

Global Solution

A Comprehensive Solution to Global Crisis

The Equation

“Turn and face the thing you fear and you will see that it was never worth fearing in the first place.”

I have heard this advice many times before but now I see how appropriately true it is in regards to the global crisis we face. All we have to do is turn and look at it directly, square on and with an open mind, and then we will see that it can easily just go away. Sounds overly simplistic, doesn't it? But let's try it anyway.

First we have to recognize that the problems we face today are enormous: global warming, post peak oil, Social Security and pension crisis, ecological meltdown, potential financial meltdown, shortage of drinking water, etc. To look at any one of these in detail is mind boggling. To analyze all of them together might take the mind of an Albert Einstein. Let's try analyzing it his way. He would probably simplify it by stepping back and creating a comprehensive math equation representing all that is known about our socio/economic culture. This would then facilitate the use of symbols to search for errors in thinking or variables that might be changed.

The comprehensive equation would be a lot of gibberish, possibly looking like the following:

$$[(H4 /Rr3 - XY \dots 6Yn (T3)2] = \text{Current Socio Economic Culture}$$

Of course, the left side of the equation would be a lot longer than depicted here. It would factor in the need for economic growth at X% per year, the fact that a few are wealthy and many are in poverty, factor in homelessness and certainly bankers. It would also include most of us needing a paycheck every two weeks, college tuition, discrimination, pensions tied up in the stock market, etc. It would all be there. Note however that some parts are fixed numbers that cannot be changed and some are variables, but the formula itself would not tell us which is which. For example, is the fact that banks are closed on Sundays a permanent fixed fact or a variable?

The equation represents how our culture has operated the past hundred years. But now we realize that the formula has a problem and that the right side of the equation needs to be changed to read:

$$[(H4 /Rr3 - XY \dots 6Yn(T3)2] = \text{DISASTER}$$

Next, we assume that:

$$\text{SUSTAINABILITY} = \text{DISASTER} - \text{Major Change}$$

In order to force the right side of our comprehensive equation to be **SUSTAINABILITY**, a **Major Change** has to also be made on the left side of the equation in order for the entire equation to remain balanced and be true. Therefore, our new comprehensive equation would look like this:

$$[(H4 / Rr3 - XY \dots 6Yn(T3)2] - \text{Major Change} = \text{SUSTAINABILITY}$$

The easiest way to make a **Major Change** is to spend a lot of money on the problem. But our situations are such that we are just two weeks away from homelessness, feel like it's the government's problem, kids in college, the rich should pay and we are always a tad bit below the rich, and above all, if we make a **Major Change** it could wreck our economy! The economy can't handle sudden massive changes and neither can we. In affect, most parts of our equation are fixed and can't be changed without causing a financial meltdown. So in the meantime we change five light bulbs and reduce our driving three miles a week; there, we've done our share. But mathematically that doesn't balance the equation so we still face **DISASTER**.

Third Rail Rule

Here's the problem with solving this global mess. Governments cannot save us because of the "Third Rail Rule" as described in The Coming Generational Storm by Kotlikoff and Burns. If a politician dares mention reducing Social Security benefits or raising taxes to combat global warming it would be tantamount to touching the middle rail that powers a subway – it would be an instant death. He won't be voted in. So the problems are not addressed by politicians. If the public were to have serious discussions about dealing with the problems before they ruin our economy the mere act of discussion could scare the economy into a recession, therefore it's not discussed with any vigor. So we change a few more light bulbs, buy stock in tech companies hoping they can solve our problems for us and continue to silently march towards the edge of the cliff.

Let's restate the problem. Ask the average person how they feel about poisoning their own drinking water and of course the response would be they were against such a horrible action. Yet the average person with a stake in a pension, 401(k), living on a fixed income, or working for a major corporation, by their actions, are endorsing poisoning their water. By insisting that our investments and the health of our employers focus on maximizing profits we are doing just that. Maximize the profits any way necessary, we don't care, just give us a 14% return or a 3% pay raise. Just don't tell us how you did it. So we too are under the "Third Rail Rule". We too are captured by the "fixed" parts of the equation.

Warm-Up Exercise

So now we have some serious math to contend with. Let's start with a simple math warm-up exercise. In your mind's eye answer these three questions: 1) How many doughnuts in a dozen? 2) If "A" = 1, "B" = 2, etc. until "Z" = 26, how many letters are there in the alphabet? 3) Where were the first French Fries fried? Even if you don't know the answer, give it a good guess before reading further.

Ever since the first grade our culture has taught us that there is only one correct answer to most questions and we have come to accept that as true. There is only one reality, our perception of it; over, finished, done, accepted. This way of thinking must stop immediately if we are to be open to alternatives. Ever heard of a baker's dozen, 13, in case one crumbles or needs to be tested? Did you know that the Chinese alphabet has almost four thousand characters in it? And finally, in grease of course.

Variables

Our only option is to review our comprehensive equation searching for what we assumed are "fixed" parts but in actuality are variables that we might be able to change; those items we felt until now were sacred and unchangeable. Then we focus on one that can accept a **Major Change** without crashing the economy in the process.

Let's re-examine the most sacred piece of the equation, our golden calf – our current economic system. Realizing how heretical this may feel at first, let's assume that it is actually a variable; one that might be able to withstand a **Major Change** without crashing if only a percentage were changed and not all of it, thus leaving two systems working in concert. If this assumption is correct, then all we have to do is get people in the United States to change their ways quickly because as every cowboy knows, you can turn a bull's body simply by turning his head. So too can the world be turned if we can turn the United States economy. This is probably the only way we are going to be able to incorporate a **Major Change** timely enough.

One option of accomplishing this is Co-Op Villages. They are non-profit cooperatives that provide all living necessities for 500 persons on 500 acres. They will produce their own food and utilities and provide medical care, housing, jobs and job training for life for their residents; a lifelong extended family. They can be integrated into our current economic system in such a manner as to not crash what we now have, leaving it sustainable. As the old system is somewhat deflated, displaced persons from that system can join Co-Op Villages in their communities, and in the process, gain more than they gave up under the old system. The old system would run smaller but at the same profit margins leaving it intact and sustainable. This is similar to pruning trees to make them grow. Parts of suburbia could be retrofitted to be Co-Op Villages. People would then be free to choose which system they would focus on. Everybody wins.

The Change

But how do you get people to rapidly change from one living system to another in order to make a timely positive impact on the planet? It's difficult to get people to change anything.

In his book **The Naked Ape**, anthropologist Desmond Morris states that if women would only sleep with men who walked on their hands, the entire male population would be hand walkers within one generation. Suppose we were to couple this thought with Robert Kiyosaki's definition of wealth in his book, **Rich Dad, Poor Dad**, wealth being the number of days you can live the lifestyle you want without having to hold a job. What you would end up with is exactly what the Co-Op Village model is – a sustainable living system that makes you wealthy immediately when you begin living it; a way that does not need to be forced on people. If we make it a gold rush, within ten years the planet could be transformed! Just as at the beginning of the industrial revolution hordes of people simply abandoned the farms and migrated to the cities, so too people will migrate to Co-Op Villages because Villages will provide a better life for most people. This will not be a revolution but rather an evolution.

We have designed Co-Op Villages for which there is a strong demand, is a sound business investment, blueprinted so that they can be replicated anywhere and economically dovetails nicely with our current capitalistic system. By investing in a sustainable village system, many major changes would occur at once without upsetting the current system. It is a painless and moderate means of transition, but, at the same time, will have a powerful effect on our global footprint. All that remains to be done is to build them. By investing in Co-Op Villages, investors will be drawing great returns, but at the same time, investors will also be playing a part in the necessary **Major Change**. We will be reversing the damage caused by ourselves because, until now, we didn't want to see what we were really doing. This is the only way we as a race are going to stop the madness and global disasters that we face today.

In order to prove our solution, we ask ourselves the following questions:

1. If Co-Op Villages are the **Major Change** needed, how is it that they will not crash the current economic system?
2. When many Villages are built, how will the two economic systems work in concert together?

Scary Part

Before these questions can be answered we need to look at the scary part: What the economists are telling us will probably happen if we do not make a **Major Change** and just continue the course we are on. By the way, most of the leading economists preaching doom do not believe that we are capable of even deciding to make a **Major Change**.

Their bottom line is that the global economy will collapse and not recover. Transportation will be severely retarded, causing loss of jobs due to commuting. Stores, including grocery stores, will empty rapidly. The basics of life - food, water, shelter and power - will be our priority. Localization will become the key word. Survival will depend on local closed economies (cooperation) in order to produce those life necessities. Stockholders and investors in most businesses will be wiped out.

Consider this: Output from factories and plants will decline due to difficulty in obtaining raw materials. Cash flows will fall, quickly bankrupting a lot of businesses early. Those that do survive will cut repairs and maintenance to continue to survive. Soon machines will break down, but replacement parts may take months to get because factories producing replacement parts have also slowed down. Businesses that survived the first round of cash flow reduction will probably not survive the second round from equipment failure. In time, repair parts will be a thing of the past and technology will begin to reverse itself.

Because food production will suffer a major decrease (no fertilizer, transportation problems, machinery failure, etc.), anywhere from 1 to 3 billion persons could die from the present world population of 6 billion. The deaths will continue until the number of survivors equals the newly adjusted earth carrying capacity, calculated location by location.

Scary, isn't it? Again, this is the prediction if we do nothing and let the shock waves hit us without a back-up plan to absorb those waves.

Back-Up Plan

Co-Op Villages will be self sustainable, producing their own food, utilities and dropping their oil demand to almost nothing. In effect, to the current economic system, each Village will be the same as 500 persons dying and reducing the demand for food, utilities and factory production on the current system. Multiply this by thousands of Villages and the resulting impact is that, as factory and food productions decrease, so will their customer demand. This will mean that, even though production slows, the decreasing demand might still be supplied without major disruption. Repair parts might remain available. What we will be doing is taking people out of the current system lifeboat without their having to die in the process.

Winners and Losers

First let's recognize that change means that things will change. Some changes will be considered good and some considered bad. To say that a system is unsustainable means that someday it will stop, perhaps by degrees in the beginning, but it will stop. Regarding our current system, a **Major Change** will occur, either by default or by planning.

With Co-Op Villages as the back-up plan, this is the most probable scenario. First, a critical shortage of raw materials will occur abruptly. This means that layoffs will be

abrupt as well. But those laid off will have an option. Villages can accept the overflow or sponsor new Villages. Hopefully, Villages will be able to produce excess food, relieving the local agri-business demands as its production falls off. As the Village system grows, the current economic system will shrink. Ideally both will occur at the same rate.

Some professions and business industries will disappear because of the emphasis on local life-support needs. Businesses that might disappear early on might be like the ones that produce and market non-essential products like \$15 plastic doo-dad key chains sold in airport gift shops, or perhaps interior decorating businesses. These businesses would no longer be needed as more urgent needs will take priority.

Financial Subsidies

So who will decide which businesses survive and which will go under? First, the financial market will do it. Most businesses carry a lot of debt as overhead. During this period, this old accounting expression will certainly ring true: “When your income is less than your outgo, your upkeep will be your downfall”. The market will shake itself out until a certain problem becomes apparent: some industries need to be salvaged no matter what.

Doo-dad companies and other non-essential businesses can close. Solar energy parts producers, water pump factories and home canning suppliers must be kept alive however. Most likely the government will step in and absorb some of their debt in order to keep them afloat. This is similar to the way airplane manufacturers have been subsidized for the benefit of the military. But now, with oil difficult to come by, long range wars will be impossible. So now the military could be deflated and an emphasis could then be put on salvaging those industries necessary for life support. This will be the ultimate market in action!

Timing

Timing is our only concern now. If we build Co-Op Villages now and the predicted collapse is instead a slow change, then we have a vehicle to absorb those that will be displaced by that slow change. In the meantime, you have rescued persons who suffer horribly under the current system. Relieving suffering can't be a bad thing. However, regardless of the rapidity, a **Major Change** must and will occur. But, if we act now, it may be possible to change gracefully and at a pace we can control. And, if a collapse should occur, working Village models will be available to replicate quickly or mimic in our existing suburbia. In this latter situation, suffering would still occur until Villages produce crops, but at least the suffering would be mitigated.

In order to navigate through the **Major Change** needed to salvage the planet, both economic systems will be needed: one to maintain life and the other to maintain our technology. Neither system will be able to flourish without the other. These steps are ready to be taken now.

Together, we can make the global crisis disappear. It can't be done for you though. It will require your affirmative thoughts, action and consent. Please forward this to someone you feel would care.

<http://co-opvillagefoundation.org>