



This old house called Canada is heaving. The foundation is cracked, the corner posts are rotting and the hole in the roof keeps getting bigger and bigger. As the structure continues to deteriorate, we run around frantically picking up the falling pieces and attempt to nail them back on. But the pieces are punky and the old bent nails we are using can no longer hold it all together. Even when we splurge and add a bit of new siding, it doesn't help much. There's just not enough strength left in the old timbers anymore.

I fear this is an apt analogy to describe the government's current attempts to rebuild our economy. Too few new ideas are available to aid in the reconstruction and the underlying economic framework is so structurally unsound that neither any new or recycled ideas can possibly save this old country/house and make it liveable again. Clearly we need to begin designing a new structure, built on a modern, solid, debt-free foundation, using strong cooperative timber, which is grand enough to house all of our children so that they can live together in warmth and comfort and fully develop their natural potential.

There is a frequency that passes through us all, that is both a part of us and part of something timeless and supreme.

Though incomprehensible, its influence can be felt.

Like a magnet, it can redirect our will and energy and bend the earthly towards the infinite.

Though collecting no physical matter for itself, it can realign all worldly things, in celebration of its passing.

Unconcerned with ownership, its effect is to share.

As a spark ignites an inferno, kindness, when amplified by action, releases potential kindness, for even greater action.

Why Is There HOPE?

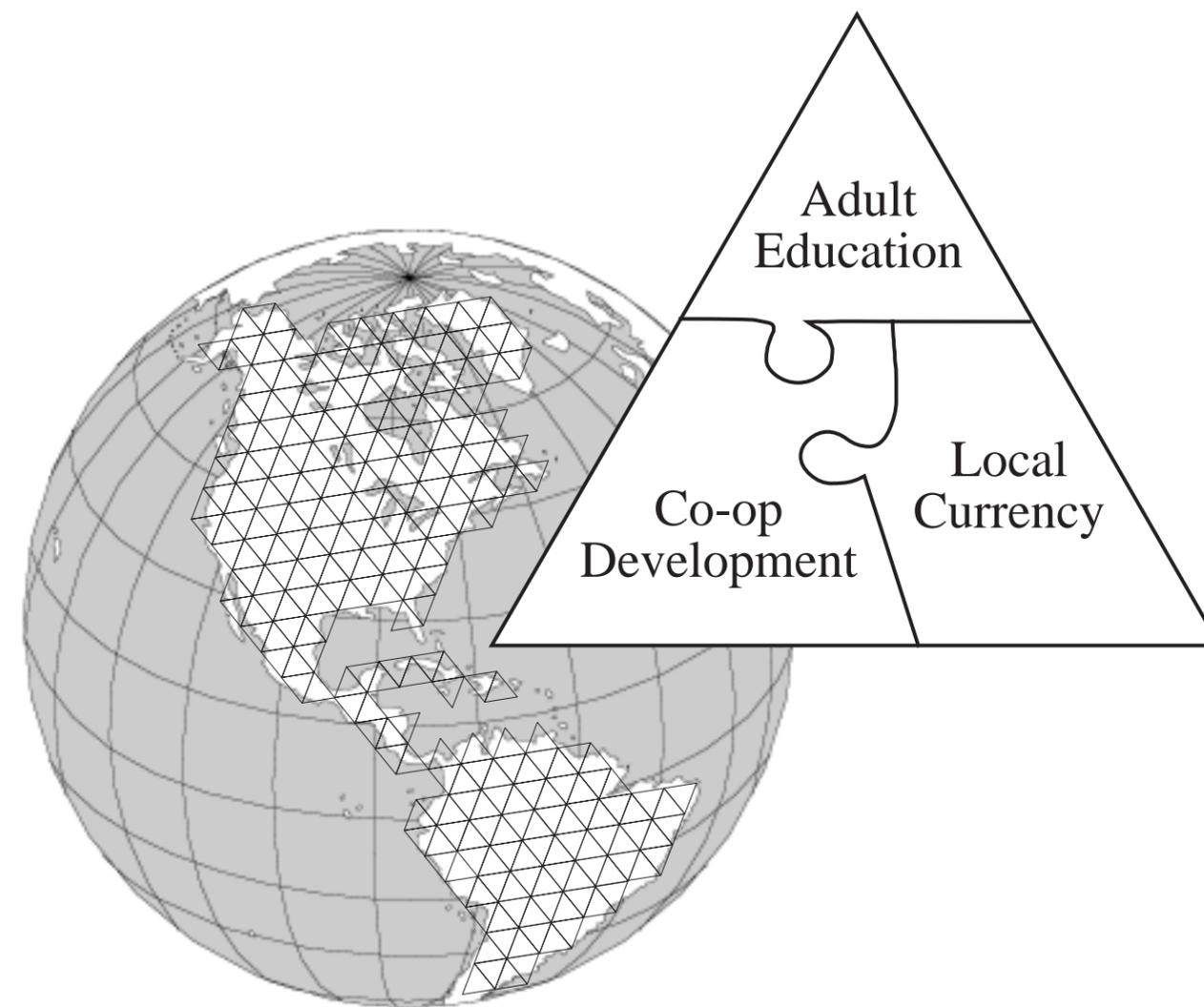
First the good news, then the bad news, and then some more good news. The good news is that the economy is still fixable. The real solutions to our problems are actually quite simple. Many knowledgeable economists have tried-and-true alternatives that will get us out of the fiscal mess we are in. The bad news is that the government really isn't interested in fixing things. In fact, our leaders are bent on destroying the power of the government and maybe even the country. The economic policies they are implementing will actually make things worse. The other good news, however, is that once enough Canadians realize what is going on, we will be able to stop them democratically and begin implementing the real solutions that will save us. As more and more people experience, first-hand, the pain and insecurity of the current recession, many serious and meaningful questions are beginning to be asked about the true purpose of society. In tough economic times, people become more willing to consider new ways of thinking and doing things. When times are good, people remain complacent and inertia carries us into the future. Discontent, however, is the catalyst of change. It is the power of critical, independent thinking to change the will of an awakened public that is the reason for hope.

HOPE magazine was created specifically to increase the public's awareness and understanding of the real issues and solutions to our country's problems. Using the everyday language of average people, HOPE will guide its readers, through the doom and gloom and political double-talk, to a fresh vision of a sane society which values the potential, and rewards the contributions, of all Canadians equally. HOPE will debunk the myths that the mainstream media and the government spin doctors have a vested interest in perpetuating and will highlight the research and recommendations of hundreds of individuals and organizations that are working tirelessly, in spite of the odds, to make Canada a better place to live. The real solutions to our problems would result in a strong vibrant economy with full employment, no government debt, low taxes, a high standard of living, increased leisure time and a healthy sustainable environment. Such a world is possible, once enough of the public becomes aware of the way to get there.

HOPE is published six times a year by Don Findlay, an independent researcher living in Kingston. Recognizing the need to demonstrate new, more cooperative ways of doing things led to the decision not to charge a fixed price for this magazine. HOPE now relies entirely on the wisdom and generosity of its readers for its survival. HOPE trusts you, the reader, to judge the value of this publication for yourself. If you feel that it makes an important contribution to society and you wish to help it to continue and grow, then please send a donation to the address below. If you wish to sponsor the printing of additional copies of HOPE, its current short-run printing costs are about \$30 per 100. If you ask for it, a credit in your name will be printed in the run that you sponsor. All of the time and labor that is expended in producing HOPE is volunteered. Please feel free to photocopy or reproduce this magazine electronically. HOPEfully, it will soon be available on the Internet. Letters to the editor, opinion pieces and local good-news stories are welcome and should be addressed to:

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Rebuilding The World,
One Community At A Time!

Dr. M. M. Coady and the Antigonish Movement

taken from a brief prepared by the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS, which was submitted to the Royal Commission on Taxation of Cooperatives, 1945

Long before the economic convulsions of the nineteen-thirties shocked Canadians into the realization that something was radically wrong (*with the economic system*), a number of people in Eastern Nova Scotia had interested themselves in a possible program which would improve living conditions in this country. Some of these people were professors at the University, others were agricultural workers, and others pastors of rural parishes. The founders of the Antigonish Movement had not been deluded by the prosperity of '28 nor had they to wait for the depression of '29 to become dissatisfied with the old order. For decades before this the farmers and fisherman of Eastern Canada had endured great depression. There were a few notable periods in which they had fairly good times, but in the main the old order meant poverty and misery for thousands of them.

The lot of the industrial worker was not much better. In boom times, especially during the last war, the industrial towns pulsed with life, but in between they suffered an economic blackout and became ghost-towns where no real human happiness could flourish. In one fifty-year period Eastern Canada lost four hundred and fifty thousand of its people to other parts of America. This acted like a pernicious anemia on hundreds of communities. **For the people of Eastern Canada it was not a question of one depression; it was a question of a whole series of depressions, of dark days when men lived in insecurity and fear, unable to concern themselves with anything but the grim struggle to keep body and soul together.**

The solution, some thought, lay in bringing the people to the University for the benefits of better education and they began to experiment with what was known as "The People's School". Groups of people with varying educational backgrounds were brought to the campus for a period of six weeks and given instruction in various fields of knowledge. The response showed that the people were anxious and able to learn, but the experiment was discontinued after four years because, in addition to the fact that such a system of adult education was beset with difficulties, it was recognized that only a small percentage could be reached in this manner alone and that the benefits of the University should be brought to the people rather than have the people come to the institution for instruction.

The second stage in the development of the movement came with a series of Rural Conferences which later became Rural and Industrial Conferences, attended by leaders in all walks of life who were anxious to inquire into the economic difficulties of the people of Nova Scotia. Out of their discussions came the conviction that **education of the type which would reach out and operate in the lives of the great majority of the people must be the first step to reform and social improvement.** To organize that educational program and develop the necessary techniques, the Extension Department was set up.

The essence of the philosophy on which the Antigonish Move-

ment is built is contained in six principles. The first of these is **the primacy of the individual.** This principle is based on both religious and democratic teaching: religion emphasizes the dignity of man, created in the image and likeness of God; democracy stresses the value of the individual and the development of individual capacities as the aim of social organization.

The primacy of the individual gives rise to the second principle that **social reform must come through education.** Social progress in a democracy must come through the actions of the citizens; it can only come if there is an improvement in the quality of the people themselves. That improvement, in turn can come only through education.

The third principle is that **education must begin with the economic.** In the first place, the people are most keenly interested in all concerned with economic needs; and it is good technique to suit the educational effort to the most intimate interests of the individual or group. Moreover, economic reform is the most immediate necessity, because the economic problems of the world are the most pressing. (*also, they control the scope of the discussion and define the boundaries of what is practical or possible in all other problems*)

The fourth principle of the Antigonish Movement is that **education must be through group action.** Group action is natural because man is a social being. Not only is man commonly organized into groups, but his problems are usually group problems. Any effective adult education program must, therefore, fit into this basic group organization of society. Moreover, group action is essential to success under modern conditions; you cannot get results in business or civic affairs without organization.

The fifth principle is that **effective social reform involves fundamental changes in social and economic institutions.** It is necessary to face the fact that real reform will necessitate strong measures of change which may prove unpopular in certain quarters.

The final principle is that **the ultimate objective of the movement is a full and abundant life for everyone in the community.** Economic co-operation is the first step, but only the first, towards a society which will permit every individual to develop to the utmost limit of his capacities.

Travelling throughout Nova Scotia to the mines, the fishing wharfs and the lumber camps, Moses M. Coady took adult education to the people. Finding illiteracy rates as high as 75% in some areas, Coady began by organizing kitchen table study and discussion groups and by teaching reading and writing. One of his strategies was to identify the "natural leaders" in the community and to teach them to coordinate and expand local initiatives. Each study group was encouraged to list their most pressing economic needs. Specific tasks and solutions would then be defined and co-operative strategies to achieve them would be developed. Education and growth was viewed as a continuing process and each success was considered to be a new

Dare We Have Democracy?

It is not that we lack the ability to envision the collective benefits of living in a truly just and democratic society which prevents us from achieving such a state. Rather, it is our fear that, individually, our standard of living might suffer which holds us back. Our current economic system perpetuates a contrived scarcity of money and opportunity which controls us by creating fear and insecurity. Also, our tax system has trained us to be suspicious about how much we would have to give up so that others could be better off.

It is not that most people by nature are evil, or greedy. Surely none but a few derive pleasure from seeing others suffer. Most workers, however, are struggling themselves in order to maintain a decent current standard of living while trying to save for an uncertain future. To ask those who are barely surviving to risk their family's well-being by paying higher taxes to help the poor is naive. It is the will to survive, not greed, that makes such a request unrealistic. To win the support of the public, any plan to reform the system must clearly demonstrate that it does not require the average worker to "make do with less" in order to succeed. A blueprint for change that ensures the economic stability of the public during the transition to a more just society would, quite likely, be widely supported.

The key to building public confidence and support for social change is adult education. The public needs a much broader understanding of how the monetary system has enslaved them. All scarcity of goods and services, all unmet need, can be traced directly to a shortage of money. That the distribution of money in society is highly polarized between the "haves" and the "have-nots" has been widely discussed. What has not been addressed sufficiently, however, are the actual mechanisms and beliefs that have created this imbalance. Once the public fully comprehends how the monetary system is robbing them of their present and their future, they will gain the confidence that it takes to jump from a sinking ship into the only lifeboat that can save them.

A few hundred years ago, when trading channels began to be organized in this country, a few shrewd traders excelled in establishing distribution systems which allowed them to profit from controlling the availability of the bounty of the land. Receiving more money than was required to maintain their personal lifestyle, these traders reinvested their capital to acquire even more property and resources. In addition, they made loans to their suppliers and customers who failed to negotiate enough from their trades to earn a decent living. Now dependent on the loans from their distributors, the producers (trappers, farmers, fishermen, etc.) lost even more of their power to negotiate fair prices. Not only did the profit margins of the distributors rise, but as lenders they now also collected interest payments from the producers. As they continued buying land, resources and the means of production and distribution, the power of these traders and lenders grew enormously.

Today there is little left of the free-market economic system that democracy was based upon. The ownership of capital, property and resources is so highly concentrated that very few outside entre-

preneurs ever move up into the ruling elite. Without economic democracy, political or social democracy is impossible. Without land or resources, a citizen must remain dependent on others for his survival. If he is lucky enough to find employment, then he becomes dependent upon the generosity of his employer for his survival. If unemployed, he is forced to become dependent upon the compassion of the state. Since the industrial revolution, machines and technology have been reducing the number of people that are required to produce the goods and services that "the markets" value. Rather than saving us, productivity increases are destroying us. Producing more goods, while spending less on labour, only increases the concentration of wealth and necessitates further consumer borrowing. In all of the industrialized nations, the number of jobless and part-time workers is growing. At the same time, governments have been dismantling the support systems that had been put in place to sustain those who the markets cast aside. Probably the greatest fear of those still working is that one day they too might lose their jobs and, being unable to replace them, become dependent on the state for their survival.

The building blocks of justice and peace are adult education, monetary reform and co-operative action. Political democracy is not possible without economic democracy and economic democracy is not possible in our debt-based monetary system. Without devising a better way to distribute the bounty of our collective endeavours, economic rationalizations will continue to displace ethical and spiritual principles until our planet's environment is exhausted.

*When a human being,
who is not physically unable,
nor lacking any normal mental capacities,*

*comes face-to-face with an opportunity
that will improve his material comfort
and enrich the emotional and spiritual
aspects of his life immeasurably,*

*feels threatened by such an opportunity,
and strikes out against it in fear,
with irrational prejudice
and inherited myths and phantoms,*

*then truly the oppression of humanity
is nearly complete.*

*Woe to the world in which hope
has become the demon,
a delusional intruder of order,
a traitor to despair.*

*For once mankind loses
the desire to be free,
then truly hope is lost forever.*

Fluctuations In Individual Income Under New Monetary System

<u>Hour Base</u>	<u>Currently</u>	<u>Shorter Work-year</u>
Total Population	30 million	30 million
Standard Work-year	2,000 hours	1,500 hours
Total Hour Base	60,000 million hours	45,000 million hours

<u>Wealth Distribution</u>		
National Net Assets	2,400,000 million \$	2,400,000 million \$
Share per Person (Annual Income)	80,000 \$ each	80,000 \$ each
Average Value of Labor	40.00 \$ per hr.	53.33 \$ per hr.

<u>Hour Base</u>	<u>Growth in Assets</u>	<u>Growth in Population</u>
Total Population	30 million	40 million
Standard Work-year	2,000 hours	2,000 hours
Total Hour Base	60,000 million hours	80,000 million hours

<u>Wealth Distribution</u>		
National Net Assets	2,550,000 million \$	2,400,000 million \$
Share per Person (Annual Income)	85,000 \$ each	60,000 \$ each
Average Value of Labor	42.50 \$ per hr.	30.00 \$ per hr.

BENEFITS OF NEW MONETARY SYSTEM

- 1 Recognizes that each human being has a birthright to benefit from the development of the earth's resources
- 2 Permits every citizen to live with freedom and dignity and to enjoy a reasonable standard of living
- 3 Encourages society to cooperate to maximize the value of its human and natural resources
As society's Asset Base of well-managed resources and durable, high-quality goods grows, so too does the wealth and security of each and every citizen (see Growth in Assets Block)
- 4 Encourages society to invest in education and human development so that all of its citizens can maximize their natural potential and make the greatest possible contribution to society
- 5 Encourages society's withdrawal from the vicious cycle of over-work/over-produce/over-consume.
Allows a shorter work week to be implemented without lowering individual income or wealth (see Shorter Work-year Block). Once we stop working ourselves to death, we can begin to focus on the creative and spiritual aspects of life and learn to enjoy our time off.
- 6 Demonstrates to people that excessive population growth has serious negative implications for society by affecting their individual incomes directly (see Growth in Population Block)
- 7 Eliminates the causes of stress, poverty, violence and crime and increases the health, safety, longevity and quality of life of all citizens.
- 8 Eliminates inflation's power to erode real income by anchoring the total money supply to the asset base. Such a shift would enable society to finally monetize the value of some of its most important, yet previously intangible, collective assets such as education, good health and a clean environment.

Immense power and despotic economic domination is concentrated in the hands of a few. ... This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the lifeblood to the entire economic body, and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will. ... Free competition is dead; economic dictatorship has taken its place. ... The whole economic life has become hard, cruel and relentless in a ghastly measure." *Pope Pius XI, Quadragesimo Anno Encyclical, 1931*

beginning rather than an end. Four main fields of co-operative activities were identified and pursued: (1) merchandising; (2) credit; (3) processing and marketing; and (4) services.

(1) **merchandising**: at the end of 1943, there were sixty retail co-operative stores in Nova Scotia with a membership of over 12,000. Their total volume of business was over \$4,000,000. (2) **credit**: at the beginning of 1944, seventy thousand people in the Maritimes belonged to four hundred credit unions with assets of \$4,250,000. In their first eleven years, these credit unions loaned over \$13,000,000 to their members. In Nova Scotia alone, the loans amounted to \$8,000,000; and it is significant that this loan business was carried on with a loss of only \$1400. (3) **processing and marketing**: in 1944, a number of co-operative groups, owning their own lobster plants, were doing an annual business of over \$1,500,000 and at that time they were the biggest producers of lobsters in the world. The co-operative poultry pools in Nova Scotia, developed by the Department of Agriculture, began with 9,437 lbs. in 1934 and marketed over 900,000 lbs. in 1944. Between 1934 and 1944 the two top grades, A and B, increased from 58% to over 90%, and the price rose from the lowest to the highest in Canada. (4) **services**: by 1944, six groups of industrial workers in Nova Scotia had completed housing projects and a seventh project had already begun. Other groups interested in housing co-operatives were in the study-club stage.

As the following 1945 passages reveal, Moses Coady believed that co-operation is the very essence of democracy:

A hundred and fifty years ago political democracy was the great aim of the people. It was thought that, if men were masters in the political realm, all would be well. Experience in this regard has been disappointing, particularly since the advent of technology, the concentration of wealth, and the powerful growth of financial groups. Owing to the intimate connection between economic control and political participation, political freedom is to a large extent nullified today. Domination in the economic field has meant control over the other fields of social activity. Those who control the financial processes of the nation will also rule the political state. Thus if the people want equality of opportunity and full participation in the democratic society they must improve their economic status. They must develop themselves intellectually and acquire economic prestige in the only way open to them - group action or co-operation. If democracy is to endure and grow to fulness, people of all classes must realize this fundamental truth.

and that co-operation is a force for unity and brotherhood:

Another great spiritual value of co-operation is that it gives the people of the nation a sense of togetherness. It gives unity of thought and action. This is particularly important for Canada. We are a mosaic of peoples. We have many religious creeds. This diversity might easily be an obstacle to our progress. Religious and racial bigotry may divert us from our true goal and dissipate our energies. Canada needs, above everything else, a new synthesis. We need new and larger loyalties. We need an over-all philosophy that will unite us in common

action. Co-operation is eminently fitted to do this. Right here in Maritime Canada, French and English, Protestant and Catholic, and adherents of all political parties are today working together in huge numbers to carry on in a friendly way the business activities of their lives.

Perhaps Coady's most eloquent expression of the benefits of co-operation was quoted in a book by Alexander F. Laidlaw, entitled "The Man From Margaree":

The promoters of the Antigonish Movement were certain of two points. They had a clear-cut idea of their objective, and they knew that this objective was to be reached through some scheme of adult education. The objective was to give life to the people of the Maritime Provinces. This meant a better economic status, more culture and greater spirituality; **it meant giving the people equality of opportunity to achieve the realization of all their possibilities through voluntary action in a democratic society.**

...this is only the beginning. We have no desire to remain at the beginning, to create a nation of mere shopkeepers, whose thoughts run only to groceries and to dividends. We want our men to look into the sun and into the depths of the sea. We want them to explore the hearts of flowers and the hearts of their fellow men. We want them to live, to love, to play and pray with all their being. We want them to be men, whole men, eager to explore all the avenues of life and to attain perfection in all their faculties. We want for them the capacity to enjoy all that a generous God and creative men have placed at their disposal. We desire above all that they will discover and develop their own capacities for creation. It is good to appreciate; it is godlike to create.

The second world war changed the economic conditions in Canada. Huge amounts of government spending during the war had helped industrialize Canada and unemployment had been nearly eliminated. The post-war boom bolstered a spirit of individualism, independence and self-reliance. Most citizens bought into the myth that unlimited upward mobility was possible for anyone who was prepared to work long and hard enough for one of the new industrial dynamo corporations that were now gobbling up their smaller competitors in the marketplace. Co-operation was out, competition was in. No one then could have imagined that history would so quickly begin to repeat itself all over again ...except perhaps for Dr. Coady. In 1954, just five years before his death, he wrote:

During the past two centuries on this continent the general emphasis has been placed on material progress. In the feverish pursuit of this goal, a comparatively few clever and sometimes unscrupulous men have acquired immense wealth and power. Great masses of the people, meanwhile, are being gradually herded into a proletarian existence. Many have already accepted it as their portion. To this end, indeed, they are often deceived into believing that those who exploit them are their protectors. Even those who know the real situation and who are in positions of leadership are afraid to speak out against oppression lest they antagonize the oppressors.

A New Monetary System For Canada

As the twentieth century draws to a close, unemployment threatens to destroy civil society. Facing shrinking tax revenues and higher social program costs, heavily indebted governments cut their support of the economically marginalized and gut labour laws and environmental regulations, hoping to attract new corporate investment. Unfortunately however, most new investment now occurs through corporate mergers and takeovers. "Excess" productive capacity is reduced and even more people lose their jobs. While society frets over how to sustain itself economically in the short term, the much more serious long term threat of global environmental exhaustion is almost completely ignored. Clearly a radical change in our thinking is required. We must re-invent society completely.

Before we can deal with our environmental problems, we must first stabilize our economic crisis. It should be obvious now to anyone who examines global employment statistics that employment is no longer an effective mechanism to distribute income. Two-thirds of the world's population is either out of work or working at poverty-level wages, while the top 10% of income earners derive most of their income from investment and interest dividends, not their own personal labour. In addition, much of the most important work in society such as raising children, caring for the sick and aged or helping the poor and disadvantaged has little market value and therefore is either low-wage or unpaid, volunteer work. Projections for the future are even bleaker. As computer technology is more fully integrated into the service sector in areas such as banking, communications and retailing, massive new job displacement will occur. As corporate ownership of the world's resources becomes increasingly concentrated, fewer and fewer alternative cultures or independent, cooperative societies will be possible. The earth will be overrun by one great global monoculture. With all of humanity's eggs in one soulless basket, pale and mindless, we will follow our economic dictators into the environmental abyss.

For decades we have been ignoring the environmental degradation of our planet. Rainforest depletion, topsoil destruction, water-table reduction, ozone layer depletion, greenhouse gas and water pollution. Good Lord how long can we continue? The earth's exploding population will soon demand more than our dwindling resource base can supply. Too little arable land, too little clean water, too little common sense. Who has the right to destroy the earth? What possible atonement could there be for making the planet uninhabitable? All you God-fearing Christians, how will you possibly justify your failure to act to save humanity? How will you look your children or grandchildren in the eye and ask for their forgiveness?

It's not too late, yet, but time is running out. We must get past the economic debate quickly. Our monetary system needs to be completely overhauled so that income can be de-linked from employment

and a guaranteed annual income can be distributed to each and every citizen. Once freed from having to depend on the profit-driven marketplace for income, citizens will be able to choose for themselves which work activities they wish to support by contributing their time, energy and talent to the project. To save our planet, every man, woman and child must realize that we must work cooperatively to conserve and share resources, reduce personal consumption and eliminate waste and planned obsolescence. We must cultivate pure science and sever its application from the profit motive. We must extend the scientific method into the field of economics and humbly recognize and acknowledge the limits of our wisdom and resources. If we dally, arguing about whether or not such drastic economic changes are really necessary, it will be too late to save the planet. We must move quickly beyond the political and economic issues, to the ecological and social problems which threaten our very survival.

As our current debt-based monetary system continues to crumble, we need to start thinking seriously about how a better system to replace it might operate. Without developing a vision now of the kind of society that we want to build, we will be left to toss about in the political chaos that the coming global financial crisis will trigger. Below is a radical, yet practical, idea for an entirely new monetary system. It is a suggestion put forward to stir the imagination and to encourage people to break through the barriers of conventional thinking and to rely on their own creative instincts to define the possibilities.

If we subtract the total dollar value of all of the debts and liabilities of everyone in Canada, (individuals, corporations, governments ...everyone) from the total value of our country's collective assets (including buildings, roads, utilities, etc.) the current book value of the remaining real assets (society's net asset value) is about 2.4 trillion dollars. Then, if we divide that value by the total population of Canada (which is currently about 30 million people), the figure that we obtain, \$80,000, is the individual share of Canada's wealth that each and every citizen (man, woman and child) would be entitled to if we divided up society's total net assets evenly. To make the concept easier to grasp, imagine that Canada is one big corporation whose shareholders (every Canadian citizen) all own just one share each worth \$80,000.

Now suppose that, instead of allowing the Bank of Canada to arbitrarily decide how much money is "enough" for Canadians, we simply monetized our entire net asset base each year and sent every citizen an equal portion of Canada's wealth in monthly installments. All of the money that each person received would only be good for a year. After that it would be worth nothing. Every year, Canada's new net asset value would be calculated and another equal share of it would be distributed to each and every Canadian as income. If the value of

Canada's net assets had increased during the year, then each citizen would receive more than they did the year before. If the value of Canada's asset base had decreased during the year, then each citizen would receive less than they did in the previous year. Never again would there be a need for debt as everyone would have sufficient income to live comfortably. The government would retain a portion of the annual money supply to fund its own operations and all taxation would be eliminated. Having no salaries, taxes or interest costs, businesses could use their revenues to finance growth and expansion. Interest-free installment programs with suppliers would replace the credit function of the banks.

No one would be forced to work in order to receive their income. It would be guaranteed to all, for their entire life. No one would need to save for their retirement or to protect their families from a loss of income due to unemployment. In fact, saving would be useless since at the end of each year any money saved would become worthless. Without thinking, many people will immediately say that if no one had to work to earn a living, then everyone would simply stop working. Initially, this might occur briefly. But ask anyone who has been unemployed for more than a month or two if they would not like to work again. Most will tell you that staying home and doing nothing is driving them crazy. People need creative work. They need the social interaction and stimulation that only work can provide. They need to feel that they are making a contribution to society. Work gives life meaning and provides the continuity and stability that most people desire.

However, even if up to half of the workforce, at any one time, decided that they didn't want to work, society would still be more productive than it is today. Real unemployment and under-employment rates are soaring and too many of those who are working are employed in non-productive activities (like tax collection and forms processing, the support and rehabilitation of the financially disadvantaged, the production, marketing and distribution of cheap, disposable inefficient products, or the entire insurance/investment/financial services industry). In fact, in 1993, only 11% of the total population worked, either full or part-time, in the goods producing sector of the economy, which includes all agriculture, fishing, logging, mining, manufacturing and construction. In the new system, the energy and enthusiasm of those happily working at creative tasks of their own choosing would raise society's overall productivity level significantly.

The incomes of most Canadians would not only rise substantially, they would be tax-free. Government expenditures would no longer include salaries or interest payments and our tax and income-support bureaucracies could be dismantled. Likewise, Canadian businesses would no longer pay salaries and taxes or make interest and

dividend payments. Management could still earn performance bonuses (based on real asset creation) to raise their current incomes well above the national average, but all Canadians would benefit from the accrued wealth of Canada. The distinction between the public and private sectors would disappear without destroying the free-market distribution system, the incentives for entrepreneurial achievement or the freedom of choice of the individual. Free education and open skills competitions would ensure that those with the greatest natural ability and drive would obtain the positions of greatest responsibility in society. Finally, creativity and intelligence would be more important than money and politics in determining success. In the new system, rather than approaching international markets with cap-in-hand, Canada could develop its foreign trade from a position of strength, on the basis of what its exports were really worth.

But if everyone, all at once, decided to use their newly acquired wealth to buy a new car, for example, wouldn't this cause inflation? The government would still be able to adjust the total amount of money in circulation by increasing or decreasing its own level of spending. Inflation, however, would be meaningless in this society. If prices rose, the value of our national assets would rise by an equal measure. Accordingly, everyone's income share of our assets would rise too, cancelling out any of the adverse effects that are normally associated with inflation. More likely, rather than prices rising, resources would simply be reallocated to meet the growing demand. People tired of waiting for the delivery of their new car would simply "volunteer" their time to help unplug the bottleneck. The availability of labour rather than the availability of capital would determine what goods are produced. Product quality and durability would become the primary consideration of consumers as, more and more, they realized that in order to maximize the value of society's asset base, and their own incomes, we must use our resources wisely.

This is but a brief introduction to the potential of this new monetary system. The most beautiful aspect of this suggestion is that it establishes a just and stable relationship between income and wealth. In the short term, it rewards individual effort and achievement with income (ie. currency that merely represents our collective wealth), yet over the long term, society's permanent asset base (the real foundation of our wealth that all generations have created), remains a part of our common heritage. Without expropriating any privately-held resources, the new system would enable all citizens to benefit from the collective wealth of the nation.

The four scenario blocks on page six indicate how a shorter standard work-year, a growth in national assets and an increase in population would affect individual incomes. Some additional benefits of the new system are listed in the footnotes.