ECONOMIC INEQUALITY:

THE VILLAINS IDENTIFIED AND THEIR TACTICS EXAMINED

Economic inequality is making life miserable for millions, if not billions, of humans; while at the same time, it is making life absolutely heavenly for those few at the very top.

Who would design such a society? No moral person would do that. It is the society that results when people obtain power, and then misuse that power to enrich themselves at the expense of everyone else.

But first, there is one point that needs to be made clear: There are many successful, wealthy "rich people" who are wonderful human beings.

This video is directed specifically at the "Greedy Rich" *and* the politicians who work with them, to pass laws that legalize the theft of wealth from their fellow citizens.

The Capitalist World

Now let's take a look back at the world that capitalists gave us when government refused to stand up to the power of their money.

A time when the Greedy Rich could work their employees long hours; on weekends; on holidays; work them any time they pleased; and if the workers complained ... goodbye job.

If employees needed to take sick time, vacation time, or maternity leave ...

goodbye job.

It was a time when the Greedy Rich worked children the same way as adults. Those children had their childhood stolen from them. They should have been in school; and after school they should have been playing with their friends, happy and carefree; not working in fields and factories. And if their parents had been paid a living wage ... those kids wouldn't have had to.

Believe it or not, this tragedy is still occurring in the 21st century in the tobacco fields of Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia.

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/14/us-child-workers-danger-tobacco-farms>

A time when the Greedy Rich could maximize profits by ignoring work hazards. You either leaned out of the window until the only thing keeping you from falling, was the gum on the bottom of your shoe, or they would find someone else who would.

A time when there was no minimum wage. Conservatives try to convince Americans that raising the minimum wage would devastate our economy, but history proves them wrong. If you go back to 1968 and adjust the minimum wage for inflation, you'll discover that it was far higher then, than it is now. Did our economy crash and burn then, as conservatives predict would happen now? Quite the contrary. Our economy flourished. Their dire predictions have already been tested in the real world ...

and have been proven wrong.

A time when there was no welfare nor unemployment insurance; after all ... that's what parents are for.

A time when there were no pension plans nor social security; after all ... that's what kids are for.

A time when there were no food stamps; after all ...

that's what trash bins are for.

The New Deal

The Great Depression knocked over the American economy, and the rest of the world followed like a row of dominoes. It was the social programs enacted by President Franklin Roosevelt, called "The New Deal," which slowly began to close the wealth gap, and pull America out of the depression.

To bring big business under control: The New Deal introduced banking regulations (the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation & the Glass-Steagall Act). They greatly reduced bank failures and eliminated bank runs. The New Deal also regulated Wall Street by creating the Securities and Exchange Commission.

For workers: The New Deal introduced a 40-hour workweek, a minimum wage, and the abolition of child labor.

For families: Mortgages were extended to 30 years allowing more Americans to own homes.

The Second New Deal added welfare, unemployment insurance, and Social Security. When capitalism was allowed to run wild, we didn't have any of those things.

Until that time, we were the only modern industrial nation in the world without a form of social security.

When America fell into the Great Depression, the rest of the world soon followed. As America slowly pulled itself out, the rest of the world followed. How was it possible for America, with only 4% of the world's population, to exert such an inordinate influence on the world's economy?

Because nearly half of the world's "super-rich" are Americans. Not 4% ... 46%. The richest 400 American families own as much as the bottom 150 million Americans. The super-rich wield enormous power.

<http://www.thomhartmann.com/blog/2011/04/400-super-rich-americans-control-more-wealth-country-150-million-other-americans>

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/17/super-rich-americans-chart_n_4115576.html>

What was one effect of The New Deal? Well, from 1934 until the beginning of WW2, in spite of the fact that we had a lingering, high unemployment rate, the Gross Domestic Product grew at one of the fastest rates in history; and that's the proof that conservatives have been lying to you.

<http://www.multpl.com/us-gdp-inflation-adjusted/table>

[politics/gdp.xls](file:///C:\2%20WEB%20SITES\SKEPTIC%20ARENA\politics\gdp.xls)

World War 2

During WW2 free enterprise was deemphasized and replaced with strict controls on prices and wages. As a result of government subsidizing business, the war economy grew very fast. America regained full employment almost immediately. Suddenly jobs were everywhere; workers didn't even need skills to get hired: companies would train them and the government would pay for it. Money was practically falling out of the sky.

The Empire Strikes Back

After WW2 income tax rates on the wealthiest Americans plummeted from around 90%, down to 70% during the Vietnam War, and then under Reagan, rates were slashed in two steps from 70% to less than 30%.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxation_history_of_the_United_States#Income_tax>

In addition, the banks, the big corporations, and Wall Street were deregulated. Monopolies, which had once been brought under control, now control various sectors of the economy.

Recent Supreme Court decisions such as Citizens United (2010) and McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission (2014) have effectively replaced our democracy with a plutocracy. The Greedy Rich will now choose our leaders, and ... they will control them.

Government Handouts To The Rich

When taxpayer money is distributed to the poor, Conservatives call it "socialism," as if that were a bad word. However, when taxpayer money is distributed to the rich, Conservatives don't call it socialism ... they call it "incentives." Let's review some of those "incentives":

Accelerated depreciation, inversion, and advertising subsidies are tax loopholes for corporations. Another is "performance pay" which allows corporations to shift the burden for their outrageous executive salaries onto taxpayers.

<http://americanprogress.org/issues/open-government/news/2011/03/23/9370/tax-expenditure-of-the-week-accelerated-depreciation/>

<http://www.ips-dc.org/corporate_tax_dodgers/>

The Greedy Rich have succeeded in reducing Capital gains taxes on investments to the point that they are now far lower than income taxes.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/stocks-soar-and-most-americans-just-dont-care/>

Teddy Roosevelt's intent with the estate tax was to prevent the growth of a hereditary aristocracy. But inheritance, estate, and gift taxes have all been decimated, thus insuring that America will have a permanent rich class, you know, a caste system.

Under what delusion would anyone design a society that heaps fabulous wealth upon a very few, while the vast majority suffer as they scramble to divide up what is left of an ever-dwindling pie? No rational person would desire such a civilization; yet that is pretty much all the world has ever had.

Foreign tax havens like Switzerland and the Cayman Islands are where the wealthy cheat Americans out of billions of desperately needed tax dollars.

Football stadiums are often financed by taxpayers who then have the privilege of paying a week's salary to take their family to a game.

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/27/the-nfl-is-very-profitabl_n_4346428.html>

Farm subsidies. They work the opposite of welfare: the bigger your farm ... the more you get.

The Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 was a trust-busting and securities-regulating initiative. The Greedy Rich were finally able to destroy it when their cronies passed the Energy Policy Act in 2005, which made the oil tycoons even richer, and also greased the way for the practice of fracking.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_Policy_Act_of_2005>

The Bailout - in what had to be the greatest legalized theft in world history, American taxpayers forked over vast fortunes to the robber barons who had stripped America of its wealth. By 2014, nearly 1,000 companies described as "too big to fail" including the mega banks, giant corporations like AIG, Wall Street, and the big automakers, were given over 600 billion dollars by American taxpayers (that averages out to 600 million dollars apiece).

So who gets more taxpayer-financed government handouts, the rich or the poor? Time's up: 60% of government handouts ... go to the rich.

Conservatives try to justify those handouts by evoking the theory of trickle-down economics: a theory that has been internationally tested in the real world ... and failed worse than any theory in history.

<https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2014/big-money-tax-breaks/exposing-big-money-tax-breaks/>

We're #1! We're #1!

There is absolutely no excuse for the richest nation on Earth, America, not be #1 ... in *everything*. Is there anything we cannot buy?

Here are a few things: Rank-Out of this many countries

Happiness 17 156 (so it's true what they say about money)

Peacefulness 101 162 (it's probably overrated anyway)

Life expectancy 35 193 (in the 1950's - we were near the top)

Literacy 24 65 (to control the people - keep'em dumb)

<http://rankingamerica.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/assets/uploads/file/quiz_answers_only.pdf>

So, what can we buy? Rank-Out of this many countries

Death by violence 1 17 (among high-income democracies)

Military spending 1-10 (more than the next 9 combined!)

(Okay, now you can chant "We're #1! We're #1!")

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_involving_the_United_States>

There is a very simple explanation why America isn't #1 in everything. It's for the same reason that people in the oil-rich Middle Eastern nations bask in poverty: all the goodies ... go straight to the top.

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/the-typical-worker-makes-no-more-than-dad-did-in-1979-2014-01-24>

The Progressive Income Tax

Why is a progressive income tax necessary? Because the game has been rigged right from the very start by capitalists. They control the means of production - so they dictate the terms. A progressive income tax is simply a way of getting back the excess profits that have been taken by capitalists. The flat tax argument sounds fair, but only because it ignores the initial rigging.

The American Economic System

America is not a capitalist economy. America has a hybrid economic system that combines capitalism with socialism. This hybrid economy has proven to be the most successful economic system in the world.

In addition to the social programs of the New Deal, all forms of insurance are also based on socialism. Americans have life insurance, health insurance, car insurance; fire, flood, and earthquake insurance; just to name a few.

If you pay your premiums and never have to use the insurance - you are one of the lucky ones. Insurance isn't designed to make money for you. It is designed to spread out the risk so that when a fellow American suffers a calamity, the premiums contributed by the lucky ones will enable the unlucky one to survive and recover. Socialism - what a horrible concept, or at least ... that's what Conservatives want you to believe.

The Enemy Of The People

The Greedy Rich have managed to convince Conservative Americans that the government is their enemy. They have accomplished this brainwashing of America by pointing to corruption and waste in government. Since no system is perfect, they will always be able to point to corruption and waste in government. The solution is not to dump the system but to fix it; that means passing laws that minimize corruption and waste in government.

The government is the enemy of the people, only when the people are not included in that government. Examples include dictatorships (rule by a king), communism (rule by a political party), theocracies (rule by a religion), and plutocracies (rule by the rich). Conservatives seem not to understand that in a democracy, the people *are* the government, and therefore, cannot be their own enemy.

History has proven that a nation's greatest enemies will usually arise from within. Iran and North Korea can only dream of hurting America as much as some of our own citizens are already doing. To quote Abraham Lincoln:

"America will never be destroyed from outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

The Greedy Rich And Their Conservative Base

The Greedy Rich are actively working to erase New Deal programs like Social Security and the minimum wage. They even want to eliminate public education. The only thing that has stopped them is the power of democracy.

The Greedy Rich work mainly through the Republican party. They retain, at great expense, lobbyists who are paid millions of dollars to promote their interests. Think about it: if the Greedy Rich are paying out millions, it is only because they expect a return ... of billions.

<http://www.alternet.org/economy/5-ways-super-rich-are-betraying-america>

That's why they pour huge sums of money into brainwashing the masses, many of whom, then vote against their own self-interests. If you've ever argued with a Fox News fan then you've experienced the utter frustration that results when facts, logic, reason, and science, all bounce off their little heads like bullets trying to pierce an army tank ... it just ain't gonna happen. Victims of brainwashing rarely respond to reason.

There is obviously something very wrong with the Conservative mind. Science has discovered that Conservatives can exploit an area in the brain that controls fear.

<http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2013-02/uoe-tpi021113.php>

Conservative Tactics

Conservatives are losing in the democratic process. So how do they choose to respond? By resorting to anti-American and anti-democratic tactics to remain in power. Some of these tactics include:

* Voter suppression efforts.
* Gerrymandering; which enabled Republicans to take control of the House of Representatives even though Democrats received a million more votes.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives_elections,_2012>

* Blocking all Obama nominees in order to gain control of the judiciary, which will allow them to reinterpret the Constitution to their advantage. We witnessed two examples of this recently when the Supreme Court granted free speech and religious rights to corporations; rights originally designed for people.

<http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2013/nov/22/harry-reid/harry-reid-says-82-presidential-nominees-have-been/>

* They hamstring the government by withholding funding as they did to the Veterans Administration in 2014. Then they blame the government when it functions ineffectively. Voters don't realize that the very politicians who accuse the government of corruption and inefficiency are often the same politicians whose sabotage is responsible for that corruption and inefficiency.
* And when the democratic process didn't go their way with the Health Care Act, they threatened to destroy our nation's economy.

Now you know why they wave the flag so furiously: it is to distract you from the fact that they are the most unpatriotic Americans in our nation.

Murder For Profit

Killing Americans has been a longtime hobby of the Greedy Rich. Their refusal to accept the Medicaid expansion will cost around 12,000 American lives - far deadlier than 9/11. Conservative controlled states will allow thousands of their own people to die for no reason other than political spite.

<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2014/01/31/1270171/-Harvard-Study-States-Medicaid-expansion-refusal-will-kill-nbsp-thousands?detail=email>

The Conservative umbrella also includes the religious far right which makes up roughly half of all Christians; or about 40% of the U.S. population. The Greedy Rich use the religious far right to give them the voting power that they need to survive in a democracy. When the democratic process doesn't go their way, the religious far right will resort to violence and murder. Many abortion providers learned this the hard way when the American Taliban bombed women's clinics, and murdered doctors and staff workers.

The Greedy Rich have poured huge sums of money into convincing the ignorant masses not to take action to prevent the destruction of Earth's climate. This will lead to famine and wars - all while their profits continue to soar out of sight. Are you wondering how anyone could be so evil as to sacrifice our children's future just to increase their already massive fortunes?

Well, next time you see the Koch Brothers ... why don't you ask them?

The Greedy Rich constantly try to convince the people of the evils of government because powerful democratic governments interfere with their profit-making activities. That explains why Conservatives are so vehemently anti-government. The Greedy Rich and the millions of minions who serve them (mostly Conservatives) have proven throughout history that they are able, and quite willing, to kill their fellow Americans ... over money.

CONCLUSION

The top federal income tax rate fell from 77% at the end of WW1 to 24% by 1929. By 1929 the wealth gap in America reached a record level. The Great Depression immediately followed. Since WW2 the Greedy Rich have succeeded in dismantling parts of the New Deal and have been able to cut the income tax rate in half. In 2008 the wealth gap rivaled that of 1929; and the economy crashed almost as badly as it did then. Coincidence?

You decide.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\_great\_recession#Comparisons\_with\_the\_Great\_Depression](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_great_recession%23Comparisons_with_the_Great_Depression)

Capitalists have had plenty of time to show the world what laissez faire capitalism could offer - and the results have been ugly. They gave us a brutal dog-eat-dog existence, while they dined on caviar. When you let the animals run the zoo ... that only works out well for the lions.

Only through strong government action were we able to create a more equal society for everyone. A strong government is the only answer. It is the only protection we have.

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If you ever thought about fighting back and trying to change the world ... now might be a good time.