

Chapter 10 BETTER BUSINESS

IT MAY SEEM THAT ENTREPRENEURS, INVESTORS, AND CORPORATIONS ARE DOOMED TO PLAY THE VILLAIN'S ROLE IN THE HYPERCAPITALIST DRAMA.



MAYBE ANYONE WHO DOES BUSINESS IS BOUND TO FALL PREY TO THE LUST FOR PROFIT...



WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I HELD THAT OPINION, BACK THEN, I THOUGHT THERE WAS NO WAY FOR BUSINESS TO RESIST HYPERCAPITALISM. BUT NOW I REGARD THAT VIEW AS A CLOSED-MINDED PREJUDICE.



OVER THE YEARS, I'VE COME TO SEE THAT THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT ISN'T ONLY ABOUT MAKING MONEY...



IT CAN ALSO INSPIRE PEOPLE TO FACE CHALLENGES AND RISKS IN PURSUIT OF THEIR IDEALS. MANY PEOPLE NOW GO INTO BUSINESS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND PLANETARY SUSTAINABILITY.



IN THIS CHAPTER, WE SHOW HOW SOME PEOPLE ARE BRINGING INTRINSIC VALUES TO THE BUSINESS WORLD.



ONE WAY IS BY

CHALLENGING BUSINESS AS USUAL.

THE AMALGAMATED GIGANTIC CORPORATION DEPENDS FOR ITS SUCCESS ON FOUR BASIC PROCESSES. FIRST, ALGI BUYS RAW MATERIALS, FROM WHICH IT MAKES PLASTIC WIDGETS. RESULT: CORPORATIONS MONOPOLIZE PRODUCTION.



SECOND, THE COMPANY ADVERTISES ITS WIDGETS AND SELLS AS MANY AS POSSIBLE AT A PRICE THAT MAXIMIZES PROFIT. RESULT: MONEY FLOWS TO CORPORATIONS.



THIRD, CONSUMERS RESPOND TO ADVERTISING BY BUYING WIDGETS, SMIDGETS, AND ALSO QUIDGETS, AND LOTS OF THEM. RESULT: OVERSPENDING AND DEBT.



FOURTH...



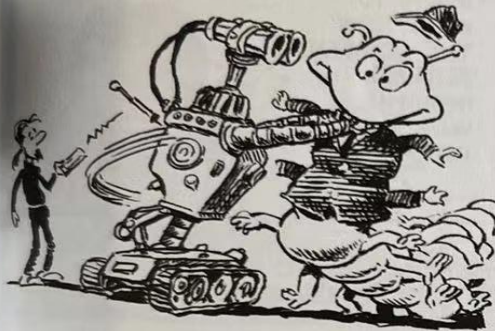
RESULT: POLLUTION.

THESE FOUR PROCESSES ARE BEING CHALLENGED BY NEW BUSINESSES AT THIS VERY MOMENT:

MAKERS,

AS THEIR NAME IMPLIES, ARE PEOPLE WHO

MAKE THEIR OWN STUFF, AND WE'RE NOT JUST TALKING SEWING AND CANNING. NEW TECHNOLOGY GIVES INDIVIDUALS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, COMPUTER-CONTROLLED MANUFACTURING EQUIPMENT, LIKE MILLING MACHINES AND 3-D PRINTERS. MAKERS MAKE ROBOTS, TOO!



RESULT: INDIVIDUALS BECOME PRODUCERS.

PEER-TO-PEER SALES

THE INTERNET HAS TURNED RETAILING INTO A VIRTUAL, WORLDWIDE GARAGE SALE. ANYONE WITH INTERNET ACCESS AND SOMETHING TO SELL CAN CONNECT DIRECTLY WITH BUYERS.

NOW I CAN BUY MY VERY OWN CORPORATION-DESTROYING ROBOT ON ETSY!



RESULT: MONEY FLOWS TO INDIVIDUALS.

SHARED ACCESS

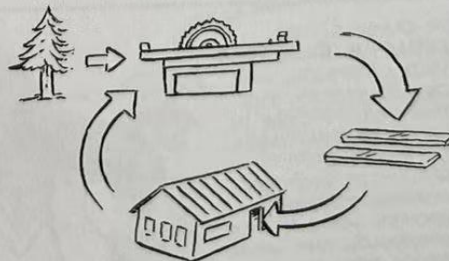
INSPIRED BY TOOL AND TOY LIBRARIES, COMPANIES LIKE **TECH SHOP** BUY DESKTOP MANUFACTURING EQUIPMENT AND PROVIDE ACCESS TO IT FOR A RENTAL FEE.



RESULT: LESS SPENDING AND CONSUMPTION.

THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

SOME BUSINESSES RECYCLE "WASTE" PRODUCTS. **TARKETT FLOORING**, FOR EXAMPLE, WILL TAKE BACK ANY OF ITS OLD FLOORING REMOVED FROM BUILDINGS AND RECYCLE IT INTO NEW FLOORING. TARKETT HAS RESCUED 75 MILLION POUNDS OF FLOORING FROM LANDFILLS SINCE 2003.



RESULT: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

ANOTHER CHALLENGE TO HYPERCAPITALIST VALUES CAN COME FROM INVESTORS THEMSELVES, IN THE FORM OF

RESPONSIBLE INVESTING.

REMEMBER, ANYONE WITH MONEY CAN BUY SHARES IN A PUBLICLY TRADED COMPANY.

CAPPY FREEMARK BUYS SHARES WITH ONLY ONE THING IN MIND: GETTING THE MAXIMUM RETURN ON INVESTMENT. ONLY MONEY MAKES HIM SALIVATE!

IT'S LIKE PICKLED HERRING THAT WAY!



HIS BUSINESS-SCHOOL CLASSMATE VALERIE YU, ON THE OTHER HAND, WANTS TO KNOW HOW THE COMPANY BEHAVES. INTRINSIC VALUES ARE HER THING!

I WANT TO INVEST IN A BETTER FUTURE!



VAL CAN BUY SHARES IN AN INDIVIDUAL COMPANY THAT CONFORMS TO HER VALUES, OR SHE CAN SPREAD HER INVESTMENT AROUND VIA A **SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MUTUAL FUND**. A MUTUAL FUND BUYS SHARES IN MANY COMPANIES AND SO REDUCES THE RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE FLUCTUATION OF A SINGLE COMPANY'S SHARE PRICE.



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS!

FOR EXAMPLE, THE **PARNASSUS ENDEAVOR FUND** AVOIDS OIL AND TOBACCO STOCKS. THE FUND INVESTS ONLY IN COMPANIES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYEES WHO ARE WORKING PARENTS, PROVIDE GOOD MEDICAL INSURANCE, AND GRANT STOCK OPTIONS TO EMPLOYEES (SEE P. 179).



AND NO FISH BREATH AFTERWARD!

DISCLAIMER: COAUTHOR TIM OWNS SHARES IN THIS FUND.

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING HAS A PUBLIC FACE, TOO. ONE TACTIC IS THE

DIVESTMENT CAMPAIGN.



THESE CAMPAIGNS TARGET INSTITUTIONS—UNIVERSITIES, PENSION FUNDS, FOUNDATIONS, ETC.—OWNING LARGE STOCK PORTFOLIOS. THE GOAL: TO PERSUADE THESE INVESTORS TO GET RID OF SHARES IN NOXIOUS COMPANIES. AS OF THIS WRITING, FOR INSTANCE, ABOUT 600 INSTITUTIONS HAVE SOLD OFF THEIR HOLDINGS IN FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES.



VAL CAN ALSO INVEST STRATEGICALLY. OWNING EVEN ONE SHARE OF STOCK ALLOWS HER TO PROPOSE **SHAREHOLDER RESOLUTIONS** ABOUT CORPORATE PRACTICES. IF A RESOLUTION POLLS A THRESHOLD OF SUPPORT, IT GOES TO A VOTE OF ALL COMPANY SHAREHOLDERS. IF IT PASSES, THE COMPANY MUST CHANGE ITS POLICY.



EVEN WITHOUT A VOTE, BAD PUBLICITY ALONE CAN EMBARRASS MANAGEMENT INTO MAKING CHANGES. FOR EXAMPLE, YUM! BRANDS (THE NAME INCLUDES THE EXCLAMATION POINT!), UNDER PRESSURE FROM SOCIALLY ACTIVE **TRILLIUM ASSET MANAGEMENT**, AGREED TO USE ONLY SUSTAINABLY RAISED PALM OIL IN YUM!'S PIZZA HUT AND TACO BELL SUBSIDIARIES.



ALTERNATIVE OWNERSHIP STRUCTURES

SO FAR IN THIS BOOK, WE'VE SEEN PRIVATE BUSINESSES, PRIVATELY HELD CORPORATIONS, AND PUBLICLY TRADED CORPORATIONS. IS THAT ALL THERE IS? OF COURSE NOT!



COOPERATIVES

CO-OPS ARE OWNED BY THE PEOPLE WHO BUY AND USE THE GOODS OR SERVICES THE BUSINESS PROVIDES. CUSTOMERS RUN THE BUSINESS INDIRECTLY, BY ELECTING MANAGEMENT. ANY CO-OP BELONGING TO THE NATIONAL CO-OP BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (NCBA) SUBSCRIBES TO THESE PRINCIPLES:



1. VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP
2. DEMOCRATIC CONTROL
3. MEMBER PARTICIPATION
4. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE
5. EDUCATION, TRAINING, INFORMATION
6. COOPERATION AMONG CO-OPS
7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE WWW.NCBA.ORG.

MEMBER-OWNED BUSINESSES INCLUDE MANY RURAL ELECTRIC COMPANIES, CREDIT UNIONS, AND FOOD CO-OPS. EXPECT GOOD SERVICE IN A CO-OP!

WHAT DO YOU SAY, SUMER? YOU AND ME, WORKING TOGETHER?

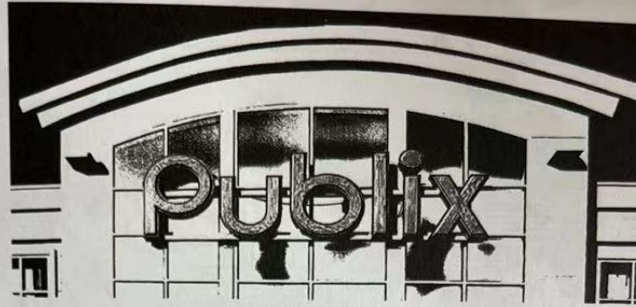


JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE TO GET OVER MY ECONOMIC ROLE CONFUSION...

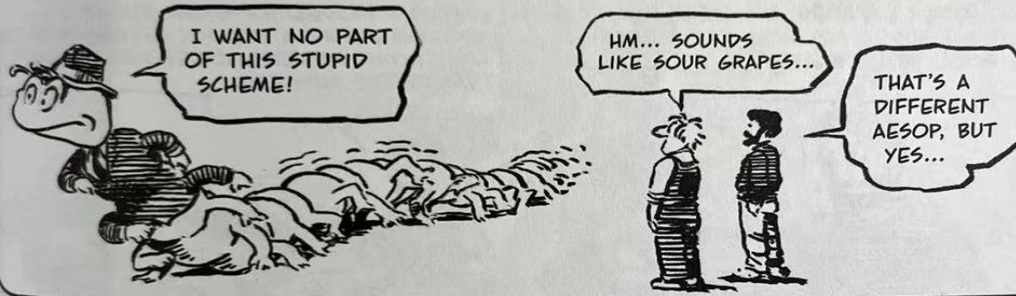
EMPLOYEE-OWNED BUSINESSES

ALTHOUGH ORGANIZED DIFFERENTLY FROM MEMBER CO-OPS, WORKER-OWNED COMPANIES OFTEN SHARE CO-OPS' DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES, CONCERN FOR WORKERS, AND COMMUNITY ORIENTATION.

BUSINESSES CAN OFFER WORKERS A BUY-IN OPPORTUNITY THROUGH AN **EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN (ESOP)**. AN ESOP GIVES EMPLOYEES A STAKE IN THE COMPANY, AS WELL AS A MEASURE OF SECURITY IN THE FORM OF COMPANY SHARES. MORE THAN 13 MILLION AMERICANS ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN AN ESOP.



WITH MORE THAN 182,000 EMPLOYEES, THE PUBLIX SUPERMARKET CHAIN IS AMERICA'S LARGEST EMPLOYEE-OWNED BUSINESS



NOT-FOR-PROFIT BUSINESSES

YES! THEY EXIST! IN FACT, **THE NEW PRESS**, WHICH PUBLISHED THIS VERY BOOK, DEDICATES ALL PROFITS FROM SALES INTO MAKING MORE GREAT, SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS, FORWARD-LOOKING BOOKS. ANOTHER EXAMPLE IS **NEWMAN'S OWN FOODS**, WHICH SENDS ALL PROFITS DIRECTLY TO A CHARITABLE FOUNDATION.



I HOPE YOU CAN SEE NOW WHY I THINK BUSINESS CAN HAVE A ROLE IN REVOLUTIONIZING HYPERCAPITALISM'S VALUES! YOU CAN HEAR THE RUMBLING ALREADY!



THE PROBLEM, OF COURSE, IS THAT MOST BUSINESSES STILL CARRY ON AS USUAL, OVERSELLING THEIR STUFF, PUMPING UP PROFITS, HOLDING DOWN WAGES, DODGING TAXES AND REGULATIONS...



BUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE "VALUES-DRIVEN" SECTOR EXPANDS, AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BUSINESSES SHOW THEMSELVES TO BE GOOD INVESTMENTS?



THESE COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WOULD OFFER A MODEL TO FUTURE INVESTORS AND ENTREPRENEURS, A NEW WAY TO CONCEIVE OF THE FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND, YES, THE VALUES OF BUSINESS.



AND WHO KNOWS? THANKS TO THEM, CAPITALISM'S INVISIBLE HAND MIGHT JUST PUSH ALGI ASIDE!



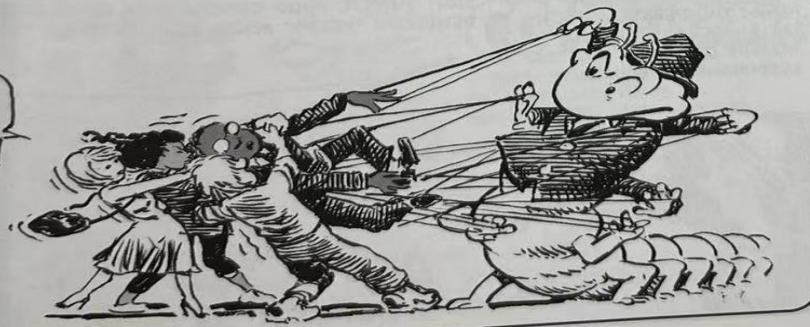
Chapter 11 GOVERNMENT FOR THE PEOPLE

A FULL DISCUSSION OF GOVERNMENT AND HYPERCAPITALISM WOULD FILL A BOOK, OR TWO BOOKS, OR TEN. IT—OR THEY—WOULD HAVE TO TALK ABOUT TAXATION, LAND USE, ENERGY, TRANSPORTATION, POLLUTION, HOUSING, INTERNATIONAL TRADE, HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS, AMONG OTHER THINGS.



AND WE HAVE ONLY THIS ONE MEASLY CHAPTER. IN IT, WE'LL MENTION A FEW STRATEGIES FOR RESCUING GOVERNMENT FROM CORPORATE DOMINATION; DESCRIBE SOME WAYS FOR GOVERNMENT TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO CITIZENS; AND LIST SOME RECENT STEPS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENTS TO ACT MORE IN LINE WITH INTRINSIC VALUES.

COME ON,
WE CAN
DO IT...



People



PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGNS

IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, AMERICAN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS ARE LONG AND SUPER-COSTLY, SO MUCH SO THAT ELECTED OFFICIALS SPEND MUCH OF THEIR TIME DIALING DONORS FOR DOLLARS (FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN!) INSTEAD OF LAW-MAKING. AND THEY'RE NOT CALLING POOR PEOPLE!



IN COUNTRIES LIKE THE U.K., WHERE GOVERNMENT BEARS THE FULL COST OF ELECTIONS, THE DEBATE SEASON LASTS WEEKS INSTEAD OF MONTHS OR YEARS, AND WAY LESS MONEY IS SPENT.

THE U.S. AND SOME STATES ALSO HAVE A SYSTEM FOR GIVING PUBLIC FUNDS TO CANDIDATES IF THEY AGREE TO LIMIT PRIVATE FUND-RAISING. THIS IS VOLUNTARY, HOWEVER. PENELOPE "PEEPS" MINTY DECIDES TO GO THIS ROUTE.



WHEN MINTY TAKES PUBLIC FUNDING, THE PUBLIC REAPS SEVERAL ADVANTAGES.

I CAN SPEND LESS TIME BEGGING FOR MONEY AND MORE TIME RESEARCHING ISSUES AND MEETING ORDINARY PEOPLE.

VOTERS ACTUALLY HAVE THE OPTION TO CHOOSE SOMEONE WHO ISN'T BOUGHT AND PAID FOR! (MY OPPONENT IS BOUGHT AND PAID FOR, BY THE WAY...)

I'M WORKING AGAINST HYPER-CAPITALISM'S FIFTH COMMANDMENT BY TAKING A PUBLIC FUNCTION OUT OF PRIVATE HANDS.

Y: A BILLY H
FRESH AIR



EVEN SO, MOST CANDIDATES STAY WITH PURELY PRIVATE MONEY. WHY?

PAUL ITTICKS EXPECTS TO WIN BY OUTSPENDING HIS OPPONENT ON POLLING, ORGANIZATION, FOCUS GROUPS, AND ESPECIALLY ADS.

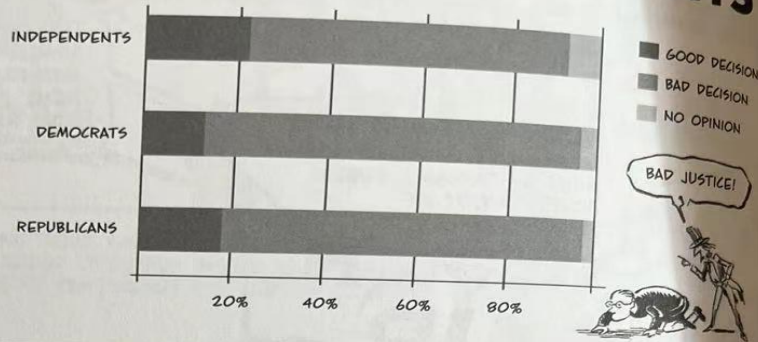


CONCLUSION?

"PEEPS" WANTS PUBLIC FUNDING OF CAMPAIGNS TO BE MANDATORY, NOT OPTIONAL.

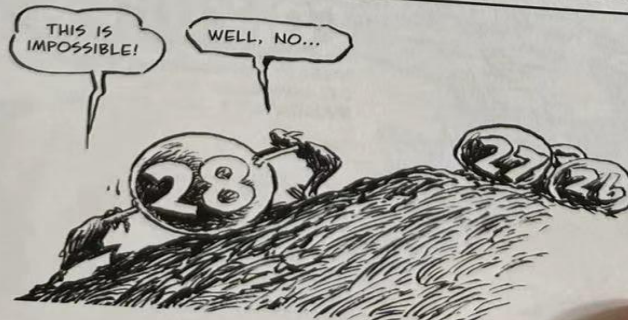
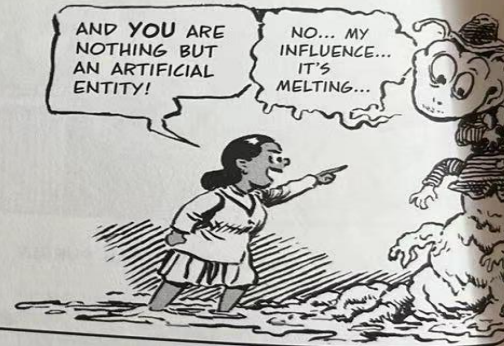
LIMITING CORPORATE RIGHTS

THE CITIZENS UNITED COURT UNITED COURT CASE (SEE P. 105) REMOVED LIMITS ON CORPORATE ELECTION SPENDING. MOST AMERICANS, REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL PERSUASION, THINK THAT THIS WAS A BAD DECISION.



THERE IS A MOVE AFOOT TO REVERSE THE COURT'S DECISION BY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. FOR A PROPOSED DRAFT OF A 28TH AMENDMENT, SEE MOVETOAMEND.ORG. THE PROPOSAL HAS TWO MAIN POINTS:

1. "THE RIGHTS PROTECTED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES ARE THE RIGHTS OF NATURAL PERSONS ONLY" (AND NOT OF ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES).
2. "THE JUDICIARY SHALL NOT CONSTRUE THE SPENDING OF MONEY TO INFLUENCE ELECTIONS TO BE SPEECH UNDER THE FIRST AMENDMENT."



PASSING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS IS A SLOG, BUT HUNDREDS OF ORGANIZATIONS AND CITY AND STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE BACKED THIS ONE, AND 22 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, SO FAR, HAVE SIGNED ON. IT'S A START!

OR, TO GO IN
A DIFFERENT
DIRECTION, WE
COULD ASK:



WHO—or WHAT— HAS RIGHTS?

SOME PHILOSOPHERS,
POLITICIANS, AND LEGAL
SCHOLARS HAVE ARGUED
FOR AN **EXTENSION** OF
RIGHTS BEYOND INDI-
VIDUAL PERSONS NOW
LIVING. FOR EXAMPLE,
WHAT ABOUT THE
RIGHTS OF **FUTURE
GENERATIONS?**

WHAT ABOUT
THIS IS SO
HARD TO
UNDERSTAND?

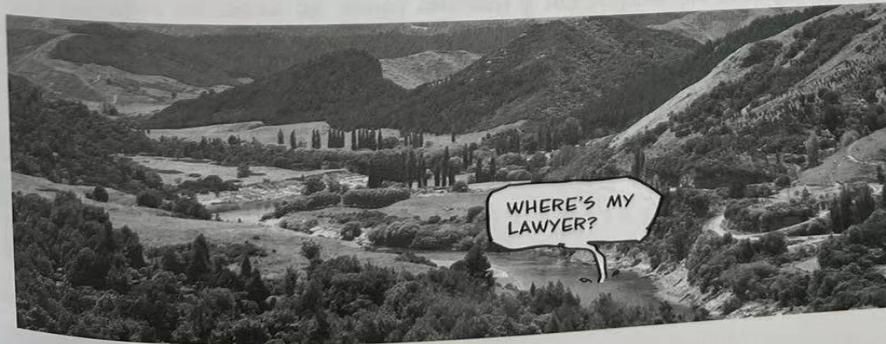


AND WHY
NOT
HERE?



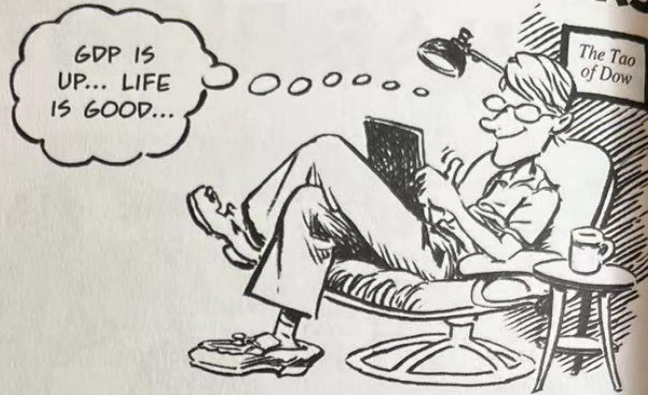
THE IROQUOIS ONCE RECOGNIZED THOSE RIGHTS (SEE
P. 73), AND SO DOES **GERMANY** TODAY. THE GERMAN
CONSTITUTION'S ARTICLE 20a SAYS, "THE STATE... IN ITS
RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, PROTECTS THE
NATURAL FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE..."

OTHER NATIONS AND JURISDICTIONS EXPLICITLY RECOGNIZE THE **RIGHTS OF NATURE**.
ECUADOR'S CONSTITUTION DECLARES THAT NATURE HAS "THE RIGHT TO EXIST, PERSIST, MAINTAIN,
AND REGENERATE ITS VITAL CYCLES." BOLIVIA HAS A SIMILAR LAW, AND NEW ZEALAND HAS
GRANTED LEGAL RIGHTS TO A RIVER, THE WHANGANUI. EVEN THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH,
PENNSYLVANIA, HAS AFFIRMED THE RIGHTS OF NATURE!



MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

WHAT NUMBERS CAPTURE A NATION'S WELL-BEING? PRODUCTIVITY, INFLATION, INTEREST RATES, DEFICITS, OR THE DOW? OVERALL NATIONAL WEALTH IS SUPPOSED TO BE CAPTURED BY THE **GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT**, OR **GDP**, THE ECONOMY'S TOTAL OUTPUT OF GOODS AND SERVICES.



BUT THE GDP, AND THE RELATED GNP (GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT),* ARE STRICTLY ABOUT MONEY, AND SO, IN THE WORDS OF **ROBERT F. KENNEDY**,



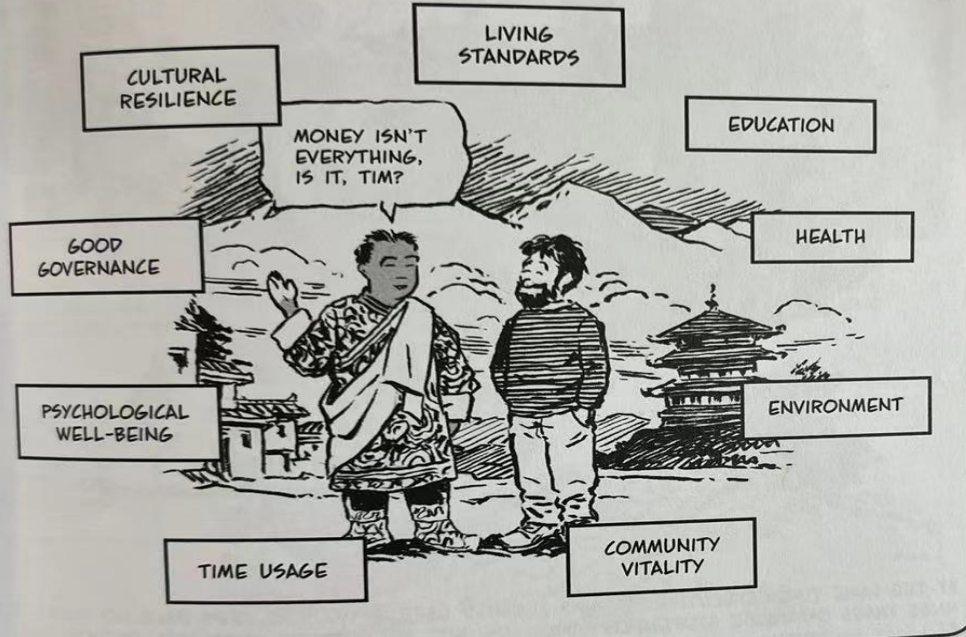
"GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT COUNTS AIR POLLUTION AND CIGARETTE ADVERTISING. IT COUNTS SPECIAL LOCKS ON OUR DOORS AND THE JAILS FOR PEOPLE WHO BREAK THEM. IT COUNTS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE REDWOOD... NUCLEAR WARHEADS AND ARMORED CARS FOR THE POLICE... THE TELEVISION PROGRAMS WHICH GLORIFY VIOLENCE IN ORDER TO SELL TOYS TO OUR CHILDREN. YET... NOT... THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN, THE QUALITY OF THEIR EDUCATION... THE BEAUTY OF OUR POETRY OR THE STRENGTH OF OUR MARRIAGES, THE INTELLIGENCE OF OUR PUBLIC DEBATE OR THE INTEGRITY OF OUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS... IT MEASURES EVERYTHING, IN SHORT, EXCEPT THAT WHICH MAKES LIFE WORTHWHILE."

CONSIDER, FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT FACES ERNIE WAGES WHEN HIS MOTHER IS DYING. IF ERNIE TAKES TIME OFF WORK TO CARE FOR HER, HE DEPRESSES GDP. BUT IF HE WORKS EXTRA HOURS FOR MONEY THAT HE SPENDS ON A NURSING HOME, HE INCREASES GDP.

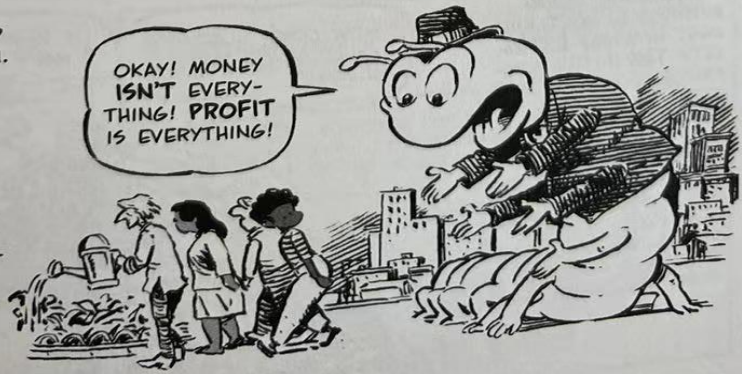


*THE GDP OF THE UNITED STATES IS THE TOTAL OUTPUT OF ALL AMERICAN COMPANIES WITHIN U.S. TERRITORY. GNP IS THE TOTAL OUTPUT OF ALL AMERICAN-OWNED COMPANIES BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE EXPRESSION OF INTRINSIC VALUES CAN HOLD DOWN GDP. INSTEAD OF GDP, THEN, WHAT WOULD BE A BETTER MEASURE OF A SOCIETY'S HEALTH? IN THE 1970S, THE HIMALAYAN NATION OF BHUTAN BEGAN DEVELOPING AN ALTERNATIVE MEASURE CALLED THE GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS (GNH) INDEX. GNH HAS NINE SEPARATE COMPONENTS.

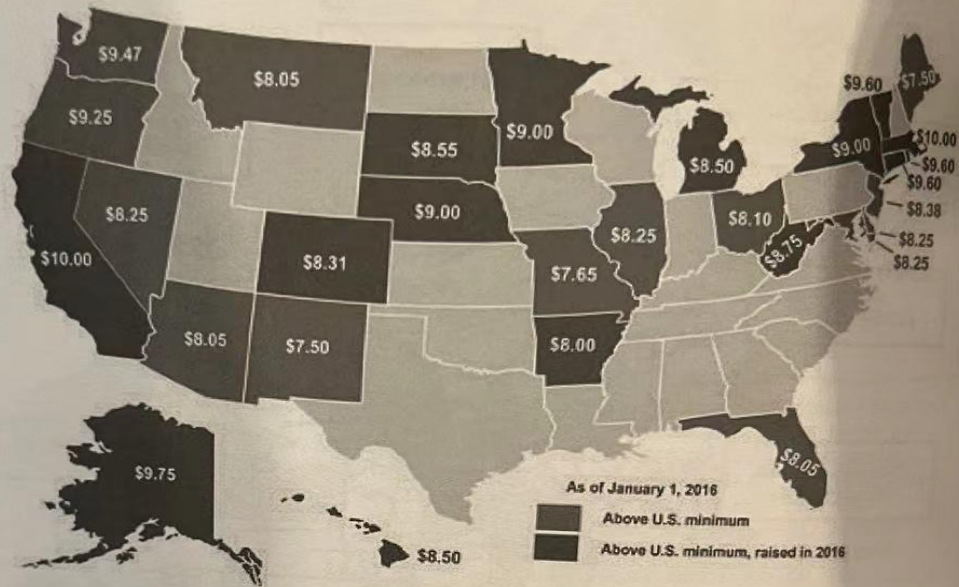


THIS MODEL HAS SPARKED A WORLDWIDE DISCUSSION. SEVERAL NATIONS, INCLUDING THE U.K., FRANCE, AND THAILAND, ARE EXPLORING SIMILAR "ASSESSMENT METRICS." HERE IN THE U.S., A NUMBER OF CITIES (E.G., JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA) NOW USE SIMILAR MULTI-FACETED INDICATORS TO INFORM POLICY CHOICES.



A BETTER DEAL FOR WORKERS

HYPERCAPITALISM HAS SLAMMED MILLIONS OF WORKERS (SEE PP. 107-114). ONE SIMPLE WAY TO LIMIT THEIR MISERY WOULD BE TO **RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE**. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SEEMS IN NO MOOD FOR AN INCREASE, BUT MANY STATES HAVE ENACTED MINIMUM WAGE LAWS BETTER THAN THE STINGY NATIONAL PROVISION, IF ONLY BY A LITTLE.



AT THE SAME TIME, EXECUTIVE PAY HAS ZOOMED (SEE P. 15). THE FEDS HAVE NO PLANS TO RAISE TAXES ON THESE STUPENDOUS INCOMES, BUT THE CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON, HAS AT LEAST FOUND A WAY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE ISSUE:

ANY COMPANY DOING BUSINESS IN PORTLAND MUST NOW PAY EXTRA CITY TAX IF THE COMPANY'S CEO MAKES MORE THAN 100 TIMES THE MEDIAN PAY OF THE COMPANY'S WORKERS. THE CITY EXPECTS TO REALIZE ABOUT \$3 MILLION A YEAR FROM THIS SURTAX, WHICH MANY COMPANIES ACCUSE OF BEING "ANTI-BUSINESS."



HISTORICALLY, WORKERS HAVE DONE BEST THROUGH **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**. BUT HYPERCAPITALISM DEMONIZES UNIONS, AND U.S. LAW MAKES THEM HARD TO ORGANIZE.

DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH...

FIRST, LET'S HAVE A FAIR, FRANK, LONG-WINDED EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH MY LAWYERS.



TO ORGANIZE A WORKPLACE, EMPLOYEES ARE POLLED, FILLING OUT **AUTHORIZATION CARDS** STATING WHETHER THEY WISH TO JOIN A UNION.



IF A MAJORITY FAVORS THE UNION, MANAGEMENT STILL HAS ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES TO DELAY, BULLY, LITIGATE, AND WEAR PEOPLE DOWN BEFORE A **SECOND** ELECTION IS HELD. THIS SECOND VOTE OFTEN REVERSES THE OUTCOME OF THE ORIGINAL "CARD CHECK."

STRANGE, BUT NONE OF THE ORIGINAL "YES" VOTERS WORK HERE ANYMORE...



IN CANADA, BY CONTRAST, THE CARD CHECK IS THE ELECTION. IF THE CARDS SAY YES, THE UNION IS IN. WHY NOT HERE?

YEAH, WHY NOT?



AND SPEAKING OF NOT HERE, HOW ABOUT PAID FAMILY LEAVE FOR ALL NEW PARENTS? THAT'S WHAT THE REST OF THE WORLD ENJOYS! (SEE P. 113.)

I'D BETTER GET TO WORK ON THE REST OF THE WORLD, THEN...



YOU WANT TO ADVERTISE STUFF? WELL, STUFF YOU!



CONTROLLING ADVERTISING



HYPERCAPITALISM PUSHES ITS CONSUMERIST VISION THROUGH ADS, SO GOVERNMENT CAN PROMOTE INTRINSIC VALUES BY REINING IN ADS.

SAN FRANCISCO, FOR EXAMPLE, BANS ALL BRAND IMAGES AND LOGOS FROM ITS PUBLIC SCHOOLS. VERMONT LIMITS THE SIZE AND PLACEMENT OF OUTDOOR ADVERTISING. NO BILLBOARDS ON VERMONT HIGHWAYS!



FARTHER AFIELD, BRAZILIAN LAW BANS ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN, DESCRIBING IT AS "ABUSIVE." PEEPS MINTY (AND YOUR AUTHORS) WOULD LIKE TO SEE A TOTAL BAN ON ADS AIMED AT KIDS, WHO MIGHT THEN GROW UP BETTER ABLE TO RESIST CONSUMERISM'S CYNICAL MANIPULATION.

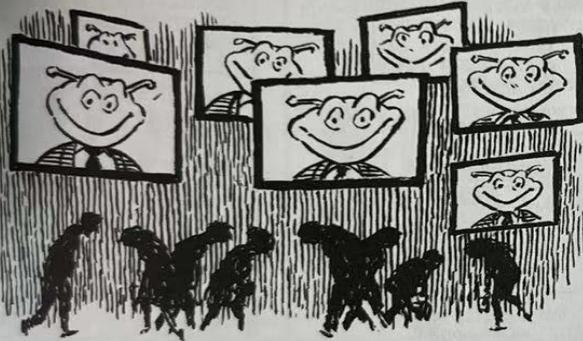


GOVERNMENT COULD ALSO CHANGE ITS TAX TREATMENT OF ADVERTISING.

SINCE ADS COST MONEY, BUSINESSES SEE ADVERTISING AS A COST LIKE ANY OTHER. THE GOVERNMENT, AGREEING WITH THIS POINT OF VIEW, LETS BUSINESSES DEDUCT THE COST OF ADVERTISING WHEN CALCULATING TAXABLE INCOME.



IT LOOKS DIFFERENT TO THE REST OF US. ADS ARE AN INVASION OF PUBLIC SPACE, SOMETHING LIKE A **TAKING**, IN LEGAL TERMS. ADVERTISING TAKES AWAY A PRECIOUS SHARE OF PEOPLE'S TIME, ATTENTION, AND PEACE OF MIND; AND FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW, BUSINESSES OWE THE PUBLIC SOMETHING FOR EVERY AD THEY PRODUCE.



SO WHY NOT

TAX

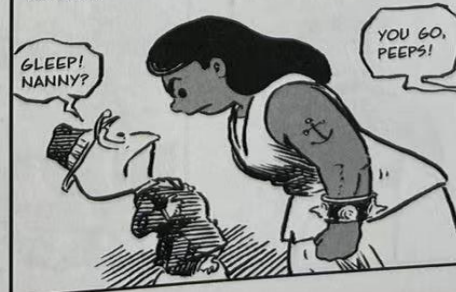
ADVERTISING INSTEAD OF SUBSIDIZING IT?



SUCH PROTECTIVE PROPOSALS, BY THE WAY, ARE OFTEN DERIDED AS CREATING A "NANNY STATE" THAT TURNS THE PUBLIC INTO A BUNCH OF CRY-BABY CITIZENS.



WE PREFER TO THINK OF GOVERNMENT'S ROLE HERE AS THAT OF A TOUGH, MUSCULAR BOUNCER, TASKED WITH KEEPING BAD CORPORATE ACTORS IN LINE!



THIS CHAPTER HAS OFFERED UP A SHORT, INCOMPLETE LIST OF IDEAS FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST SOME OF HYPERCAPITALISM'S TROUBLESOME TRENDS...



OTHER NATIONS HAVE MADE PROGRESS IN SOME AREAS WE'VE DISCUSSED, BUT IN THE U.S., REFORMS HAVE COME MAINLY IN STATES AND LOCALITIES. STILL, I THINK THEY'RE IMPORTANT!!



FIRST, WHEN A LOCALITY SUCCESSFULLY ENACTS POLICIES THAT EXPRESS INTRINSIC VALUES, IT GIVES **VISIBLE EVIDENCE** THAT HYPER-CAPITALISM CAN BE RESISTED.



SECOND, LOCAL ACTION CAN SPREAD NATIONWIDE. WOMEN COULD VOTE IN WYOMING 40 YEARS BEFORE THE 19TH AMENDMENT... AND JUST LOOK AT RECENT PROGRESS ON GAY MARRIAGE...



THIRD, IT IS USUALLY EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO MAKE CHANGES LOCALLY, ON A SCHOOL BOARD OR CITY COUNCIL, THAN AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.



AND THAT BRINGS US TO OUR FINAL CHAPTER...



IT'S ABOUT PROTEST.