of fact, creedology is such a dominant trait of human beings that even science has become a creed. Not only does science consist of a well defined group of methods of learning, it also conveys the belief that those methods will eventually solve all of mankind’s problems, a belief entirely like the Christian belief in the Second Coming. But there is not one iota of evidence to support this belief. Instead of science making mankind less credal, credalism has made science into just another creed. Science has become nothing but a handmaiden of belief. Scientists are now as much soldiers in ideological wars as seekers of knowledge. This kind of science will never make it possible for human beings to live in harmony with nature or live together in peace. Unless human beings can be weaned off of this attachment to belief, Homo Sapiens is a doomed species.

But such a weaning might not be possible. The human attachment to belief might be instinctive. In fact, considering the attachment to belief as instinctive might be the only way to explain the human attachment to creeds for over seven millennia, which makes all of the horrible deeds of people to be the result of a generic trait rather than personal faults.

Is this stupidity the essence of the human condition? It is if standing up for beliefs is a virtue rather than a vice. Standing up for what is known to be true is the better practice. People do not wage war over what mankind knows; they wage war over what they merely believe and that is doubly dumb.

John Kozy is a retired professor of philosophy and logic who writes on social, political, and economic issues. After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, he spent 20 years as a university professor and another 20 years working as a writer. He has published a textbook in formal logic commercially, in academic journals and a small number of commercial magazines, and has written a number of guest editorials for newspapers. His on-line pieces can be found on <http://www.jkozy.com/> and he can be emailed from that site’s homepage.

PRIVATISATION! FREE TRADE! SHARES FOR ALL! THE GREAT CON THAT RUINED BRITAIN

Peter Hitchens; Mail on Sunday

I am so sorry now that I fell for the great Thatcher-Reagan promise. I can’t deny that I did. I believed all that stuff about privatisation and free trade and the unrestrained market. I think I may even have been taken in by the prophecies of a great share-owning democracy. I thought – this now seems especially funny – that private British Telecom would be automatically better than crabby old Post Office Telephones.

I think anyone who has ever tried to contact BT when things go wrong would now happily go back to the days of nationalisation. Soviet-style slowness was bad, but surely better than total indifference.

And it’s all very well being able to buy cheap goods from all over the world, as we fling our borders wide and abandon the protection of our own industries that everyone says is so wicked and will make us poor and backward.

How I miss the old names of trusted brands, and the knowledge that these things had been made for generations by my fellow countrymen.

But the new broom swept, and it swept pretty clean. In towns I know well, car assembly lines, railway workshops, glassworks engineering plants, chocolate factories vanished or shrank to nothing.

A journey across the heart of England, once an exhilarating vista of muscular manufacturing, especially glorious by night, turned into archaeology. Now, if it looked like a factory, it was really a ruin.

Someone usually pops up at this stage and says that we still manufacture a lot. If you say so, but then why are the drug-dealers so busy in our new factory-free industrial areas, and why can I never buy anything that was made here, except from absurdly expensive luxury shops?

Why are our warships made of foreign steel? Why are the few factories that do exist almost always foreign-owned, their fate decided far away by people who don't much care about this country? And why is our current-account deficit with the rest of the world the worst it's ever been in peacetime, and nearly as bad as it was during the Great War that first bankrupted this country a century ago?

If it's all been so beneficial, why do so many of the containers that arrive in British ports, full of expensive imports, leave this country empty.

Sure, some things have got cheaper, and there are a lot more little treats and luxuries available.

The coffee and the restaurants are better – but the essentials of life are harder to find than ever: a good life and an honest place; a solid, modest home big enough to house a small family in a peaceful, orderly landscape; good local schools open to all who need them; reasonably paid secure work for this generation and the next; competent government and wise laws. These have become luxuries, unattainable for millions who once took them for granted.

And now the remains of our steel industry are vanishing, not because nothing can be done (any determined government could save it if it really wanted to) but because we're all still worshipping that free-market dogma that captivated us 30 years ago.

I never thought I'd yearn for the National Coal Board or British Steel or, good heavens, British Leyland. But I do begin to feel I was fooled into thinking that what was coming next would be any better. At this rate it may soon be much, much worse.

THE NEOLIBERAL CON-TRICK'S BEEN RUMBLING (AT LAST)

Richard Murphy, Tax Research UK; via Global Table

(Richard Murphy's reaction is not uncommon. He need not be so puzzled. There is an increasing number coming from Hitchen's end of the old political spectrum who are coming to an understanding of the Great Lies which form the foundations of neo-liberal 'globalised' economics. Sometimes this shift in understand runs slower, sometimes quicker. But for anyone to have to unlearn all that they have been brainwashed with during their lives about Queen, Country and the wonders of 'Free ... i.e. corporate ... Enterprise' is hard so often some forbearance is needed.

This is further evidence that the old left/right paradigm is largely dead, that the real battle line is between those who would concentrate power and those who would devolve it and that the 'old right' have more in common with the the 'new left' than their corporatist counterparts in the 'old left' and the 'new right' - Ed)

I am not sure how to react to this;-

"I am so sorry now that I fell for the great Thatcher-Reagan promise. I can't deny that I did. I believed all that stuff about privatisation and free trade and the unrestrained market. I think I may even have been taken in by the prophecies of a great share-owning democracy. I thought – this now seems especially funny – that private British Telecom would be automatically better than crabby old Post Office Telephones.

I think anyone who has ever tried to contact BT when things go wrong would now happily go

back to the days of nationalisation. Soviet-style slowness was bad, but surely better than total indifference.”

It comes from arch right-wing Daily Mail columnist (and one time Trotskyist) Peter Hitchens. There is much more that follows the quote I have noted. It would be easy to dismiss it as middle age nostalgia, except that, firstly, if that was the case I'd suggest he get into steam trains and get over it and, second, irritating as Hitchens is that would suggest he wasn't able to identify the true reason for his sentiment, and I think he can. As he put it:

“I never thought I'd yearn for the National Coal Board or British Steel or, good heavens, British Leyland. But I do begin to feel I was fooled into thinking that what was coming next would be any better. At this rate it may soon be much, much worse.

It's taken Hitchens a long time to smell the coffee on the economic con trick played on the people of this country at cost to almost all of us. But it looks like he now has, at long last. Now let's see the Mail as a whole follow suit, shall we? Many of their readers may well have lost as much as anyone.

THE NEW ASTROLOGY

Alan Jay Levinovitz; via Critical Thinking

By fetishising mathematical models, economists turned economics into a highly paid pseudoscience

Since the 2008 financial crisis, colleges and universities have faced increased pressure to identify essential disciplines, and cut the rest. In 2009, Washington State University announced it would eliminate the department of theatre and dance, the department of community and rural sociology, and the German major – the same year that the University of Louisiana at Lafayette ended its philosophy major. In 2012, Emory University in Atlanta did away with the visual arts department and its journalism programme. The cutbacks aren't restricted to the humanities: in 2011, the state of Texas announced it would eliminate nearly half of its public undergraduate physics programmes. Even when there's no downsizing, faculty salaries have been frozen and departmental budgets have shrunk.

But despite the funding crunch, it's a bull market for academic economists. According to a 2015 sociological study in the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, the median salary of economics teachers in 2012 increased to \$103,000 – nearly \$30,000 more than sociologists. For the top 10 per cent of economists, that figure jumps to \$160,000, higher than the next most lucrative academic discipline – engineering. These figures, stress the study's authors, do not include other sources of income such as consulting fees for banks and hedge funds, which, as many learned from the documentary *Inside Job* (2010), are often substantial. (Ben Bernanke, a former academic economist and ex-chairman of the Federal Reserve, earns \$200,000-\$400,000 for a single appearance.)

Unlike engineers and chemists, economists cannot point to concrete objects – cell phones, plastic – to justify the high valuation of their discipline. Nor, in the case of financial economics and macroeconomics, can they point to the predictive power of their theories. Hedge funds employ cutting-edge economists who command princely fees, but routinely underperform index funds. Eight years ago, Warren Buffet made a 10-year, \$1 million bet that a portfolio of hedge funds would lose to the S&P 500, and it looks like he's going to collect. In 1998, a fund that boasted two Nobel Laureates as advisors collapsed, nearly causing a global financial crisis.

The failure of the field to predict the 2008 crisis has also been well-documented. In 2003, for example, only five years before the Great Recession, the Nobel Laureate Robert E Lucas Jr told the American Economic Association that 'macroeconomics [...] has succeeded: its central problem of depression prevention has been solved'. Short-term predictions fair little better – in April 2014, for

instance, a survey of 67 economists yielded 100 per cent consensus: interest rates would rise over the next six months. Instead, they fell. A lot.

Nonetheless, surveys indicate that economists see their discipline as ‘the most scientific of the social sciences’. What is the basis of this collective faith, shared by universities, presidents and billionaires? Shouldn’t successful and powerful people be the first to spot the exaggerated worth of a discipline, and the least likely to pay for it? In the hypothetical worlds of rational markets, where much of economic theory is set, perhaps. But real-world history tells a different story, of mathematical models masquerading as science and a public eager to buy them, mistaking elegant equations for empirical accuracy.

As an extreme example, take the extraordinary success of Evangeline Adams, a turn-of-the-20th-century astrologer whose clients included the president of Prudential Insurance, two presidents of the New York Stock Exchange, the steel magnate Charles M Schwab, and the banker J P Morgan. To understand why titans of finance would consult Adams about the market, it is essential to recall that astrology used to be a technical discipline, requiring reams of astronomical data and mastery of specialised mathematical formulas. ‘An astrologer’ is, in fact, the Oxford English Dictionary’s second definition of ‘mathematician’. For centuries, mapping stars was the job of mathematicians, a job motivated and funded by the widespread belief that star-maps were good guides to earthly affairs. The best astrology required the best astronomy, and the best astronomy was done by mathematicians – exactly the kind of person whose authority might appeal to bankers and financiers.

In fact, when Adams was arrested in 1914 for violating a New York law against astrology, it was mathematics that eventually exonerated her. During the trial, her lawyer Clark L Jordan emphasised mathematics in order to distinguish his client’s practice from superstition, calling astrology ‘a mathematical or exact science’. Adams herself demonstrated this ‘scientific’ method by reading the astrological chart of the judge’s son. The judge was impressed: the plaintiff, he observed, went through a ‘mathematical process to get at her conclusions... I am satisfied that the element of fraud... is absent here.’

Romer compares debates among economists to those between 16th-century advocates of heliocentrism and geocentrism

The enchanting force of mathematics blinded the judge – and Adams’s prestigious clients – to the fact that astrology relies upon a highly unscientific premise, that the position of stars predicts personality traits and human affairs such as the economy. It is this enchanting force that explains the enduring popularity of financial astrology, even today. The historian Caley Horan at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology described to me how computing technology made financial astrology explode in the 1970s and ’80s. ‘Within the world of finance, there’s always a superstitious, quasi-spiritual trend to find meaning in markets,’ said Horan. ‘Technical analysts at big banks, they’re trying to find patterns in past market behaviour, so it’s not a leap for them to go to astrology.’ In 2000, USA Today quoted Robin Griffiths, the chief technical analyst at HSBC, the world’s third largest bank, saying that ‘most astrology stuff doesn’t check out, but some of it does’.

Ultimately, the problem isn’t with worshipping models of the stars, but rather with uncritical worship of the language used to model them, and nowhere is this more prevalent than in economics. The economist Paul Romer at New York University has recently begun calling attention to an issue he dubs ‘mathiness’ – first in the paper ‘Mathiness in the Theory of Economic Growth’ (2015) and then in a series of blog posts. Romer believes that macroeconomics, plagued by mathiness, is failing to progress as a true science should, and compares debates among economists to those between 16th-century advocates of heliocentrism and geocentrism. Mathematics, he acknowledges, can help economists to clarify their thinking and reasoning. But the ubiquity of mathematical theory in economics also has serious downsides: it creates a high barrier to entry for those who want to participate in the professional dialogue, and makes checking someone’s work excessively laborious. Worst of all, it imbues economic theory with unearned empirical authority.

‘I’ve come to the position that there should be a stronger bias against the use of math,’ Romer

explained to me. ‘If somebody came and said: “Look, I have this Earth-changing insight about economics, but the only way I can express it is by making use of the quirks of the Latin language”, we’d say go to hell, unless they could convince us it was really essential. The burden of proof is on them.’

Right now, however, there is widespread bias in favour of using mathematics. The success of math-heavy disciplines such as physics and chemistry has granted mathematical formulas with decisive authoritative force. Lord Kelvin, the 19th-century mathematical physicist, expressed this quantitative obsession:

When you can measure what you are speaking about and express it in numbers you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it... in numbers, your knowledge is of a meagre and unsatisfactory kind.

The trouble with Kelvin’s statement is that measurement and mathematics do not guarantee the status of science – they guarantee only the semblance of science. When the presumptions or conclusions of a scientific theory are absurd or simply false, the theory ought to be questioned and, eventually, rejected. The discipline of economics, however, is presently so blinkered by the talismanic authority of mathematics that theories go overvalued and unchecked.

Romer is not the first to elaborate the mathiness critique. In 1886, an article in *Science* accused economics of misusing the language of the physical sciences to conceal ‘emptiness behind a breastwork of mathematical formulas’. More recently, Deirdre N McCloskey’s *The Rhetoric of Economics* (1998) and Robert H Nelson’s *Economics as Religion* (2001) both argued that mathematics in economic theory serves, in McCloskey’s words, primarily to deliver the message ‘Look at how very scientific I am.’

After the Great Recession, the failure of economic science to protect our economy was once again impossible to ignore. In 2009, the Nobel Laureate Paul Krugman tried to explain it in *The New York Times* with a version of the mathiness diagnosis. ‘As I see it,’ he wrote, ‘the economics profession went astray because economists, as a group, mistook beauty, clad in impressive-looking mathematics, for truth.’ Krugman named economists’ ‘desire... to show off their mathematical prowess’ as the ‘central cause of the profession’s failure’.

The mathiness critique isn’t limited to macroeconomics. In 2014, the Stanford financial economist Paul Pfleiderer published the paper ‘Chameleons: The Misuse of Theoretical Models in Finance and Economics’, which helped to inspire Romer’s understanding of mathiness. Pfleiderer called attention to the prevalence of ‘chameleons’ – economic models ‘with dubious connections to the real world’ that substitute ‘mathematical elegance’ for empirical accuracy. Like Romer, Pfleiderer wants economists to be transparent about this sleight of hand. ‘Modelling,’ he told me, ‘is now elevated to the point where things have validity just because you can come up with a model.’

The notion that an entire culture – not just a few eccentric financiers – could be bewitched by empty, extravagant theories might seem absurd. How could all those people, all that math, be mistaken? This was my own feeling as I began investigating mathiness and the shaky foundations of modern economic science. Yet, as a scholar of Chinese religion, it struck me that I’d seen this kind of mistake before, in ancient Chinese attitudes towards the astral sciences. Back then, governments invested incredible amounts of money in mathematical models of the stars. To evaluate those models, government officials had to rely on a small cadre of experts who actually understood the mathematics – experts riven by ideological differences, who couldn’t even agree on how to test their models. And, of course, despite collective faith that these models would improve the fate of the Chinese people, they did not.

Astral Science in Early Imperial China, a forthcoming book by the historian Daniel P Morgan, shows that in ancient China, as in the Western world, the most valuable type of mathematics was devoted to the realm of divinity – to the sky, in their case (and to the market, in ours). Just as astrology and mathematics were once synonymous in the West, the Chinese spoke of *li*, the science of calendrics, which early dictionaries also glossed as ‘calculation’, ‘numbers’ and ‘order’. *Li* models, like macroeconomic theories, were considered essential to good governance. In the classic

Book of Documents, the legendary sage king Yao transfers the throne to his successor with mention of a single duty: ‘Yao said: “Oh thou, Shun! The li numbers of heaven rest in thy person.”’

China’s oldest mathematical text invokes astronomy and divine kingship in its very title – The Arithmetical Classic of the Gnomon of the Zhou. The title’s inclusion of ‘Zhou’ recalls the mythic Eden of the Western Zhou dynasty (1045–771 BCE), implying that paradise on Earth can be realised through proper calculation. The book’s introduction to the Pythagorean theorem asserts that ‘the methods used by Yu the Great in governing the world were derived from these numbers’. It was an unquestioned article of faith: the mathematical patterns that govern the stars also govern the world. Faith in a divine, invisible hand, made visible by mathematics. No wonder that a newly discovered text fragment from 200 BCE extolls the virtues of mathematics over the humanities. In it, a student asks his teacher whether he should spend more time learning speech or numbers. His teacher replies: ‘If my good sir cannot fathom both at once, then abandon speech and fathom numbers, [for] numbers can speak, [but] speech cannot number.’

Modern governments, universities and businesses underwrite the production of economic theory with huge amounts of capital. The same was true for li production in ancient China. The emperor – the ‘Son of Heaven’ – spent astronomical sums refining mathematical models of the stars. Take the armillary sphere, such as the two-metre cage of graduated bronze rings in Nanjing, made to represent the celestial sphere and used to visualise data in three-dimensions. As Morgan emphasises, the sphere was literally made of money. Bronze being the basis of the currency, governments were smelting cash by the metric ton to pour it into li. A divine, mathematical world-engine, built of cash, sanctifying the powers that be.

The enormous investment in li depended on a huge assumption: that good government, successful rituals and agricultural productivity all depended upon the accuracy of li. But there were, in fact, no practical advantages to the continued refinement of li models. The calendar rounded off decimal points such that the difference between two models, hotly contested in theory, didn’t matter to the final product. The work of selecting auspicious days for imperial ceremonies thus benefited only in appearance from mathematical rigour. And of course the comets, plagues and earthquakes that these ceremonies promised to avert kept on coming. Farmers, for their part, went about business as usual. Occasional governmental efforts to scientifically micromanage farm life in different climes using li ended in famine and mass migration.

Like many economic models today, li models were less important to practical affairs than their creators (and consumers) thought them to be. And, like today, only a few people could understand them. In 101 BCE, Emperor Wudi tasked high-level bureaucrats – including the Great Director of the Stars – with creating a new li that would glorify the beginning of his path to immortality. The bureaucrats refused the task because ‘they couldn’t do the math’, and recommended the emperor outsource it to experts.

The equivalent in economic theory might be to grant a model high points for success in predicting short-term markets, while failing to deduct for missing the Great Recession

The debates of these ancient li experts bear a striking resemblance to those of present-day economists. In 223 CE, a petition was submitted to the emperor asking him to approve tests of a new li model developed by the assistant director of the astronomical office, a man named Han Yi. At the time of the petition, Han Yi’s model, and its competitor, the so-called Supernal Icon, had already been subjected to three years of ‘reference’, ‘comparison’ and ‘exchange’. Still, no one could agree which one was better. Nor, for that matter, was there any agreement on how they should be tested.

In the end, a live trial involving the prediction of eclipses and heliacal risings was used to settle the debate. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see this trial was seriously flawed. The helical rising (first visibility) of planets depends on non-mathematical factors such as eyesight and atmospheric conditions. That’s not to mention the scoring of the trial, which was modelled on archery competitions. Archers scored points for proximity to the bullseye, with no consideration for overall accuracy. The equivalent in economic theory might be to grant a model high points for success in predicting short-term markets, while failing to deduct for missing the Great Recession.

None of this is to say that li models were useless or inherently unscientific. For the most part, li experts were genuine mathematical virtuosos who valued the integrity of their discipline. Despite being based on inaccurate assumptions – that the Earth was at the centre of the cosmos – their models really did work to predict celestial motions. Imperfect though the live trial might have been, it indicates that superior predictive power was a theory's most important virtue. All of this is consistent with real science, and Chinese astronomy progressed as a science, until it reached the limits imposed by its assumptions.

However, there was no science to the belief that accurate li would improve the outcome of rituals, agriculture or government policy. No science to the Hall of Light, a temple for the emperor built on the model of a magic square. There, by numeric ritual gesture, the Son of Heaven was thought to channel the invisible order of heaven for the prosperity of man. This was quasi-theology, the belief that heavenly patterns – mathematical patterns – could be used to model every event in the natural world, in politics, even the body. Macro- and microcosm were scaled reflections of one another, yin and yang in a unifying, salvific mathematical vision. The expensive gadgets, the personnel, the bureaucracy, the debates, the competition – all of this testified to the divinely authoritative power of mathematics. The result, then as now, was overvaluation of mathematical models based on unscientific exaggerations of their utility.

In ancient China it would have been unfair to blame li experts for the pseudoscientific exploitation of their theories. These men had no way to evaluate the scientific merits of assumptions and theories – 'science', in a formalised, post-Enlightenment sense, didn't really exist. But today it is possible to distinguish, albeit roughly, science from pseudoscience, astronomy from astrology. Hypothetical theories, whether those of economists or conspiracists, aren't inherently pseudoscientific. Conspiracy theories can be diverting – even instructive – flights of fancy. They become pseudoscience only when promoted from fiction to fact without sufficient evidence.

Romer believes that fellow economists know the truth about their discipline, but don't want to admit it. 'If you get people to lower their shield, they'll tell you it's a big game they're playing,' he told me. 'They'll say: "Paul, you may be right, but this makes us look really bad, and it's going to make it hard for us to recruit young people."'

Demanding more honesty seems reasonable, but it presumes that economists understand the tenuous relationship between mathematical models and scientific legitimacy. In fact, many assume the connection is obvious – just as in ancient China, the connection between li and the world was taken for granted. When reflecting in 1999 on what makes economics more scientific than the other social sciences, the Harvard economist Richard B Freeman explained that economics 'attracts stronger students than [political science or sociology], and our courses are more mathematically demanding'. In *Lives of the Laureates* (2004), Robert E Lucas Jr writes rhapsodically about the importance of mathematics: 'Economic theory is mathematical analysis. Everything else is just pictures and talk.' Lucas's veneration of mathematics leads him to adopt a method that can only be described as a subversion of empirical science:

The construction of theoretical models is our way to bring order to the way we think about the world, but the process necessarily involves ignoring some evidence or alternative theories – setting them aside. That can be hard to do – facts are facts – and sometimes my unconscious mind carries out the abstraction for me: I simply fail to see some of the data or some alternative theory.

Even for those who agree with Romer, conflict of interest still poses a problem. Why would skeptical astronomers question the emperor's faith in their models? In a phone conversation, Daniel Hausman, a philosopher of economics at the University of Wisconsin, put it bluntly: 'If you reject the power of theory, you demote economists from their thrones. They don't want to become like sociologists.'

George F DeMartino, an economist and an ethicist at the University of Denver, frames the issue in economic terms. 'The interest of the profession is in pursuing its analysis in a language that's inaccessible to laypeople and even some economists,' he explained to me. 'What we've done is monopolise this kind of expertise, and we of all people know how that gives us power.'

Every economist I interviewed agreed that conflicts of interest were highly problematic for the scientific integrity of their field – but only tenured ones were willing to go on the record. ‘In economics and finance, if I’m trying to decide whether I’m going to write something favourable or unfavourable to bankers, well, if it’s favourable that might get me a dinner in Manhattan with movers and shakers,’ Pfliegerer said to me. ‘I’ve written articles that wouldn’t curry favour with bankers but I did that when I had tenure.’

When mathematical theory is the ultimate arbiter of truth, it becomes difficult to see the difference between science and pseudoscience

Then there’s the additional problem of sunk-cost bias. If you’ve invested in an armillary sphere, it’s painful to admit that it doesn’t perform as advertised. When confronted with their profession’s lack of predictive accuracy, some economists find it difficult to admit the truth. Easier, instead, to double down, like the economist John H Cochrane at the University of Chicago. The problem isn’t too much mathematics, he writes in response to Krugman’s 2009 post-Great-Recession mea culpa for the field, but rather ‘that we don’t have enough math’. Astrology doesn’t work, sure, but only because the armillary sphere isn’t big enough and the equations aren’t good enough.

If overhauling economics depended solely on economists, then mathiness, conflict of interest and sunk-cost bias could easily prove insurmountable. Fortunately, non-experts also participate in the market for economic theory. If people remain enchanted by PhDs and Nobel Prizes awarded for the production of complicated mathematical theories, those theories will remain valuable. If they become disenchanting, the value will drop.

Economists who rationalise their discipline’s value can be convincing, especially with prestige and mathiness on their side. But there’s no reason to keep believing them. The pejorative verb ‘rationalise’ itself warns of mathiness, reminding us that we often deceive each other by making prior convictions, biases and ideological positions look ‘rational’, a word that confuses truth with mathematical reasoning. To be rational is, simply, to think in ratios, like the ratios that govern the geometry of the stars. Yet when mathematical theory is the ultimate arbiter of truth, it becomes difficult to see the difference between science and pseudoscience. The result is people like the judge in Evangeline Adams’s trial, or the Son of Heaven in ancient China, who trust the mathematical exactitude of theories without considering their performance – that is, who confuse math with science, rationality with reality.

There is no longer any excuse for making the same mistake with economic theory. For more than a century, the public has been warned, and the way forward is clear. It’s time to stop wasting our money and recognise the high priests for what they really are: gifted social scientists who excel at producing mathematical explanations of economies, but who fail, like astrologers before them, at prophecy.

*Alan Jay Levinovitz is an assistant professor of philosophy and religion at James Madison University in Virginia. His most recent book is *The Gluten Lie: And Other Myths About What You Eat* (2015).*

GOOGLE UPGRADES DIGITAL WALLET TO PAY BY FACIAL RECOGNITION

Kevin Samson; Activist Post

As we march steadily toward a cashless society, Google is naturally at the forefront of seeing it come to fruition as quickly as possible.

Despite the fact that several years ago Google had a major security scare with its first incarnation of the digital wallet smartphone app, which required a temporary shutdown, they are announcing a new system being tested which does not even require the smartphone at all.

A growing number of people apparently find that having to remove their smartphone is just

such a hassle that they are prepared to embrace payment via biometrics – in this case, facial recognition.

As a perfect indicator of the target market, please read this sad quote: “Imagine if you could rush through a drive-thru without reaching for your wallet, or pick up a hot dog at the ballpark without fumbling to pass coins or your credit card to the cashier,” Bhat said.

In one sentence, that quote might represent literally everything that is wrong with modern society.

The new system is being cleverly called Hands Free; and, as the second indicator of its potential mass appeal, it will be rolled out first at McDonald’s and Papa John’s fast food restaurants.

A second more serious component to this ties in with the recent rollout of citywide WiFi systems that keep people connected at all times. Layered on top of that is the arrival of billboards with hidden cameras built in that can film you, then track you through your mobile phone. This reality makes the following information more chilling than convenient:

The digital wallet uses Bluetooth and Wi-Fi connections alone [sic] with location sensing capabilities in smartphones to detect when someone is near a store enabled with Hands Free payment technology.

“When you’re ready to pay, you can simply tell the cashier, ‘I’ll pay with Google,’” Bhat said.

“The cashier will ask for your initials and use the picture you added to your Hands Free profile to confirm your identity.”

At some locations, Google is experimented [sic] with using cameras in stores to recognize people with Hands Free digital wallets so they could pay without even pausing.

The number of people already prepared to accept this system numbers in the millions, according to Google.

Although this announcement would appear to border on satire, (in) a world where cash is seen as a major annoyance, and laziness is embraced as a virtue.

THE WAR ON SAVINGS: THE PANAMA PAPERS, BAIL-INS, AND THE PUSH TO GO CASHLESS

Ellen Brown; Oped News

The War on Cash by <http://tradingadvantagedaily.com/>

Exposing tax dodgers is a worthy endeavour, but the "limited hangout" of the Panama Papers may have less noble ends, dovetailing with the War on Cash and the imminent threat of massive bail-ins of depositor funds.

The bombshell publication of the "Panama Papers," leaked from a Panama law firm specializing in shell companies, has triggered both outrage and scepticism. In an April 3 article titled "Corporate Media Gatekeepers Protect Western 1% From Panama Leak," UK blogger Craig Murray writes that the whistleblower no doubt had good intentions; but he made the mistake of leaking his 11.5 million documents to the corporate-controlled Western media, which released only those few documents incriminating opponents of Western financial interests. Murray writes:

Do not expect a genuine expose of western capitalism. The dirty secrets of western corporations will remain unpublished.

Expect hits at Russia, Iran and Syria and some tiny "balancing" western country like Iceland. Iceland, of course, was the only country to refuse to bail out its banks, instead throwing its offending bankers in jail.

Pepe Escobar calls the released Panama Papers a "limited hangout." The leak dovetails with the attempt of Transparency International to create a Global Public Beneficial Ownership Registry, which can collect ownership information from governments around the world; and with UK Prime Minister David

Cameron's global anti-corruption summit next month. According to The Economist, "The Panama papers give him just the platform he needs to persuade other governments, and his own, to turn their tough talk of recent years into action."

The Daily Bell suspects a coordinated global effort linked to the push to go cashless. It's all about knowing where the money is and who owns it, in order to tax it, regulate it, "sanction" it, or confiscate it:

Without privacy, authoritarianism flourishes because it is impossible to build and expand private networks that would act as a deterrent A worldwide transparency regime virtually guarantees abuses and corruption from those in power.

This is a reason why the "cashless society" idea is such a bad one. When no one is able to use cash, financial histories will be easily available via electronic bank records. Michael Snyder of InvestmentWatchBlog.com also links the Panama Papers with the push to go cashless:

. . . [W]ith this Panama Paper leak and all its pre-conditioning against tax havens, people aren't realizing yet that very soon, once Negative Interest Rates and Bail-Ins are being openly discussed and prepared for implementation, the whole tax haven or tax dodger discussion in the media will quickly switch from talking about corrupt billionaires and shell companies half way around the world, and instead will be talking about something much closer to home

In my strong opinion this whole thing is all part of the coming capital control war, which ties directly in with the coming transition to a biometric digital currency, the implementation of Negative Interest Rates, the rollout of large scale systemic bail-ins, and the demonization and eventual criminalization of physical assets that are outside of direct taxation control (which again would be done using the pre-conditioned guise of "tax havens", with physical precious metals and physical cash being the main targets).

War on Corruption or War on Savers?

What we may be witnessing here is the 1% going after the 10% of people who, according to German researcher Margrit Kennedy, do not need to borrow but are "net savers." Today the remaining 90% are "all borrowed up." Either they are unwilling to borrow more or the banks are unwilling to lend to them, since they are poor credit risks. Who, then, is left to feed the machine that feeds the 1%, and more specifically the 0.001%? The power brokers at the top seem to want it all, and today that means going after those just below them on the financial food chain. The challenge is in squeezing money from people who don't need to borrow. How to legally confiscate their savings?

Enter bail-ins, negative interest, all-digital currencies, and the elimination of "tax havens."

Bail-ins allow the largest banks to gamble with impunity with their depositors' money. If the banks make bad bets and become insolvent, they can legally confiscate the deposits to balance their books, through an "orderly resolution" scheme of the sort mandated in the Dodd-Frank Act. Negative interest is a fee or private tax on holding funds in the bank.

Eliminating cash prevents the bank runs that these assaults on people's savings would otherwise trigger. Money that exists only as digital entries cannot be withdrawn and stored under a mattress. Exposing tax havens shows the predators where the money is and who has title to it, facilitating its confiscation and preventing the funding of massive rebellions against confiscation.

Orchestrated at Davos

That could help explain those coordinated developments we've been seeing across the central-bank-controlled world, proliferating particularly after the January summit of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where the global elite gather to discuss the hot economic issues of the day. According to one Morgan Stanley attendee, a notable topic this year was the need for "a rapid introduction of a cashless society so that even more negative deposit interest rates could be introduced in Europe to offset likely secular stagnation." With the use of physical cash curtailed, J.P. Morgan estimates the European Central Bank could ultimately bring interest rates as low as negative 4.5%.

"Secular stagnation," the official justification for negative interest, means a chronic shortfall in demand: not enough money chasing goods and services. Today virtually all money is created by banks when they

make loans; and when old loans are paid off, new ones must be taken out to maintain the money supply. Central banks have traditionally dropped interest rates to stimulate this continual borrowing, but interest rates have now effectively been pushed to zero. The argument is that they can be pushed below zero -- but only if cash withdrawals, and hence bank runs, are not an option.

That is the argument; but as Paul Craig Roberts, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy, observes:

The notion is that the economy's poor economic performance is not due to the failure of economic policy but to people hoarding their money. The Federal Reserve and its coterie of economists and presstitutes maintain the fiction of too much savings despite the publication of the Federal Reserve's own report that 52% of Americans cannot raise \$400 without selling personal possessions or borrowing the money.

In an article titled "Exposing the Hidden Agenda of Davos 2016", Zerohedge reports on a flurry of activity during and after Davos related to the push to go cashless. But stimulating demand may just be the cover story for something darker behind this orchestrated effort.

Rescuing the Economy or the Banks?

Of greater concern at Davos than "secular stagnation" was the imminent insolvency of some major banks. Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, writing in January from Davos, quoted William White, former chief economist of the Bank for International Settlements, who warned:

The situation is worse than it was in 2007. Our macroeconomic ammunition to fight downturns is essentially all used up.

European banks have already admitted to \$1 trillion of non-performing loans: they are heavily exposed to emerging markets and are almost certainly rolling over further bad debts that have never been disclosed.

The European banking system may have to be recapitalized on a scale yet unimagined, and new "bail-in" rules mean that any deposit holder above the guarantee of 100,000 will have to help pay for it.

It seems the War on Cash is being waged, not to stimulate the economy, but to save the lucrative private banking scheme at all costs. Quelling the riots likely to result from the mass confiscation of deposits could also underly the heightened push for a global "security state" and for those "anti-corruption" measures designed to determine where the money is and who owns it.

Postscript: Bail-ins under the new 2016 European Recovery and Resolution Directive began officially today, April 10, in Austria. Ominously, it was in Austria that a major bank bankruptcy triggered the Great Depression in 1931.

Ellen Brown is an attorney, founder of the Public Banking Institute, and author of twelve books including the best-selling WEB OF DEBT. In THE PUBLIC BANK SOLUTION, her latest book, she explores successful public banking models historically and (more...)

WHY YOU NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE CASHLESS SOCIETY

Joshua Krause; Activist Post

Last month, the European Central Bank suggested that the 500 Euro note needs to be eliminated. Not long after, academics and policy makers in the US started to call for the elimination of the \$100 bill. This isn't something that the average person really thinks about on a regular basis, or even cares about. The vast majority of our purchases are done through digital channels these days. Unless you're about to buy a used car on Craigslist, you probably won't be needing the hundred-dollar bill. For most people, eliminating it would be an inconvenience at best.

So what gives? Why is anyone even considering the elimination of these bills? It seems like there is simply no need for it.

The truth is there are a lot of reasons why governments and banks want to eliminate these high-denomination notes, and none of them are good. It should go without saying that the people who are pushing this are not going to give you a straight answer. You're going to hear them give the same excuse over and over again for the foreseeable future: Large denominations are indispensable for black market transactions. They enable drug dealers, tax evaders, corruption, and terrorism.

But that's just what they'll say in the beginning. One day they'll give all those same excuses, except instead of suggesting the elimination of large-denomination bills, they'll suggest we get rid of cash instead. That's right. What the government, multinational corporations, and the central banks really want, is a completely cashless society, and they're going to start by eliminating the bills we don't use very often. Pro-gun supporters will recognize this strategy as the "slippery slope." Start out with something small that sets a precedent, and quietly eliminate everything over a long period of time so no one notices.

Eliminate certain bills, restrict large cash purchases, demonize people and businesses that hold large amounts of cash and confiscate their wealth through asset forfeiture, flag bank accounts that transfer large sums of money, etc. You may recognize some of those as policies that are already in place. The anti-cash crusade is happening right now, and here's the real reason why:

For starters, there are people in both the public and private sector that want to track everything you do. Like a stalker, they just really really want to get to know you better. They want an intimate knowledge of what you buy and sell. The corporations that are in bed with our government would love to have this knowledge, so they can do a better job of tailoring their marketing to you.

The governments that are in bed with the corporations want to use that knowledge to rule every aspect of your life. You can't live if you can't buy and sell, so without cash you'll be locked into a system that you can't opt out of. They say that cash is for terrorists and criminals, but they don't want you to realize that you're in the same boat as them. No cash means no anonymous transactions.

The second biggest reason? They want to steal from you. Taxes aren't enough. They can't bring themselves to stop spending our money and putting us into debt, and we don't want to give them anymore money, so raising taxes through a legitimate political process is off the table.

Instead they're going to lower your interest rates. How low? Ideally they want negative interest rates. They want to make it impossible for you to save money. The excuse for this will be different from before. They'll do it when the next major recession hits, so they can say that it'll be good for the economy. If saving money means losing money, then you'll spend money, thus supporting the economy. But really, they just want to legally steal from you (insert taxation joke here). They know that if cash isn't eliminated before these negative rates are implemented, you can simply pull your money out of the bank and hide it in your mattress. They don't want to leave you with any choice.

As you can see, physical cash is an essential means for maintaining your liberty. That's why, in light of recent calls to disband high-denomination bills, two right-wing Swiss politicians have proposed the exact opposite. Philip Brunner and Manuel Brandberg have suggested the creation of a 5000 franc note to ensure the safe-haven status of Switzerland's currency. Their reason? Cash is so important to individual liberty, that it could be compared to the right to bear arms.

In this context "cash is comparable to the service firearm kept by Swiss citizen soldiers," the pair argued in their motion, saying they both "guarantee freedom".

"In France and Italy already cash payments of only up to 1,000 euros are allowed and the question of the abolition of cash is being seriously discussed and considered in Europe," Brunner said on his Facebook page. The move toward electronic payments allows governments "total surveillance" over individuals, the pair claim.

So how will you preserve your freedom if, and probably when this comes to pass?

The most obvious solution would be to stock up on gold and silver before the cash ban arrives, because that is really the best alternative. Precious metals provide the only other convenient way to make untraceable purchases (you'll probably start to see underground markets pop up to cater to many of the normal purchases you make every day). After all, gold and silver were the most popular forms of currency until the 20th century. Alternatively you could put your money in any physical asset that may hold its value, such as land or firearms, for example; but for daily purchases, gold and silver are king.

Of course, the government could try to ban that as well. They tried confiscating gold before and they could do it again. However, it's not going to do them any good. When negative interest rates arrive with the cashless society, there will be millions of people moving their assets into gold and silver.

They'll be joining everyone who is operating in the black market, who will have already moved into precious metals by necessity.

There would be widespread disobedience against those rules. Nobody is going to give a damn about the laws at that point. If the government tries to brazenly wipe out everything you've earned throughout your entire life, you won't be too concerned about the law and neither will millions of other savers. With that many people, it will be impossible for the government to really clamp down on it.

Honestly, they'll be just as successful in preventing you from owning gold and silver, as they are in preventing you from buying pot. And the cops will have their savings wiped out as well, so they'll be playing the same game you are. It'll be prohibition all over again.

In short, gold and silver are the best things you can buy to prepare yourself for the cashless society. A lot of people will be rushing into precious metals if our government decides to get rid of cash, and the government will likely be helpless to stop you. So stock up now before the herd realizes what's happening to them.

Joshua Krause was born and raised in the Bay Area. He is a writer and researcher focused on principles of self-sufficiency and liberty at Ready Nutrition. You can follow Joshua's work at our Facebook page or on his personal Twitter. Joshua's website is Strange Danger.

BANK BAIL-INS ARE BACK, AND THEY BEGIN IN AUSTRIA

Examiner.com

Entering into 2016, all members of the European Union (EU) were required by law to have bail-in legislation on their books in preparation for the next potential crisis that in previous times would have resulted in a taxpayer funded bailout. This was accomplished both by individual countries, and at the central bank level, and is regulated under the auspices of the European recovery and resolution framework for banks.

And on April 10, it appears that these new rules have come not a moment too soon as Austria is to become the first European state to implement a bail-in as it induces the new policy on the failed Hypo Alpe Adria (bank), which is known today as the Heta Asset Resolution AG when it was nationalized by the Austrian government six years ago. Initially, a haircut of 54% will be implemented against senior creditors that could take upwards of six years to finalize the process and payouts to the debt holders.

“Today, the Austrian Financial Market Authority (FMA) in its function as the resolution authority pursuant to the Bank Recovery and Resolution Act (BaSAG - Bundesgesetz über die Sanierung und Abwicklung von Banken) has issued the key features for the further steps for the resolution of HETA ASSET RESOLUTION AG. The most significant measures are:

- a 100% bail-in for all subordinated liabilities,*
- a 53.98% bail-in, resulting in a 46.02% quota, for all eligible preferential liabilities,*
- the cancellation of all interest payments from 01.03.2015, when HETA was placed into resolution pursuant to BaSAG,*
- as well as a harmonisation of the maturities of all eligible liabilities to 31.12.2023.*

According to the current resolution plan for HETA, the wind-down process should be concluded by 2020, although the repayment of all claims as well as the legally binding conclusion of all currently outstanding legal disputes will realistically only be concluded by the end of 2023. Only at that point will it be possible to finally distribute the assets and to liquidate the company. - FMA.GOV.AT

The significance of today's bail-in act out of Austria is that it is the first of its kind in the Eurozone, and opens the door for future bailouts in a banking system that is extremely underfunded due to derivative and liquidity issues. And while this bail-in does not affect individual depositors at

this time, it sends a clear message that sovereign governments are not afraid to use their new tools to bail-out insolvent banks rather than simply letting them default and go bankrupt.

With the global economy well into the next recession, and banks growing ever closer to default because of loans made in the oil sector and emerging markets, it is no longer surprising that the EU rushed through encompassing bail-in regulations prior to 2016, even to the point of suing nations that hadn't put their own forms of bail-in laws on the books. Because now more than ever, it appears now that these new rules will be needed quickly for a financial crisis that could be just around the corner.

THE BATTLE FOR YOUR SAVINGS

Dan Denning; Capital & Conflict; via Peter Challen

Last week I wrote to you that the war on cash is over. But the battle for your savings rages on. And it took an ominous turn over the weekend. I call it a weapon of wealth destruction: the bail-in.

Bank bail-ins – in which losses on bad debts are “shared” with senior creditors – have finally come to the Continent. They started in Cyprus. But now it’s happening in Austria. It’s the test-case of the European Union’s Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD). The Austrian Financial Market Authority issued steps over the weekend for the winding-up of Heta Asset Resolution AG. It included the following measures:

- A 100% bail-in for all subordinated liabilities
- A 53.98% bail-in, resulting in a 46.02% quota, for all eligible preferential liabilities
- The cancellation of all interest payments from 01.03.2015, when HETA was placed into resolution

Now, please keep in mind those measures don’t all directly affect depositors in other Austrian banks. And please keep in mind “senior creditors” does not, at least as far as I know, include regular depositors in the bank. Not yet anyway. And please keep in mind the UK banking sector is not part of the EU’s banking union.

But it’s the process I want to bring your attention to. A definition of “creditor” can always be changed. I believe it’s just a matter of time until it does. And that’s why you should prepare today. Why?

BRRD is the post-GFC method for containing the spread of financial panic and preventing taxpayer funded bail-outs of bad banks. That’s all fine and good. But the new method puts the cost of failed banks squarely on creditors, stock holders, and depositors in the bank. That’s the potential risk to savers. Mind you, the Bank of England has its own method for solving the next UK banking crisis. That method was set up by the bank’s Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA). Here’s the important point, according to the BoE’s own website, “The PRA has built on its approach to recovery and resolution planning through the European Union (EU) Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive.”

Under the BRRD, bank creditors – which include savers – share the losses in a “bail-in”. The Austrian event was a “proof of concept”. And it was momentous enough that the Austrian regulator felt compelled to comment. It wrote:

While the application of the new European recovery and resolution framework for banks is uncharted territory both in legal and practical terms... The measures that have been prescribed... form the basic structure for an orderly resolution, and fully satisfy the aims of the European resolution regime – namely to guarantee financial market stability, to protect taxpayers and to bail-in creditors.

It’s true that the BRRD regime prevents tax payers from having to bail out bad banks. It’s also true that by mandating bail-ins, the people who will pay for the next bank crisis are bank creditors. That includes bond holders, shareholders, and – as far as I can tell – depositors (who are classified as unsecured creditors).

You may be well-aware of this already. Or it may not matter to you. You may be convinced – and you could be right – that what happened to savers in Cyprus and now, apparently, in one Austrian bank, could never happen to savers in a UK bank. But the language in BRRD couldn't be much clearer, could it?

P.S. If you missed my note over the weekend, it was to inform you that *The War on Cash* by Tim Price will not undergo a third printing. There are less than 100 copies left. Tim has decided to focus on a new book project that is due out later this year. In the meantime, he'll be following the story of negative interest rates, digital cash, and bank bail-ins in the London Investment Alert.

THE ENTIRE GLOBAL ECONOMY NOW HINGES ON ONE THING

James Corbett; TheInternationalForecaster.com; via Critical Thinking

As I write these words we are now only hours away from The Most Important Event Ever to Happen in the History of the Global Economy. Investors are bracing themselves. Markets are anticipating. Journalists are spilling Olympic sized swimming pools of ink on writing headline after headline after headline after headline about this, the deciding economic event of our time.

If only this math actually added up.

No, the great event is not the announcement of the discovery of free energy. Or a major new technological breakthrough that will revolutionize industry and increase productivity. Or even an innovative new theory for how to pull us from the brink of the global derivative black hole collapse. It's something entirely more ordinary: words.

That's right, with just a few magic words uttered at today's meeting of the Economic Club of New York, Fed chair Janet Yellen will cause entire markets to rise or fall. A single declarative sentence could strike down a small country. An effusive adjective could cause an entire industry to boom, a disparaging remark could cause that same industry to collapse. A rising intonation, an arched eyebrow, a significant pause, even a semi-colon could be the difference between rags and riches for millions of workers around the world.

Just imagine what she could do with a dangling participle.

Sound ridiculous? It is. Yet nevertheless this is the situation we've arrived at.

As I've noted before time and time again in this column, we have entered the "New Normal" where fundamentals do not matter at all, only perception. Do you believe the Fed has solved the market meltdown of '08? Then they have solved it. Do you believe the skyrocketing debt and geyser of excess liquidity created in the last decade are not a problem? Then they are not a problem. Do you think Janet Yellen can speak rising stocks or a falling dollar into existence? Then she can.

The long story short: the MSM has been playing up the idea of a "Fed revolt" in recent weeks. Don't get your hopes up. Sadly, this revolt has nothing to do with an angry public finally learning the truth about the Federal Reserve and running the banksters out of town.

Instead, it's to do with Yellen's much-scrutinized remarks at this month's Federal Open Market Committee press conference. After the remarks were run through the usual round of tea leaf reading and innard scrying, it was decided that Yellen was telegraphing a slow down in the rate hikes that the Fed had been projected to engage in this year. In the last couple of weeks, four of the 17 FOMC members have spoken out of turn to say they disagree with this approach and will be voting for or advocating a quicker rate hike schedule, with the first one as early as next month. So at today's meeting of the Economic Club of New York, where Yellen will be giving an address, markets around the world are on the edge of their seat to see if Yellen will maintain her dovish stance on the Fed's monetary approach this year or if she will adopt to the bear's advanced schedule.

If you don't believe me that this is a Big Deal that is Driving the Global Economy right now, just look at any of the major financial rags in the last 24 hours. They have explained rising European stocks and sliding futures and a strengthening dollar and easing gold and modestly lower American stocks and who knows what else on the mere anticipation of Yellen's speech today.

Of course, Yellen is not the first person to have this seemingly infinite power over the global economy. Bernanke had it before her. And Greenspan before him. And presumably every Fed chair before him, too. There's a reason they're called the Gods of Money and Greenspan was referred to as a Wizard whose use of the words "irrational exuberance" popped the dotcom bubble. In this system, central bankers conjure economic reality into existence merely by speaking the words. The very essence of magic. Now it's Yellen's turn to have the power to conjure.

If all of this seems insane to you, then congratulations. You're right. It is insane. But in a system that has been constructed around the whims of the central bankers, this is the result: an economy where one bankster technocrat has the power to push the economy off a cliff or to keep the whole thing levitating simply by commanding it to do so.

For those looking for a solution to this situation, the answer is obvious. Run (don't walk) away from the banksters' rigged game. Every step toward disassociating yourself from the bankster system is a step away from this insanity. Alternative and complementary currencies, cryptocurrencies, credit unions, barter, P2P, community organizations, food independence. All of these things are vital steps to be taking if we ever hope to get off the craziness of the central bankster carnival ride otherwise known as the status quo.

Or you could just sit around waiting for Janet Yellen to set the world economy straight.

RUNNYMEDE GAZETTE EDITED BY:- FRANK TAYLOR.
2 CHURCH VIEW, ST GILES TERRACE, CHETTON, BRIDGNORTH, SHROPSHIRE, WV16 6UG

Tel; (01746) 789326

frankinshropshire@hotmail.co.uk