**The First Requisite of Justice**

***(Please note that the following was inspired by the author’s reading of the work of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, a 19th century French thinker in the overlapping realms of anarchist and socialist theory)***

**The first requisite of justice is the prohibition of and protection from every form of exploitation of disadvantage.**

Wherever manmade evil exists in the world, exploitation is its cause. Exploitation may be defined as: One or more people possessing advantage over one or more other people taking advantage of said disadvantage for the economic, financial, political or other gain by the exploiter. The specific *forms* of exploitation are near limitless, but taking advantage of disadvantage is their shared root.

The specific *forms of victimization* caused by exploitation are also near limitless, but the resultant damage paid by the victim(s) always involves some form of *diminishment* (a reduction in possession, rights, advantage) and/or *oppression* (the loss of the potential to do better; the loss of opportunity, which, in economic terms, is known as ‘the opportunity cost’).

Any system which is inherently exploitative is inherently unjust and productive of manmade evil. Evil itself may be defined as the unnecessary suffering of life and often connected unsustainable degradation of the planet. Evil, in turn, is rooted in mental and moral deficiencies, most often manifested through greed, and exacerbated by the drives of the prideful, insecure ego in league with ignorance and insufficiently-developed morals. What shall remain true into the foreseeable future of humanity regardless of the social systems through which evil is perpetrated is that these *root* causes of evil shall remain, as humankind is innately subject to them. That does *not* mean, however, that we must accept and give into this innate *susceptibility* and assume that humanity is inherently evil, as the immoral realists would have you believe, and as embodied by morally-void credos like “it’s just business” or “the strong do what they can, the weak suffer what we must.” Instead, we must realize that humanity is inherently *limited and corruptible* through weaknesses of body and mind, and instead of perpetuating the *systemic* causes of evil that reward the advantaged for taking advantage of disadvantage, which essentially incentivize exploitation as most modernly prevalent systems tend to do, that we create and propagate systems and constructs which instead prohibit all forms of exploitation to as large a degree as possible while incentivizing popular, or inclusive, benefit, and which thereby naturally foster the doing of good. Herein, ‘good’ may be defined as anything which is in the best interests of life and the planet as a whole, and which tends to correlate with the increase in the total quality of existence on earth, whether by granting direct benefits or by increasing opportunity.

In the long bending arc of the moral universe, any systems which are inherently exploitative, and which thereby facilitate the production of evil and prohibit the production of good, cannot stand the progressive tests of time. Every such system is ever less likely to exist relative to the degree of its evil-creating exploitation and to where humanity stands upon the long bending arc of the moral universe, an arc bent by the challenging of progressives of the immorality of the conservatives ever reformulating their strategies for the purposes of manipulating the masses into believing that morality is immorality.

One means of accounting for the unjust costs paid by the victims of exploitation is through the concept of *value*. Value may be defined as something which confers a quality of life benefit in its possession and enjoyment, and a reduction in that quality of life benefit in its dispossession. One means of accounting for changes in this quality of life benefit is through the dichotomous concept of *positive value* versus *negative value*; through the concept of ‘addition’ and ‘subtraction’ as applied to the quality of life impact upon anyone affected by the idea, concept, system, person etc. under consideration.

‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ may thereby be defined relative to this positive value and negative value. The more total positive value an individual or group contributes to life as a whole, the more they may be considered ‘good.’ The more total negative value an individual or group imposes upon life as a whole (including through financial extractions and all aforementioned modes of diminishment and oppression), the more they may be considered ‘evil.’ This is where we arrive at the concept of ‘total value’ in consideration of good and evil, another term for which is net value. So, for example, we can analyze and estimate the added quality of life value that an organization contributes to the world and subtract the negative value that they cause in the world to arrive at a net, or total value determination. The more that their total value is positive, the more good they are, the more it’s negative, the more evil they are. This, then, provides a moral foundation for analyzing anything, based upon the premise that the most important thing in life is the quality of that life; the quality of its existence, as life is inherently valuable.

In the study of socioeconomics, the first forms of exploitation and its creation of negative value and evil are based upon the necessities of life; that which everyone *needs* to survive. Anything of need, in other words, has the largest quality of life determination, as not only can there can be no meeting of ‘wants’ which contribute to quality of life until the needs of the life are met, but the more something qualifies as a need, the greater quality of life benefit it confers upon anyone not possessing it. Absent modern commercial and consumer markets, and assuming a ‘clean slate’ in which we are able to provide for our own needs without companies supplying them, socioeconomic need begins with arable land to live upon and cultivate for the production of food, and thereby containing all necessary sustainable resources, including oxygen, drinkable water and timber. Need is, ideally, also inclusive of anything necessary to assure sound physiological and mental health, including healthcare and utilities at the minimum, but also sufficient means of education and socialization, and protection from all forms of physical and mental harm. In the context of ‘free market’ economic theory these necessities are known through the revelations of ‘inelastic demand;’ through those goods and services demanded regardless of price. There is no stretching, or elasticity, in their demand in the face of market factors because they are necessities.

From a moral framework and within the total value, quality of life and its implications for good and evil, we find that the meeting of need is the foremost concern of all human systems. Anything which is needed for survival which any person or group is placed under pressure to possess imposes an especially great negative value upon him or her through the exploitation and potential dispossession of that need, as such things are the foundation upon which their life is built and, as such, they grant him/her/them the greatest positive value in their possession and the greatest negative value in their dispossession.

Thus, the beginning of manmade evil is the injustice of exploiting and threatening to deprive human *need*, which itself begins with the land (‘real estate’) upon which life is lived. The conquering and claiming of ownership of land and the exploiting of the people’s inability to purchase and own land is the first source of manmade evil; that which is perpetrated against the people through the exclusivity of equity in residential, commercial and industrial property; especially residential, whereupon life is lived.

The second form of manmade evil is the injustice of exploiting and depriving of any person’s value added to *productivity*; forcing the dispossession of the value added from one’s work through the ownership of both the means of production and the products themselves. Any individual working for any organization which denies him or her a merited share of the value they add to the company perpetuates this form of injustice by exploiting their inability to purchase and own the means of production and the products and, thus, the value added through the contribution to said production. In the United States, this injustice is perpetrated most commonly through ‘free market competitions’ in wage and salary, illuminating the irony of the ‘free market’ actually denying the freedom to live justly.

The third form of manmade evil comes from depriving people of the opportunity to possess any form of opportunity, good or service which stands to add to their quality of life *after* their needs have been met. Taking advantage of people’s inability to acquire these ‘wants’ or ‘luxuries’ imposes a negative value upon them, but nowhere near to the degree which is imposed when exploiting their demand for needs.

The fourth form of manmade evil, and that which is strongly connected to the first three forms, involves the system of governance through which the collective will of the people is meant to equate with a system of law, oversight and public benefit which gives the people the best possible chance to increase their quality of life. This, again, starts with protecting and assuring that their needs are not taken advantage of, then moves on to their endeavors, or professional efforts, and wants not being exploited.

What is clear from any progressive standpoint is that the United States of America fails its people in every one of these forms. Our needs are exploited, such as our need for healthy food that doesn’t make us sick over time to be supplied at a reasonable cost (which isn’t supplied through our highly unscrupulous factory food industry), medicine that actually heals rather than conceals our ills to be supplied at a reasonable cost (which our poison-peddling for-profit healthcare industry is *horrible* at) and our need to have a place to live supplied at a reasonable cost (exploited through a housing industry that takes advantage of our inability to purchase equity, as through landlords, and our inability to purchase land and housing without paying through the nose in interest, as through the banks and their mortgages). We pay dearly in the exploitation of all these needs through systems which make the wealthy ever wealthier while simultaneously depriving us of the opportunity to improve our stations.

Then there’s our professional endeavors, owned by corporations that deprive us of the opportunity to hold ownership, or equity, in those endeavors, forcing us to ‘free market’ compete for paltry wages so they can be as profitable as possible. And our political system which is called a democracy but which is actually a plutocracy that woefully underrepresents the will of the majority. There are *many* other posts, pages and books available through this site for more information on these immoral means, but the point being made herein is this: *the first requisite of justice, the prohibition of exploitation, is not only not being upheld, it is nowhere close to being the reality in our so-called supreme, advanced land; in fact, exploitation is incentivized (encouraged) by the prevailing systems of business, economics and politics.*

The truth is that we are anything *but* free to have the best possible opportunity to increase the quality of our collective lives due to inherently exploitative systems that continually make the rich richer through the precise same mechanisms which limit everyone else’s opportunity to earn their fair share.

These facts, of course, dictate to the progressive that better ideas must displace the currently prevalent human systems by which exploitation are maintained to the inestimable quality of life loss of the people. While I would encourage everyone to develop their own ideas and opinions, the following are some of the possibilities which *Infinite of One Publishing* believes can aid in the true pursuit of justice.

**A Game Plan for Implementing Justice:**

**The First Step: Protect the people from financial, economic and professional exploitation**

This might involve the Founding, Financing, Promoting and Spreading of a collectively, popularly benefitting construct such as the ***Collective Credit & Mutual Mortgage Company***(CCMM)

The Three-Part Mandate of the CCMM:

1. Create and provide a ***Mutual Mortgage Instrument***(MMI) as a means to enable widespread, affordable residential equity so as to protect against the first form of injustice by providing people with a way to avoid the exploitation of landlords, builders and conventional bankers
2. Create, facilitate the formation and promote the spread of the ***Business Collective***(BC) as a means to enable widespread business equity so as to protect against the second form of injustice by providing people with a way to avoid the exploitation of conventional business
3. Create and provide a ***Collective Credit Instrument*** (CCI) as a means to facilitate #1 and #2 by enabling those seeking the justice entailed in residential and business equity to more readily acquire said forms of justice-ensuring equity through the ‘microloan’ and ‘crowdfunding’ models

A Brief Outline of #s 1-3:

1. The idea of the *Mutual Mortgage Instrument* (MMI) is based upon the realization that the ‘buying power of numbers,’ or ‘collective buying power,’ permits the opportunity to avoid the exploitative costs imposed upon people that are unable to afford their own residences until they reach a certain stage of ‘financial security’ while working within the conventional financial and professional systems. Though the specific manifestations of this instrument and its forms of circumventing the conventional pitfalls through which residential exploitation occurs are myriad, and even unlimited, the idea might be simply illustrated through the following example:
   1. A large number of people of limited means, say 100 families, whom conventionally are forced to flush all their money down the tubes in lease/rental costs (deprived of the opportunity to build equity and instead enriching their exploiting landlords) coming together to sign a mortgage obligation under which a large condominium complex consisting of 100 units with shared communal space (equal right of access and use within reasonable, predefined contractual limits) is financed and constructed.

What you’re essentially accomplishing with such a Mutual Mortgage Instrument (MMI), in other words, is to cut out the profiteering residential middle-men; you’re excising the profiteering exploitations embedded in leases and conventionally-produced housing developments, and much of what is lost through conventional mortgages as well, thereby allowing the people who are profited off of by these parasitic entities who unscrupulously take advantage of those people’s limited financial circumstances to retain those extracted profits for themselves while simultaneously empowering those people to apply that collectively saved money to the ownership of their own residence far faster and at far lower cost than would otherwise be possible. The popular benefit to be garnered from the proliferation of such a Mutual Mortgage Instrument (MMI) would be immense.

1. The idea of the *Commercial Collective* (CC), called the *Business Collective* in my previous work (including through the *Infinite of One* philosophical novel and website/blog), permits the opportunity to avoid the exploitative costs imposed upon people that are unable to afford to buy equity (or to ‘start their own business,’ in the common parlance) in their professional endeavors until they reach a certain stage of ‘financial security’ and ‘risk aversion’ while working within the conventional financial and professional systems. Rather than this financial limitation and the risks involved leading to their being exploited through common equity-excluding business formations and cutthroat competitions for limited wages and salaries, the Business Collective grants them the immediate right to some share in the bottom line of the organization for which they’ll work, with that share being awarded relative to their assessed value of contribution to that organization. Though the specific manifestations of this business formation and its circumventing of the conventional pitfalls through which professional/work exploitation occurs are myriad, and even unlimited, the general idea is this:
   1. A large number of people of pre-identified, complimentary skills and abilities able to fill the positions within a certain type of company which all which to be involved in are brought together to hash out the details of a business formation. How they are identified and brought together is open, but I imagine an online system by which they enter information pertaining to what type of company they want to be a part of, what they bring to the company in terms of skills, abilities and potential start-up funds, and are thereafter led to communicate with and potentially join with others whom have complimentary capacities and goals. The general framework for the contract of formation would include a merit-based system of assessing the relative value of every partner’s (or ‘owner-operator’s’) contribution to the business, and reflecting the value of that work in their overall share in the company. The contacts might also include such aspects as:
      1. a system of democratic reassessment of that judged relative merit of contribution and equity entitlement
      2. a democratic system of voting people ‘up’ or ‘down’ the chain of command and ‘into’ or ‘out of’ positions
      3. a democratic system for suggesting and voting upon certain plans of action and business strategy
      4. a means of ‘buying out’ or ‘buying in’ that honors merit and democracy
      5. a means for assessing increases in equity based upon the investments of partners
2. The idea of the *Collective Credit Instrument*(CCI) is based upon the realization that people of limited means are typically denied credit due to being on their own when seeking it and are, in connection, also denied the ability to financially and morally gain from providing it. Similar to #1, the CCI enacts the lessons learned from the ‘microfinance’ industry and ‘crowdfunding’ phenomenon and websites (like *Kickstarter* and *GoFundMe*) and uses them to circumvent the injustice of excluding most people from the benefits of credit. Again, though the specific manifestations of this instrument of credit and its circumventing of the conventional pitfalls through which financial oppression occurs are myriad, even unlimited, the general idea is this:
   1. People, many of whom will be involved in the *Mutual Mortgage Instrument* and *Commercial Collective* from #s 1-2, and whom will certainly be thereby encouraged, offer their surplus means (their ‘disposable income’) as a way for others to overcome the same conventional exploitations. Collective Credit Instruments can be drawn upon for any number of quality-of-life-increasing uses by those seeking credit, especially their involvement in *Mutual Mortgages* and *Commercial Collectives*, the foundations by which increasing quality of life may be built through the avoidance of residential and professional exploitation.

**Once such financial instruments and commercial structures are in place, we the progressing people can move on to the establishment of true democracy and the consideration of larger, global institutions which enable a greater spread of equity and microfinancing across borders.**

**And if there’s one thing you take away from reading or viewing this, let it be that there can be no true justice in existence when prevailing systems are inherently exploitative, and, therefore, that the pursuit of justice almost always entails protection against exploitation.**

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