

ECONOMIC PARADOX

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London Free Press, Sept. 1998

More and more people are devoting ever increasing time and energy to maintain traditional family values and their own mental and physical well-being.

What most people don't realize is that they are trapped in a seriously flawed social system. They are using a set of economic principles that are a contradiction of how things really work. When confronted with these contradictions people become very uncomfortable and confused.

For example, society generally disapproves of athletes using "performance enhancing drugs", yet that same society will spend millions of dollars to watch an athlete like Mark McGwire set records while on drugs.

Then there is all that evidence of moral wrongdoing by U.S. President Clinton, yet he still has strong support among U.S. citizens.

There is a growing frustration among parents with teachers, school boards and the provincial government. Yet most of these parents say they don't care about the issues. In spite of being so uninformed or apathetic to the classroom situation, they still want their children in school being "properly" taught.

What have these examples of confused behaviour got to do with the current immoral and unethical economic system?

Well, for starters, the system is an economic paradox. Taxes reward "bad" behaviour and penalize "good" behaviour. The gap between good and bad has become blurred. It's no wonder people are confused.

On the international scene vested interests (i.e., banks) have accumulated immense wealth by speculating on the natural resource base that is the common heritage of all people. In most countries this unearned wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few privileged families. Much of this wealth has found its way into U.S. stocks, bonds, and currency.

Yet it is this group of pirates that is being rewarded with bailouts by the International Monetary Fund and with your tax dollars. Meanwhile, the average citizen around the world loses their job and must pay more for the necessities of life. In Canada the latter, of course, is subject to the PST/GST or equivalent.

Locally a responsible citizen improves a vacant lot with a new building. This creates jobs, other business opportunities and a generally healthier economic environment.

The local council, supported by provincial policy, rewards this positive activity with a crushing tax burden while ignoring rents from the limited common pot (resource base)

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of building lots, minerals, forests, broadcast spectrum, etc. The paradox here is that "good" citizens are heavily taxed while governments undertax "bads" like urban sprawl, pollution and traffic congestion.

Society is conditioned to accepting the economic practices described above as normal and so until something like closed schools, hospitals or a global recession jolt their consciousness, people just play along with the corrupt system that surrounds them.

Every so often, however, the economic bubble will burst and/or "bad morals" based on immoral economics will cause a society to collapse just as it did in Roman times. Only then (maybe) will public pressure motivate the politicians to devise a more just set of economic rules.

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