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SOCIOECONOMIC DEMOCRACY A PROGRESSIVE SOCIETAL ARRANGEMENT

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Presented here is an advanced, fundamentally just and democratic socioeconomic system capable of resolving or significantly reducing, simultaneously, many of the intimately intertwined societal problems of humanity. Socioeconomic Democracy is a progressive societal arrangement wherein there exist some form and amount of Universally Guaranteed Personal Income and Maximum Allowable Personal Wealth, with both the lower bound on personal material poverty and upper bound on personal material wealth set and adjusted democratically by all participants of a functioning Democratic Society. Discussed first are the essential aspects of Socioeconomic Democracy. Next, related implications such as possible democratic variations, incentive and self-interest, numerous justifications, practical political approximations, system realizability and implementation are all sketched. Some of the dozens of societally beneficial ramifications are indicated. Finally, we briefly suggest how Socioeconomic Democracy would favorably impact the world's presently inconsistent and therefore struggling socioeconomic systems of "Capitalism," "Socialism," and Islamic religio-socio-economics.

Keywords: *Socioeconomics, Democracy, Economics, Socioeconomic Democracy, Income, Wealth, Limits, Societal Problems, Progressive.*

Essential Aspects of Socioeconomic Democracy

Socioeconomic Democracy (SeD) is a theoretically consistent and practicably implementable model socioeconomic system wherein there exist both some form and amount of locally appropriate Universally Guaranteed Personal Income (UGI) and some form and amount of locally appropriate Maximum Allowable Personal Wealth (MAW), with both the lower bound on personal material poverty and the upper bound on personal material wealth set and adjusted democratically by all participants of a Democratic Society.

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The definitive document describing Socioeconomic Democracy is the book Socioeconomic Democracy: An Advanced Socioeconomic System (George, 2002). The original specifically defined idea of Socioeconomic Democracy was evidently first presented in Common Sense II: On the Further Design of Government in General (George, 1972).

We begin by examining each of Socioeconomic Democracy's democratically set bounds, i.e., UGI and MAW. Following that is an important yet simple differentiation between Qualitative Democracy and Quantitative Democracy. The latter, justified by elementary Public Choice theory, is used to allow society to democratically decide the amounts of these two fundamental economic bounds, i.e., UGI and MAW. The four basic theoretical variations of SeD are then outlined.

Universally Guaranteed Personal Income. With Socioeconomic Democracy, each participant of the democratic society would understand that some form and amount of democratically determined, societally guaranteed personal income (UGI) would always be available. Put another way, society would guarantee each citizen some unrestricted minimum amount of purchasing power, one way or another.

To be sure, this basic idea dates back at least to antiquity, resonates in all religions (both spiritual and secular, as in political economy), and has, in recent decades, been increasingly explored and richly developed by numerous individuals, organizations and governments at all levels. The Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) is but one of many national and international groups exploring, advocating and introducing the general concept around the world.

Depending upon available resources and the degree and direction of technological development, this democratically set, societally guaranteed minimum income for all could be sufficient to satisfy the typical individual's minimum subsistence and/or personal healthy growth needs. Alternatively, other societies might democratically decide to set the guaranteed amount at a partial subsistence level, for a variety of locally legitimate reasons.

There are, of course, as many different names and forms of UGI (ranging at least from Basic Income (BI) and Citizen's Income (CI) to Negative Income Tax (NIT) and including Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI)), as there are reasons to establish some form of UGI, or, for that matter, as there are ways proposed to fund different forms of UGI. Indeed, a democratically set UGI could logically be called and

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considered Guaranteed Sustainable Development for All. An increasingly popular public policy perspective referred to as Socioeconomic Affirmative Action is clearly related.

Maximum Allowable Personal Wealth. Further, with Socioeconomic Democracy, all participants of the democratic socioeconomic system would understand that all personal material wealth above the democratically determined and established maximum allowable amount (MAW) would, by due process, be transferred out of their ownership and control in a manner specified by the democratically designed and implemented laws of the land, and transferred in accordance with other laws of the land to fund, say, various forms of Sustainable Development for All.

Do note that all the wealth above the democratically determined maximum allowable amount, now to be devoted (after SeD is established) to the sustainable development of all, could be either transferred in some sense directly to a democratic government to be deployed as democratically determined, or be dispersed and deployed as the present wealth owners desire and think best, satisfying, of course, a few reasonable laws, rules and regulations on the matter.

This latter procedure has many merits, of which one would be that the present wealth holders might in general be expected to more fully appreciate their "earned" opportunity to direct their democratically determined excess wealth toward focusing on specific legitimate societal problems that particularly interest and concern them.

Yet again, this "privilege" to personally deploy one's "excess" wealth for the betterment of society, as personally preferred, could be extended only to those who had personal wealth in excess of the initially established, democratically decided MAW limit (a "Grandfather" clause, as it were), while all excess personal wealth periodically trimmed off after the system is well established could be directed toward a democratic government's General or Specific Welfare Fund.

Perhaps needless to say, the primary benefit of SeD to enhance the general welfare is the result of the economic incentive the democratically set MAW limit creates, and not the amount of wealth periodically trimmed off and donated toward the worthy cause of insuring sustainable development for all. (But everything helps.) This crucial economic incentive is discussed later.

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Democracy. As Sir Winston Churchill once laconically observed, "It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others that have been tried." Considering the demonstrated, disastrous and unequivocal results of "all the others that have been tried," we here desire to seriously explore the potentials of a new, meaningful and democratic socioeconomic system.

There is a simple procedure by which each individual participant in a democratic society (or each member of a democratic legislative body) can directly vote her or his particular preference for an amount, magnitude, or quantity of something in question, with the democratically determined, societally or legislatively desired amount unequivocally resulting. As if to emphasize the significance of the discovery, Duncan Black (Black, 1958) and Economics Nobelist Kenneth Arrow (Arrow, 1963) independently and more or less simultaneously established the important yet simple mathematical result and procedure more than a half century ago.

Their now-classic Social Choice contributions have provided the theory which shows that the Median Value of the participants' (citizens' or legislators') Personal Preference Distribution is the amount the democratic society or body, as a whole, is "for" -- assuming the minimal operational "one participant, one vote; majority rule" decision-making process. This procedure is referred to here as Quantitative Democracy. Roughly speaking, this means that the democratically determined amount is such that half the voters want that much or more while the other half want that much or less.

Note that the objective is not, definitely not, and should never be "equality in and of everything" (whatever that might mean, and neglecting its impossibility of realization), but rather acceptably bounded inequality of essentials, with the particular democratic society democratically determining the degree of inequality it will tolerate or thinks best.

Possible Variations of Socioeconomic Democracy

Note that any participant in the democratic political process, who might be opposed to any UGI, for any reason, could vote to place the lower bound on universal, societally guaranteed assistance at zero. If a majority of voters so voted, it would be the democratic desire of that particular society, at that particular time, to have no UGI.

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Likewise, anyone who might be opposed to some finite limit on allowable personal material wealth, for any reason whatsoever, could and should vote, at election time, to place the upper bound of MAW at infinity. If, for any of a variety of reasons, a majority of the voting public were to prefer and vote to place MAW at infinity, then it would be the democratic desire of that society, at that time, to have no upper bound on personal material wealth.

Socioeconomic Democracy is thus seen to embrace and facilitate all four of the generic variations of democratic socioeconomic systems. That is, there can be democratic societies wherein there is:

Nonzero UGI and finite MAW. This is the standard and most effective form of Socioeconomic Democracy, with capability to facilitate democratic expression of a wide range of opinions and ideologies that characterize different countries, regions or autonomous groups of people.

Collectively, locally appropriate forms, amounts and approximations to SeD will no doubt provide considerable healthy experimentation with a range of alternative socioeconomic philosophies and evolving under the constraints of a range of available or developable resources. In all cases, however, multidimensional improvement in the society can be expected, with an acceleration of the process of improvement to be expected following increasing global adoption of locally appropriate forms of SeD.

Zero UGI and finite MAW. This basic political perspective has many merits, and, as importantly, further satisfactorily resolves many thoughtful individuals' arguably legitimate concerns about universally guaranteed personal income without any qualifications on that guarantee whatsoever. In such a system as this, the many societally beneficial ramifications of Socioeconomic Democracy would all be due to the economic incentive created, and the monetary funds made available, by the democratically set maximum allowable personal wealth bound.

Nonzero UGI and infinite MAW. This perhaps understandable and certainly ubiquitous impulsive thrust toward attempting to "help the poor," with or without addressing the causes of the perennially poor and poverty-stricken, does, of course, have its legendary problems. Among these are determining just how and how much to finance the UGI, as well as who says so and who pays for it. The evolution of human consciousness is currently transcending this confusing and progress-impeding oversight.

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Zero UGI and infinite MAW. This situation, which can theoretically be democratically desired and realized by majority-rule ballot, is, clearly, similar to the present situation of unconstrained bounds on personal material poverty and personal material wealth. But at least with a Socioeconomic Democracy established and public voting on the matter, this strange situation would be democratically approved, with such skewed and problem-producing societal wealth maldistribution apparently acceptable, at least to a majority and at least for the time being.

Beyond these four theoretical and fundamental variations of Socioeconomic Democracy are, of course, the wide ranges of possible specific magnitudes of the UGI and MAW levels, both democratically established. It is in the act of considering and setting these societally acceptable wealth and poverty boundary magnitudes that proper attention to the particular societal situation can and will be expressed.

A few specific possibilities are considered below. It should be kept in mind that the different magnitudes of the democratically established UGI and MAW levels would likely have different effects regarding the amount of reduction of particular societal problems.

Perhaps needless to observe, the same voting procedure (Quantitative Democracy) could be used to democratically resolve a wide variety of other serious societal questions concerning magnitudes of important societal parameters, arising in many different realms and levels of society. These might include, for example, a democratically set upper bound on allowable personal income and/or an upper bound on the allowable ratio of maximum-to-minimum income, or wealth -- in a company, corporation, or country, etc. Thus, many societies, all fundamentally democratic, could nevertheless display their unique democratic differences.

Incentive and Self-Interest

Let us now briefly consider economic incentives, self-interest and possible specific boundary magnitudes in a Socioeconomic Democracy. We start first with the economic incentive created by a democratically set Maximum Allowable Personal Wealth limit. We have observed earlier that, with SeD, all wealth above the democratically set upper bound on personal material wealth could either be given to the government as taxes (to either enhance the General Welfare or be mandated for specific projects and purposes) or be disposed of as the present wealth "owners" so choose (again,

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satisfying reasonable, democratically established societal restrictions, suggestions and opportunities).

In any case, all "rational," self-interested, insatiable, and certainly law-abiding (as the current neoclassical economic assumptions go), extremely wealthy participants in a Socioeconomic Democracy, who still desire increased personal material wealth, would be economically motivated, that is, have economic incentive, to actively and seriously work to increase the general welfare and well-being of the less materially "well-off" members of society. Only in this manner can these (still-wealthiest) participants persuade a majority of the likewise self-interested citizens/participants of the democratic society to see the wisdom in and democratically vote to raise somewhat the legal upper limit on allowable personal material wealth -- everything considered.

There is, in fact, strong economic incentive for those who are at or near the democratically set upper bound on allowable personal material wealth to be successful in improving the General Welfare. For if the current level of MAW is not producing sufficient improvement in the General Welfare, as democratically determined, there is the possibility and probability that the democratic society will democratically decide to reduce the MAW limit even more, in order to enlist even more still-wealthy participants, and their extra wealth, in the proper and noble task of seriously improving the General Welfare and well being of all society, humanity and posterity.

The ultimate effect of such economic incentive, as experienced by those at or near the democratically set upper bound on MAW, will be to transform their very real, primitive and originally perhaps justified and understandable (individual survivability) concept of "self-interest" to instead, and in effect, interpret and include larger and larger segments of society and humanity as "self," insofar as calculations of "self-interest" are concerned.

This is because such a perspective will be appealing to that still-functioning, primitive, individual-ego-informed self-interest. Put another way, global and higher consciousness will be increasingly appreciated, encouraged and demonstrated with the emerging realization of the very real benefit to personal "self-interest" that results from considerations of inclusive humanity's "self-interest."

An informative exercise is to consider the effects and ramifications of many different levels of MAW, democratically set in, say, contemporary USA -- though the general idea is, of course, applicable

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and already considered many places. For example, consider what different situations would obtain in the USA (as well as globally, for that matter) if the personal MAW limit in the USA at election time in, say, 2012, or even 2016, were democratically set at, say, alternately Infinity, $1trillion, $700billion, $100bn (we sure are getting used to dealing with these big numbers), $50bn, $10bn, $1bn, $550million (the penalty fee Goldman Sachs and its CEO, Lloyd "Goldman is doing God's work" Blankfein paid the SEC, thus erasing 15 day's of GS's hard-earned profit, or even $100m (also known as a "Texas Unit" to those who can't be bothered with small change). Presumably, particular individuals could not unreasonably favor and vote for an upper bound on allowable personal material wealth of, say, $10m, or even $1m, though it is highly unlikely that a majority of U.S. voters/dreamers would favor such low magnitudes. It certainly is to be noted that this range of such lower magnitudes would be appropriate to consider and democratically desired by many so-called under-developed societies.

A further informative question might be: "Just what does the present reader think/feel the MAW limit should be in the USA?" Still another, as instructive, question is: "Just what does the thoughtful reader think/feel the MAW limit ultimately would be, if democratically established in the USA in 2012, or perhaps a couple years thence?" Clearly, these different possible magnitudes for a democratically set MAW limit established in contemporary USA would dramatically vary the overall economic incentive created by such a limit.

The economic incentives created by various forms and amounts of UGI and its political approximations have long been theoretically examined, practically tested and adequately documented. The results are easily available, though anyone not familiar with the subject could conveniently begin with BIEN. Indeed, there has long been a very close approximation to UGI in the great state of Alaska (only one year residency required) and there is currently something approximating a form of Citizen's Income, though not so named, in Iran as well as a referendum proposing to implement such a system in Switzerland.

Certainly, except for Tom Paine and, actually, Thales, no proposal for some form of UGI has ever yet been seriously linked directly to total societal democracy and some form of upper bound on allowable personal material wealth. Hence, in spite of its promise and potential, humanity continues to suffer and attempts to endure the present state of this biologically and psychologically very sick planet.

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Insights parallel to those regarding different possible democratically set MAW limits, above, can be obtained by considering implications and ramifications of various possible specific, democratically set UGI amounts and approximations, in the USA and elsewhere, again, say, in 2012. Thus, if one were "totally" uninformed and utterly against any universally guaranteed income for all humans, one would vote to place the UGI level at $0/year. For different reasons, different arguments by different individuals could easily be produced to justify consideration of, say, numerical values for personal UGI ranging from $1/year, $1/month, $1/day (amount one-sixth of humanity tries to live on), $2/d (amount approximately another third of humanity tries to live on), $100/mo, $200/mo (sometimes comparable to the Alaska Permanent Fund dividend), $10,000/year, $100k/yr, $1m/yr and, say, $657m/yr (which was something like the average "earned" income compensation of the "top" 20 private equity and hedge fund managers in 2006).

The incentives, economic and otherwise, created by establishing these two crucial economic bounds, i.e., UGI and MAW, democratically, will, among many other desirable developments, significantly encourage and enhance the informed political participation of all citizens in their finally meaningfully democratic society -- here assumed a positive, progressive and desirable political development. This is basically because of very real and undeniable self-interest in all of us. After all, the only way to democratically establish the UGI and MAW limits is to participate in the political process that would change the de facto settings from zero and infinity, respectively, to magnitudes more suitable for a sustainable democratic society and world.

Justifications for Socioeconomic Democracy

Quite apart from the dozens of serious individual (but interrelated) societal problems eliminated or abated by Socioeconomic Democracy, there are also the larger scientific, philosophic and humanistic arguments pushing incontestably in the same direction. We can, however, take only the briefest glance down these many different dimensions of justification.

Regarding Human Rights, is there anything more appropriate than the Universal Declaration of Human Rights expressed on December 10, 1948 by the UN General Assembly? While it could do no harm to review all of the Declaration, two Rights are particularly germane to our truncated list of justifications for some form of Socioeconomic Democracy.

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"Article 25 (1): Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

"Article 25 (2): In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society."

A literal "wealth" of justifications are compiled and presented in (George, 2002) including psychological, philosophical and religious reasoning. As but one powerful justification, consider Anthropology and the pioneering work of Ruth Benedict. (Maslow and Honigmann, 1970) recovered some insightful and predictably unpublished notes of Benedict regarding what she unabashedly referred to as "social engineering."

But before we enjoy Benedict's intoxicating brew, we should note that she was the much-appreciated mentor of Margret Mead, herself a pioneer in the field and long ago an advocate of guaranteed income. Mead was the one who also famously and frequently observed "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

"From all comparative material," Benedict informs us, "the conclusion that emerges is that societies where nonaggression is conspicuous have social orders in which the individual by the same act and at the same time serves his own advantage and that of the group. The problem is one of social engineering and depends upon how large the areas of mutual advantage are in any society. Nonaggression occurs not because people are unselfish and put social obligations above personal desires but because social arrangements make these two identical.

"I shall need a term for this gamut, a gamut that runs from one pole, where any actor skill that advantages the individual at the same time advantages the group, to the other pole, where every act that advantages the individual is at the expense of others. I shall call this gamut synergy, the old term used in medicine and theology to mean combined action greater than the run of their separate actions.

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"I shall speak of cultures with low synergy, where the social structure provides for acts that are mutually opposing and counteractive, and of cultures with high synergy, where it provides for acts that are mutually reinforcing.

"There is no problem about which we need more enlightenment than about concrete ways in which synergy is set up in societies."

Benedict observed that "anthropologists have not found any atomistic society with high synergy; courses of action in mutual opposition to each other are the order of the day, and the possibilities of people joining each other for common action is minimal. Extremely low synergy in atomistic societies is the commoner rule"

Later, Benedict speaks of primitive economic orders, which "fall into two main types: The first of these I shall call the funnel system. All that the community produces you are to imagine going into the large end of the funnel, which collects everything and channels it toward the richest persons. The collective wealth has only one prime destination, the person who already has valuable possessions. This system depends upon certain men's claims to the labor of others, or upon ownership and the right of favored persons to corner certain articles of wealth. It reaches its highest development where there is interest and where wealth can be used to obtain forced labor.

"The second great pattern of economic orders is one I shall call the syphon system. This is the economy where wealth is constantly channeled away from the point of greatest concentration -- from any point of concentration -- and spread throughout the community. The syphon system ensures great fluidity of wealth.

"Since everyone is provided for, poverty is not a word to fear, and anxiety, which develops so luxuriantly in funnel societies, is absent to a degree that seems to us incredible. These are preeminently the societies of good will, where murder and suicide are rare or actually unknown. If such societies have periods of great scarcity, all members of the community cooperate to get through these periods as best they can.

"When one is studying aggression in different cultures, therefore, one of the things one looks for is the degree to which economic distribution is set up according to the syphon method or the funnel method."

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Practical Political Approximations

Numerous reasonable approximations to the ideal theoretical democratic socioeconomic system model are conceivable. One simple, obvious and meritorious political approximation is characterized by different political parties advocating different amounts for the two crucial socioeconomic boundary parameters, with the "winning" political party or coalition then implementing their particular understanding of the General Will of the democratic society.

Another not-unreasonable political approximation to universally guaranteed income might be guaranteed income for all citizens over and/or under certain age limits. Brazil, of course, is introducing a guaranteed income, starting with all children who "will" go to school. A poor "approximation" to a democratically set upper limit on personal wealth would be a democratically set tax on significant wealth. The referenced text on Socioeconomic Democracy (George, 2002) devotes a whole chapter to a wide-ranging discussion of numerous possible practical political approximations to the ideal theoretical model.

System Realizability and Implementation

The rational study and objective comparison of alternative future possibilities provide the opportunity to make a contribution to societally desirable evolution. The serious student of the future must, of course, be willing to seriously consider presently nonexistent situations. Complementing this requirement is the necessity of establishing that the alternatives considered are in fact physically realizable.

In this limited space, it must simply be stated that the necessary implementation aspects of Socioeconomic Democracy are clearly established, see (George, 2002). These include appropriate voting procedures, necessary administrative technicalities, acceptable legal technicalities, sufficient economic analysis and societally acceptable political considerations.

Suffice to say, Socioeconomic Democracy is unquestionably realizable. Accordingly, far from arriving at "The End of History," it would appear we might well be experiencing the "First Light of Humanity."

In any case, one should certainly keep in mind that "All is Prelude."

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Ramifications

As is indicated above and described at length in the referenced material, Socioeconomic Democracy would thus create economic incentive and provide necessary funds to encourage and effect significant reduction in an almost surprisingly diverse array of unnecessary yet painful, expensive and lethal individual, societal and global problems.

These problems include (but are by no means limited to) those familiar ones involving: automation, computerization and robotization; budget deficits and national debts; bureaucracy; maltreatment of children; crime and punishment; development, sustainable or otherwise; ecology, environment, resources and pollution; education; the elderly; maltreatment of the feminine majority; inflation; international conflict; intranational conflict; involuntary employment; involuntary unemployment; labor strife and strikes; sick medical and health care; desirable military metamorphosis; natural disasters; pay justice; planned obsolescence; political participation; poverty; racism; sexism; untamed technology; and the General Welfare.

It should be kept in mind that these highly desirable outcomes of reduced societal problems are not simply "Goals for a Better World." Rather, they are the direct and predictable ramifications of adopting various forms of locally appropriate Socioeconomic Democracy.

One of a number of reasons why so many different societal problems will all be significantly reduced is because they will all be addressed simultaneously, synergistically, systematically and therefore successfully. Whatever societal problems are not addressed adequately by the publicly motivated and now economically energized "private sector," as democratically determined, can, should and will be successfully addressed by the democratic government (now significantly reduced in size and yet far more effective in benefiting all members of the society it represents and for which it was established), which will now have available sufficient funds and motivation to do so, appreciatively provided by the democratically set Maximum Allowable Personal Wealth limit.

Confident that anything, taken to extreme, turns into its opposite, and that all things are related, and therefore multiply related, let us now take a brief tour of some of these simultaneous transformative possibilities of a progressive societal arrangement.

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Automation, Computerization and Robotization. "What is to be done?" now that automation, computerization and robotization are increasingly able to produce almost everything the whole of humanity could possibly need, and a good bit of what humanity could reasonably want, while requiring next to nobody to push the buttons?

A thoughtful, democratic society could easily adopt Socioeconomic Democracy and thereby guarantee universal direct personal benefit from Humanity's Heritage of Advancing Technological Capability. It is emphasized that this proposal in no way conflicts with, but rather will synergistically encourage and help facilitate, the necessary resurgence of local, satisfying and sustainable community living, globally.

The Common Technological Heritage of Humanity has been reinvested time and time again, starting long before the wheel and accruing compound interest over years, decades, generations, centuries and millennia. "Wealth," as Bucky Fuller famously and frequently observed, "is knowledge utilized." There is sufficient accrued technological wealth to provide a satisfying material and spiritual existence for every member of humanity, and the fact that this is not (yet) realized is the direct and predictable result of the economic incentives created by contemporary sputtering psycho-politico-socio-economic systems.

The global psycho-sociopathic prostitution of technological development must end. The obvious and blatant violation of this intended inheritance and birthright of all humanity to benefit from properly directed science and engineering is unconscionable, predictable and soon to be eliminated, democratically.

Budget Deficits and National Debts. Suffice to say here that Socioeconomic Democracy would derive necessary funds from, and provide societally synergetic economic incentive for, the materially wealthiest members of society to rapidly reduce and eventually eliminate harmful governmental budget deficits and more harmful governmental debts. National surpluses, not only for rainy days but even sunny and exploratory days, should and would be possible.

The typical intergenerational injustice of accumulating and bequeathing staggering debt to future generations could/would finally be terminated. All of those who presently obtain their luxurious personal income and wealth by the care, feeding and milking of huge governmental debt would still have at least their subsistence needs met with a UGI -- democratically set -- at a

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sufficiently high level to help guarantee not only basic survival but some sense of satisfaction in life.

Bureaucracy. Save perhaps for a bureaucrat, bureaucracy is generally considered a significant societal problem -- often most prominent in "developed," "overdeveloped" and "mal-developed" socioeconomic systems. For the bureaucrat, it is not infrequently a dull-to-absurd, but seemingly necessary, means to a guaranteed personal income. SeD would be most effective in reducing societally expensive, unproductive, intrusive, inefficient and generally undesirable bureaucracy.

For example, with Socioeconomic Democracy, practically all present social welfare bureaucracies, which administer myriad uncoordinated and frequently competing, wrongly incentivized General Welfare programs, including Food Stamps, AFDC (Aid For Dependent Children and Corporations), Unemployment Compensation, robbed and/or worthless Retirement Plans, Promises and Old-Age Pensions, even Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and all those other near bankrupt mega-systems of the federal, state and city governments which now or will soon require complete restructuring, would no longer be necessary and could be carefully and systematically eliminated while simultaneously better and more efficiently satisfying all legitimate human needs during the transition and transformation.

These bureaucracies will either be independently restructured without acknowledgement of, and coordination with, the necessary restructuring or elimination of all the other subsystems in society's presently sputtering General Welfare System or, as a result of SeD, the problems the bureaucracies have been erected ostensibly to solve will in actuality be solved universally, democratically and far more efficiently. One way or another, the bureaucracies and the programs are going to change fundamentally and soon.

Children. Whether speaking of the continuing conditions of children in the USA, which significantly "leads" the rest of the industrial nations in the high rate of child poverty and pathetic gang killings, or in the rest of the world, where many children in many countries labor and languish, malnourished and mobilized for war and killing, the right to a healthy and happy childhood is as violated by the long reach of contemporary economic systems as by past economic systems.

Whether children are forced into slavery, corporate profit-motivated labor, prostitution, or crime for survival on the street is the shame of

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us all. It should be clear Socioeconomic Democracy would go a long way toward eliminating the violations of the rights of children -- nationally and globally, and for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways.

Having solved the national deficit and debt problem with SeD ipso facto reduces undeserving debt, a filthy-to-toxic environment and killing-machine raped-resources saddled upon future generations of children because of the excesses, cowardice, stupidity or simply relative unconsciousness of past and present generations of adults, politicians and economists.

Crime and Punishment. While there certainly are Many Faces of Crime, it should be immediately clear that SeD is capable of democratically differentiating between Crimes caused by Need and Crimes caused by Greed. Certainly, Socioeconomic Democracy can and does eliminate Need (at least as democratically determined) and therefore any and all crime caused by it. At long last, society could really get tough on the remaining crime mostly caused by Greed and the incentive promoted by contemporary socioeconomic systems.

It can even be anticipated that overwhelming majorities of law-abiding, sensitive citizens might coalesce to form a consensus supporting a solution to the far more important and harmful crime problem (crime caused by Greed) by throwing all people apprehended and found guilty of crimes caused by Greed into a jail equipped with only such amenities as can be afforded by the prisoner's forfeited UGI during his (or her) residency in jail. This, as opposed to present-day Country Club Confinement currently reserved for many wealthy and “successful” corporate criminals and government officials convicted of crimes of Greed.

The sheer terror (that good ol' "economic incentive") often associated with the fear of being fired, laid off, terminated, downsized or outsourced in a global market where there are far more people than presently available worthwhile jobs would, of course, no longer be experienced with SeD (since at least the individual's subsistence needs would be guaranteed). Hence, far fewer people would become so desperate, distorted and “demented” after being laid off (for any of a variety of reasons, again) as to massacre former employers, fellow employees, innocent bystanders, shoppers in malls, citizens in Post Offices, school children in schoolyards and college children in colleges, and all the other vengeful and perhaps understandable-if-undesirable killings, ad infinitum.

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Needless to say, the contemporary "growth" and presently profitable "Incarceration Industry" (profitably supplying an "apparent need"), most notable in the USA, and devoted in the USA to attempting to warehouse (certainly not rehabilitate) the highest number and proportion of incarcerated individuals on this glorious globe, could and would be reduced, with surprising billions of dollars saved. Indeed, the present cost of one prisoner in jail (food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, supervision, gym equipment, etc.) is far more than society "freely" provides its hard-working, law-abiding, honest and well-intentioned citizens. The fact that this doesn't "figure" figures, considering contemporary socioeconomic systems, the malignant economic incentives they create and the sociopathic economists who espouse such malignancies.

It is true that the USA Incarceration Industry might be expected to take a "hit" from such a humane policy, but again, there is the democratically set UGI to provide at least sustenance for all the no-longer-needed, presently well-unionized Human Warehouse Guards and more misanthropic Human Warehouse Entrepreneurs, until they get back on their feet and find another job to contribute to their healthy personal growth and that of the now-democratic society.

Development. At the outset, it is observed that the whole world is in development. The dimensions of development include at least its physical, environmental, scientific, technological, economic, social, psychological, political, ethical, sustainable, spiritual and cosmic aspects. Different societies -- as different individuals -- have developed to different degrees down these different dimensions.

Both the democratically set maximum allowable personal wealth limit and the democratically set universal guaranteed income would contribute, in significant ways, to healthy development along essentially all these dimensions, as the interested reader is invited to verify for herself.

While much good work has been done by and in response to the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is becoming clearer that satisfaction of many of the eight basic goals will not even be approached by 2015, the year of reckoning, at least without fundamental and universal change in a positive direction. And then, of course, the MDGs' attempt is only aiming at reducing by one half the number of humans now living in poverty and other forms of needless misery. Such a limited overall goal is, understandably, held in utter contempt by many, considering what society and humanity could do. Much more requires doing and can be done.

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These two democratically set limits (UGI and MAW) would also provide a societal "future shock absorber" which is at once simple and societally controlled. For the "underdeveloped" nations of the world, many of whom continue to seek alternatives to the strict “capitalist” and “socialist” (whatever those words now mean) development models, SeD would allow all the peoples of these nations to democratically control the rate and direction of societal development -- heretofore almost always an ugly and inhuman process, thanks in the last half century significantly to the IMF and WTO Banksters and their frequently befuddled Economists and sundry Economic Hit Men, and many (but not all) International Corporations which can and do buy and sell national governments. In the "developed" countries, where fundamental technological change is bound to take place one way or another, further healthy (as opposed to contemporary psychopathic) development would be realized by the economic incentive created with the two democratically set boundaries on personal material poverty and personal material wealth.

Ecology, Environment and Pollution. Neither the well-being (welfare) of society in general nor the well-being of individuals of society are well served by presently profitable polluting practices promoted by the economic incentives created by contemporary socioeconomic systems. Socioeconomic Democracy would do much to reduce further pollution and in fact would provide strong economic incentive and opportunity to help restore the presently degraded environment -- throughout this polluted planet. Serious, meaningful concern (and meaningful love) could then be shown not only for our immediate children but also for that seventh generation.

From a universal, democratically established and set, societally guaranteed personal income, at least four benefits are immediate. First, this guaranteed income could financially allow people to refuse to work in industries that significantly pollute the environment. This reduces pollution (and killing). Second, the guaranteed income could sustain people while they demanded non-pollution-producing jobs and even jobs to reduce present pollution. This reduces pollution (and killing) even more. Third, the democratically set guaranteed income for all would allow more people to refuse to buy the significantly polluting products of industry. Pollution (and killing) is thereby reduced even further. Fourth, this democratically set universally guaranteed income would allow more people to demand nonpolluting products from industry and even products and processes that ecologically complement other existing products and processes. All this contributes to the well being and welfare of

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everyone and everything -- including the environment: solid, liquid and gaseous.

Consider next the basic effect on pollution of a democratically set and adjusted maximum allowable personal wealth limit. Any self-interested, rational participant at or near the upper bound on allowable personal material wealth would no longer be economically motivated to attempt to generate personal profit, by means currently legal or illegal, at the expense of significant environmental pollution or damage, i.e., at the expense of other members of society. This elimination of externalities and the pseudo-Economists who ignore them will profoundly improve the cleanup process.

This is because society could pay for the added costs of properly cleaning up the pollution with funds obtained by democratically reducing the allowable wealth limit even more. Further, such societal control would be most effective because it would be operating at and on the source of the pollution, rather than attempting to repurify the total volume of the polluted medium -- a societally expensive suggestion frequently proffered by those proposing to manufacture and market technological fixes.

The Gospel of Consumerism, understandably promoted by presently motivated corporations, aided and abetted by slick-and-thin advertising, would be transformed into a Gospel of Conservation, equally enticingly promoted by transformed and redirected corporations operating in a democratic society and a democratic socioeconomic system dedicated to the General Welfare of All. “Good Business” is by no means an oxymoron, and requires only the correct economic incentive.

Education. It should be clear that Socioeconomic Democracy would effectively resolve the problems of financing, providing and rewarding dedicated quality teachers for, and successfully imparting to students the importance and joy of, a meaningful education for all.

It is assumed that at least one of the more important objectives of education is increased clear thinking capability on the part of students and ultimately the adult participants of a democratic society. To realize Socioeconomic Democracy, people will have to start thinking -- it will be an education in itself, and may even cause momentary headaches.

With SeD, there is strong economic incentive for the still wealthy, pegged at the democratically set upper bound on allowable personal material wealth, to see that this goal of quality education is indeed

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realized. And some form of a locally appropriate universal guaranteed material income at least helps to guarantee everyone the opportunity for further education of personal choice, when and as desired or required, throughout life.

The essential participation of parents in the education of their children (always recognized as important, but because of the stresses and conflicts caused by inefficient contemporary socioeconomic systems and their blood-and humanity-sucking economic incentives) could far more easily be provided with SeD in place – for, it is by now hoped, obvious reasons.

Elderly. The approaching bankruptcy of the many mega-systems societies have hesitantly designed to express at least partial gratitude to previous generations for bearing and nurturing them does seem a shame. But as Occidentals all surely have learned by now, a crisis is an opportunity. In this case, with SeD, it is the opportunity to eliminate the financial, intellectual and moral crises in the quality of life for all the elderly, by democratically creating a more advanced, efficient and effective socioeconomic system to universally accomplish this most appropriate task.

Feminine Majority. Socioeconomic Democracy clearly satisfies numerous legitimate demands articulated by or for the feminine majority of humanity. For example, SeD would guarantee all people the opportunity to participate meaningfully in the socioeconomic sphere. All poverty, including the major portion experienced by women (and their children), would be eliminated democratically and immediately.

No longer would there be such a thing as "unpaid labor." Indeed, guaranteed income for all would cover all women who frequently labor totally unpaid to bear and rear the prevailing patriarchal socioeconomic system its next generation of laborers and warriors. Thus finally would matriarchic nurturing be acknowledged as crucial to human existence, survivability and sustainable development, not in more glowing words but with something a little more substantial.

In any case and far more importantly, with all women guaranteed some measure of economic independence, SeD certainly would dramatically reduce the number of unwanted, unnecessary or harmful pregnancies and births. Hence, the desire of those who claim a "right to choose" would converge with the desire of those who currently claim a "right to life" but evidently merely mean at present a "right to birth," regardless of the lifetime of consequences, including, not frequently, living hell.

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Democratically set guaranteed income for all would be the universal safeguard against any significant economic hardship experienced by anybody (most often by women and children) as a result of changing family relationships. No longer would a woman -- or a man -- be forced to prostitute herself -- or himself -- in order to obtain what a majority of the members of society consider a satisfactory subsistence. Highly priced prostitution, in the oldest as well as all other more recently established patriarchal professions, most definitely including the pseudo-science of economics, would also tend to be reduced, as the interested reader is urged to thoughtfully and thoroughly verify for herself.

The democratically set, universally guaranteed income would be available to all older women who require it and the democratically set maximum bound on personal wealth would provide economic incentive for the still rich, famous and powerful to cause meaningful, acceptable and satisfying work to be made available for all older women who desire it.

Inflation. Now, some form of democratically set, societally guaranteed income for all would make that portion of present society which is most adversely affected by inflation essentially immune thereto. Clearly, if inflation exists, for any reason, the democratically set UGI could simply be increased by subsequent voting to match the higher cost of living. This procedure could ultimately be automated, thus eliminating need of frequent voting during periods of high and/or increasing inflationary rates, by employing a "cost-of-living index" to appropriately adjust a periodically reset UGI level by ballot. Note that such a societal safeguard against inflation basically provides guaranteed minimum purchasing power during periods of high inflationary rates. Implications for a true and actually beneficial "free and fair market" are enormous.

Among many other things, SeD would eliminate (or significantly reduce) all "wage push" inflation because there would then be reasonable and democratic control over the extremes in the distribution of wealth and income. “Wage earners,” “workers” and all those other glorified-then-ignored “stupid small people” would for the first time have their just economic reward and there would be no need for labor to "push" for their just economic reward. No longer would workers be held hostage by economic incentive operating off contemporary income and wealth distributions and no longer would they be forced to accept wages many orders of magnitude lower than others who clearly do no more (and frequently less) good for humanity. As noted later, this also

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eliminates societally disruptive but presently necessary labor strikes.

A democratically set maximum allowable personal wealth limit would do much to ease inflationary pressures. Among many other important effects, it would provide economic incentive for the still-wealthy near the democratically set upper bound on MAW to find out just what really IS inflation (which, among other things, leads to what really IS money?), what causes inflation and how to put a stop to it, because until they do, the democratically set UGI can be raised to keep up with inflation and the democratically set MAW limit can be reduced to help pay for it.

International Conflict. The enhancement of societal well being made possible with Socioeconomic Democracy ipso facto provides an effective and positive deterrent to international warfare, here assumed undesirable and to be eliminated, ASAP. The simultaneous resolution of a large number of these other serious societal problems, as described here, eliminates at once many causes of -- and perhaps more importantly, many excuses for -- war, with its attendant, purposeful and predictable killing, not to more than mention environmental damage.

Beyond this, other significant beneficial effects of SeD can be anticipated. For example, those participants in the democratic socioeconomic system who are personally at or near the societally set upper bound on allowable personal wealth would no longer have personal economic incentive to promote war or military intimidation, whether involving their own country or other nations. They could no longer gain personal wealth, as many now do, by such action and could well lose it, especially if their society democratically decided to further reduce the allowable personal wealth limit to help finance involvement in any “necessary” hostilities.

Democratically set, governmentally guaranteed personal income for everyone also provides many direct deterrents to warfare. Among other strong effects, it would eliminate any economically "handicapped" class, which, of course, has historically provided warring nations with a convenient pool of combatants and minimally paid, brave-or-cowardly, thoughtful-or-thoughtless killers.

Such guaranteed income also solves the very real and almost always neglected problem of necessary income for all those who presently derive their personal income and wealth from warfare, its threat, preparation, propagation or promotion, either directly or indirectly, that is to say, the murderous (if presently profitable) Military-

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Industrial Complex that General Dwight D. Eisenhower and, before him, "Old Gimlet Eye" General Smedley D. Butler emphatically warned against.

Consider just one, of hundreds, of examples of those who would lose their jobs "if Peace broke out" due to establishment of Socioeconomic Democracy, but whose minimum necessary personal income would be guaranteed by the establishment of Socioeconomic Democracy.

Who would have guessed that the U.S. Pentagon has perhaps the largest Public Relations apparatus in the world -- spending, we're told, about $4.7billion on P.R. in 2009 alone and employing some 27,000 people -- a staff nearly as large as the entire 30,000-person U.S. State Department? If meaningful Peace did break out, what would most mentally-deficient Economists do but suggest a cost-savings program with government throwing out all those hardened, willing workers onto the streets, without food, water, shelter, further education, health care, or even a few good luck pennies to jingle in their jeans? But with UGI, democratically set, these former PR types' basic needs would still be met, at least until they learned a more societally beneficial profession.

All this reduction in "profitable" war makes available, among other things, needed funds for Sustainable Development for All. Far more importantly, perhaps, it provides a fundamentally different and far healthier Mindset for Mankind.

Yet if some war is absolutely "necessary," both democratically set MAW and UGI bounds, and the economic incentives they create, would go a long way to insure that all military personnel are provided adequate care (financial, medical, psychological, educational, therapeutic and otherwise) to meet their requirements for attempting to salvage a deservedly respected, dignified and healthy life, both during and after their military service -- as opposed to not-uncommon contemporary conditions and practices. The veteran suicide rate, currently estimated by some (in the U.S. Veteran's Administration!) to be about 18 per day, but certainly a universal phenomenon, is to be expected considering contemporary socioeconomic systems and the societally harmful economic incentives they create. That same suicide rate could and would be essentially eliminated with Socioeconomic Democracy.

Intranational Conflict. Whether intranational conflict has components of cultural differences, color, gender, age, religion, class, caste and/or whatever else people manage to quibble about, a

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common thread is almost always economic. But with Socioeconomic Democracy, that common cause of intranational conflict is simply and democratically eliminated – or at least significantly reduced. Forthrightly, the proposed just and democratic societal arrangement will have publicly acknowledged and declared its commitment to the all-inclusive General Welfare. Here again, we assume that intranational conflict is undesirable and to be eliminated -- in spite of all the presently highly paying jobs, guaranteed income for a few, wealth concentration and increasing GDP that intranational conflict and its concomitant problems generate.

As a single specific example of the harm caused by present intranational conflict (and international conflict, for that matter), consider the lowly landmine. Economically produced by the millions (in contemporary socioeconomic systems with contemporary economic incentives), these and similar creations of scientifically trained and, no doubt, highly paid minds could, of course, also be discussed under the Problem of Pollution, which is what they are for everyone else after the boys (and now girls) are done playing war games and have gone home or been buried. To be sure, they are a rather deadly form of pollution; but then, in the long run, what pollution isn't?

Or landmines could be discussed under Medical Care for instantly, if crudely, amputated limbs and lives. Or they could be discussed under Involuntary Unemployment, which is what they produce if the unsuspecting victims somehow survive the explosion and then have to try to figure out a way to compete for survival in a personal-profit-motivated, everyone-else-be-damned global marketplace. Landmines could be discussed under Drug Abuse, which is certainly one unfortunate but predictable and understandable ultimate result of seeing one's surviving loved ones or oneself limping about on crutches and artificial limbs or trying to get around in wheelchairs because of the stupid wars, the stupid war promoters, manufacturers and the stupid landmines.

Admittedly, on the "positive" side, perhaps all these and the myriad other ultimate ramifications of profitably produced, distributed and abandoned landmines, depleted Uranium artillery shells, general spraying of CBR weaponry and other abandoned obscenities will sow the seeds for the next conflict, which can then kick start a sluggish and uncompetitive economy, bringing again momentary prosperity for some with the economic boom accompanying the next intra- and/or international conflict.

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Involuntary Employment. Whether rooted in the requirement to "work or be shot" or "work or starve to death," involuntary employment, if not identical with, certainly shades into slavery. A most important characteristic of any societally satisfying economic system -- and one totally ignored by practically all contemporary economic systems and confused economists -- is therefore the ability to eliminate or substantially reduce involuntary employment. It bears reemphasis; it is here assumed that involuntary employment (or, for that matter, involuntary anything) is undesirable and to be minimized or eliminated throughout society.

Socioeconomic Democracy does well in this regard. A democratically set, universally available guaranteed income, placed somewhere around subsistence level, would allow most of those presently involuntarily employed to terminate personally unsatisfying and/or societally and environmentally detrimental employment. Note that the amount of income set democratically and guaranteed everyone would determine just how much involuntary employment could be eliminated, with effectiveness increasing as the societally set UGI level is increased.

On the other side of the personal wealth spectrum, those near the democratically determined upper limit on allowable personal material wealth would be economically encouraged to help make all truly necessary and desirable societal work personally satisfying for, and voluntarily sought by, those who are willing to perform such work. The percentage of the population enlisted in this societally desirable endeavor increases as the level of the democratically set allowable personal wealth limit decreases.

Involuntary Unemployment. Socioeconomic Democracy would also be an effective safeguard against the problem of involuntary unemployment. Quickly reviewing, if a person is involuntarily unemployed, for any reason and for any duration, that person's basic needs, democratically determined, would still be satisfied. This necessary minimum income would be available regardless of whether the unemployment was frictional, cyclical, structural or simply economic-theory-impaired. Indeed, this income, guaranteed against the shortcomings of economic theory and antiquated economic theorists, and not to forget the onslaught of work-eliminating technology, would eventually allow "unemployment" to become a good thing -- something no current scarcity-assuming (actually, scarcity-producing, scarcity-maintaining and scarcity-glorifying) economic system can do. Until that time, those at or near the democratically set maximum allowable personal wealth limit would have considerable monetary motivation to see that

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acceptable, satisfying, reasonably remunerated and societally beneficial work is made available for all who desire such structured activity.

Further, do note that any involuntary unemployment caused by the fear of being employed in cost-cutting, safety-sacrificing, personal-profit motivated Corporate Business Ventures such as underground mining and offshore drilling, etc., would be much assuaged by the reality of both democratically set MAW and UGI limits.

Labor Strife and Strikes. Societal inconvenience and disruption caused by labor strikes are, of course, experienced only in those politico-socio-economic systems wherein this particular form of request, protest, and demand for redress are tolerated, permitted and employed. A valid solution to the very real societal problems caused by labor strikes must clearly contain, among other things, the legitimate goals of the strikers. Equally important, a truly valid solution would accomplish these goals at no illegitimate expense or inconvenience to any other members of society. A general and efficient solution would simultaneously realize the same degree of legitimate socioeconomic redress for all members of society.

Socioeconomic Democracy renders labor strikes more or less obsolete and would unquestionably significantly reduce their occurrence. This is so because practically every legitimate goal of labor, yet articulated or not and succinctly summarizable as a just demand for democratic participation in society's socioeconomic system, is realized with SeD. The causes of a large number of labor strikes would therefore be eliminated. Further, all other participants in the democratic socioeconomic system could only benefit from the elimination of societally disruptive yet presently necessary, though frequently ineffective, labor strikes.

Medical and Health Care. We have elsewhere observed that some quality universal guaranteed medical care and (for efficiency's sake) health promotion is a very real form of (partial) UGI -- as is quality universal education. When the amount of UGI is democratically set, the amount could be adequate to provide and guarantee, individually and societally, physical and psychological health.

We here merely observe that SeD (especially the democratically set MAW limit) would encourage and cause a desirable and fundamental metamorphosis in the economic motivations and incentives within the medical professions and much more importantly within the medical business professions (economically motivated, as they are, just as most every other business), which currently frequently

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attempt (and are legally bound) to package and provide medical, dental, pharmaceutical and psychotherapeutic care primarily for personal profit, rather than overall societal health and benefit.

Military Metamorphosis. The metamorphosis of the military has been taking place for many years now but has of late accelerated. Accompanied by lively discussion, to be sure, there is the metamorphosis of the relationship of women to the military (including inter alia both the expanding roles of women serving in the military and the various "uses" made of women in both friendly and occupied territories by the still-mostly male military). There is the metamorphosis of the purpose of military capability from solely killing, controlled or wanton destruction and dominance to increasingly peacekeeping activities (a service as dangerous and courageously performed as old-fashioned frontline, face-to-face trench combat) and on to the increasing use of specialized military forces for rapid rescue, disaster relief and general humanitarian missions (again requiring courage and commitment).

This military metamorphosis is taking place at the same time as the complementing metamorphosis in the meaning and understanding of national security. Certainly governmental departments concerned with the interior, the environment, the economy, medicine and public health, education, etc., are all significant parts of a metamorphosing Department of Defense, intelligently concerned with true national and international security.

Socioeconomic Democracy would encourage and help facilitate the healthy metamorphosis of the military. As the reader is seeing, SeD would simultaneously reduce or eliminate many of the causes of and excuses for war. Any justifiably proud traditions of the military and the warrior would certainly not cease with the diminution of war. Only the killing would. All of the above-mentioned changes and other new ways to serve would be developed and expanded. A National Service Corps, obligatory or voluntary, associated with some approximation of SeD, could eventually grow within and become a proud part or branch of the military service. Throughout the global metamorphosis of the military, the military personnel of all countries can, should and will continue to serve their countries, and humanity, with courage, strength, intelligence, compassion and good humor.

Natural Disasters. As the experience of the unfortunately feeble and financially constrained, whether or not valiant, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) efforts in the USA to socialize some of the costs and benefits of widespread natural

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disaster relief emphasize, almost all such efforts have in the past been only partially helpful and too often too little and too late. These formal governmentally organized responses to natural disasters have been both too little and too late primarily because society has not yet made an unquenchable commitment to the General Welfare of all its citizens -- though that was and remains one of the six purposes of writing that "precious" United States Constitution.

In the hypothesized, and soon to be realized, just and democratic socioeconomic system, as defined here, all (or at least a majority) of the participants will have made such a commitment. A balanced budget, reduced societal debt (both public and private) and reduced expenditures on society's other shrinking problems will make available far more funds and capabilities to maximize beneficial response to, and minimize harmful effects caused by, the predictably continuing sequence of multibillion dollar "unexpected" natural disasters. The metamorphosis of the military provides enormous potential for further rapid, effective and massive response capability during and after, as well as anticipatory preparation prior to, natural disasters.

Do consider the possibilities. From asteroids, meteorites and comets slamming into the planet (thanks, Jupiter, for the impressive yet distant demonstration), to hurricanes, tornadoes, cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, tidal waves, "Rogue" waves (we're not talking about Sarah, though some might view her as another natural disaster), volcanic eruptions (of magma or crude oil), blizzards, floods, mud slides, droughts, fires, melting polar ice, rising tides flooding coastal communities and mega-cities, periodically shifting oceanic currents including (but not limited to, as they say) El Niños y La Niñas, and all the other impressive natural processes, they will all continue to occur even if humanity does not, by its actions, affect by one iota Gaia's health and well-being.

On the other hand, and being realistic, rational and responsible, it could/should be acknowledged that some detrimental effects of human action have already taken place (personal-profit-motivated Global Climate Change and the Pacific and Atlantic ocean trash piles sure aren't "natural" disasters), more are to come, and it is by no means clear just how harmful things really are or will become and just how big a "natural" disaster humanity will really manage to create and/or personify.

Pay Justice. As surely as an Iowan Whirlwind merits respect, so Pay Justice merits respect, about the globe. And just as an unexpected, suddenly appearing, beautiful, powerful and determined Iowan

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Whirlwind demands immediate action, so Pay Justice demands immediate action, about the globe. No need for further fancy definitions, detailed discussions, governmental gibberish, required further research, subtle slavery, obligatory oratory or academic alibis. Pay Justice Now!

It is no doubt quite clear, this far along, just why and how Socioeconomic Democracy would help realize a significant increase in Pay Justice, about the globe. From universal Pay Equity to universal Appropriate Pay, it is quite simple: Pay Justice Now!

Planned Obsolescence. The determination of the multidimensional beneficial impact of Socioeconomic Democracy on the personally profitable and societally detrimental practice of planned obsolescence is hereby confidently left to the reader, gentle or otherwise. And while one is at it, one should definitely simultaneously consider the related problem of promoting addictive consumerism, blatantly and vulgarly encouraged everywhere possible.

Political Participation. It should be clear that the almost ubiquitous problem of voting, whether that problem be manifest as an oppressive requirement to vote, a present lack of the opportunity to vote, or merely a growing majority not bothering to vote, would be substantially eliminated if the questions to be decided at election time were the democratic determination of the bounds on universally guaranteed minimum income and maximum allowable personal wealth. The political apathy expressed by many tens of millions of Americans and million of others throughout the world who do not vote has, of course, little to do with the inconvenience of registering and voting and far more to do with the disenchantment with the seemingly near meaningless political process providing next to nothing worthwhile for which to vote.

Some have argued logically for a Basic or Citizen's Income on the grounds that the UGI would be, among many other things, appropriate payment to participate meaningfully, wholeheartedly and thoughtfully in society and its politico-socio-economic system. The UGI can be viewed, employing (temporarily and reluctantly) neoclassical free-market theory, as a necessary and just salary providing economic incentive for everyone to participate in the finally relevant ritual of voting. Buckminster Fuller more thoughtfully referred to something similar as a highly desirable “Lifetime Fellowship.”

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One alleged geographical obstacle to, or problem with, increased political voting (what with electronic feedback of election results instantaneously radiating westward across, say, the United States) is the projection and/or reporting of election results (for politicians) prior to all voting polls closing. A not uncommon complaint comes from California, though the great State of Hawaii sees the sun for many hours after California and the rest of the country are wrapped in darkness. And then there is Russia!

In any case, when voting to democratically determine the two bounds of SeD at a federal level, each vote, whether the first cast, the last cast or any of those cast in between, would be of equal weight and impact on the final outcome -- and would, as observed above, in all likelihood be eagerly and thoughtfully cast. Then, while at the polling booth or filling out the mail-in ballot, the participant might even bother to cast a vote for some promising politician or political initiative worthy of consideration.

Another aspect of the improvement in the political process resulting from adoption of SeD is the increased public focus on the meaning, purpose and realization of democracy. The whole concept of "representative democracy" clearly needs a steam bath, under high pressure, about the globe. At a minimum, Proportional Representation (PR) will replace, or rather evolve from, presently poorly performing "Representative Democracy." Note also the withering away of any alleged or real "Tyranny of a Majority."

Poverty. The myriad manifestations of the ubiquitous problem of poverty assault our senses daily. It is of moral, economic and visual interest to eliminate poverty. But if we are serious about the desire to truly eliminate poverty, it behooves us to pay appropriate attention to the meaning of the word. From almost unbelievably obliging dictionaries, we are given the following apropos phrases illustrating meanings of the word poverty:

(1) State or condition of having little or no money, goods or means of support, as in "broke."

(2) Lack of something specified, as in poverty of intellect.

(3) Deficiency of desirable ingredients or qualities, as in poverty of charity.

(4) Scantiness or insufficiency, as in poverty of the "Safety Net."

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Beyond these more or less common definitions and interpretations of the word poverty, there is the poverty of practically everything else. There is the Poverty of Affluence and the Poverty of Progress. There is the Poverty of Liberalism (18th, 19th and 20th century versions; 21st century version of Liberalism DOA/RIP), the Poverty of Socialism (ditto), the Poverty of the Welfare State and the Poverty of Mixed(-up) Economies. There is the Poverty of Education and the Poverty of the Academic Community. There is the Poverty of the University Economics Departments, that can't or don't want to figure out a better economic system to eliminate the poverty they and everybody else daily experience, ignore or guarantee their personal income by "working on." Certainly Hope, Confidence and Justified Faith appear impoverished. Perhaps most important of all, there is the ***Poverty of Ideas to solve, once and for all, the Unnecessary Planetary Problem of Poverty.***

The terrifying Tsunami of Poverty, engulfing the globe, can and will be ended with Socioeconomic Democracy.

Racism. Consider next the impact of Socioeconomic Democracy on that variegated problem of "racism." First, it should be observed that according to recent scientific discovery and understanding, not to mention common sense, there is but one race -- the human race. Further, we all share, scientifically speaking, a common GreatMother, who lived many hundreds of thousands of years ago in Africa -- and who, no doubt, thought about, cared and wished well for all her GreatChildren to come. So whatever the squabble among humans, it is and indeed definitely displays all the characteristics of a "family fight."

As an aside, it is noted that with our common GreatMother from Africa, this makes most all "Americans" African-Americans, with any differences of note simply being on which ship, deck and in-or-out of chains they and/or their ancestors come over in. "Native" Americans are an exception, and could mostly be referred to as African-Asian-Americans, or African-Polynesian-Americans, quite respectfully.

Thus, with only one human race, there can really be no real problem of racism -- that isn't utterly stupid. Admittedly, however, this simple scientific fact has evidently not as yet penetrated general consciousness or persuaded a large number of people from behaving in ways that display and dramatize their continuing confusion concerning the matter. But resolve the important problems, the economic distribution and incentive problems, and "racism" as we now know it will almost vanish.

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Any residual "racism" (after Socioeconomic Democracy has universally solved the really important economic distribution and incentive problems -- and, for that matter, the production, productivity and productiveness problems) will certainly not be something to fear, dread or even get bent out of shape over. Rather, any vestiges of "racism" would then be something to ridicule, or at least laugh at, or, more thoughtfully yet, pity, or, more thoughtfully yet, ignore, while paying attention to the far more interesting, delightful and fascinating aspects of life on this beautiful Planet Earth -- home of its beautiful and colorful Human Race.

Sexism. The "problem of sexism," we respectfully submit, is very much like the "problem of racism" -- at least in certain crucial aspects and structure. It will become apparent that a significant portion of practically anything that could at all reasonably be referred to as harmful and undesirable "sexism" would be eliminated when the current decidedly undemocratic and patriarchal socioeconomic systems of the world have been replaced with Socioeconomic Democracy. It is reserved for the reader to think of literally dozens of reasons why this will be so and dozens of examples of what might be expected with a locally appropriate democratic socioeconomic system.

Untamed Technology. As has been seen, SeD reduces the societal problems caused by presently motivated and incentivized technology, as well as provides incentive for the redirection of technological development towards greater satisfaction of human needs. That is to say, Socioeconomic Democracy would help realize the desirable but unrealized promise of technology, as well as reduce and help eliminate the undesirable but unfortunately realized harmful and killing potentials and actualities of technology.

Being guaranteed an income -- minimal though it may initially be -- people could, and an increasing portion of them would, refuse to work on technological projects not clearly dedicated to the well being of all society and the environment. The relationship here to involuntary employment should be clear.

Further, this guaranteed income could, and at least a portion of it would, be devoted to the development of societally beneficial appropriate technology -- as opposed to personally profitable but societally detrimental technological development economically encouraged by many present socioeconomic system arrangements and incentives. As with other societal problems, the beneficial effects of a democratically set universal guaranteed income, in taming technology for the unequivocal advantage of all humanity,

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depend upon the magnitude of that income. If that magnitude were democratically set at a satisfactory subsistence level, the impact would be quite significant and beneficial.

At least as important, those at or near the democratically set maximum allowable personal wealth limit would be economically encouraged to give appropriate thought to the trade-off between short-term personal gain and possible long-term societal loss resulting from an exploited potential of technology. For if, overall, society is harmed by particular technological developments (as is frequently the case, presently), society could increase its democratically set guaranteed income to offset the added expense of rectifying the harm.

Conservation would then logically imply societal reduction of the maximum allowable personal wealth limit to finance any actual increase in societally determined and provided universal minimum income guarantees. On the other hand, technological developments that significantly benefit society in general would at the same time tend to personally benefit the still-wealthy participants in the hypothesized democratic socioeconomic system, since these developments hold the promise of eventually raising the MAW limit -- which is the only thing most economists, regardless of their particular stripes or spots, "thinks" motivates mankind. What an insult!

Finally (or is it just the beginning?), and specifically, there is the Ray Kurzweil and Clones crowd, profitably preaching the upcoming Technological Singularity Point (which evidently is in fact a Sequence) that will, among many other delightful and awe-inspiring accomplishments, develop Human Body 2.0 and 3.0. Considering Human Body 1.0 and its obvious multidimensional shortcomings, such development might indeed be desirable. But until such "futurists," as well as many others seriously consider the implications, ramifications and better design of psycho-politico-socio-economic systems, humanity had best beware.

Welfare Reform. If the reader (gentle or otherwise, but certainly diligent) has gotten this far, it should be "perfectly clear" by now that a fully blossomed Socioeconomic Democracy would indeed "end Welfare as we know it." In its place would be an advanced socioeconomic system that would allow society to much more easily, realistically, productively, satisfyingly, efficiently, effectively, ecologically and democratically guarantee the General Welfare of a Democratic Society, Humanity and Posterity.

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Desirable Impact on Contemporary Systems

As has been apparent to thoughtful humanistic philosophers for millennia, the careful design of humanity's politico-socio-economic systems are crucial to mankind's general well being, beneficial development and moral evolution. The inconsistencies and overlooked relationships contained in all contemporary systems become more apparent and damaging as the centuries, decades and days fly by.

Whether corrupt or simply not fully informed, Capitalism as presently practiced and with its very visible hands controlling a government presumably of, by, and for all citizens now crumbles globally before our very eyes. Even some of the wealthiest "1%" are, admirably, condemning the cutthroat characteristics of contemporary Capitalism. But it is the needless sufferers who must thoughtfully, peacefully and democratically change "The System." Capitalism, as presently practiced, and meaningful Democracy are neither consistent nor compatible.

Elitist governments, allegedly ruling all citizens and their activities for the benefit of all, as in most all versions of Socialism so far realized, have likewise dramatically demonstrated their inability to bring about real peace, freedom and well being for everyone in their tight grip. Much of this is highly undesirable but easily understandable, considering Socialism's presumed attempt to repudiate and repel Capitalism's obvious expanding empire ambitions. But if nothing else, Socialism's fuzzy definitions and inconsistent axioms preclude it from being the answer to the problem.

Then there is the admirable "Whole Systems" approach of Islamic religious-psycho-politico-socio-economics. The primary objective of the prophetic mission of Muhammad ibn Abdullah was to introduce and establish a healthy, happy and balanced society based on the fundamental values of fraternity and equity not known in the Arabian and Middle-Eastern pre-Islamic world (or most anywhere else, for that matter). This attempt at a comprehensive improvement in humanity's obviously improvable condition took place more than a millennium before publication of the Declaration of Independence, The Wealth of Nations, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and certainly a very long time before Marx, Keynes or Rawls.

Painfully abbreviating the fascinating development of Islamic Economics, suffice here to say that Zakat (Zakah), The Third Pillar of

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Islam, is a remarkable approximate anticipation of Socioeconomic Democracy, in that it is a tax on large personal wealth (not income) to be used to improve in many ways the life of the poor. If the Qur'an specifies a tax on wealth, as opposed to a limit on wealth as exists in a Socioeconomic Democracy, perhaps it was that even Muhammad himself could not at the time conceive of, let alone predict, way back then that eventually there would be megamultiibillionaires of all religions and hungry people.

As for democracy, and as has been discussed and documented by many scholars, Muhammad was at first reluctant but eventually grew to accept the fact of his divine inspirations. Nevertheless, he insisted, emphatically and repeatedly, that he was a human being who ate, drank, required sleep and in particular was quite capable of making mistakes in matters of mundane life. All Muslims were to use reason and intelligence in order to more fully appreciate and understand the bountiful generosity and intentions of God. "Consultations" between him and all Muslims regarding earthly matters were welcomed and considered by him absolutely essential to reach the best possible solution to a particular problem.

While Riba "no Interest" is perhaps the most familiar characteristic of (theoretical) Islamic economics, to many Muslims and non-Muslims alike, it certainly is the case that it is not Riba but Zakat that is One of the Five Pillars of Islam. Nevertheless it is here observed and acknowledged that “Western” economics is finally starting to (be forced to) reconsider the ethics and simple justification of money and banking definitions, operations and purposes. Again, this writer devotes an extended chapter to the discussion of Islamic Economics (George, 2002).

Unfortunately but perhaps predictability, the Holy Books of “the People of the Book” all specify similar attitudes and requirements which are not sufficiently obeyed. But then, not only are the social requirements of all three “Monotheistic“ religions frequently violated, but even polytheistic, atheistic, and agnostic cultures violate the simplest, most ancient and adequate admonition of all -- the Golden Rule.

The interested reader is urged to develop and extend for herself the ramifications and implications of Socioeconomic Democracy in those areas of particular personal interest. Contemporary socioeconomic systems are truly prolific so far as producing problems. Every unnecessary societal problem creates its unnecessary casualties.

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Socioeconomic Democracy can and will eliminate such problems. Then, of course, there is the whole new realm of desirable future democratic possibilities, beckoning to be thought about, explored, birthed and satisfyingly lived. This writer hereby expresses his willingness and desire to collaborate with any and all who would be interested in adapting and/or adopting the ideas of Socioeconomic Democracy to peacefully fit locally appropriate situations.

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