A WEEKLY COMMENTARY

ON TARGET

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The Price of Freedom is Eternal Vigilance

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Thinning the Herd: Brett Weinstein and the Dangers of AI
By William Waite

On the development and integration of Artificial Intelligence Brett Weinstein is more thoughtful than most. His perspective is from that of an evolutionary biologist and he summarises the problem as one of "hyper-novelty." For an evolutionary biologist the state of hyper-novelty occurs when the rate of environmental change exceeds the rate at which humans can adapt to it. AI, he argues, can only accelerate what is already an intolerably unpredictable and shifting situation. On a recent podcast alarmingly titled "AI Agents Emergency Debate: These jobs won't exist in 24 months! Containment has failed, we must prepare for what's coming!" [1] Weinstein categorises his concerns. They are:

1. The malevolent AI scenario. AI runs wild and kills everyone (of least concern)
2. The misalignment problem where the AI misunderstands an instruction and in carrying it out causes tremendous damage.
3. The derangement of human intellect
4. The massive disruption to the way things function (labour displacement being the most important problem in this category)
5. The last one is that this just simply accelerates demographic processes that do potentially result in the unleashing of technologies that pre-existed AI. This can easily result in an escalation into wars that turn nuclear.

The final three are guaranteed and in varying degrees already with us.

Dealing with Weinstein's concerns in order.

From this distance it is impossible to assess the threat from a malevolent or misaligned AI. Many key people including Musk and Altman have expressed deep concerns at the potential for AI to get of control. With the combination of AI target selection and IDF sniper drones shooting (children) in Gaza [2] you could be forgiven for thinking we're living through the beginning of the end. There is a disturbing recklessness in how Silicon Valley elites appear to be knowingly jeopardising the wellbeing of billions of people who will be affected by their technology. The cavalier attitude was neatly captured by Sam Altman of OpenAI in 2015 when he said "AI will probably most likely lead to the end of the world, but in the meantime, there'll be great companies."

The derangement of human intellect has been going on for some time but has shifted up a gear with the widespread use of the internet and algorithmic social media. Weinstein references "dopamine traps" which bait users to become addicted to digital instant gratification and AI deep fakes which make it nearly impossible for the unsuspecting to know fact from fiction. Another certainty with the widespread use of AI is that it will cause human intelligence to atrophy. If intelligence is a function of the use of intelligence won't the outsourcing of our problems to AI necessarily lead to the deterioration of organic, human intelligence?

It is the problem of labour displacement which features most significantly in Weinstein's fourth category. There is consensus that millions of jobs will soon be displaced by AI. In an article this morning in *The Australian* about the AI revolution in the banking sector we read:

> *Banks are reviewing their entire operations to determine where to embrace AI. The area where the biggest changes will take place are head offices, and large areas of administrative activity will be taken over by AI.*
>
> *The first major off the blocks was Westpac, with staff cuts and a declaration that it would target a cost-to-income ratio below other major bank rivals in four years.*
>
> *Westpac's declaration has provided the trigger for an interbank cost reduction competition. This competition will spread to other areas of Australian corporate life, and the consequent revolution will impact universities because the initial routine tasks performed by graduates will be taken over by AI.* [3]

The concern can be condensed to something like this. The widespread replacement of people with AI spells economic ruin for the people and for the wider economy. At the level of the individual mortgages and rents will not be paid, food and a decent material existence is put out of reach. In a full employment economy where selling something remains the only claim to goods and services people, through no fault of their own, will be disallowed from accessing the products of a more productive economy ("productive of what?" is a different question). If the purpose of production is consumption what's the point of that?

It would also be a disaster for the economy. The widespread contraction of

incomes will lead directly to recession, defaults and business insolvencies. As per the pattern government debt would likely increase to fill the vacuum and corporations scaled to weather the ups and downs of business cycles would further entrench their advantages. This is an environment in which the public/private partnership thrives and what's left of genuine competition withers and dies. Purchasing power is increasingly siloed in assets by a diminishing fraction of the population insulated from the chaos by their wealth and liberated from the labour of the masses. This can go to very dark places. When asked what he fears most about AI Weinstein said:

> *My fear coming, stemming from technology and AI is that this is a runaway process and that that runaway process is going to interface very badly with some latent human programs. That in effect, the need for workers largely disappears and the people who are at the head of the processes that result in that elimination for the need for workers start talking about useless eaters. Maybe they come up with a new term this time. Thin the herd. Yep, or they allow it to be thinned or something. Right.*

The half-baked range of solutions floated to address this impending dystopia are not cause for comfort. On the one hand is a government issued Universal Basic Income funded by redistributive taxation and government debt. On the other is a chorus of meritocrats – almost always tech entrepreneurs – who in addition to being above the impending chaos believe that creative and meaningful opportunities in the new economy will magically appear. The first is a formula for the final enthronement of finance by government debt and the second is an excuse for doing nothing and continuing to 'thin the herd.' Unsurprisingly both 'solutions' are suggested by the same people.

Optimistically what we have here is an opportunity to reframe the breakdown of the employment system as something that could provide for greater human liberty. If, as everyone says it will, the AI revolution increases economic productivity, it is not necessary that millions of people be impoverished in the process. If nothing else Australian bank share dividends show that money can be distributed completely dissociated from labour. A more general distribution of credit, unattached to debt, would allow those replaced by AI to continue to consume and permit society to avoid the worst aspects of mass labour displacement. It should be said that the possibility of this wider economic security has been with us for some time and is not new with the advent of AI, but, due to a faulty financial system which will not distribute purchasing power except as debt, it remains yet unrealised.

Such an arrangement would have beneficial second and third order consequences. A measure of economic security tied to the real economy of the nation would allow people to manage their own level of involvement in whatever comes next. Coming back to Weinstein's 'hyper-novelty,' people would have some flexibility in how, and at what pace, they adapt to the emerging conditions. Some might decide to pursue the course of tech entrepreneurs, good luck to them, but the temperaments and

nervous systems of mere mortals might prefer something quieter and less cut-throat. We should keep in mind that the idea that meaning is derived from our status as sales people is the assertion of a culture dominated by sales people, not a universal absolute.

To Weinstein's fifth point the most important 'accelerating demographic process' ongoing at the moment is the cetnralisation of power away from the individual. This presents possibly the greatest threat of all. Often AI is spoken about as though it is a neutral tool distinct from the people who program and deploy it. This is of course not the case. AI is another tool that is being used by some people to dominate others. Private companies and government are already teaming up to gather people's data and analyse it using AI in order to manipulate them in ways they can't control or understand. The police state entanglements between the, Israeli and Trump administrations and their dealings with Palintir are a case in point. [4] Said Palantir CEO Alex Karp: "Palantir is here to disrupt and make the institutions we partner with the very best in the world, and when it's necessary to scare our enemies and, on occasion, kill them."

What do we become if we outsource our very thinking to a machine? If we take Decartes' "I think therefore I am" does it bring into doubt our very existence? To what degree are we our thinking and if that part of us is diminished do we just diminish ourselves? When what passes for thinking is just a machined amalgam from a selected range of expressions can the Conditioners finally say: "*They are not men at all : they are artefacts.*" And what are we to make of this obsession with intelligence as the solution to our problems? In the panoply of desireable human qualities intelligence (whatever it is) is hardly our limiting factor. Notably intelligence is absent from the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

I am reminded of the final stages in C.S. Lewis' *Abolition of Man*. [5] It may bring understanding but little comfort:

> *I am inclined to think the that the Conditioners will hate the conditioned. Though regarding as an illusion the artifical conscience which they produce in us their subjects, they will yet perceive that it creates in us an illusion of meaning for our lives which compares favourably with the futility of their own: and they will envy us as eunuchs envy men. But I do not insist on this, for it is mere conjecture. What is not conjecture is that our hope even of a 'conditioned' happiness rests on what is ordinarily called 'chance' — the chance that benevolent impulses may on the whole predominate in our Conditioners. For without the judgement 'Benevolence is good' — that is, without re-entering the Tao — they can have no ground for promoting or stabilizing their benevolent impulses rather than any others. By the logic of their position they must just take their impulses as they come, from chance. And Chance here means Nature. It is from heredity, digestion, the weather, and the association of ideas, that the motives of the Conditioners will spring. Their extreme rationalism,*

by 'seeing through' all 'rational' motives, leaves them creatures of wholly irrational behaviour. If you will not obey the Tao, or else commit suicide, obedience to impulse (and therefore, in the long run, mere 'nature') is the only course left open.

At the moment, then, of Man's victory over Nature, we find the whole human race subjected to some individual men, and those individuals subjected to that in themselves which is purely 'natural' — to their irrational impulses. Nature, untrammelled by values, rules the Conditioners and, through them, all humanity. Man's conquest of Nature turns out, in the moment of its consummation, to be Nature's conquest of Man. Every victory we seemed to win has led us, step by step, to this conclusion. All Nature's apparent reverses have been but tactical withdrawals. We thought we were beating her back when she was luring us on. What looked to us like hands held up in surrender was really the opening of arms to enfold us forever. If the fully planned and conditioned world (with its Tao a mere product of the planning) comes into existence, Nature will be troubled no more by the restive species that rose in revolt against her so many millions of years ago, will be vexed no longer by its chatter of truth and mercy and beauty and happiness. Ferum vicotrem cepit [6]: and if the eugenics are efficient enough there will be no second revolt, but all snug beneath the Conditioners, and the Conditioners beneath her, till the moon falls or the sun grows cold.

Lord, give us strength. ***

1
The Diary of a CEO. 12.05.25. AI Agents Emergency Debate: These jobs won't exist in 24 months! Containment has failed, we must prepare for what's coming. Accessed from: ***https://youtu.be/JMYQmGfTltY***

2
Surgeon breaks down in parliament explaining how IDF drones target children. 13.11.24. Available from: ***https://youtu.be/fgsK7noLGOM***

3
Gottleibsen, R. 28.05.25. How big banks in Australia could use AI to sell more home loans. *The Australian.* Available from: ***https://www.theaustralian.com.au/commentary/how-big-banks-in-australia-could-use-ai-to-sell-more-home-loans/news-story/b6928a5d58b641ae07f618ed45be3964***

4
Allyn, B. 3.05.25. How Palantir, the secretive tech company, is rising in the Trump era. Available from: ***https://www.npr.org/2025/05/01/nx-s1-5372776/palantir-tech-contracts-trump***

5
Dorsett, L (Editor). 1988. *The Essesntial C.S. Lewis.* MacMillan Publishing Company, New York.

6
Meaning: The defeated conquered its uncivilised vanquisher.

The Breakdown of the Employment System By Arnis Luks

https://alor.org/Storage/Library/Douglas%20CH%20-%20Breakdown%20of%20the%20Employment%20System.htm

A Pincer Movement is being conducted against the small-ish farmer by the state governments of Western Australia and Victoria. Sheep production at times can produce a viable % return on investment even for the relatively modest producer. However, with the imposition by the Victorian State Government of a logarithmically-increased Emergency Services Levy 10:1 against the farmer's land area; costs are elevated beyond the modest returns from the marketplace, making it unrealistic to continue operating and trading. The state government is financially forcing them out of the market with this new levy - currently deferred for 12 months due to effective protests in the city.

From antiquity, taxes were only levied against the increase experienced by the producer. Flock numbers were assessed on the numbers between the previously existing herd and the current herd. If the herd numbers increased by 30 percent, then the 30 percent increase was tithed at 10 percent of the 30 percent; being three percent. Placing a monetary assessment against acreage does not consider uncontrollable variables such as drought, the price of water, the costs of energy, maintenance of equipment, replacement of the herd, labour costs, interest rates, viability of the land and finally seed. Increasing the levy by a factor of 10:1 can nullify the viability of farming as an industry.

In Western Australia the state and federal labor governments banned live sheep exports. Farmers, to remain competitive, are now compelled to reconfigure their land and equipment for other uses. I noted on my return trip home from WA that one enterprise had a convoy of three very large track-driven tractors each with a 40-foot collapsible air-seeding combine attached. Those three apparatuses are capable of ploughing and seeding strips of land about 120 foot wide at an optimum speed of 4.35 miles per hour (seven kilometres) - covering (in combination) about 200 acres per hour – around the clock 4,800 acres per day - nearly 7 square miles per 24 hours - an acre was the amount of land tillable by one man behind one ox in one day.

Apart from the few people associated with this process of air-seeding the 4,800 acres per day, no one else derives an increase in spending power to purchase the result. Wages, salaries and dividends are an incomplete mechanism to purchase what has been potentially produced. The employment system is actually breaking down. Improvements in production, now with AI as well, have replaced man as a major component in industry.

CH Douglas identified this phenomenon more than 100 years ago and made proposals to balance the disparity of available spending power (against what has been produced with advances in technology). He recommended a national dividend being issued equally to 'all' in society. He also recommended a consumer price discount at

the point of purchase, to ensure price stability and reflect the real costs-of-production - being a falling price level as efficiencies are implemented.

Corporate giants can now avoid tax to the tune of billions. They can and do amass teams of highly sophisticated lawyers, and through trade agreements such as the TPP, be assessed by the World Bank Administrator Tribunal rather than our own national courts and the Australian Taxation Office.

Being a rules-based order, they are at the forefront of trade negotiations that exclusively benefit themselves in preference to a host nation. This journal has recorded Imran Khan fighting to protect his nation of Pakistan against this predatory encroachment and exploitation by transnational corporations – backed by central banks.

FURTHER READING HERE:

The Case That Blew the Lid Off the World Bank's Secret Courts

https://fpif.org/the-case-that-blew-the-lid-off-the-world-banks-secret-courts/

ATO loses $1b tax dispute with Alcoa as US companies play hardball

https://www.afr.com/companies/mining/ato-loses-1bn-tax-dispute-with-alcoa-as-us-companies-play-hardball-20250529-p5m3bt

Ford enlists Trump tax officials in billion dollar ATO brawl

https://www.afr.com/wealth/tax/america-inc-raises-the-stakes-in-fight-with-canberra-over-tax-20250508-p5lxn3

Financial Leverage by central banks against the host nation is the standard fare to monopolise national assets unto themselves. This is a modern form of piracy. Australia has experienced 'privatisation' (simply another name of the same phenomena) of our infrastructure to satisfy (for a short period of time) the massive debt levels we have incurred by the fraudulent financial system.

https://lowy-institute.github.io/publications/2025/DUKE-peak-repayment-china-global-lending.pdf

The Lowy-Institute reports that the world's 75 poorest countries are irredeemably indebted to China. Think of our Pacific Island Nations to the North. This is misleading as it does not clearly indicate the central banking power that operates behind this illusion of China. China's diplomats are operating as the frontispiece for central banking. China is equally in debt to central banking, as is every other nation. However, it has become the engine room for world manufacturing - as policy.

An essential point to be reminded of is that during the collapse of the Berlin Wall as an event, it was revealed that the Soviet Union was governed by a handful of central bankers and Vladimir Putin. It was not the Politburo - the hard-line Communist who are supposed to control the Communist Party and therefore the nation - but central bankers who ultimately controlled the political apparatus called communism. The reality of Marxism on the ground is that it is a dictatorship 'of' the proletariat, not a dictatorship 'by' the proletariat.

China has now become a collector of debts, rather than a perceived benevolent-issuer of loans. Their Military operates as the strongarm-branch to enforce policy compliance. USA does the same to an equal degree. Consider the recent diplomatic mission to Australia from the USA - calling for increased spending on military equipment – no doubt purchased from the USA as exporter of preference. The 'Economic Hitman' operates through governments, but in reality, foreign dignitaries commissioned to do the very-work John Perkins was enlisted to do – enticing leaders with outlandish 'promises of prosperity or security', when in fact they entice-to-trap nations into contracts of irredeemable bondage, exchanging their very-real national assets for a bowl of financial debt-bondage.

From Our NewTimes Archives: 1957

False Financial Policies Force Recognition Of Red China -
U.S.A. and Australia to Follow British Lead?

We have on numerous occasions drawn attention to the fact that the non-Communist nations cannot, in the long run, successfully withstand the Communist conspiracy while they maintain their unrealistic financial and economic policies. We have in particular pointed out how the urgent necessity to increase the volume of exports was going to force even the U.S.A. to grant recognition to the Chinese Communists. This necessity to increase exports is not a real necessity; it is a result of financial rules which force individuals in modern industrial communities to seek a "favourable balance of trade" in order to keep their economic system from breaking down. When Australia's Minister for External Affairs, Mr. R. G. Casey, recently caused a mild sensation with his plea for greater Australian trade with Red China, we wondered whether this first step towards the ultimate recognition of Red China was not based upon the knowledge that his fellow-internationalists in the U.S.A. were proposing a similar policy. We did not have long to wait before learning that Mr. Casey's views are shared by the policy makers in the U.S.A.

Last week press reports stated that a new Senate sub-committee was going to investigate why the United States was "out of step" on the issue of trade with China. The Chairman of this new subcommittee claims that every country in the world is doing increased trade with Red China and that the U.S.A. must do likewise. Here we have a classic example of the madness that is destroying what remains of civilization. International Finance knows no country and has no loyalties except to its policy of enslaving the whole world in debt and of erecting an international tyranny to prevent revolt. The Money Power has shown that it is just as willing to make loans available to Communist Governments as to non-Communist Governments.

The directors of the Money Power, with its headquarters in the U.S.A., know what they are about. But those businessmen and others, who advocate increased trade with Communist countries because they accept such non-sense as the claim that a nation grows wealthy on its exports, are victims of mind conditioning. What, for example, can the American people possibly want from Communist China which they do not produce themselves or which they could not obtain from non-Communist countries?

How the Communist leaders must laugh to themselves as they see the Americans, who have demonstrated that they have an almost completely self-contained economy, and who could provide all their genuine requirements with a few hours work per week, seeking to send some of their production to Communist China.

The Americans will get nothing in exchange for this production, except, of course, dollar credits created in the U.S.A. This procedure helps prevent the American economy from breaking down, but it also ensures that the Money Power prevents the Americans from enjoying the potential leisure, which is physically possible.

When Mr. Casey made his plea for greater Australian trade with Communist China, he did not tell Australians what they might expect to receive in exchange for their production. Is it seriously claimed that the Australian standard of living can be increased by sending vast quantities of Australian wool and wheat to Red China?

Those mesmerised by financial abstractions will no doubt reply that these exports will increase Australia's "export earnings" and that these earnings will increase purchasing power in Australia. It is true that there is an increase in the domestic money supply as a result of exports. But this increase is the result of increased financial credits being issued by the Australian banking system. Chinese money will not be sent to Australia and used in exchange for Australian wool. In a real and physical sense, a big volume of exports to Red China would be a big loss to Australia, or any other exporting country, and a big gain for the Communists. If Australians, Americans, and other people of non-Communist countries cannot devise some way of providing themselves with increased purchasing power to buy what they have produced without first giving away a big proportion of their production to their enemies, they do not deserve to survive. The Communists have never bothered to conceal their views on this matter.

***

THE WHOLE WORLD IN (DEBT) GOLD CHAINS

By Major C.H. Douglas in "Manchester Despatch"1920s

Out of the welter of discussion and recrimination which has been proceeding on the subject of the economic and social crisis through which the world in general, and this country in particular, is passing, one idea stands out clearly. It is a new idea, and yet it has been, I think, grasped by a majority of the population.

It is that the crisis, the poverty, and the mental and physical distress which are the features of these present times, are in a certain sense artificial. We are starving in the midst of plenty. It is not goods and services which are lacking - it is the money with which to buy those goods and services which either actually exist or could potentially be made. Money is only a ticket system.

It would appear that every effort has been made to confuse and obscure this issue. The crisis is described as an unemployment crisis, whereas a little consideration will make it clear that our scientists, our organisers, and our engineers have been engaged for hundreds of years, and successfully engaged in producing this so-called "unemployment" crisis, which properly considered is, of course, the successful

transfer of economic labour from the backs of men on to the backs of machines. That is what we have been trying to do, and that is what we have succeeded in doing.

The machines are capable of making the goods, but the unemployed cannot buy them because they lack money, and to them a situation which should be one of freedom and leisure, appears disguised as one of economic catastrophe.

The actual and potential wealth of the world is demonstrably beyond all the requirements of the highest standard of living for the whole of the population.

What are we told by our politicians and our inspired Press and Broadcasting agencies? That we cannot afford even our present standard of living, that our taxes must he increased, which, if it means anything at all, means that we have less money to spend on our personal requirements and can therefore draw less upon the real wealth of the country.

That we must work harder and our social services must be curtailed. That the wages of labour must be cut down, and the dividends of railway shareholders, amongst others, must be so reduced that they, in turn, will be powerless to obtain even that portion of this abundant and increasing wealth to which they have been accustomed.

Obviously these two claims, first, on the one hand, that the world is rich and getting richer (which is the claim of the engineer and the scientist), and on the other band, that it is poor and getting poorer (which is the claim of the financier and his protagonist, the orthodox politician) cannot at one and the same time be true.

In spite of every hindrance to the formation of an instructed opinion, the man in the street has arrived at the correct conclusion. The scientist is right, and the financier is wrong.

Now, the first step towards understanding how it is that the financial system presents a fictitious picture of poverty when, in fact, there is no fundamental poverty anywhere, can, I think, best be taken by realising that when you make goods or grow food, you do not thereby make the money with which to buy the goods that you have made or the food that you have grown.

The greatest factor in the creation of real wealth is the cultural inheritance of civilisation - scientific knowledge, tools, processes, organisation, and so forth. A second factor is that of raw materials, and especially solar energy, and a third factor, of diminishing importance, is that of labour.

This cultural inheritance is beyond dispute the birthright of the community and not of any section of it. But the money which is required to distribute this real wealth comes from an entirely different quarter. There is now no dispute possible in regard to the matter. It is actually made by the banks, and the ownership of it is claimed by the banks.

The process is mainly a book-keeping process and has been epitomised by a well-known banker -- the Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna -- in the words:

"Every bank loan and the purchase of every security creates a deposit, and the repayment of every bank loan and the sale of a security destroys a deposit."

Suppose you grew a ton of potatoes, and I wrote you out a cheque for £5 and took your potatoes. If you were willing to accept my cheque indefinitely, it is obvious that as fast as you grew potatoes I could come into possession of them by writing out cheques for them.

It is also obvious that: If your only method of getting the goods and services which you require was by obtaining cheques from me for the purpose of handing them on to someone else, that so long as I retained the monopoly of writing cheques I should be potentially the owner of everything you and your neighbours could produce.

Although banks have the monopoly of the creation of money, no bank has ever been known to give money away. It lends money: that is its business, and it expects repayment, with interest. In consequence, there is a certain volume of money flowing out from the banks in the form of loans, and a certain volume of money always returning to the banks in the form of repayment of loans.

It is this volume of money, and not the amount of available goods, which governs the purchasing power of the general population.

In order, quite ineffectively, to enable goods to be disposed of in the face of an inadequate supply of purchasing power, prices are driven down, with the result that producers make a loss and their producing plants are put out of action.

While the technical details of this situation are too complex for treatment in a short article, it is accurate to say that ultimately the core of the problem can be put into four words - ***"the monopoly of credit,"*** and that the solution of the problem is also contained in four words - ***"the distribution of credit."***

Put into language which anyone can understand, this means that just as the cultural inheritance, to which I previously referred, is the birthright of the community and forms the main basis of our immense productive capacity, so the financial purchasing power necessary to transfer this production to the members of the community essentially belongs to them and not to the banking system.

We are all of us entitled not merely by right, but by expediency, to a large and increasing dividend based not upon work, but upon our inheritance, and without that dividend it is impossible for the economic system to function since it is obviously useless to produce goods if they cannot be used, and the orderly production and distribution of goods depends upon orders backed by money.

If our present civilisation survives the growing stresses and strains which are being placed upon it by an ineffective monetary system, future generations will owe a great debt to such individuals as Mr. Montagu Norman, the present Governor of the Bank of England. For he has succeeded in demonstrating, even to the more public spirited amongst our bankers, that the banking mentality is conspicuously unsuitable for the position of immense power in which circumstances have combined to place it.

Neither a change of system nor a change of personnel by itself is sufficient, and in the last resort the issue lies in the outcome of a conflict between reactionary financiers and the general population.

Not only do we require a radical modification in the credit and financial system, but this modification requires for its operation a type of mentality which is capable of distinguishing facts from figures. If our civilisation can provide both this change of system and the personnel to operate it, we can pass within a short period of time into, at any rate, an economic millennium...

As you read the following, remember C.H. Douglas was writing the above words nearly one hundred years ago. He saw then the problem was not production… the problem was the distribution of production. The answer is a philosophical answer!!!

World rulers en route to a different civilisation-- the 20:80 society

"World-class dreams are at home in San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel," wrote the authors of *"The Global Trap"* in 1997. "In this site steeped in history, the man welcoming the world's elite in late September 1995 is one of the few who has made himself history. Mikhail Gorbachev…"

The world's elite came to discuss and plan for the future - our future, only we have not been invited to have a say. The following took place at the meeting:

"…The ageing self-made billionaire doesn't bat an eyelid. He is completely focused as he asks the central question in response: 'How many employees do you really need, John?' (asks David Packard, co-founder of the hi-tech giant Hewlett-Packard.)

'Six, maybe eight,' Gage dryly comes back. (John Gage, top manager at Sun Microsystems) 'We'd be really stuck without them. It's all the same no matter where on earth they live.'

The leader of the discussion, Professor Rustum Roy from Pennsylvania State University, tries to dig deeper: And how many people are currently working for Sun Systems?

Gage: 'Sixteen thousand. All but a small minority are rationalization reserves.'

Not a murmur passes through the room. The prospect of previously undreamt-of armies of the unemployed seems to go without saying for those present. None of the highly paid career managers from the company divisions of the future believes that there will be enough regularly paid jobs in any sector of the economy in the technologically demanding growth-markets of hitherto affluent countries.

The Fairmont pragmatists sum up the future in a pair of numbers and a concept: '20 to 8o' and 'tittytainment'.

In the next century, 20 per cent of the population will suffice to keep the world economy going.

'More manpower won't be needed' thinks Washington SyCip.

A fifth of all job-seekers will be enough to produce all the commodities and to furnish the high-value services that world society will be able to afford. This 20 per cent, in whichever country, will actively participate in life, earnings and consumption to which may be added another 1 per cent or so of people who, for example, have inherited a lot of money.

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