"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing . . ." — EDMUND BURKE.

THE NEW TIMES SURVEY

THE AUSTRALIAN LEAGUE OF RIGHTS

Vol. 25 No. 07 July 2024

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Bullshit Jobs By William Waite

Introduction and Defining The Problem

It's my pleasure to be the opening speaker at this year's Douglas Social Credit conference. I am somewhat humbled to be standing here representing the thought and work of C.H. Douglas, in my opinion one of the most profound thinkers of the 20th Century. I would like to thank the organisers of this weekend's seminar, The Douglas Social Credit Institute, and the people here at the Adelaide Public School's Club for their hospitality.

Douglas was a practical character. He was an engineer and he took jobs all over the world. It was the engineers' insistence on wanting to make things *work* for the individual which earned him a great deal of credibility with practical people.

It was Douglas' belief that "to the greatest extent possible the will of the individual should prevail over his own affairs", that the system should work for the individual, and it was the purpose of government and economics to manifest this principle. Douglas took a special interest in the practical operation of the industrial system, particularly on its financial organisation, which he saw as essentially controlling the production of goods and services and their distribution. It was this careful study which led him to the conclusion that the priority of industry controlled by centralised finance was not the efficient delivery of goods and services as it should be, but rather the purpose was to achieve some moral result in the population by means of the employment system.

This was the view Douglas expressed in his book *Social Credit* published 100 years ago, commenting on the organisation as he saw it then:

> we have decided that the industrial system with its banks, factories, and transportation systems, exists for a moral end, and does not exist for the reason which induces individuals to co-operate in it, i.e. their need for goods; and that

> moral end can only be achieved through the agency of the system and its prime constituent – employment. And the practical policy to be pursued… It is to make the man-hours necessary for a given programme of production equal to the man-hours of the whole population of the world, so that everyone capable of any sort of work should, by some powerful organisation, be set working for eight or any other suitable number of hours a day. [1]

This top-down program of character building by full employment, 100 years later, is coming to its absurd conclusions. On the tickets which have gone out it says that I elected to talk about the rise of useless work. I want to modify that topic slightly. What I want to talk about is the rise of bullshit jobs.

Firstly, we can settle on a definition of bullshit jobs. What they are and what they are not. Then we can get a sense of how widespread the problem is. From there I will talk about how it has happened, the economic structure which assures it, and the moral result that inspires it. Finally, I will talk briefly about the solution to the problem. In addition to Douglas, I will draw on the work of the late anthropologist David Graeber, who has done the latest and fullest study of the phenomenon and who literally wrote the book on Bullshit Jobs.

After a process of refinement, Graeber finally lands on a working definition of what a bullshit job is:

> "A bullshit job is a form of paid employment that is so completely pointless, unnecessary, or pernicious that even the employee cannot justify its existence even though, as part of the conditions of employment, the employee feels obliged to pretend that this is not the case." [2]

I have run with this definition for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it forms a sort of limit case for identifying meaningless work in the economy. Because people will usually go to great lengths to justify their behaviour to themselves and others, jobs which are judged by those who do them to be meaningless seem to me to fail the easiest of tests. It also makes common sense to assume that the best judgement about whether or not a job is bullshit is made at the level of the person who actually does it. If you believe your job makes a meaningful contribution, it probably does. I see no reason to second-guess you. At least it provides some degree of satisfaction to you, the individual, which, from a Social Credit perspective, is the correct level of analysis. On the other hand, if you believe your job is a complete waste of time and makes no meaningful contribution (outside the money it pays you to live), then you are also probably correct.

The other aspect of this definition to think about is that a bullshit job requires a degree of dishonesty on the part of the person doing it – that's what bullshitting means. The worker must pretend either to the customer, but usually to the hierarchy that the work they are doing is actually serving some useful purpose – at least while they are doing it. I think this aspect of bullshit jobs is important and will be talked about later on.

There are a few other things we must say before we go any further. We must draw

the distinction between bullshit jobs and shit jobs.

Bullshit jobs are not to be confused with plain shit jobs. A shit job is usually a blue-collar job which, while it may be unpleasant for one reason or another because it is low paid, dirty, tedious, dangerous, low-status, or requires undesirable hours etc., is still necessary. Examples of shit jobs may include cleaning, assembly line work, traffic control. The interesting thing about these jobs is that the people who do them, while they may not be all that keen on their jobs, they don't classify them as having no purpose. Owing mainly to technology there are fewer and fewer of these jobs left. For instance, the paradigmatic shit job is garbage collection but, in this day and age, in Australia at least, the unpleasantness has largely been designed out of the task. The actual garbage collector is a truck driver who has little if any personal contact with rubbish at all.

There are some grey areas which deserve a mention. One is the creeping bullshitisation of useful jobs. There is always necessary work to be done, but increasingly these jobs are being eaten into by useless activity. I have seen this happening in education. The time spent planning and teaching lessons is being eroded by other, mainly administrative, tasks which have little to no impact in the classroom. The requirements of reporting, recording incidents, mandatory training and professional development, risk assessments, individualised student planning, assembling noble sounding intentions for the hypothetical audits, etc., is endless and ever-expanding. Personnel are being added all the time into the management and administration tiers to cover paperwork and the unions are constantly campaigning for more non-teaching time for teachers so that all this can be done. It is actually not possible to do it all and make an adequate job of teaching and "workload" is one of the reasons people report leaving the profession. According to Graeber, this experience is replicated in nursing as well. Many nurses complained that up to 80% of their time is taken up with paperwork, meetings and the like. I would also include in this category of bullshitised jobs useful work directed down blind alleys. For instance, concreters pouring footings for wind turbines arguably have had their jobs bullshitised.

Finally, there are the second order bullshit jobs. That is jobs, which in themselves, are not actually pointless but they are pointless because they exist to support bullshit jobs and people who are so preoccupied with bullshit they can't take care of themselves properly. For instance, after school day care for children of people who haven't the time to look after their kids and people who clean and maintain the vast office buildings where bullshit work is carried out might be considered second-order bullshit workers.

How Widespread Are Bullshit Jobs and Where Do We Find Them?

In his first book, *Economic Democracy*, mostly written in 1917, Douglas includes a long, long list of jobs which we might include in our category.

He described this work as "economic sabotage" which he said was "the colossal

waste of effort which goes on in every walk of life quite unobserved by the majority of people because they are so familiar with it.":

The simplest form of this process is that of 'making work': the elaboration of every action in life so as to involve the maximum quantity and minimum efficiency in human effort. The much-maligned household plumber who evolves an elaborate organisation and etiquette probably requiring two assistants and half a day, in order to 'wipe' a damaged water pipe, which could, by methods with which he is perfectly familiar, be satisfactorily reqpaired by a boy in one-third the time;

The machinist insisting on a lengthy apprenticehsip to an unskilled process of industry, such as the operation of an automatic machine tool, are simple instances of this.

On planned obsolesence..."the manufacturer who produces a new model of his particular specialty, with the object, express or subconscious, of rendering the old model obselete before it is worn out.

We then begin to touch on the immense region of artificial demand created by advertisement; a demand, in many cases, as purely hypnotic in origin as the request of the mesmerized subject for a draught of kerosine.

In another class comes the stupendous waste of effort involved in the intricacies of finance and book-keeping; much of which, although necessary to the competitive system, is quite useless in increasing the amenities of life. [3]

He goes on to mention the burden of armaments, the growing bureaucracy "elaborating safeguards for a radically defective social system" and the waste of labour involved in production for export sales.

With these categories in mind we might achieve some sense of the size of the problem.

Considering our definition, the obvious way to gauge the prevalence of bullshit jobs is to ask people. What we have suggests large swathes of the population believe their jobs to fit in to our category. A YouGov pol in the UK which asked, does your job "make a meaningful contribution to the world?" found that more than a third, 37%, said that it did not, with a further 13% unsure. A later poll in Holland asking the same returned similar results, slightly higher, with 40% reporting they worked meaningless jobs.4 While we are on these numbers it is worth noting that they seem to indicate that many people are aware of the pointlessness of their work and are not fooling themselves.

We can look at other indicators which suggest the scale of the problem in the Australian context:

According to the latest Intergenerational Report more than 90% of Australia's workforce is now employed in the services sector with this trend set to continue in the immediate future. I am not suggesting that services jobs are all bullshit, but it is worth pointing out that Australians make very little direct contribution to producing the actual goods which underpin our material quality of life. According to

projections from *Jobs and Skills Australia* the fastest growing occupations over the next decade will be professionals, managers and community and personal services workers. The very areas in which bullshit jobs proliferate. More service, less substance.

In terms of where we find them, Douglas' list is as good as any you will find and tragically just as relevant today as it was when he wrote it. I will point to some current trends.

Government, of course, deserves a special mention. The number of people in government whose jobs seem to be about making things hard, slow, and complicated is difficult to calculate. Last week our dairy farmer neighbour was describing the tortures – grants, quotes, soil tests, DAs, thousands of dollars of architectural drawings, environmental considerations, computer portals, clearances, restrictions – to build a small veranda on a hundred-year-old country hall. Anyone who tries to do anything involving permissions from government has stories like this.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that bullshit jobs are only found in the public sector. These jobs also show up in vast numbers in the private sector as well, especially in administration and finance (which belong to a growing sub-category of service jobs called 'information services.') This is not a new phenomenon. You'll recall that Douglas wrote about "the stupendous waste of effort involved in the intricacies of finance and book-keeping." In Australia, finance employs 3.8% of the workforce, compared with agriculture at 2.1% and, last I checked, we actually do mostly feed ourselves. Graeber also gives special mention to the FIRE sector(finance, insurance and real estate) which is sometimes put alongside services, manufacturing and farming in the employment breakdown. He dedicates a section of his book to "Why the financial industry might be considered a paradigm for bullshit job creation." The answer is simple if you understand the fundamentals of the financial system, as Graeber obviously does. The FIRE sector is unique in that it is the only industry which creates, plays around with, and destroys large amounts of money [5] which means there are no real financial restrictions on how much bullshit can go on. The large amounts of money available to governments through taxation and the national debt obviously have a similar enabling effect on bureaucratic bloat.

What Is The Problem

It shouldn't be difficult to convince you that requiring large swathes of the population to be engaged (or perhaps disengaged) in meaningless activity is not a healthy situation. At the fundamental and most important level it is an affront to our human sense of purpose, which must be the basis of any vitality in human life. If I could summarise the anguish expressed in the testimonials in Graeber's book, I would say that bullshit jobs drain the vitality, the enthusiasm for life, of those locked into them.

These jobs stand in opposition to the belief in life as an opportunity of some kind which is why the people who do them report feelings of misery, despair, a sense of

hopelessness, depression, desperation, relentless mediocrity, self-loathing, etc.

Commenting on the effects of technology, Orwell once described the trip by motorcar to be something like a "temporary death." I think this is also a good way of thinking about the state of mind required to sustain a bullshit job. Being confined to one of these positions, one experiences an overwhelming feeling of powerlessness to affect one's circumstances. The creeping apathy which invariably accompanies long stints of uselessness bleeds into other areas of peoples' lives affecting family relationships and participation in the broader community. It makes people numb, indifferent to their own suffering and to that of others, and what makes the whole thing even more aggravating is the requirement to pretend that what is obviously bullshit is not so.

Referencing Graeber's *Bullshit Jobs*, Mattias Desmet includes the phenomenon as one of the factors which contributes to individuals' sense of loneliness and powerlessness, cuts them off from nature and others, and makes people psychologically and materially dependent on the happy few whom they do not trust and with whom they cannot identify. This condition reduces people to what Hannah Arendt called the atomized subject. "It is this *atomised subject,*" Desmet writes, "which we recognise as the elementary component of the totalitarian state." [6]

Then there is the thorny issue of making a large part of the population spend the best hours of their waking lives pretending. It makes one's life a lie, at least a partial lie, and I wonder if this factor softens people up for accepting other lies. We are bombarded by bullshit; Lippman's manufacture of consent and Chomsky's 'necessary illusions'. Power relies on things not being widely known and things widely known not being widely discussed. The sheer time spent pretending by people who work bullshit jobs, I think, has something to do with why much of this is tolerated. If you spend half your life pretending, why not just pretend all the time. It's not a good long-term strategy for dealing with reality, but what's reality?

The psychological effects of bullshit jobs and the social conditions which it creates are reasons enough to abandon them as a bad idea. But there are a whole host of other negative impacts which show up in the economy as well.

Something I touched on earlier is that the requirement for millions of people to be needlessly employed introduces a great deal of unnecessary friction into the economic system. The proliferation of red and green tape when dealing with government is the most obvious case in point and it largely happens as a result of people inventing things for themselves and their underlings to do. A person employed as an educationist, for example, must suggest alterations to teaching methods; an environmentalist must protect the environment regardless of whether or not the environment requires protection; an employment consultant must find something for the unemployed people in their caseloads to do; someone employed as a workplace health and safety officer will, when all the hazards have been identified and minimised, simply invent hazards. The endless quantity of paperwork, processes

and boxes for ticking as a result of bloated government and private compliance bureaucracies is a continual drain on more productive elements of society. The cost in time and energy jumping through hoops is immeasurable, suffice to say here it is vast.

But there is a double-cost to all of this bullshit activity. In a different economy geared to the efficient delivery of goods and services, rather than a manufactured necessity for full-employment, people would be freer to attend to the numerous necessary duties which aren't paid. This is the unquantifiable opportunity cost of bullshit jobs. These are activities necessary to healthy and functional people which must in the world of full-employment remain largely undone. For instance, raising one's own children, studying, exercising, building skills and competence, volunteering and community participation, but since, for most, these activities do not include the money system they take a subordinate position to bullshit. The imbalance created in a society misdirected by a false necessity for paid employment at the expense of the broad sweep of things requiring human attention is literally civilisation ending.

The Agency of The System

Agreeing now that all these people doing bullshit jobs is bad on multiple levels, we want to describe how it is that such a large number of people have been cornered into doing something that is essentially against their interest, and the interests of wider society. Our opening quote had Douglas explaining that the industrial system exists for a moral end which "can only be achieved through the agency of the system and its prime constituent – employment."

It is this aspect "the agency of the system" and especially employment which I want to focus on now.

This quote from Douglas in *Economic Democracy* speaks directly to how the financial and economic system causes bullshit jobs.

> "It must be borne in mind that the existing economic system distributes goods and services through the same agency which induces goods and services, i.e., payment for work in progress. In other words, if production stops, distribution stops, and, as a consequence, a clear incentive exists to produce useless or superfluous articles in order that useful commodities already existing may be distributed." [7]

If explanation is needed, what he is saying here is that the economic system has a dual purpose. Firstly, it produces goods and services and secondly, it distributes them. It distributes the consumer products it generates by the provision of incomes through employment. Access to goods and services is made contingent on employment, so you're either a Kalahari bushman or you simply can't afford not to be employed.

This is why our employment setting is always maximum. Because the system does

not recognise any other legitimate claim to the market outside "payment for work in progress." The financial system has a built-in mechanism for creating bullshit jobs.

Underneath all this is the method by which money, credit, is created. In modern economies money is created when banks make loans. In the main, these loans take the form of enforceable agreements to handover future incomes so that consumption can happen in the present. These commitments to pay future incomes for money now amounts essentially to the piling up of commitments to work. It's as though money must be *worked out* of the system.

Further compounding the problem is the ongoing disparity between prices and purchasing power. Returning to the dual purpose of industry: production and distribution. There exists a built-in imbalance in the price system which means that prices on the production side always exceed the incomes made available to distribute what is being produced. This financial imbalance means that we are constantly having to borrow more money/debt into existence to make up the difference between prices and incomes. More consumption than ever is now funded directly via debt and it means that people, businesses and governments, society generally, is committing to work further and further into the future in order to live in the present.

One of the testimonials in Graeber's book is by Tom who works in advertising. Referring to his particular role, he makes the point: "that supply has far outpaced demand in most industries so now it is *demand* that is manufactured." [8] This idea of manufacturing demand is useful in understanding the artificial limitations which impede the proper distribution of production. While people may want things this demand cannot be made effective because the money to consume is insufficient. So the system moves to increase demand by increasing debt levels and cycle it via the employment system. The stimulation of demand in terms of artificially making people want more, and in terms of increasing debt are both crucial aspects of the problem which concerns us.

To confirm what I am saying one need look no further than the most powerful organisations in the country, i.e., the banking establishment and political consensus, are completely committed to both the maximisation of debt and the servicing of this debt by pursuit of full-employment. Personal, business, and private debt has never been higher, and, in the latest Intergenerational Report, the government writes "A high rate of labour force participation is central to economic growth and sustaining revenues for government services" [9] Full employment remains the number two priority of the Reserve Bank after monetary stability, and ahead of the economic prosperity and welfare of the Australian people.

Despite the displacement of labour and the use of machines as the most significant factor in the production of goods and services, the financial system continues to insist that no money will be created except as debt owed to itself and no goods distributed without employment. Regardless of industrial realities, our method of money creation and the on-going insistence on "work in progress" have us hooked to employment.

This issue of debt and the reality that our money supply is the product of obligations to work is still not widely understood. This circular relationship, debt-work-consumption-debt, means that the industrial system cannot be down-regulated to fit demand. Everybody must find a niche through which to draw an income; to put themselves in the way of economic values in perpetuity in a great many cases, without regard for genuine demand or need. The machines must be paid for, so the machines must run; if machines are making things, then these things must be sold; mortgages, car loans, credit cards etc. must be paid which means work; the national debt must be serviced so GDP must increase by so much. Economic prosperity and security means indebtedness to the banks. Freedom is slavery. One of the most depressing consequences of this economic arrangement is the prevalence of bullshit jobs.

The existence of bullshit jobs amply demonstrates that the policy of full employment has nothing to do with economic necessity. That is, it has nothing to do with a requirement for everyone able to work to be involved in providing the material needs of society.

Exactly 100 years ago Douglas wrote in Social Credit:

> "the primary fact on which to be clear is that we can produce at this moment, goods and services at a rate very considerably greater than the possible rate of consumption of the world and this production and delivery of goods and services can, under, favourable circumstances, be achieved by the employment of not more than 25 per cent of the available labour, working, let us say, seven hours a day. [10]

The truth is obvious. The use of machinery and the utilisation of improved techniques of mass production have decimated the opportunities for genuinely productive employment and vastly increased the quantity of consumer goods and services. Bryan Monahan points out the obvious truth that the quantity of production is proportional to the energy utilised rather than the number of people employed. In 1947 he estimated that the energy contribution of people was less than one-fiftieth total productive energy used. [11] Human energy long ago ceased to make an important contribution to the energy required for production, but our mode of distribution – namely the employment system – staggers on as though everything remains contingent on human muscle.

The Moral Reason

The widespread reality of bullshit jobs is the best evidence I know for dispelling any notion that full-employment is about economic efficiency or necessity. Obviously, if the economy was actually designed for the efficient provision of goods and services bullshit jobs wouldn't exist.

If we return to Douglas' quote at the top of the talk we will recall that the whole purpose of this full employment thing is to achieve some moral end. That is, the setting of full employment is a form of social engineering, but then the question is,

what sort of citizen and what sort of society is it aiming at?

The conventional moral position on the political and economic spectrum is that the state of being employed is a universally empowering condition and a pre-requisite for a moral life. This is also represented as the public's opinion, though it's difficult to know how much people actually believe it. As Graeber says, "There is a feeling that work is a moral value in itself, and that anyone not willing to submit themselves to some kind of intense work discipline for most of their waking hours deserves nothing." [12]

There are any number of examples of this attitude expressed by popular commentators. The following quotation is from Jordan Peterson making the moral case against a Universal Basic Income and is typical of the moral sentiment regarding employment:

> *I think it's a horrible solution by the way. I don't think the fundamental problem is that people don't have enough money. I think the fundamental problem is in some sense that human beings are beasts of burden and if they are not provided with a place where they can accept social responsibility, social and individual responsibility, in an honourable manner they degenerate and die. That's the opiate crisis in the West right now. Men need…, men who are men don't need money, they need function.* [13]

Peterson appears to be saying here that a payment which would allow people to consume what is being produced not attached to employment would interfere with man's *place* as "a beast of burden." Man is, in Peterson's view, to be "provided with a place" or a "function" in the employment system where he can "honourably accept social and individual responsibility."

Well for millions of people who work bullshit jobs the system is providing the place, but it is not delivering on the promise of honourable social and individual responsibility. Opiate addicts exist amongst the employed and unemployed. This view of the role of universal employment reduces man's purpose to an economic function and holds him there in perpetuity. We have seen that far from having a moralising and improving effect on people, for many, bullshit jobs have a powerful demoralising effect in that they make people more dependent, less content, less confident in the future, less vital. It's a method for the *containment* of humanity.

But that I think is the point of the whole stodgy edifice. The moral characteristic which is being cultivated in the population can be captured in a single word: *servility*. Full employment is power's answer to the dilemma "what do we do with all these people? We can stick them in an office with a computer and a pile of paper." It may lack imagination, but then the latest crop of technocratic megalomaniacs are not distinguished for their imagination.

So we come to the *real* moral of full-employment. It is not healthy, happy citizens living out meaningful lives in a productive and efficient economy. It is the practical policy of our social conditioners to solve 'the problem of happiness'. Huxley explains in the foreword to Brave New World:

The most important Manhattan Projects of the future will be vast government-sponsored inquiries into what the politicians and the participating scientist will call 'the problem of happiness' – in other words, the problem of making people love their servitude. [14]

There is little doubt that the financial system is owned and controlled by people whose primary interest is to attain power over others. A demoralised, dependent population of atomised subjects is the most easily frightened, the most easily 'persuaded', and ultimately the most easily managed. When it's all boiled down, full-employment, which makes bullshit jobs inevitable, creates servile populations which is a method of risk management for the ruling financial elite.

Graeber would agree:

The ruling class has figured out that a happy and productive population with free time on their hands is a mortal danger… If someone had designed a work regime perfectly suited to maintaining the power of finance capital, it's hard to see how he or she could have done a better job. [15]

Finally, Douglas would agree:

Why, then, is there so great a misdirection of attention in a matter of such primary importance? There is, I think, only one general and comprehensive answer which can be given to this question; and that is, that whether consciously or not, there is a widespread feeling on the part of executives of all descriptions that the only method by which large masses of human beings can be kept in agreement with dogmatic moral and social ideals , is by arranging that they shall be kept so hard at work that they have not the leisure or even the desire to think for themselves. [16]

What Can Be Done?

We can come at the solution as Douglas dissected the problem. On the one hand we have agency of the system, and on the other the moral rationalisation which justifies it and hides the real motive.

The large number of people who are admitting they work bullshit jobs are essentially complaining about having to do something they don't want to do. As we've seen, the things which are making them do it is the money system which will withdraw its support and probably enlist the sheriff to change the locks unless they continue with the job. When you have something making you do things which you would not do for any other reason, you are, in the realest sense, talking about a government. The financial system therefore is a form of government and it works by the machinery which we have been talking about today. The nature of this government, what it wants and what it is prepared to do to get it, is of the most urgent importance. Douglas said this about government by money:

When a monetary system dictates your actions, then you are governed by money, and you have the most subtle, dangerous and undesirable form of government that the perverted mind of man – if it is the mind of man – has ever conceived.

Douglas described the policy of this government to be "the elevation of the group ideal and the minimising of individuality." This is the policy which gives us bullshit jobs. It is an inversion of the principle we started with "to the greatest extent possible the will of the individual should not prevail over his own affairs"

I believe, as Douglas did, that at some level the financial system is consciously designed to get the results we see. These results are not inevitable. The system could be designed differently to achieve different results.

"The other alternative," Douglas wrote, "while recognising the necessity for discipline in the world, does not concern itself with that necessity in considering the modern productive process." [17] Social Crediters believe that the proper purpose of the industrial system is to deliver goods and services of the type and quantity desired by the population with the minimum labour required - not the employment of the whole stock as a starting point.

This thing we have which drip feeds the vast productive potential of the industrial system so long as we accept our place as labour and debt takers is a distortion of the facts. We do not want, and we have not asked for, discipline imposed from above. We have seen the moral character of our leadership. It's not in a position to teach lessons on morality. The policy of full-employment, imposed by politicians and finance, which chains people to the treadmill of mindless, pointless work, must be publicly abandoned.

The financial system must be made to release the industrial system to do the job for which it has been developed – to produce goods and services and save labour. The hard work has been done, we have the know-how and the technology in place.

To achieve this, it is finance which must be brought to heel. The monopoly of credit which only provides our money as debt, that is work owed to the owners of the financial system, must be broken up so that goods and services ordered by consumers may be fully delivered to them. This requires a two-pronged approach – the modification of the price system to establish a sensible relationship between the prices of essential goods and services and their real cost of production; and the distribution of a national dividend funded outside the debt system. The objective is to establish, as Douglas said, "a stable ratio between an available quantity of wealth and the money available to purchase it." With sufficient consumer purchasing power to fully distribute the product of the machine, the captives of bullshit jobs would be freed of the inanities of their bullshit sentences to pursue their own projects, pleasures, ideas and tend to neglected relationships and duties. Bottom-up reconstruction could begin.

The technical details of such a plan are more easily understood when read than heard. I assure you it can be done. The problem has nothing to do with technique. It is a problem of power.

To be governed by money as Douglas said is dangerous. Our focus has been on the individual. But the protection of the autonomous individual is the best policy we know for protecting the group, that is society. The central problem with rule

by finance is that it strives relentlessly to concentrate power and it is not able to recognise the existence of any type of risk which doesn't show up in the conjuring of their accounts and spreadsheets. The mechanistic ideal which animates the financial technocrat can only inadequately grasp the indeterminate nature of the reality they attempt to manage. The worst thing about rule by the economic type is its characteristic narrowness. Government by money is essentially blind government and there is no knowing what they are going to crash us into.

Conversely, A policy which ensures "that to the greatest extent possible the will of the individual shall prevail over his own affairs" stabilises the ship of state by distributing the weight of power through its base, like ballast.

I'm with Douglas and Graeber –

"this is a disastrous state of affairs, I wish it to end."

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Corrective Economic Approaches By Charles Pinwill

The first thing when attempting to make changes is to look to what tools may be available to do them. This may involve things material and intellectual, and even knowledge from history. Here, above all we are talking about sanctions.

A sanction is anything which allows you to achieve a result. I can remember working in a remote place trying to drive a nail to secure a pump into place to water thirsty stock, and without my full toolbox. I tried the back of a shifting spanner and the side of an axe. Driving nails was impossible.

The sanction I needed here was a hammer.

History teaches that is every society there is a *key sanction*. In Imperial Rome the key sanction was the Legions. If you had the support and affections of the Legions you ruled the world. All other sanctions; moral, intellectual, rhetorical or money were secondary. They were all available, but only if you held the key sanction.

With the break-up of Rome, power was localised and the medieval system emerged. When all of the things which supported your life such as food and shelter had to be had from just a few miles from your home, the key sanction became land. The ownership and monopoly of land was now the key sanction and fell to the local Lord of the Manner. This situation prevailed for some hundreds of years.

In time the rivers and waterways were reopened and the roads also became operative. The local Lords' monopoly of your life support was increasingly undone. He had to compete with wheat, honey and other materials coming in from elsewhere. His monopoly was progressively broken by the activity of merchants. We had arrived into the mercantile system.

The means of operating the mercantile system was now money. We had left the key sanction of the Legions and the monopoly of land; it was now money which was the key. For a time commodities such as honey, grain or precious metals may perform the function of money, but that soon passed. Trade between Italy and the mouth of the Rhine was complicated and demanded a flexible currency.

The Bankers of Northern Italy, such as the Medici family, came into prominence. They loaned to both traders and purchasers and soon the credit you had with these Banks was the form of money.

Our money is still our bank deposits. Notes and coins are an insignificant 2% of money. Before we look further an corrective economics we need to understand something of this *key sanction*.

New and additional bank deposits are created when banks give loans. Banks never lend their deposits in spite of misunderstandings. None of us have ever had our deposit reduced to lend it to another.

Every time a bank makes a loan the amount of money in existence is increased, and when we repay a loan the deposit we use to do so is cancelled out. The function of banks is to both create and destroy our money.

The above is elementary knowledge, but critical to understanding the key sanction now existant in society.

When men seek to understand anything, be it an asteroid, a radio wave or a substance we always do it in the same way. What's that? We measure it. We measure it in all of its known properties; length, weight, velocity, shape, chemical makeup etc.

So what is he first thing if we are attempting to a change to the economy? We measure it!

Strangely, Governments barely bother with such. They do do a few accounts. They do a budget which is an estimate for next year, or more probably, largely a guestimate for it. They do calculate gross activities, or the turnover, for the previous year which they call a Gross Domestic Product or GDP.

No Company Director would consider such limited accounts as being sufficient to understand their company's affairs.

Companies do much more extensive and important accounts to understand their affairs. Chief amongst these are Comprehensive Balance Sheets and Profit and Loss Accounts.

Balance Sheets measure their advantages, such as their land, productive capacity and intellectual property etc. Secondly they measure those things which constitute claims upon their assets, their liabilities, and arrive at a net worth, even if it is negative. Secondly, they do Profit and Loss accounts.

These measure the value of their productivity against the cost of achieving it, to arrive at either a profit or a loss for their activity.

No Company Director would pretend to understand his company, and no one would invest in a company without these accounts. Comprehension without them is impossible.

National Accounts

All large entities, and most small ones too, do these accounts with one notable exception. Governments, though responsible for national economics, show no interest in measuring the economy in this way and do no such accounts.

The governments of Canada and Australia each did one National Balance Sheet in about 2020. They were both very deficient, as they included neither the largest asset nor liability. A nation's largest asset is its people. Even just valuing the vocational training of its people dwarfs other assets in value. The largest of national liabilities is its money.

Money in our pockets is our asset as it represents our claims upon others, but the national money supply represents the claims upon the economy, as it were the IOUs that we have issued against our national assets and are outstanding.

Without basic accounts politicians regularly sell national assets to foreigners for money. They exchange assets to acquire liabilities and think they have done well. It is a little more complicated then this but perhaps more on that later.

The absence of a National Profit and Loss Account leaves the economy unmeasured in important ways. This account measures the value of consumer products available, against the purchasing power available to consume it.

If purchasing power is inadequate to use our consumption more money needs to be created. If it is excessive it needs to be constrained to prevent inflation through excessive demand.

While no nation has ever done a National Profit and Loss Account, some such accounts have been done privately using available national statistics.

One was done for the year 2014 for the United States and was published in the book *Different Essays* published by Balboa Press.

It showed that the total consumer production produced by Americans was $12,501 billion. The total aggregate personal income of all Americans available to buy it, was only $10,100 billion. The deficiency of purchasing power was $2,401 billion. This amounted to a deficiency of $7,528 per person or of $30,114 per family of four.

Another way of saying this is that Americans produced $12,500 billion for a cost of doing it of $10,100 billion. The national profit was $2,400 billion. Of course this was untenable as 20% of the national production could not be by increasing indebtedness. Federal Reserve Bank statistics show that indebtedness increased in 2014 by $2,278 billion, approximating the deficiency.

Another National Profit and Loss Account was published for Australia for the year 2020 in the book *Where Money Comes* From, published by Logoswriting.co.

This measured total consumer production as $1,082 billion and consumer incomes of $795 billion; a deficiency of $287 billion. Taking the population as 23 million, the deficiency per living Australian was $34,560 or $138,560 per family of four. This required an increase of indebtedness in Australia of $287 billion, or $34,560 each. The fact that the economy did not collapse into recession is testimony that this happened.

Another way of considering the above is that the Australian economy is inherently profitable. Our profit of production above its costs was $287 billion or $34,560 each. In a corporate situation where profits are understood, this would have been available to pay the shareholders a dividend.

In a national consideration, the shareholders are our people who own this country by our right of inheritance. If we had this information we would then have been able to make a choice to keep the economy liquid. Either increase our indebtedness by $287 billion or pay a National Dividend of $34,560 each.

Both the books mentioned by Charles Pinwill as having Prototype Accounts, *Different Essays* and *Where Money Comes From*, are available from Amazon.

With the proper accounts this national dividend would not have been inflationary. When it is measured to meet the deficiency only, there is no excessive demand here.

Without proper accounts Governments regularly expand the money supply by either too little or too much. They don't know what they are doing, and can't, without measurement.

The key to all this is measurement, and once done, the choice between debt or dividend will become apparent. It may not become apparent immediately, but with regular accounts year after year, done with the credibility of authoritative accountants, the penny will eventually drop.

This is the hope of the world for sound economics. There is no hope (except with rare intelligences) with expounding theory, however sound. Proclaiming our rights in the economy will resound with few.

The prospects of inducing Governments to measure their economies are minable. The primary means of Politicians' success is had by kissing babies and such like, and other considerations are peripheral.

Prestigious accountants remain unawares of the enormity of the contribution to public welfare which they might effect. So where is the road forward?

Back to basics: the key sanction of money. Until sufficient accountants with standing can be recruited to the cause, they will, at least, respond to generous payments. Financing them and the promotion of the accounts as important and significant, is necessary.

We need someone with a few millions of dollars, or to somehow acquire same for the task. While the endeavour is daunting and difficult, it is what it is.

All that is open to us is to attempt to do it.

National Director's July-August West Australia Tour

Looking back on the extensive two-month speaking tour undertaken by Eric Butler and his wife Elma in May-June 1955, current National Director Arnis Luks will be carrying out a similar speaking tour in July and August 2024 across West Australia. The tour begins around The Midlands Route and across to Geraldton for the 20th of July, expecting to be in that area for several days before proceeding south to Perth, for the 27th afternoon-workshop 1.30pm-, and the evening *New Times Dinner* 6.00pm- to follow on, at Topolinis Caffé, 639 Beach Rd, Warwick, Ph 08 9447 7118.

We make a special appeal to all supporters to help make this tour a success. Arnis is undertaking this tour as a novel method to awaken people to the political possibilities of an incarnated faith, and would appreciate maximum co-operation.

In the past home meetings have proved a big success, and it is hoped that supporters will consider opening their own homes to this timely message. Where it is felt that home meetings cannot be arranged, it is also suggested that thought be given to approaching Church organisations, Rotary and Apex Clubs, and Returned Servicemen's organisations to this timely message.

Arnis will also be carrying ample stocks of book supplies and subscription forms for the new *OnTarget* Booklet, and is willing and able to deliver several important talks suitable for home meetings, one-day workshops, and two-day Seminars. ***

On Target Subscriptions and ALOR Donations

Subscriptions

Following on from the Kitchen Table Forums conducted across all Australian states last year, and taking into account feedback from a good number of people with the establishment of the monthly booklet *'On Target',* the ALOR National Director Arnis Luks has committed to repeat a similar Australian wide tour, while promoting existing and new subscriptions to the *'On Target'*. Issued each month to promote the League's Objectives, the booklet will complement the National Director's busy community campaign.

Contact HO to hold an ALOR Workshop and Kitchen Table Forum in your area !

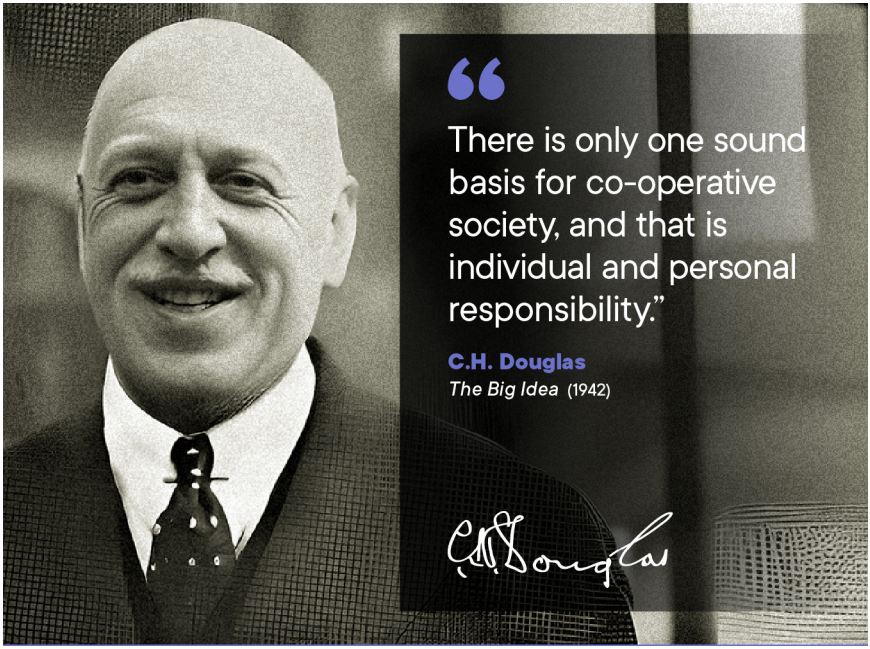
Purchasing a subscription of the monthly booklet *'On Target'* ensures you are kept updated on ALOR activities and other training initiatives, for yourself, and also consider an additional subscription for a young person, or a friend.

Subscriptions are payable by Direct Bank Transfer : details in the advert on the next page, or through the ***veritasbooks.com.au*** website - ***'subscriptions'***.

Donations

Donations are the support backbone to keeping the League going with resourced-feet on the ground. To support the continued development of the League's Objectives, this can be performed in the same manner, by a Direct Bank Transfer.

Readers wishing to support the Australian League of Rights are invited to make Direct Bank Transfers as per the details on the next page.



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