

THE EVOLUTION TO CIVILIZATION

Love, the humane society of social love, true civilization -- that is the "something better" that we know of. But, can it be? Is it really possible? How?

WHY THE SOCIETY OF SOCIAL LOVE IS ESSENTIAL

"Truth is that which conforms to and describes reality. Reality is that which is, not only matter and energy in their various forms but also: feelings and emotions, ideas and cultures, languages and arts, and so forth. Whether we can know, sense, measure or understand some aspect of reality or not it still, nevertheless, is."

Why is this so important? Because, the most significant characteristic of the 20th Century, other than its explosion of technology, was its adoption of the diametrically opposite attitude toward truth and reality -- that truth is different for each person and each case, that it is what each individual perceives it to be -- that there is no objective reality, only the subjective reality as perceived by each individual -- that all is relative.

Aside from the damage that such thinking has done to scientific progress, its most severe damage is the license that it gives. It gives license to create, choose, decide upon one's own "reality" and then act accordingly. "If truth is only my truth then I can have whatever truth I like. If there is no objective reality then I may do as I wish without regard for the effect on others." Such thinking ultimately gives us war, rapine, holocausts.

But, if there is an objective reality, objective truth, then, even if we are not able to completely know and understand it we are still subject to it, still measured and judged by it, and we feel compelled to behave accordingly.

Thus objective reality and objective truth, which indeed are, are also desirable, beneficial to society. If we must have a god, a standard and judge of behavior, then objective truth and reality are that.

Two fundamental social or societal conclusions that can be drawn from reality, drawn from experience, follow. They are so obvious that their proof is in their statement.

First

The only way for one to receive humane treatment is for another person to give it. But, we all are "another person" to other persons.

Therefore, the only way for us all to consistently receive humane treatment is for us all to consistently give humane treatment.

Second

In a society functioning on competition for wealth, power, and control there will always be a pyramid of success having a small number of winners at the top and the rest of the people below.

Therefore the chance of being a winner is quite small.

In the material competition the vast majority of us are *losers* not *winners*. That is in the very nature of the competitive mode. The competition can produce only a very small number of *winners*; there has to be a very large number of *losers* to support the economic / social imbalance, for the pyramid arrangement to function.

Furthermore, that arrangement inherently requires a tremendous waste of resources and dissipation of otherwise attainable progress that could benefit all of us, all of society. Those resources and that potential progress and improved quality of life, rather than going to our benefit, are taken from us by our masters, our conquerors the *winners*, in the cost of their maintaining their position and the repression of us.

There is only one solution, only one reasonable course of action for we *losers* to take. We must stop playing that game; we must change the rules.

- Would we like to be on top, the *winners* in that competition ?

Yes, of course we would.

- Have we any hope of that ?

No, no way.

- Well then, in that case, do we then want "good", "right" and "fair" to rule ?

Of course we do. It is the only way that we can at least be partial *winners*, the only way that we can avoid being total *losers*.

WHY THE SOCIETY OF SOCIAL LOVE IS POSSIBLE

It is not easy to so change the rules.

Our behavior throughout our lives is a constant struggle between: on the one hand the motivations of our material nature to survive, to hunt, gather and eat, competing to what ever extent necessary to accomplish those goals and "devil take the hindmost"; and on the other hand the motivations of our rationality, our sense and our conscience, which keep speaking to us about "good" and "bad", "right" and "wrong", "love", "justice" and "fairness".

As our intelligence has gradually developed we have, nevertheless, been dominated by the material origin of our nature. It is so ingrained in us that we cannot easily act contrary to it. Yet, we have arrived at the point where our experience shows us that our capitulation to our material side is self-defeating.

History and experience demonstrate absolutely that so long as our society functions according to its material "survival of the fittest", competitive mode, that long will it be the pyramid of a very small number of dominating *winners* at the top and a vast mass of deprived, repressed humanity, the *losers*, underneath, supporting those few *winners*.

But, we are all victims of "the prisoner's dilemma". The dilemma, which can be presented in various forms, is as follows. Two persons are captured by authorities as suspects of having committed a crime, are held prisoner and are kept and interrogated separately. Each is told, "If you will cooperate and implicate the other then you will be treated leniently."

The problem of each of the prisoners is that if the authorities had sufficient proof they would not need the sought confessions nor the implicating of the partner prisoner. Therefore if both prisoners are silent they will go free. But, if either prisoner accepts the authorities' "deal" the other prisoner will suffer the full penalty.

Should the prisoner being questioned accept the partial benefit of leniency assuming that he cannot rely upon his partner's loyalty, or should he go for total freedom counting on his partner's doing the same, but at the risk of the full penalty because of his partner having testified against him to obtain leniency ?

In society, if we all behave humanely (both prisoners refuse to confess) we all benefit. But if some persons pursue wealth, power and control (our partner prisoner implicates us) while the rest of us assume that everyone is cooperating (while we were loyal to him), then that rest of us become the base of the pyramid supporting the aggressive few (he gets off and we get the full penalty).

If we cannot count on our fellow citizens' abstaining from power and exploitation (if we are not sure our partner prisoner will stay loyal), are we not better off taking "half a cake rather than none" by pursuing whatever small wealth, power and control we can (implicating our partner to obtain leniency) ?

Clearly, the prisoners dilemma situation favors those who have captured the prisoners and hold them incommunicado. Likewise, in society the situation favors those who are the aggressive pursuers of wealth, power and control and operates against the majority of the citizenry who would like a humane environment but find it difficult to progress toward it.

At every moment our material nature and self-deluding perceived opportunities to win tempt us back to the old ways. Only fixing our gaze on the irrevocable fact, we cannot be winners so let's be cooperators, can save us.

The solution to the dilemma is to implement the desired social policy not by radical change but by progressive development of social thinking. Individuals can only be counted on to behave at a level of social responsibility and humaneness that corresponds to the more or less social norm of their time and environment. It is hopeless to count on heroic, altruistic or even citizen-like motivation to improve society.

The change in attitude toward social behavior, the improved concept of what is socially criminal must evolve. It must come from the people and become part of what the people are. It must come about not as an overtly or formally agreed upon rule but, rather, as the gradually developed innate ethic, the fundamental moré that we live by.

We must come to feel about struggling to climb to the top on the backs of our fellow persons as we now feel about neglecting our children, murdering our parents, hypocrisy, stealing and lying.

It is easy to say such things, to advocate such goals and behavior; the history of mankind is replete with such advocacy. But, how do we actually move toward the goal ? How do words become actions ?

Curiously, the method is quite simple and has already long existed and operated. That is why we have made the small progress that has been obtained so far in progressing toward true civilization. Throughout our history we have, in fact, been following the method, not consciously but nevertheless inevitably. We need now merely recognize it, consciously adopt and pursue it, and hone the method to maximum effectiveness by working to accelerate its operation. The method operates as follows.

Because, apparently, we are basically well-intentioned beings when not in too dire straits, and because we are rather weak in ambition, self control, and self discipline, the standards that we proclaim are always significantly higher than our actual performance relative to those standards. Prodded by our inner conscience, we are always contending levels of social and personal moral and ethical behavior that are significantly above the levels at which we actually perform. That behavior has so characterized human behavior and the human experience over so many millennia that one is forced to conclude that it is inherent in us.

(That conclusion is not unreasonable. Our standards would tend to be based on our desires for ourselves, how we would wish to be treated. Our

external behavior must in addition deal with our laziness and our inherent competitiveness in the struggle for survival.)

That very fact, that very characteristic of us as sentient beings, has produced the moral and ethical progress we have so far achieved. And, while we see a long path of needed progress ahead of us; nevertheless, we have already progressed by a significant distance from our animal origins.

- Because the level of our intentions is higher than that of our performance there is continuous pressure tending to produce some consequent progress in the raising of our performance.
- As our performance improves our standards of behavior, our intentions, also tend to rise.
- This process iterates generation by generation and yields the extremely slow but inexorable progress that we have made and are making.

This does not really require that individuals change as individuals. Rather, the advance is by generations. The point to which society has arrived by virtue of the progress that the prior generation made is simply to the next generation the way things always were, the usual, normal, taken for granted status of society. It is their starting point.

Societally we tend to perform, on the average, at the average level of our standards. That average includes all of the range from high noble standards at one end of the range to the worst aspects of current society at the other. As a result there is some pressure to eliminate or ameliorate those worst aspects. And the result of that elimination or relief of the worst aspects is a new, somewhat higher average level of the standard because it is now an average over the same range of values except that it omits the eliminated worst aspects.

We even tend to further elevate our most noble standards at the high end of the range because the elimination of our current worst aspects of society and the consequent rise in our average standards tend to make new higher standards seem to be more possible. They become reasonable when before they had seemed to be hopelessly unrealistic.

Thus we see that the evolution to a humane society, to true civilization, is possible. That evolution is going on now; it has been going on and it will continue to do so. Its action has been and is innate, inherent, a natural aspect of human society .

But the progress is slow, agonizingly and sufferingly slow.

HOW THE SOCIETY OF SOCIAL LOVE CAN BE ACHIEVED

Then, how can we further this action, contribute to this progress, hone the method to greater effectiveness ? By doing these three things.

- Recognize that this process occurs and is the means to ultimate humane, rational civilization and, therefore, work personally to raise standards and eliminate worst aspects of society.
- Enlist, inform and educate fellow men, society, in that recognition, that work, and that contribution to progress.
- Persist. Work hard at the project and persist in patience.

The goal cannot be achieved by coercion. It cannot be achieved by some special elite. It cannot be achieved by asking for heroic or even merely special sacrifice by people. All of those methods have been tried by religions, governments and revolutionaries with their supposed elites of clergy or statesmen or party leaders. In spite of its initial self-sacrificing dedication the leadership eventually always gives in to the temptation to use its dominant position to further its own selfish interests and to abandon the pursuit of the people's overall individual and collective social interests.

A truly humane and rationally ordered society can only come from the people, can only be achieved by the gradual evolution of society over the generations, over generations of reducing and eliminating bad and raising standards of good. The humane society can only be achieved by generations of evolving the innate standards of all mankind to the level that social love is reasonable and natural.

But, the need for patience, the fact of slow progress, or the multi-generational length of the task must never excuse failure to diligently strive for the goal. Every individual is either part of the solution or part of the problem. He is either a contributor to the betterment of mankind or in actual effect, and therefore in fact, a supporter of the continuing of the so damaging, so wasteful, competitive jungle of human society. There is no "neutral ground" no non-involvement.

CONCLUSION

The import, the message of this entire work, is as follows.

There is no God, no divine justice, no "fairness" at all. The universe is, itself, a non-sentient, non-"feeling", material existence. It does not "care". It simply functions according to its natural nature, according to essentially simple modes of behavior set by its nature. It is, and it "behaves" in a manner that is

neither "good" nor "bad" in the ethical or moral sense. "Good", "bad", and "fair" are values that arise out of intelligence, out of reasoning applied to experience.

We (and presumably other) rational beings who have arisen through the operation of that universe are a special "hybrid" a combination of:

- all of the natural consequences of a material universe operating according to its nature, the competition for survival, and*
- the judgmental concepts that rationality gives rise to: "right" and "wrong", "good" and "bad", "love", "justice" and "fairness".*

These two aspects of our nature arose from the natural universe and are part of its nature; but, there is, nevertheless, no universal or cosmic enforcement of those judgmental values that arise from intelligence.

Their implementation is up to us, to us "on our own", alone.

If we persist in our pursuit of self-interested personal welfare, personal satisfaction and gain, with poor regard for our neighbor, then we shall be victims condemned by ourselves as the inevitable consequence of our own actions to being and living in such a society.

If we face up to these truths and participate rationally in society and humanely in our lives and day to day existence with each other, then we shall, to that extent, enjoy the benefits of such a society.

And,

If we teach others these truths and if we are each a humane example then we will bring the civilization of social love into being.

This is not a matter of morals or some objective rule imposed from outside our society. Rather, it is the only way to our ultimate successful functioning as a society of rational beings.

The task is, then, to create true civilization, a society of truth, love and justice. The method is to shift society gradually but persistently ever more and more in the direction of disapproval and non-acceptance of social injustice and of personal selfish, aggressive, self-centered behavior.

We must become the environment in which we wish to be. That "becoming" is the final stage of our evolution.