

This paper is one of a series of individual essays written within the conceptual constraints provided by "Forms for a Future." The collection of essays will become the individual episodes of the podcast.

## '... Forums for A Future...'

Podcast (#11) The Introduction to Part IV: Concepts for a Future  
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### **Prelude**

Part I of the series contains a brief 2-minute promotional and a conceptual foundation for thinking about change as the convergence of economic, political, social and personal perspectives. Part II is a set of four podcasts providing a philosophy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Part III is a set of four podcasts describing three lessons from modern history on the inter-play of Power, Wealth and Beliefs for informing the present. Today, in Podcast # 11, I will introduce Part IV, which presents prescriptive principles for having a future.

### **Key Concept**

The key concept for Part IV is that a realignment of how we think about Power, Wealth and Beliefs is required for the Post-Modern Era. These three elements of political, economic and social forces must be re-conceptualized to provide individual people with a Personal sense that they have a reasonable future. This is a prerequisite for enabling humankind to make the choices that will avoid the inevitable collapse if we do not do so.

### **Introduction**

As people, we are never going to escape the combined impact of Power, Wealth, and Beliefs. Political, economic, and social forces, respectively, are the basic timeless elements of the human experience. What is negotiable, at any particular point in time, is the specific nature of the relationships between them. The nature of these forces, however, is no small matter for they determine the quality of our Personal existence.

An individual cannot either be for or against the interdependent nature of these forces. That is a given fact of our life. However, what one can either be for or against are the specific ways these forces operate to constrain our lives at the present moment. On the one hand, our subjective sense of self is derived from the psychological impact of these forces on our everyday life. And, on the other hand, these forces are the resultant of the actions taken by real people, both individually and collectively, to define the very nature of forces themselves. The Personal (or human) Paradox is that we are both the recipients and the authors of our own fate.

Within any era, the human condition is largely a reflection of whatever is commonly accepted -- usually without question -- as the current reality. As the mechanisms of the current system of power, wealth and beliefs are played out, most people will accept it as their fate and attempt to quantitatively maximize the balance on their personal ledger. The society progresses largely within the parameters of the accepted reality, without raising significant qualitative questions.

However, between eras, the exact opposite is the case. What is at stake, at a time of change, is the qualitative nature of the relationships that prevail between power, wealth and beliefs. Such inflection points are, then, epic times because the new mechanisms will shape the nature of the human experience for an indeterminate future. This is why, today, is a time of destiny.

Qualitative, not quantitative, issues are before us as we re-define a new set of rules through which power, wealth and beliefs will become the standard that dictates our fate.

### **The Personal Element**

For these reasons, the Personal Element is critically important. As human beings we are faced with the most difficult of all human tasks. We are faced with the need to relinquish many of our time-honored beliefs -- often ones to which we have committed our life, and which, therefore, have become an integral part of our sense of self. And, in addition, we are faced with creating -- inventing -- alternative ways of thinking on which our degree of adaptation to the new Era will depend. The choice is of epic proportions because it is about our survival.

This is no small challenge. It is why I introduced the *Forums for a Future* podcast with a section entitled "A Philosophy for the 21st Century." That philosophy is Constructive Alternativism; it is the mind set that when existing rules for understanding the present -- such as the current interplay of power, wealth and beliefs -- are no longer suitable, it is then time to create an alternative set of rules for that interplay that will allow us to have a future.

In the long distance past, Mother Nature, over millions of years, changed the geography of the earth. This provided the basis for Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest through the genetic mechanism of natural selection. Now, it is mankind, not Mother Nature, which is changing the geography of the earth, providing the basis for "Social Darwinism." This is the survival of the human race through the mental (not genetic) mechanism of Constructive Alternativism. However, now the time frame is not millions of years, but an interval that encompasses the time span of those who are alive on this planet, today. For the first time in human history the destiny we choose will also be our fate.

What an exciting time the alive.

### **Prescriptions For the New Era**

What constraints are required on power, wealth and beliefs -- on these timeless political, economic, and social forces -- for living in the postmodern world?

- First, they have to solve the left over problems. We need a framework for unscrambling the present through new lenses that gives us a fresh perspective on contemporary

economic, political and social issues including, specifically: globalization, the ideology of the New American Century, and the sustainability of life on this planet.

- Second, they must be prescriptive of where we need to go. They need to allow us to have a vision of the future so that we may direct our destiny in a way that provides for a coherent and hopeful sense of self-direction, rather than to have events direct our life in a way that leaves us feeling helpless in the hands of fate.

### The Principles

In this section, I will propose three concepts that, respectively, reflect the political, economic, and social pillars. These three concepts provide a framework for re-defining the interplay between power, wealth, and beliefs to restore order -- a coherence -- from which one can build a new personal frame of reference for the future. They are:

- Citizenships of the world, not world citizenships.
- The power of balance, not the balance of power.
- Knowledge as public domain, not a private commodity.

### Interdependence

These three principles are not independent concepts. They are similar to the triangle formed by power, wealth and beliefs, in the sense each can be understood only in terms of the other two. The three principles provide a new arrangement for creating the interplay between power, wealth and beliefs that is appropriate for the conditions of the new Era we are entering. From these three principles, and their interrelationship, will then flow prescriptions for having a future. These are the topics of the next three podcast that comprise the substance of Part IV.