

## Thesis #9

Our community of nations needs a new doctrine of human rights. For in their present forms the nation-state, parliamentary governance and the rule of law do not authentically reflect people's needs. England, more than any other nation, shaped the foundations of our globalised civilisation, but her people did *not* consent to the Social Contract that was crafted to favour the feudal aristocracy. A new Social Contract would empower people to create the quality-of-life that fulfils their aspirations.

# Induced Ignorance & Social Change

Fred Harrison

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OUR WORLD is locked into an aggressive state of bi-polar disorder. The emerging half, centred on Asia, will continue to grow if it can avoid a military conflict over lumps of rock in the China Sea. The retreating half is centred on the trans-Atlantic nations. They are preoccupied with depleting their assets (human, cultural and material) to preserve the fiction of authority and prosperity. The outcome will not be a partnership of equals.

The fractures in our globalised civilisation are revealed by the civil disturbances: 843 of them between 2006 and July 2013. Most were protests over the lack of “real democracy” (Ortiz *et al* 2013). But proposals for reform advocated by think-tanks and governments will not banish deep-seated problems. The OECD (2014) classifies its proposals as “structural”, as capable of delivering “strong and sustainable growth”. In reality, they would dismantle arrangements that were originally intended to alleviate suffering. Labour markets, for example, would be de-regulated. No assessment is offered as to who would ultimately gain (the net benefits would be capitalised in the land market).

Change is needed, but the West will endure a deepening cultural crisis if it fails to reappraise the foundations on which power is constructed. For the prevailing economic doctrine is causing the West to haemorrhage its vitality. We see this in many tragic ways: the dispiriting effect on young

people who cannot find employment; declining standards in schools; corruption in the law-making and law-enforcing agencies; the de-skilling of middle-aged men; families that cannot survive on their wages and must turn to food banks for hand-outs...the list goes on. Governments retrench, incapable of meeting their moral and financial obligations. In Britain, the health service allows elderly people to die needlessly, and money is saved by cutting the funds that are required for life-saving drugs.

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With the exception of Germany, western governments are desperate. The implications are dangerous. The US justice department, for example, has confirmed “the legal basis on which the US government can kill Americans in a way that does not contravene a US government ban on assassinations” (Dyer and McGregor (2013). At the UN, member states discussed the use of battle robots – “fully autonomous weapons” - to kill people (Chivers 2013). These are anecdotal indicators that reveal a civilisation out of control. Geopolitical space is being fashioned for a power struggle in which everyone will lose.

Absolute decline in the West is proceeding apace. What would it take to reverse the process? The only way to develop sensible answers is to examine the formative process. Western civilisation is the accomplishment of the culture of rent-seeking.

The core of this process may be simply stated. Wealth created by working people is transferred to those who monopolise the assets which are (for most practical purposes), fixed in supply; on which we all depend for our existence. These are the resources of nature. *Those who control the land are consequently endowed with the power to control the culture of the communities on those territories.* Why does this follow? Populations fund and sustain their culture and physical infrastructure out of the net income they produce. This is technically called economic rent. Social rent is the organising principle that governs the fate of complex societies.

- ❖ Correctly applied, social rent makes the Good Life possible for everyone willing to work.
- ❖ Diverted from its social purpose, rent rewards behaviour that causes society to spiral out of control.

If a minority of people are allowed to monopolise social rent, they acquire control over law-making, the tools of coercion and the means of communication. This was the achievement of English aristocrats. Patricians in other countries contributed, but England's nobility set the pace. They played the single most important role in sealing the foundations of what would evolve into a globalised civilisation.

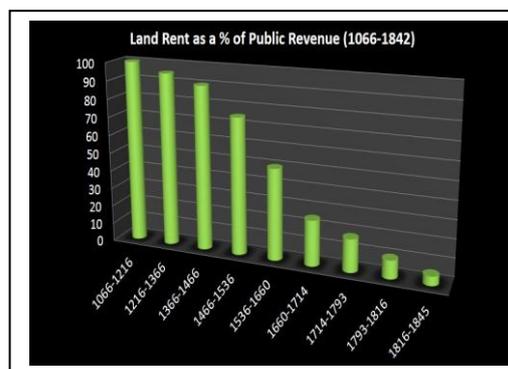
Beginning with a fateful meeting in a field near Windsor Castle in 1215, the feudal magnates dictated a deal to a king that triggered a financial process that unfolded itself all the way through to the sub-prime mortgage racket and real estate financial crisis of 2008.

*From then on, the feudal barons and knights set out to plunder the public purse. Their mission: de-socialise the rents that funded the nation (see Graph). To legitimise their coup, they evolved a "rule of law" doctrine and a set of parliamentary conventions*

*which, to this day, protect the rent-seeking culture that disfigures people's lives.*

Why were the English unable to reverse this unfolding history of exploitation? One approach to teasing out an answer emerges by reflecting on a claim by Lord Neuberger, President of the UK's Supreme Court. He analysed the formation of the British attitude towards other members of the European Union. He argued that because there had been "No invasion for 950 years [that] is why we don't like Brussels" (Bingham 2014). The British were suspicious of the EU because "over the past millennium, the UK has enjoyed a more self-contained and stable experience than any other nation in Europe". According to this creation myth, not since William the Conqueror in 1066 has an alien force successfully landed on English soil. Modern Britain evolved because the people remained free of tyrants.

Reality is less edifying. Take, for example, the case of that other William. William of Orange arrived from the continent with an army in 1688 and ended up on the throne of England. Wasn't this an invasion? Not according to the version authorised by the aristocracy. He was invited to assume the Crown by English patricians who did not favour their home-grown monarch. This they represented as a "Glorious Revolution". In reality, it was just another inglorious putsch in an unfolding *coup d'état* against the state that began with Magna Carta in 1215.



The mission was nothing less than the privatisation of the state. The process spans 800 years, and it is not yet complete: the rent-seeking culture's struggle, *at all times*, is to maximise the flow of social rent into private pockets. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a trivial 4% was drawn directly from rent to fund public services.

This was treason writ large against the people of England. The legacy: an anarchic social system. But the exploitation, instead of being condemned in the court of public opinion, is celebrated as successful nation-building. This perverse reading of history stems from the rent-seekers' success in wrapping their deeds in slogans of patriotism. This, in turn, empowered them to indict dissenters as traitors. The aristocracy thus fashioned a statecraft based on their greed (Thesis #1).

The people of England were co-opted into what evolved into a culture of cheating (Thesis #2). ***Their ancestors did not sign up to the Social Contract written by, and for, the feudal nobility.*** Outcome: by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, land "owners" and their ancillary financial system had established a Welfare State for the exclusive benefit of those with the power to capture the nation's rents. The shire knights convinced the people of the commons that the nation's rents were theirs by title – their *entitlement*. This history will be centre stage on the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magna Carta in June 2015 (Box 1).

### Induced Ignorance

Traditional communities are shattered when they lose their commons. The impact is transmitted inter-generationally. Hunger, crime and violence result from the erosion of life-affirming cultural norms and practices. Around the world, many people are committed to alleviating such suffering. Offended by the atrocities of poverty, homelessness and ecocide, reform

activists seek change. And yet, their efforts have failed to erase the blights on the human landscape. There is a reason for the disappointing outcome of all their work. *They apply palliatives to symptoms.* Flaws in the foundations of society are left free to run riot over each new generation.

#### Box 1 From tenants to "owners"

Magna Carta, the agreement between King John and his barons, is popularly associated with the principle of Habeas Corpus. That document, however, also reveals how the seeds were sown that led to the financial coup against the English state. The aristocrats initiated the de-socialisation of the kingdom's rents by reducing *scutage* (rents) due to the Crown from its head tenants. This episode is reviewed by the late Sir Kenneth Jupp MC, a judge in the High Court of England who was awarded the Military Cross for bravery in World War 2 (Jupp 2005: 94). Feudal tenants became land "owners" not by acquiring absolute ownership of the land itself, but by capturing ownership of location rents.

Defects in the structure of society automatically reproduce poverty in all of its manifestations. These are symptoms of a distressed society (Harrison 2012). Despite all the strenuous efforts of non-governmental organisations, hundreds of millions of people remain in poverty, alienated from their birthright – the natural right of access to the riches of both nature and society, the value of which is synthesised into a single stream of revenue: rent. Meanwhile, the internal dynamics of the life-wrecking system go unchallenged.

People do protest against bogeymen like bankers and their bonuses. Politicians are censured for not keeping their word. Corporations are attacked for trampling on eco-systems. But the structural flaws that permissively encourage these forms of

anti-social behaviour remain cloaked in mystery. The institutionalised nature of that *process* of exploitation is a matter of historical record. So why do governments continue to disregard that knowledge when they promote their “evidence-based reforms”?

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century an English judge introduced the concept of “wilful blindness”. He instructed a jury on how someone could “wilfully shut his eyes” to an illegal act (Heffernan 2011: 2). That principle was most recently applied in the Enron case. Two men at the top of that commodity-trading corporation claimed to be innocent of the frauds that cost thousands of Americans their life’s savings. They were convicted after Judge Simeon Lake explained to the jury: “Knowledge can be inferred if the defendant deliberately blinded himself to the existence of a fact”.

To assert that politicians are wilfully blind is to accuse them of dishonesty. In fairness, most of them genuinely want to improve the lives of their constituents. To account for the failures of governance, therefore, we must conclude that *they really do not know what they are doing*. This, however, requires explanation. The best theory may be labelled *induced ignorance*. Politicians (indeed, all of us) are victims of a process of misinformation that shuts minds to a dishonourable part of European history (but see Box 2). How do we account for this pathological state?

Over the centuries, most people understood that they were being deprived of an equal share of their nation’s riches. They repeatedly registered their discontent. To meet this challenge, a cost-effective way of containing dissent had to be developed. The cheapest method (one that conserved rents for consumption by the rent-seekers) was to school each new generation into a set of beliefs that deluded people into accepting their lot in life. This was

achieved by moulding language in ways that mangled minds, and therefore people’s behaviour.

### **Box 2 From Socialism to Oligarchy**

Some did escape indoctrination. Karl Marx is a notable case. But opportunities for reform, such as those of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were wasted. Critics of capitalism failed to forensically concentrate on the market economy’s structural flaws. Socialism is a notorious example of the failure to reconceive the foundations in ways that were sympathetic to people’s needs. Thus, erstwhile champions of the socialist paradigm have allowed the rent-seeking virus to re-colonise their territories. Ex-Soviet nations are now run for the benefit of oligarchs. Bloody violence in the streets of Kiev in February 2014 registered the Ukrainian people’s opposition to the corrupt culture that enriched the resource rent seekers. The lessons have not been learnt in China, which is following Russia in alienating the nation’s rents to a minority of citizens.

### **Mangling the Metaphors**

Linguist George Lakoff and his co-author Mark Johnson have shown that “most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature” (1980: 4). Metaphors are crucial to the way that we think, and therefore to the way that we behave. We rely heavily on the coherence of our metaphors. But this also means that, if we wish to intercede in the way people behave, we may do so by altering the way that they think. This would be achieved by amending the meaning and use of relevant concepts. Words deployed by bigots illustrate the way language can mobilise emotions and direct people’s behaviour.

The feudal aristocracy created a whole lexicon designed to intimidate peasant populations into accepting the loss of their ancient right of access to common land. Noblemen were the

“upper class”; others were in lower classes. This language of humiliation (and related behaviour: you *doff your cap to your betters*) was vital for the rent-seeking mission. Today, the values and attitudes of that class culture infuse national statistics, as with the classification of people into employment categories. Missing is the category for the “idle rich” class.

But because this mind-mangling process occurred over a period of 800 years, it is difficult (without study and reflection) to grasp its reality. The default position: denial. We are in control of our minds – *right?* It offends self-esteem to suggest otherwise. So we may turn to a similar process that was telescoped into a shorter period of 150 years, to examine how a whole continent was indoctrinated.

The capture of Africa was achieved by deploying a few colonial administrators and a modest number of soldiers from countries like France, Belgium and Britain. Anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski surveyed the history in *The Dynamics of Cultural Change* (1945).

Africa was a land grab on a breathtaking scale. When Malinowski undertook his fieldwork, he noted that the impact on indigenous people was not recorded in the works of scholars of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He wrote:

*[C]onsidering that land tenure is one of the key problems, it is extraordinary how little discussion there is of it in such books as those by Junod, Smith, Dale, Rattray, Dudley Kidd, and Torday. Moreover from these early accounts of African land tenure, all change has been carefully cleaned off the picture; all traces of European influences have been expunged* (1945: 117).

That was Step 1 of mind control: conceal the evidence from public gaze. But it was not sufficient. How people think about such issues also needs to be influenced. How else could dispossessed populations be coerced into compliance with the

wishes of their masters? This is where the metaphors came into play. Malinowski cites two examples.

Christian missionaries preached the Gospel of Universal Brotherhood. The *preaching* was based on a vision that sought to assure the converted that they would live in a community of equals. The *practice* was the colour bar. The cognitive dissonance engendered by such tensions between words and deeds confused those whose land was being appropriated.

Gold diggers were Malinowski’s second example. Cecil Rhodes deployed the “dignity of labour” metaphor in political discourse to manipulate men in the Transkei. A tax of ten shillings was imposed on those who preferred to work on ancestral lands rather than go down European-owned mines. Rhodes told the Legislative Assembly: “You will remove them [the Natives] from that life of sloth and laziness, you will teach them the dignity of labour, and make them contribute to the prosperity of the State, and make them give some return for our wise and good government” (1945: 115-116).

Such foundation policies and language solidified a new social structure for a continent which, today, remains hostage to Europe’s statecraft of greed. Social and economic evolution is retarded by doctrines that continue to mangle the minds and the culture of indigenous peoples (Box 3).

### **Box 3** **Geldoff goes for Gold**

Singer Bob Geldoff, who campaigns against poverty in Africa, is frontman for a new private equity fund that is targeting the “massive returns” to be made out of Africa. The primary source of revenue is the continent’s resource rents. Geldoff would be horrified if he understood that his venture into High Finance will help to consolidate the economic mechanisms that impoverish Africa.

How do we release ourselves from the thought-control processes that disfigure society? In the past, social discontent was relieved by resort to violence. In no case has that violence been the prelude to the recovery of natural justice. In France, Russia and China, people were promised liberty and fraternity. Instead, they endured bloodshed and exploitation.

But neither is the solution to be found in displacing responsibility onto non-human agencies. Social change will not emerge by *Empowering the Earth* (Begg 2000). Nor do the exclusively biological models help. These claim that humanity is in an infantile stage and needs to grow up. Pre-literate humans developed customs and practices that enabled them to navigate their way through hazardous times and places. They established ways of living that did not bequeath deficits to future generations and did not inflict mortal damage on their habitats. These were mature people, and we do humanity a disservice to suggest that we have yet to reach maturity. The solution to the social perversions of the past is closer to home, under the Englishman's castle.

### **The Englishman's Castle**

Is it possible for people to buy back their ancestral land? That could be one way to view the "property owning democracy" heralded by Margaret Thatcher's "right to buy" policy of the 1980s. Low-income families were encouraged to purchase social housing at big discounts. They reaped big capital gains and joined the rent-seeking class. But the exercise has failed: the numbers owning their homes in the UK are now declining. Nor could it work. For *if we all become rent-seekers, who would work to create the rents?*

The way in which the people of Britain were lured into accepting the culture of greed is illuminated by the "the Englishman's castle" metaphor. That

castle is the semi-detached family dwelling. The purchase of real estate is promoted as virtuous. People burden themselves with mortgages to "get on the property ladder". This is prudent, because homes have been converted into financial assets. This, in turn, has pushed acquisitiveness to the point where *the rent-seeking culture is itself in jeopardy*. Examination of the housing market illuminates the way in which the viability of the state is being eroded. The starting point is people's attitudes towards the way government raises revenue to fund public services.

This is what families pay to access the public services they need:

- ❖ taxes to government, *plus*
- ❖ location values to vendors of dwellings.

The irrational basis of the public's collective consciousness is displayed when they attack taxation. They complain about direct payments to their elected governments, but remain silent about the *indirect* payments which are levied by property owners. This difference is explained by the way people are coached to attack "big government" and its powers of taxation. *Vitriol is never directed at vendors who charge families that want to live in the catchment area of the public services they need*. Economists encourage these lop-sided prejudices by remaining mute on the sociology of fiscal policy. An example is the work of distinguished American economist Martin Feldstein. He has emphasised the damage caused by conventional taxes, but he fails to explain that governments would not distort people's lives if they collected revenue direct from rents (Feldstein 1996).

All of this explains why people do not challenge the vendors of dwellings with this kind of question: "Why have you included in the price of this home the value of public amenities that you do not own and which you do not

provide?” On the contrary, we celebrate the success of those who reap capital gains from their properties. Out of that loot, some of them

- 1) paid for their children’s privileged access to fee-charging schools;
- 2) funded additional health and recreational services that add to longevity of life; and
- 3) purchased status symbols that signify wealth (such as high-end cars).

The collateral impact of this behaviour:

- a) house prices were pushed beyond affordable limits for many families;
- b) shortfall in government revenue, so deadweight taxes had to be raised; and
- c) distortions to labour and capital markets as investors sought “tax-efficient” solutions.

Reformers unwittingly connive by focusing on palliatives to mitigate

- i. unaffordable housing: by demanding subsidies for low-income families, allowing the crisis to creep through the generations;
- ii. labour markets: demanding protective regulations which disadvantage those who fall outside the regulatory net (Box 4); and
- iii. the division of people into Haves and Have-nots: by seeking tax-funded benefits which perpetuate fiscal-based injustice.

The emphasis on palliative action derives from the *entitlement* culture, which seeks to distract people from root causes. When writ large, we see whole populations subjected to the Stockholm syndrome: hostages come to identify with the cause of their kidnappers.

The net effect is that the palliative approach, far from mitigating crimes against the people, permit income inequality to grow. That inequality is now at an all-time high in countries on both sides of the Atlantic. The mechanism that deepens this financial injustice can be viewed by shifting attention away from an exclusive consideration of *income*. We need to take into account *capital gains* from land-based assets.

- ❖ The land market redistributes value away from those who work, to those who do not enhance the value of the locations they occupy. The “good fortune” of home owners is neither accidental nor random. Their capital gains are the logical result of laws that enabled a minority to extract community-created rents for their private benefit.

#### **Box 4 Dying for Work**

The rent-seeking culture induces attitudes that cause increasing numbers of middle-aged men in Britain to kill themselves, when they are rendered unemployed. While suicides have been declining in most sections of the population, they rose dramatically since the 2008 crisis for men between the ages of 45 and 59, according to the Office for National Statistics. Feelings of humiliation and desperation caused them to be almost two and half times as likely to commit suicide as the rest of the population in 2012.

- ❖ Money-lenders battered on to the rent-seeking mission of the aristocrats. Result: today, bankers are legally empowered to fabricate “money” out of thin air. Then, through mortgages, they oblige people to yield up to 25% of the value they create over their working lives. Bankers *create nothing* and

*give nothing*, but they claim title to the real value created by working people.

Because of this history, Britain became the archetype of a weak form of governance. We define a weak state as one in which the law-making powers cannot be used to treat all citizens as equals. The weak state is servile to rent-seekers.

This economic model is bankrupt. Nations do not pay their way. They are (to borrow a term from ecologists) unsustainable. They do not cover their costs. That bankruptcy can be expressed in cash terms, as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP). In 1980, the richest members of the OECD had average household, corporate and government debts equal to 160% of GDP. Thirty years later, this had doubled to over 300% (Cecchetti *et. al.* 2011: Table 1, p.7). A large and growing part of the costs of current consumption are imposed on future generations. Similar deficits stem from our treatment of both culture and nature. *Rent-seeking is the behaviour that is cannibalising our civilisation.* Is it possible to orchestrate an end to this process of depletion?

### **Unfreezing our Minds**

The evidence of 5,000 years of history leaves no room for doubt: civilisations are vulnerable to structural flaws that trigger their demise. A society that managed to combine complexity with sustainability would be something new. Ours must be the quest for a post-civilisation settlement. How do we initiate the changes that would empower us to evolve such a society?

To begin, we need something that the German-American psychologist Kurt Lewin (1890-1947) would call the “unfreezing” stage. This would take the form of a compelling critique of the present system, one to which most people would subscribe, and which would animate them into action.

Poverty is a practical problem that could provide such a focus. People are willing to work to alleviate current suffering, while simultaneously working for structural reform.

Poverty is a manufactured by-product of the culture of rent-seeking. That is why politicians and non-governmental activists are not able to exorcise this evil in the midst of plenty. The UK illuminates the futility of trying to negotiate freedom from destitution without confronting the social paradigm that causes poverty.

When Margaret Thatcher was elected Prime Minister in 1979, she quoted St. Francis of Assisi’s statement about bringing harmony in place of discord, truth in place of error, faith in place of doubt, and hope in place of despair. St Francis chose poverty as a lifestyle. The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) was concerned with the plight of people who did not choose to exist at the material margins. And in their critique of Thatcherism, they also quoted the words of St. Francis to attack the politics of Margaret Thatcher. The poor in Britain, they declared, were becoming poorer (Bull and Wilding 1983).

Neither Thatcher nor the CPAG offered an effective critique of the systemic causes of poverty. Therefore, they could not define what it would take to eliminate poverty. Both were sincere in their aspirations. Neither was consciously malevolent in ignoring the root cause of poverty. Both were victims of induced ignorance. So they contributed to the perpetuation of poverty, by failing to pinpoint the mechanism that could permanently erase it. Outcome: in Britain, young people have endured a 19% fall in wages since 1997, while the older (home-owning) generation now earns 2.6 times more than workers aged 18-21. This compares with a difference of 1.7 times in 1997 (Intergenerational Foundation 2014). What would it take to unfreeze our minds?

## The Language of Hope

A vision of hope is needed. Two examples may be cited, one from the language of the divine, appealing to sacred forces for salvation, the other appealing to scientific materialism for salvation.

Dutch pastor Conrad Boerma invoked the language of liberation theology. He understood that trauma inflicted by land loss could lead to self-destructive fatalism. He witnessed what happened in Salvador Allende's Chile. Land reform included the planting of trees in Osorno, a district threatened by soil erosion. One night the *campesinos* dug up and destroyed the trees. Their explanation: "When the trees have grown and the land is restored, our harvests will be taken away again". Six months later, Allende was assassinated by the CIA-backed death squads. And to confirm the pessimism of the peasants, the landlords' regime was restored (Boerma 1979:77).

Hope needs to be restored, for "once people have a different picture of the world and believe in the possibility of change, they re-gain their self-confidence and press for change" (Boerma 1979: 85). Boerma cites Dorothee Sölle, who examined the impact on people locked up in German concentration camps. They were humiliated to the point where they acquiesced in their fate.

*"The first stage towards overcoming this suffering is to find a language that leads out of the uncomprehended suffering that makes one mute – a language of lament, of crying, of pain, a language that at least says what the real situation is."*

Boerma notes that this is the significance of liturgy and worship, with psalms as a phase in the process of change. Sölle writes:

*"I consider the stage of articulation, the stage of psalms, to be an*

*indispensable step on the way to the third stage, in which liberation and help for the unfortunate can be organised"* (Sölle (1975: 70, 74).

Karl Marx rejected theology. He developed a materialist theory of history. This led his disciples to believe that their salvation was embedded in the laws of society. Their rallying cry: *liberation is inevitable*. People will be freed through "dictatorship of the proletariat".

These two approaches indicate how the structure of power may be subverted by invoking language to create a psychological state that empowers people. But *success depends on knowing how to re-design the structure once they acquire the power to liberate themselves from tyranny*. Thus, for example, little will now change in Ukraine, even though the people have deposed an authoritarian president. Joining the EU is not the way to salvation, as the unemployed youth of Greece and Spain will attest.

## Learn, or Lament?

Our global community of nations needs a shared "human rights" doctrine. The one that originated with the UN's Universal Declaration is not fit for purpose. It is a legacy of the English aristocracy (which explains why the Declaration makes no provision for an enforceable right of access to land). Under it, people may assert rights; but are not required to honour corresponding obligations. This ensured that the human rights agenda would disappoint the masses in the post-World War II era.

The land grabbers *had* to separate rights from responsibilities, if they were to successfully dishonour the feudal arrangement. In that form of social organisation, holding land was conditional on rendering service to the state. Adam Smith affirmed that this obligation remained valid for the era of

commerce: rent paid into the public purse reflected the benefits received from the state. The knights of yore had to rupture that rule. So they created a class that was irresponsible; it answered to no-one but themselves.

Without a new doctrine of rights and obligations, we may expect many more eruptions of the Arab Spring kind, as people react against the injustices of post-colonialism. But while these events raise people's hopes, expectations will be dashed. This is tragically illustrated by events in the Islamic world.

When popular protests led to the overthrow of Mubarak in Egypt and Gaddafi in Libya, the people could not control the outcome in favour of everyone's welfare. The western "democracy/rule of law" paradigm was not sufficient to construct people-centred solutions. Military figures continued to exercise power. So, when the Moslem Brotherhood president was ousted in Egypt, the power behind the throne turned out to be a general. Armies in Moslem states are major land-owners in their own right, their rents funding the privileged lifestyles of those in command (Pakistan's army is a notorious case). The construction of more secular political arrangements will be conditional on not challenging the power of the military (Saleh 2013). Can anything be done about this?

The task of reconstructing society on new social foundations in the Islamic world must begin by examining Sharia law. This censures "interest" as usury, but permits the privatisation of community-created rent. If the West wishes to deal with jihadist fundamentalists in its spheres of interest, it must confront the suicide bombers with an ethical economics that resolves the crises induced by poverty. *Someone* needs to explain that it is feasible to jump-start the growth of a new kind of society that is shorn of institutionalised poverty and faithful to moral and spiritual norms.

The only practical formula is the renewal of what John Locke called the Social Contract. The two cornerstones are respect for the rights of others, and stewardship of nature. Starting with the notion of a contract, we may begin to reverse the damage inflicted on people who were dispossessed of their natural right to "life, liberty and estate". *Estate* is the old English word for land. But so embedded is the culture of rent-seeking that change will only happen if whole populations are mobilised in favour of moral renewal – a Great Awakening that supports the crafting of a new social contract.

Locke argued that people entering into civil society, and submitting to government, do *not* relinquish their natural right to "life, liberty and estate" (Locke 1690: Ch. 7, §87 and Ch. 9, §123). But as it happens, he played fast and loose with this doctrine to excuse the vast estates of the aristocracy (he deployed the concept of money as a store of value to negate his own proviso – that the accumulation of land was conditional on leaving sufficient good land to meet the needs of others). Locke's doctrine was awkward for America's Founding Fathers. They resorted to an elegant solution. They deleted the word *estate* when they incorporated the doctrine into their constitutional documents (land was replaced by "the pursuit of happiness"). By this means, America's written constitution sanctioned the economics of apartheid. That constitution continues to blight the lives of the people of that great nation to this day.

***The time has come to re-negotiate the social contract.*** It is not for the agents of the state (who represent the culture of cheating) to appoint lawyers to write that contract. We, the People, are under an obligation to engage in an interrogation of all the options before jointly drafting, and giving our consent to, a settlement that emancipates everyone to participate in the create of a post-civilisation society.

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