

SATIRE: Dead-end Capitalism? Never Worry, Here's a Business Opportunity to Die For...

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Global Research, July 21, 2011

21 July 2011

Region: [Europe](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

With apologies to Jonathan Swift...

The social crisis of late capitalism is sweeping across the US and Europe like a hybrid between hurricane and wrecking ball. The economic system that deifies the making of money profit and so beloved and mythologised by Caucasian peoples in particular is – to say the least – out of control. It is demonstrably killing workers, families, communities, the environment and spreading world wars. Yet still the people whom it is killing cling on to their faith in the hurricane-wrecking ball.

Maybe this faith is well-placed. After all, where there is profit to be made, there is ingenuity and innovation – so it is said. And this entrepreneurial spirit is the engine of European Civility and the American Dream. Actually, not to be too immodest about the prowess of capitalism, we may even claim that it's logic and spirit is the Mother of Invention. It is in our DNA as Homo sapiens. It's what made us stand upright, sharpen tools and light fires, make wheels and then cars.

Once again in the midst of existential threat, capitalism comes to the rescue with opportunities for innovation, profit-making and survival.

Just one example. In the US, the land where the entrepreneurial free spirit is said to be at its most evolved, there's a huge market waiting to be tapped. A crisis waiting to be turned into a golden opportunity. Apparently, fiscal debt levels are so bad that states are cancelling funeral services for penniless vagrants. This is where state authorities have up to now paid for the burial of poor people who either don't have families or have families who can't afford the \$4,000 bill for coffin, hearse, grave-digging, religious ceremony etc.,

Market research finds that the problem of not being able to afford burying these people is particularly acute in the state of Illinois. Apparently, every year some 10,000 low-income or vagrant citizens rely on the state to rest in peace. That seems to be a growing number especially in recent years of late capitalism, as people end up being thrown out of their jobs and homes by profit-making companies and banks.

So the state of Illinois is cutting back on burial costs. The solution being tendered is for more cremations. Cut out all the trappings of traditional funeral and burial and just burn the corpse. Big savings. But to the smart entrepreneur that way still presents economic costs and limits profit. I mean, there is the fuel-cost of cremation, and presumably a coffin is still being provided and maybe a pastor for a prayer or two.

So, here is a niche market and innovation for our capitalist in these times.

Now please bear with this idea. It may seem repugnant at first, but put those visceral and moral feelings aside and Think Profit At All Times.

How about instead of cremating all those corpses, we utilise them as human sandbags in our overseas' wars? I mean, if Illinois can be used as an average, across the whole of the US on an annual basis we are talking about 50,000 corpses. That's a lot of sandbags. At 1.5 metres in length each, that's a lot of area that can be protected around military installations in Iraq and Afghanistan (and hopefully Libya soon too.)

For the cost of fuel to cremate these poor people, their corpses could be flown out on those big DC-whatever-they-are-planes (more contracts for the Pentagon) to military theatres of operation. That way, there would be no more need and cost to excavate sand and the taking up of manual hours to fill linen bags with the material. Indeed, the same sand can then be liberated to build properties for smart investors.

Instead, the corpses of those low-incomes and vagrants are laid out head to toe and on top of each other around the perimeter of military bases – serving as shields for our troops against incoming fire. OK, the bodies will have to be varnished with formaldehyde – damn a hidden cost! – especially given the high summer temperatures of Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.

But come on, think outside the box (pardon the pun). It's an opportunity to save costs, make profits and utilise materials. And even with a bit of luck, the Warren Commission's "magic bullet theory" may kick in, whereby enemy incoming fire is ricocheted off the stiffs back to the crazy militants, thus killing a few of them.

Also, there's the patriotic spin-off. I mean, when our troops are taking cover behind those human sandbags amid ferocious incoming, well our boys can take a peek at the cold lifeless eyes of those stiffs. And that'll remind them sooo much of home and our great leaders. Now that's the spirit of capitalism!

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Finian Cunningham has written extensively on international affairs, with articles published in several languages. Many of his recent articles appear on the renowned Canadian-based news website Globalresearch.ca. He is a Master's graduate in Agricultural Chemistry and worked as a scientific editor for the Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, England, before pursuing a career in journalism. He specialises in Middle East and East Africa issues and has also given several American radio interviews as well as TV interviews on Press TV and Russia Today. Previously, he was based in Bahrain and witnessed the political upheavals in the Persian Gulf kingdom during 2011 as well as the subsequent Saudi-led brutal crackdown against pro-democracy protests.

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