

Market Economy \$, Market Government \$\$, Market Society \$\$\$ Is Modern Complex, Civilized Society Sustainable?

2019

Thomas A. Burns Ph.D.

Klamath Falls, Oregon

Everything Goes Back to the Fundamentals of What Constitutes Being Human!

Introduction

When Humans get into trouble at any scale from the individual to the family to the village to the state to the nation to the global community, it usually reflects an imbalance in how they are manifesting the two major tendencies that contribute to species survival: the competitive and cooperative “instincts.” Other ways of describing this basic dynamic opposition include: individual versus social values, personal vs. communal perspectives, self-interest vs. community benefit, Me vs. We, etc. Now, both competitive and cooperative human “instincts” have been proven to be genetically based. And, importantly, both of these ways of engaging the world – when kept in appropriate balance – are essential to individual and social security and ultimately to species survival. Supporting both aspects of this fundamental dynamic are our emotions which exist to charge the exercise of both of these “instincts” in our behavior with “felt” importance. The essential competition-cooperation dynamic is expressed at all social levels/scales and throughout all of our human societal institutions. If the manifestation of these “instincts” are kept in balance first, at all scales, second, within and among these social institutions, and third, in relationship to the surrounding ecology, humans best position themselves to thrive for the long term. By contrast, to the degree that these “instincts” are expressed in an imbalanced manner in any of these domains, humans put themselves at risk.

Conditions in the Very Long Period of Bands and Tribe

In the first 240,000 years of human existence, humans existed in bands and tribes where they learned to balance these two ways of understanding themselves as individuals and of relating both to other humans and to the resource system of the environment that surrounded them. If they did not achieve this state, they failed in the long term “test” of their viability and were added to the trash heap of species experimentation. The multiple millennia provided the long term test across many different ecological contexts of the basis for true sustainability. Ultimately, the winning formula favored smaller groups of relatively mobile bands organized into more loosely structured tribes, all operating within recognized territories. Within

bands and tribes social relations were personal in nature with others known in the round and over time in multiple roles. Others were regarded as brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles and cousins and elder grandparents even if they were not truly blood relations. Individuals depended upon one another in multiple ways. And while individuals could excel and be recognized and rewarded for their individual talents and skills, they were fully aware that the positive results of their efforts were to be shared, not hoarded. Allowing for individual differences and often the different roles assigned to the sexes, individual adult humans were mostly equal in status and position. Elders were respected for their knowledge and skills, and children were raised along side supervising adults learning the skills necessary to survive and be successful. And typically young people transitioned to adult status around the time of puberty – no extended, independent adolescence. Individuals who competitively pursued their exclusive self-interests invited being banished from the community, which was often a death sentence. Among tribes and across their territories there was competition, but there was also trade that encouraged cooperation; and disputes were often settled by ritual means rather than violent confrontation.

Viewed in strictly modern material and secular terms, this aboriginal/native life was physically demanding, vulnerable, and relatively short. Viewed in spiritual and social as well as ecological terms this lifestyle was balanced, sustainable, and of a much higher quality than is typically accorded by us moderns.

For those who think I am idealizing the aboriginal/native cultural condition of bands and tribes, I suggest examining the work of Bill Gammage, The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines Made Australia, Sidney, 2011. This thoroughly documented, multiple award winning study reveals how aboriginal bands and tribes in Australia coordinated across a vast continental territory and across huge differences in climate and ecology to achieve social and ecological balance for millennia. This was the situation prior to their relatively late contact with the forces of civilization, mostly in the latter part of the 19th century. Especially interesting is the assumption of the invading Europeans as to their superiority and their corresponding view that these mostly “naked and black” aborigines were savages, ignorant and definitely not utilizing their land to its best advantage. The result: under European management, the land and wildlife were greatly degraded and put in peril. Note: these “simple” people managed their population [infanticide] so as to keep the numbers in their bands and tribes within what were sustainable limits even in periodic times of ecological stress.

The lesson from an impressive work like The Biggest Estate on Earth: it was a

long, slow process for humans to develop a worldview and appropriate following behavior that supported a truly sustainable/balanced societal and ecological system. By contrast, most modern humans have existed in complex society under “civilized” conditions for only 1-2,000 years, a period that amounts to a strictly experimental phase. And during this time modern humans have been pursuing change so rapidly in all aspects of their lives and institutions that there has been nowhere near sufficient time for the systems to settle out and for sustainable balance to even be recognized, much less achieved. The result: in the name of making rapid “progress” pursuing their current developmental projectory, modern humans may be about to blow the chance for the species to take advantage of the incredible opportunities that complex society and the civilized state really have to offer. Exposing the relationship of this unfortunate potential result to the fundamental imbalance that exists in modern society between our competitive and cooperative “instincts” is what the remainder of this essay is about.

The Thesis of This Essay

The thesis of this essay: Modern Complex Society suffers from a pervasive imbalance that favors the competitive, individualistic, self-interested perspective and diminishes the influence of the cooperative, communal, community benefit perspective at nearly all social scales and in many of its institutions – including those institutions that rely upon and are intended to promote cooperation. This trend toward the competitive begins with a minimally regulated capitalistic economy, expands to an increasingly market oriented government – including the judiciary, and ends with what is now being identified by social scientists as a market society. The consequences of the over emphasis on the competitive at all levels of modern society results in significant social and ecological problems all the way from local to the global scales that have the potential to threaten the sustainability of the human civilized state.

History – The Early Period of Complex Society

With the advent both of concentrated animal husbandry and especially of agriculture in the first 3,000 years of the “modern” period, the population of human societies grew very substantially, and it settled in concentrated, specific locations. But, critically important, the benefits of this new “enlarged” human condition were not shared equally among the members/citizens. Whereas in bands and tribes all adults were relatively equal and mostly shared equally in resources and benefits, with settlement, enlargement and concentration, citizens rapidly came to be differentiated into ranked classes, with the elite/privileged citizens controlling more

and more of the benefits/resources/wealth. As this elite system of power, privilege and wealth developed further, the classes came to be assigned permanent positions often with a hereditary basis; and differentiation among the elite resulted in the emergence of the institution of Kingship. In this process, formal religion arose to provide support for this system of differential social status by associating privilege and high social position with elevated spiritual status – ultimately assigning divine status and combining it with kingship. The result of these developments was that the mostly egalitarian social condition of bands and tribes disappeared along with the equal sharing of resources. Such extreme differentiation supported competition between individuals and classes for power and wealth which in turn gave rise to both formal external [military] and internal [police] security forces to suppress dissent and to protect the elites and their territories/states/nations/empires.

For 5,000 plus years, this highly differentiated and relatively permanent state was the condition of complex society as empires arose and fell across much of the planet. Civilizations and empires frequently fell due to corruption, competition and incompetence among the elites, the exhaustion of resources, natural disasters, or defeat by competing city states/kingships/empires. In some instances, revolution by the less privileged classes was either a major or contributing factor in these downfalls. On average these complex society civilizations persisted for about 350 years with longer surviving examples going through cycles of ups and downs. They were the first experiment in complex society, and they were not stable or sustainable for the long term in anything like what pertained in the multi-millennia time frame of bands and tribes. The lesson: Complex society based on a high degree of political and economic inequality, competition and self-interest was not sustainable – socially or ecologically. The cooperative, community benefit “instinct” in human behavior and this principle in social relations had not been respected. Most kingships are gone today, but some intermediate stage warlord/chieftain based societies persist.

Trade has always been important among human groups including bands and tribes, and trading relationships require cooperation and encourage at least a limited form of federation. And city-states prior to being unified into nations or empires often participated/cooperated in extensive trading networks. But competition among city-states, and especially empires, frequently descended into full blown warfare at a scale and with disastrous consequences that bands and tribes never experienced. Of course, competition among modern nations/empires have resulted in even more devastating global scale conflicts with weapons that threaten humanity as a whole.

Warfare – along with efficient trading/transport systems and food production – were significant motivators of technological innovation in early complex society. And these societies allowed for a level of specialization in the crafts and the pursuit of knowledge that favored much more rapid progress in understanding the nature of the material world and implementing improvements in manipulating this world to the benefit of humans. Improved security and a “higher” standard of living was the result – at least for the elites and for those that were more closely associated with them. Progress was made technologically in a number of areas, and relatively separate craft, soldier, scholar/bureaucrat, and artist categories of citizens emerged. In short, opportunities began to arise for citizens to advance their position in spite of this highly stratified society. They could improve their personal situation if they were competitive and industrious in applying their talents, knowledge and skills. And since bureaucratic skills were needed in many areas, basic financial and accounting systems arose to provide the basis for efficient management, which required at least a basic level of organizational cooperation. Social rules were codified forming the basis for a legal and eventually a judicial system. And written languages were created allowing for events to be recorded and knowledge to be retained in a more reliable form.

The overall result: the ground work was laid in early complex society for very significant “improvements” in the human condition in spite of the diminishing of the egalitarian/cooperative principle in the reliance upon highly stratified social relations.

The Transition to Modern Complex Society

The Greeks were the first to explore addressing the inequality issue in early complex society by instituting a “congressional” structure of government and the voting privilege for elite men of property to determine policy and resource use decisions. This was a huge leap, and while it did not persist beyond the period of the Greek “empire,” the precedent was noted in the historical record to be revived later in the 18th century. What had always been the egalitarian group decision making process in bands and tribes was formalized in the later 1700s in America and different European countries in a democratic government with elected representatives who voted in legislatures on proposed bills to determine how the country would be managed with separate executive and judicial branches to assure that the laws were both implemented and fairly respected by all citizens. While voting privileges were initially restricted to men of property, this development in the political and judicial institutions of government greatly revived the previous

egalitarian social character of bands and tribes regarding both cooperative decision making and cooperative judgment for how the rules of society – laws – were to be applied and enforced. With the later extension of voting privileges to all adult citizens regardless of sex or most other distinctions, the egalitarian ideal was realized in principle in the political structure of most modern complex society governments. Nevertheless, the modern period is rife with examples of once democratic governments reverting to authoritarian rule in one form or another. Retaining the cooperative, community benefit, egalitarian “instinct” of humans in the major institutions of governments in modern complex societies remains a challenge.

Modern Conditions in Complex Societies – The Emergence of Global Society

While the polity and judiciary domains of complex society under the governmental structures implemented by the originators of modern democratic governments were designed to promote and implement cooperative, egalitarian principles and values, the economy – under the umbrella of a free enterprise, capitalist point of view – was left free to pursue the competitive, self-interested orientation and values. Accordingly, individual citizens and collective groups of such citizens elected to invest time, effort and resources in various enterprises in behalf of seeking exclusive economic benefit.

This initial definition of modern complex societies is the basis for the underlying dynamic in nearly all modern “democratic” nations: an egalitarian/cooperative polity and judiciary and a competitive/self-interested/capitalistic economy. When this dynamic is managed and kept in balance, it can be extraordinarily productive, encouraging creativity and innovation through the activity of the competitive economy while assuring the maintenance of egalitarian principles, communal values and community benefit through the institutions of the polity and judiciary.

What was not anticipated in the 18th century formation of modern representative democracies was the extent of the power that could be accumulated and then directed at the government by a free enterprise, capitalist economy and its super wealthy individuals, large corporations, and an allied financial/banking industry. The most recent period in the history of modern developed democratic nations – the 19th, 20th and now 21st centuries – has been characterized by successive efforts by governments to contain the excesses of the advocates for and beneficiaries of the capitalist economy. In America, the major attempts have included: 1) anti-trust efforts to stop unfair attempts by big businesses to create monopolies by excluding competition, 2) banking and investment regulations to address the near collapse of

global societies due to the run away, fraudulent investment practices that caused the Great Depression, 3) the implementation of personal and corporate income and inheritance taxes to curtail the excessive accumulation of wealth by corporations and a few individuals and families, and 4) again, banking and investment regulations to curtail the unsustainable and corrupt practices of the financial industry which were responsible for the Great Recession.

Unfortunately, in America and elsewhere this century long, reactive approach by governments to address the excesses of the various components of the economic forces has always been insufficient and behind the curve. And most importantly, these efforts have never dealt adequately with the fundamental underlying problem – most dramatically represented in America: the negative impact of money in politics! When money from the economic domain is allowed to “buy” undue influence in the election of our federal governmental representatives from Congress to the White House, our polity becomes vulnerable to being controlled by our economy. And since polity is responsible for the appointment of federal judges, the judiciary also becomes susceptible to being “bought.”

Big Money in America coming from large corporations and the wealthy – often hidden and distributed through their PACs and encouraged by the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision – finances long primary and federal campaigns to elect representatives that favor the self-interests of capitalistic enterprises. And their hired guns – their well funded teams of Washington lobbyists – press for and often literally write the legislation that subsidizes their concerns and reduces both regulations and corporate tax obligations. So long as corporations are legally defined in virtually all states as being obligated to return the maximum financial benefit possible to their shareholders, and so long as the members of the managing boards of these commercial and financial corporations are drawn almost exclusively from the management and financial investment domains, corporations themselves have no real option to even consider what decisions they might take to at least in part cooperate and contribute to community benefit.

Both major American political parties have participated in the growth of the country's orientation to a market government and ultimately a market society. The Republicans are the party of enterprise, investment and finance, and they have become more emphatically so in the years since Reagan – the most recent example, the 2018 major Tax Reform bill. They are also supposedly the party of limited government, but really they are the party of major military spending to “police the world” and if necessary to intervene militarily to protect American “interests.” These “interests” are always spun to the public and other countries as

being concerned primarily with the protection of individual rights, the rule of law, and democratic values, but in fact the key “interest” is protecting and promoting American commercial enterprise. In this regard, America now spends as much on its military as the total combined military budgets of the next eight highest military spending countries – including Russia and China!

Republicans are America's market party. And they are very good at hiding their primary market focus by diverting the attention of the voting public to secondary issues like anti-abortion, anti-gay rights, anti-non Christians, anti-non whites, anti-non English speaking ethnic groups, anti-welfare recipients, etc. Republicans decry the pressure of immigration, especially from any of their many “anti” groups, while at the same time they avoid full immigration reform because many of their market “clients” benefit from the cheap labor made prominently available by several of these “anti” groups.

In general, Democrats support spending directed more to social services which the Republicans regard as “welfare” or more pejoratively as “socialism.” In this regard, Republicans do not want to talk about all the corporate subsidies that they implement with special “deals” and tax breaks that conveniently rarely sunset. In fact, this total corporate “welfare” far exceeds the federal expenditures devoted to social assistance. The Democrats were the party of labor, but in recent years they have supported more and more market oriented legislation and deregulation as unions have waned in influence and monetary support. And Democrats gave away the major protection afforded the public by the Glass-Steagall Act, which kept the investment and banking domains of finance separate following the lessons learned about the causes of the Great Depression. Following the Great Recession, in which the same underlying causes arose in the financial “instruments” created by the “too big to fail” banks, these restraints on the financial industry were partially reintroduced in the Dodd-Frank Act and the creation of the Consumer Protection Agency. No surprise, under recent Republican Congressional control both of these efforts have been significantly weakened in subsequent anti-regulation legislation.

Democrats may be somewhat less a “market” party than the Republicans, but until the 2016 presidential election, Democrats have been about as deeply in bed with Big Money and their PACs as the Republicans. However, through an internet solicitation process, the primary campaigns of a few 2016 Democratic candidates for national office were almost entirely financed by “small contributions” from individual citizen donors. And these campaigns demonstrated that this approach can be viable at least at that level. But in the general 2016 federal election, the Democrats reverted to the big money funding base – with all of its associated

influence buying problems. There has been a lot a squawking over the years about the need for federal level campaign finance reform to provide for publicly financed elections and limitations on political PACs, but there has been no meaningful action to date. Interestingly, at the state level, two states with opposite political leanings have instituted such reforms, and they have proved to be very successful.

In its many manifestations, the negative influence of Money in Politics is both a key symptom and major cause of the current “disease” of imbalance in and among America's major institutions. And this “disease” is rampant in most nations of the world leading to gross levels of corruption in many cases. This “disease” favors the competition/self-interest/individualistic side of our human nature rather than our cooperative/community benefit side, and it affects how we organize, operate and manage our social institutions at all levels. So, the clear trend emerges that is carrying most countries of the world – and definitely including America – toward what is now referred to as a market government with – in America – its market legislature, market executive and market judiciary! The result: currently economy is the driving force in America and in most of global society, and the imbalance that it is promoting may well be taking global civilization toward the cliff edge of survival.

Major Problematic Consequences of the Modern Conditions of Imbalance

There are many problematic consequences that follow from the competitive, capitalistic, market orientation of the economic institution of modern society being allowed to dominate the operation of the egalitarian, cooperative institutions of democratic governments. This condition of imbalance is especially notable in modern American society. What follows is a list of many of these major consequences with brief associated commentary:

1) The middle and lower middle “classes” have experienced stagnant or depressed economic conditions since the mid 1970s as the global economy has taken off and outsourcing by corporations first of manufacturing and then of basic professional services to cheaper labor and material markets has become common. Investors seek out corporations that look for the greatest competitive advantage to make the greatest profit. In this context, the interests of middle class employees receive minimal consideration resulting in job and wage insecurity and losses.

2) The frustrated middle and lower “classes” have become vulnerable to simplistic populist appeals from proponents who suggest that they can solve the related problems. They then most often claim that government itself is the major cause. In fact, government, with what should be its core concern for the common benefit of

the citizenry, is the only entity that can do anything significant to address the situation. The Republicans, and especially the hyper conservative Tea Party and Freedom Caucus together with Trump, end up promising much but only exacerbating the problem.

3) Labor unions have decreased in numbers and strength in the face of outsourcing options for business enterprises limiting the influence of the middle class. And, corporations are able to “buy” representatives to state and federal legislatures who promote the “right to work” agenda and “open shops.”

4) Over the last 40 years, economic inequality has become more and more prominent as mostly only the wealthy upper 1% of the population has been in a position to secure the economic benefits from global investment opportunities. The 1% now own more than 90% of the wealth in The United States.

5) Following from #4, the country has trended toward oligarchy – rule by the rich – as money is able to determine more and more who gets elected to office and what judges are appointed to the courts. And the resulting market government favors the “self” interests of the moneyed class and business enterprises.

6) Republicans have greatly increased the level of the federal inheritance tax exclusion [now \$11,180,000 per person] – protecting and perpetuating at the generational level the resources of wealthy families – the top 1% benefit again.

7) The market government is in the “business” of protecting the short term economic interests of all business enterprises. There are many unfortunate consequences: a) corporations have been allowed to exceed logical anti-trust limits, to suppress competition, and to truly become “too big to fail,” b) the financial and real estate assets of average citizens have been put at unnecessary and unknown risk in many different ways by the development of complex legal instruments by corporations and the financial “industry,” c) protections for citizens from potentially harmful or bogus products and services have been reduced, d) public investment in public infrastructure and basic research has been curtailed, e) support for public services of all kinds has been under attack, and f) environmental degradation from virtually all enterprises has been “overlooked,” denied or minimized. The most flagrant example of this last issue is the failure to properly regulate and limit the fossil fuel industry in spite of the overwhelming evidence that the burning of these fuels is the major cause of global warming. We reach the astonishing point where it is possible for climate change to be characterized by our President as a hoax perpetuated by China, and a considerable percentage of the

population does not object! In this context, America leads in promoting the weak and slow global response to this serious ecological challenge which invites collective consequences for complex society that can be catastrophic.

8) The global market economy as supported by market governments can only survive if it is constantly expanding. Commercial and financial enterprises accept debt to finance their ventures, and they plan on outgrowing the impact of this debt due to the effects of inflation and increasing demand. Increasing demand requires an ever increasing population and/or standard of living. And this entire system necessitates access to more and more energy and greater and greater demand on natural resources. But energy resources are presently either limited [green sources], risky for a number of reasons [nuclear], or the major cause of climate change [fossil fuels]. And other natural resources are limited, and drawing them down to dangerous levels invites negative environmental and ecological – and ultimately – economic consequences. Native/aboriginal bands and tribes learned that to survive for the long term they had to manage their societies in terms of a sustainable “economic” approach to their natural resources and the surrounding ecology. The market society with its commitment to an ever expanding economy is just a very new experiment at the very end of the modern development of complex culture, and it is highly questionable whether it is sustainable in the long term. Unfortunately, a combined global economic and ecological collapse with devastating consequences to complex society seems likely if humanity continues to pursue the present course of societal imbalance favoring a competitive, self-interested perspective and associated activities.

Actions Necessary to Reestablish Balance in Modern Complex Society

If we want to get serious about addressing the fundamental situation of imbalance that now threatens American and most other modern complex societies, there are many constructive moves we can make:

- 1) Change the legal definitions of corporations and partnerships to require them to serve the economic interests of their shareholders but also to respect the interests and concerns of their employees, their clients/consumers, the surrounding community, the public at large, and the environment.
- 2) Make the executives and boards of directors of all corporations legally and criminally responsible if they do not abide by the revised definition of a business enterprise described in #1. No more getting away with just paying huge fines.

3) Make the intent of the law as declared in the Report that accompanies all laws – and not just the “word” of the law – what all entities – including corporations – must respect. Stop the constant search by business enterprises for loopholes to get around the word of the law.

4) Rescind the Citizens United decision of the Supreme Court to declare that no economic enterprise can be regarded as a person with all the obligations, rights and privileges of a person. At a minimum, real “persons” have to balance competitive and cooperative orientations and all the actions that follow from them in their lives. Business enterprises are guided by a pretty exclusively competitive and self-interested orientation.

5) Eliminate all off shoring of assets by corporations and the wealthy in order to hide these assets and avoid paying taxes. White collar crime must be taken seriously and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

6) Fund all federal business oversight agencies/departments at a level that supports regular audits/reviews/inspections of business enterprises and the pursuit of fines and prosecutions where warranted.

7) Revitalize/recommit the bureaucracies of all federal regulatory departments/agencies to pursue their missions. No more passivity or undue accommodation of the interests of any enterprise.

8) Require that federal agencies and departments be led by experts with relevant knowledge in the area to be managed/regulated and without ties to the economic or other interests of the related enterprises. The only goal of cabinet, agency and department leaders, as well as lower level functionaries, must be to see their areas of management run with integrity and efficiency. Forbid all administrative rulings and personnel assignments to these federal regulatory agencies/departments with the intent to diminish the regulatory effectiveness of these organizations.

9) Limit the executive branch of government to its constitutionally designated functions: to execute fairly and efficiently the laws of the congressional branch of government and to lead all national efforts to keep the country secure. The executive branch must not be allowed to decide what laws it wants to enforce, to conduct foreign affairs independent of legislative approval, and to use administrative rulings to shift allocated funds or advance or diminish the missions of selected agencies or departments. The modern trend toward a more and more powerful unitary executive, which allows it to assume more of the functions of the

legislative branch, must be reversed. If this reversal does not occur, the overall effect will be that the trend toward a market government will be magnified by the allied trend toward an authoritarian executive. Both of these trends are manifestations of the anti-egalitarian and competitive perspective in what is supposed to be the cooperative/public benefit oriented government.

10) Include formulas in local, state and international trade relations and agreements that factor in the true comparative costs of producing products and services in alternative locations. These formulas must include more than just the base costs of labor and materials. Decisions to move – outsource – a business enterprise must be publicly justified by including an assessment of the relative costs: a) of providing safe working conditions for employees, b) of protecting the environment from the local to the global level, and c) of offering subsidies of all kinds by governments at all levels. The costs of conducting business in communities, states and countries that require more comprehensive responsibility from business enterprises can not be disadvantaged by competition from locations that are less responsible. Requiring business to conduct this public evaluation before “moving” is a critically important action to create a level playing field especially for labor in all locations. The consequence is likely to be that the jobs and wages of the middle class in more responsible locations will be much more fairly treated.

11) Greatly restrict use of the “revolving door” between participation in government and both management positions in business enterprises and the lobbying of elected and appointed government officials.

12) Reestablish the Glass-Steagall Act, or its equivalent, to permanently separate basic banking functions from investment activities. The financial assets of citizens, including the value they hold in real property, can not be put at undue risk by the financial industry's desire to use these funds in excessively complicated, high risk, casino like, activities.

13) Enforce the anti-trust laws to break up corporations and financial entities that are stifling competition or pose too big a risk to the public if they fail. Take the “too big to fail” issue seriously for all business enterprises.

14) Require all investments in all publicly traded stocks and bonds to be held for a minimum of two weeks. Playing buy/sell “games” by both individuals and financial enterprises to artificially benefit from very short term timing manipulations in this market must end.

15) Create an entity that is fully independent and representative to complete comprehensive individual and corporate tax reform – including all forms of public assistance/subsidies as well as income and inheritance taxes. Special individual and corporate benefits of all kinds must be restricted to assisting entities in transition and must pass the test of contributing to the public good. Assigning permanent disability benefits to individuals is as potentially problematic as allowing permanent subsidies for corporations. Except in truly extreme cases, public assistance of all kinds to all individual private entities must be limited and temporary. Corporate and individual federal income taxes must be fair and equal, and they must be graduated to greatly reduce excessive wealth flowing to the few individuals or corporate executives at the top. The value of all benefits and stock options for corporate employees and executives must be declared and assessed as income. To reduce excessive wealth being transferred at the death of individuals, inheritance taxes must a) greatly limit the extent of the wealth allowed to be transferred without federal taxation, and b) greatly increase the percentage of tax to be paid on the balance. The wealth returning to individuals or corporations as a result of their economic success must be fairly shared with the public to support the egalitarian/cooperative principle in society.

16) Develop and implement a comprehensive set of reforms to greatly restrict the influence of money in politics. These reforms must: a) limit the time period of federal campaigns, b) limit campaign monetary expenditures to the amount that is federally assigned for both primaries and main elections, c) restrict and require full accounting of all secondary donations of products and services to all campaigns, d) restrict any connection between PACs and the campaigns of candidates in both primaries and elections, e) limit the input of PACs and all other similar organizations in campaign periods to support for issues/policies/ programs and not to support for specific candidates, f) require all lobbyists to be registered and all of their activities/proposals to be announced to, recorded for, and made available to the public.

17) Develop a fully independent agency of the federal government to evaluate the truth value/factual basis for all information passing in the news media and on social media platforms. The distinction must be made between a) outright fabrication/fiction/fake news, b) opinions expressed without reference to any facts, c) opinions expressed referencing only selected facts, d) opinions expressed by relevant, recognized experts who are arguing for the importance of many of the relevant facts, e) reports by independent investigators and individual experts that make an effort to reference and objectively evaluate most of the known facts, and f)

professional, documented reports that have undergone review for their integrity by secondary experts and that make an effort to assess the full relevant factual inventory on the focal topic. Using sophisticated and constantly updated information review algorithms, all information submissions that become available to the public can be very rapidly assigned to one of these six evaluation categories, thereby assisting the public in recognizing the extent to which they should rely on the information provided. In the modern – instantly and globally available – context of virtually all information, the instruments/processes must be in place to identify fake news and the relative reliability of all other information offerings to the public. This is especially important when it comes to protecting the integrity of federal elections, but it is also important for restraining the development of extremism of all kinds. The fair evaluation of the factual basis of public speech does not limit free speech itself; it merely protects the public from the negative effects of being exposed to false, partial, or incomplete information in modern media sources.

18) Require all boundaries of federal legislative districts in all states to be created by fair and politically independent entities operating under the supervision of the federal courts. All adjustments to these districts must accurately reflect the most recent census data in a timely manner.

19) By one means or another, eliminate the Electoral College and allow the president and vice president to be elected by popular vote. This action merely affirms the basic egalitarian principle in government at the highest level.

20) Amend the Constitution to designate the number of senators from each state to be determined by the following two criteria: a) two senators for a base state population up to ten million permanent residents, b) an additional senator for each ten million citizens over a base population of ten million permanent residents. This action retains the privileged representation for small population states but recognizes that states with large populations are currently significantly under represented in the Senate. This action supports the egalitarian principle in the federal government which in turn supports cooperation.

21) Voting in all federal elections by registered voters must be supervised and overseen through the federal courts in a federally determined and implemented voting system. This system must provide individual access for all voters to basic public information on all candidates and all issues up for a vote, and citizens must be encouraged to educate themselves on the candidates and issues and to vote. Employers must accommodate their employees' efforts to vote and encourage them to do so. No separate municipal, county and state voting processes in

federal elections. Registration to vote must be free of all impediments, voting locations must be equally accessible and adequate to accommodate the expected numbers of voters, and the voting process and its tabulation must be conducted with every voter receiving a copy of his or her ballot and with the ability to secure and confirm all votes of all voters after the election. Citizens must have every reason to believe that their votes count.

22) Promote the sense of togetherness – community – at all social levels from family to village to city to region to state to nation to global humanity. Togetherness requires the view of others as at least acquaintances – even friends; the view of other individuals, groups, villages.....nations as entities that we can respect and that we can approach with the expectation/assumption we will be able to cooperate. We must convert impersonal relations, which are cautious/defensive and are the overwhelming norm in modern complex society, into personal relations, which are inviting/welcoming and where individuals know one another well – in many different ways/roles and over time. The view of others as strangers has to become the view of others as at least potential friends if humans are to release their competitiveness and cooperate at the level that is necessary to address all of the challenges that humans face at all levels – especially at the national and global levels. We must encourage real, interactive face-to-face experiences among neighbors and communities to overcome the isolation that has become pervasive since broadcast media entered our lives and has got us fixated on information flowing on the audio-visual devices inside our cars and homes and in our hands. We need to implement neighborhood and community celebrations that bring citizens together to just dwell in knowing one another and in sharing food, drink and public space – not for some alternative, more specific purpose.

Conclusion

Humans are genetically predisposed to being both competitive and cooperative. When applied appropriately, both of these tendencies contribute to the human species biological and social survival. Over the many millennia of the evolution of the “simpler” human societies of bands and tribes, the groups that survived learned to balance the expression of these basic human “instincts” at the individual, social, and ecological levels so that their societies were sustainable in the very long term. The advent of complex society some 10,000 years ago is very recent in the history of humanity, and it remains in an experimental phase awaiting a determination as to whether it will develop to a form that is sustainable in the long term. Early forms of complex society made very significant progress in many ways, but their commitment to stratified, authoritarian social structures sacrificed the egalitarian,

cooperative principle in social relations that was a very important component in the success of bands and tribes. This imbalance resulted in these early complex societies only proving to be sustainable for relatively short periods before they collapsed for a variety of reasons.

In a limited form, the egalitarian, cooperative principle in social relations and social institutions in complex society was first re-instituted in Greece. It reappeared in the 18th century in American and European nations in the form of representative democratic governments that guaranteed individual human rights and the rule of law as created by the congressional representatives of the people, laws that were to be implemented by an independent executive, and assured by an independent judiciary. This constituted a monumental transformation of complex society so as to assure balance in social relations by implementing governmental institutions that supported egalitarian values and the cooperative perspective.

Modern, “democratic” complex societies have experienced very significant pressure/influence on their egalitarian oriented governments coming from their associated competitive, capitalistic economies. The result has been a decided trend toward a market government which serves the “self” interests of business enterprises as much or more than it supports the common good of the citizens. In this setting, the egalitarian, cooperative perspective takes a significant hit and a condition of imbalance arises in the society at large. This state of imbalance has had many negative consequences, some of which are potentially dire and which collectively threaten the long term viability of complex society as well as the survivability of humans in the civilized state.

Modern complex society has enormous potential, but in its current imbalanced form it is as unsustainable in the long term as a result of the negative impacts of its out of control economy as it was unsustainable in its early period due to excessive social stratification and authoritarian rule. Long term sustainability of complex society depends on achieving balance throughout the scales of social relations and within and among the major institutions of society. And as a global society emerges, more and more this same balance must be realized at the level of interconnected national societies.

To realize where modern humans must go, we humans must know where we have been and what the basic underlying polar human proclivities are that define who we are at the individual and social levels and how these proclivities must be managed and expressed at the institutional level to support long term sustainability. Currently, this awareness is unfortunately very limited. For all its glorious potential,

the modern complex society experiment is under threat of relatively imminent failure.

Fixing this problem of embedded imbalance is a daunting task because the problem is systemic. In the main, we know all the primary actions that we need to take and why in order to tilt the table of government away from a competitive market orientation and back in the direction of achieving true balance. Accomplishing this will stop the more general shift in the direction of an overall market society. The only question is whether we have the collective will in America and among the nations of the world to make these moves before the entrenched market trend is fulfilled and complex society and the promise of civilization proceed over the cliff and into oblivion.

Ultimately IT is ALL an experiment. But unlike most species, humans have the capacity to evaluate their situation and initiate changes that foster conditions that favor fulfilling their maximal potential and their long term viability. Complex society and the civilized state offer an attractive platform for humans to achieve this goal; but the current global state of fundamental imbalance in our institutions together with our tendency to assume that one way or another the future will take care of itself dictate against this transpiring. We will have to “exceed” our usual selves to keep the door open to our really spectacular future.