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Exposing “The Perfect Crime”: Thomas A. Myers’ Open Letter to the Occupy Wall Street (Ows) Movement

Dennis P. McCann

Journal of International Business Ethics Editorial Board

The Journal of International Business Ethics (JIBE) is proud to publish this open letter from Thomas A. Myers, the principal of one the USA’s top firms specializing in forensic accounting. For those whose perception of the Occupy Wall Street movement has been shaped largely by the concerted attempts of mainstream news media to marginalize or otherwise discredit it as a throwback to the hippie protest movements of the 1960s, Myers account should prompt us to take a second look. The movement, at its core, is not some misguided declaration of war on capitalism as such, but a principled demand that justice be done to those who perpetrated ‘the perfect crime’ of ripping off the system of global financial markets, thus precipitating the global financial crisis. Myers’ specific expertise in forensic accounting allows him to describe authoritatively the crime and identify those who had a hand in it.

But it is lucidity of his prose and the transparency of his moral passion that ought to elicit from us a renewed commitment to take up the cause of ethical reform in the financial services industry. Myers’ letter, however, offers more than just an expression of solidarity with the protestors who this past autumn and winter occupied Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan. In order to shame those whose cavalier disregarded their fiduciary responsibilities. Myers asks all of us to join him, not only in shaming those who so cavalierly set aside their fiduciary responsibilities, but also in working to formulate and implement an “Investors’ Bill of Rights,” beginning with the pension plans, endowment funds and other institutional investors, that may help restore the ethical basis and legitimacy for the indispensable role of financial institutions in the global economy. If you are at all concerned about the integrity of international business ethics, you cannot afford to ignore this invitation from Thomas A. Myers.

