

Humanity at the Crossroads: Business and Jobs

By [John Kozy](#)

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Theme: [Global Economy](#), [History](#), [Poverty](#)
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What's known as the economy has not only had horrid consequences, it is ultimately unsustainable. In two centuries, it has turned human beings into beasts of burden and their rulers into mere teamsters, it has polluted the Earth, extinguished uncounted species and exterminated millions of people, it has denuded forests, melted glaciers, and is in the process of depleting un-renewable natural resources. Someday, no natural resources will be available for industrial processing, and this economy's assets will turn to dusted rust.

The economy, which is nothing but a collection of abstract ideas to which humanity is being sacrificed, has brought all of this about. If human beings and life in general survive, humanity will have to revert to its natural state in which jobs are done in cooperation with nature rather than in opposition to it.

Conventional wisdom is seldom wise; worse, it is often completely false. And when it falls into the category of the obvious, it is doubly dangerous for its obviousness makes it more difficult to question.

No one defines the word 'freedom' or lists the things Americans are free to do that people in other advanced democratic nations cannot, but who questions the claim that the American people are the freest on earth? No one provides a comparison of poverty in America to poverty in other developed countries, but who questions the claim that America is the most prosperous nation the world has ever known? No one mentions that America has not decisively won a major war in more than thirty years although it has fought perhaps a dozen or more, yet who questions the claim that America has the strongest military power yet created? All of these conventional, obvious bits of common wisdom are dangerous; they lead Americans into a false sense of complaisant superiority that is bringing about the country's undoing.

There are many such conventional, obvious bits of common wisdom. An encyclopedia would be required to list them all, but there is one so astoundingly false that I have never been able to understand why anyone believes it even though everyone seems to: businesses create jobs!

In fact, even deciding what this assertion means is difficult. If it means that only businesses create jobs, it is patently false. Not only do governments and even individuals create jobs, jobs existed for millennia before any businesses as we know them came into being. Ever heard of hunters and gatherers? Hunting and gathering are jobs that people worldwide engaged in. So are herding, trapping, fowling, planting, harvesting, building, skinning, preserving as in drying, cleaning, and the ubiquitous cooking. When a mother cooks her family's dinner, she is doing a job but not for a business. When an otherwise unemployed

person is hired to cut your lawn or clean your house, you, not a business, are creating a job. In fact, throughout most of human history, these were the types of jobs human beings engaged in; they did not work for businesses! Businesses did not create any jobs. Anyone who doesn't know this should never have been awarded a diploma from any university, not an MBA, a Ph.D. in economics, or a J.D. Not even a simple B.A.

American politicians and economists take this unquestioned falsehood and attempt to make it the keystone of an economic policy and commercial law that makes the company more important than the species. People are made into factory fodder to be used like any raw material; buyers are cautioned to beware because merchants are expected to cheat, the courts will uphold a merchant's claim against a buyer but deny a similar claim made by a buyer against a merchant. In other words, the company is placed in a superior position to the worker, the job holder, the consumer, the person. The economy becomes a Hegelian master-slave relationship which has never been synthesized.

But what the proponents of this false bit of conventional wisdom fail to recognize is that it has a logical converse. Businesses do, of course, hire people and thus create jobs. Business is a necessary condition for jobs of this kind. But in like manner, the availability of labor is a necessary condition for the existence of business. One is no more important than the other. There is no logical or even practical reason to value the business differently than the jobholder. Just as businesses make jobs possible, workers make businesses possible. The only reason business has a predominant position in the economy is that policy makers have either eliminated or prohibited most other kinds of jobs. If you want people to be only factory fodder, prohibit them from being anything else.

One wonders, of course, how people who held jobs for millennia without the intercession of businesses suddenly, almost overnight in historical terms, became factory fodder. It happened because the masses were driven from the land. They were driven into cities where the kind of work people had done for millennia was no longer available. The only critters available for the hunt are other people and the only stuff to be gathered are other people's property. Industrial capitalism turned hunting and gathering, the most basic form of work, into crimes. Property became more important than people.

How did this come about? We shall never know. The event has been buried by the dust of time, but we do know who tried to justify it.

John Locke, in his *Second Treatise on Government* argues that there are three natural rights—life, liberty, and property. Thomas Jefferson, who was familiar with Locke's writing, said, "Oh, no. That's a recipe for tyranny by the *status quo* and altered the trilogy into life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. What Jefferson saw and Locke didn't was that if all the property were already owned by the aristocracy, making property a right gave exclusive possession of it to those who already had it, which made the Hegelian master-slave relationship irresolvable, and so it still stands today. Worse, it has been chiseled into a legal wall of separation by the American federal courts when they imported English Common Law into American jurisprudence.

What's known as "the economy," industrial capitalism, has not only had horrid consequences, it is ultimately unsustainable. In two short centuries, it has turned human beings into beasts of burden and their rulers into mere teamsters, it has polluted the Earth's atmosphere, its streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans, extinguished uncounted species and

exterminated millions of human beings, it has denuded forests, melted glaciers, and is in the process of depleting un-renewable natural resources. Someday, no natural resources will be available for industrial processing, and this economy's assets will turn to dusted rust. Industrial Capitalism carried within it the seeds of its own dissolution. Its process is a physical *reductio ad absurdum*. If human beings in particular and life in general survive this collapse, will humanity revert to its natural state? Will the jobs people do be done for the benefit of human beings rather than for an artificially constructed economy?

The economy's leaders have indirectly brought all of this about by their policy choices, but the economy has done it directly. What is happening to humanity is being brought about by the economy which now controls the actions of leaders and the fates of people. Everything that happens is a consequence of it, and it is nothing but a collection of abstract ideas to which humanity is being sacrificed.

Some will say that technology will be our savior. But that is nothing but a belief based upon a hope, a unicorn on the back of a chimera, that is, too, more likely false than not. Technology has been far more destructive than constructive. Every technological advance has brought with it its own horrors. Business is not a human benefactor, and technology is just another kind of business. It does not exist for you and me any more than hedge funds do. It exists only for the sake of the economy.

John Kozy is a retired professor of philosophy and logic who writes on social, political, and economic issues. After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, he spent 20 years as a university professor and another 20 years working as a writer. He has published a textbook in formal logic commercially, in academic journals and a small number of commercial magazines, and has written a number of guest editorials for newspapers. His on-line pieces can be found on <http://www.jkozy.com/> and he can be emailed from that site's homepage.

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