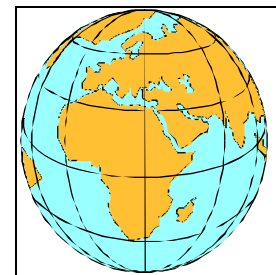




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**“Liberate work by removing its tax burden and finance social security by taxing the consumption of goods, which most often are produced by machine.”
(+ unconditional Basic Income for all)**

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SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

A. Growth and how the cards are dealt

Is growth indispensable?

Yes say some (on the right) because it guarantees progress and employment.

No say others (on the left) because, for them, it means pollution of the planet and endangers future generations (the green left).

According to them **everyone's needs can be met without growth.**

For them growth is the sworn enemy of sustainable development ...

In truth, these two positions are **caricatures** and to pit them against each other like this is to forget to take account of all the parameters relating to growth.

Growth takes place in an historical context, in a succession of socio-economic events that can be described by means of an upward or downward curve.

All societies and enterprises, **like all living beings**, are born, grow, reach a steady state, and then decline in as far as the steady state no longer corresponds to their needs, or becomes obsolete or is undermined by competition.

Such decline reduces GDP (Gross Domestic Product), which is a measure of the wealth of a country or a continent.

What happens in practice is that decline is made up for by the birth and growth of new enterprises, so that – **as with communicating vessels** – the level of GDP is at first maintained.

But if, then – as the result of a prolonged recession, say – consumers lose their purchasing power, the principle of communicating vessels no longer applies and they find themselves weakened, depending on **assistance** and tied up with **government regulations** that deprive them of initiative.

In the name of the left regulations are issued to the point of paralysis. In the name of the right deregulation is carried out leaving the benefits of financial power in the hands of a few.

And if the population does not have enough money to buy products and services, sales, profits and stock market values plummet, to the detriment of the COMMON GOOD.

At bottom, the central issues are wealth distribution and the ability to take initiatives.

*"At present, chance determines how the cards are dealt, and the unlucky ones, unable to play the game effectively, are given assistance from the riches of the successful (unemployment benefit). If we decide to deal a strong card to everyone (**basic salary, plus freedom to do business**), the game can go on, which it can do only with the fourth player (the whole of civil society). In the virtual world of information **wealth comes from sharing**. For if I give you an egg and you give me an egg, each of us has one egg. But if I give you an idea and you give me an idea, we both have two ideas and collective wealth has increased.*

Growth comes from the human and material capital which constitutes the collective wealth, and it is the "time-value" that determines what goes to each and becomes the common good.*

*Yoland BRESSON. ***

It is, then, to our advantage that the world gets richer and that fruitful exchanges increase in the framework of sustainable human development ...

Those on the left think that State regulation, which by definition leaves less room for financial and industrial initiative, can guarantee sustainable human development.

The faith of those on the right in private sector initiative leads them to believe that the hidden hand of the Market will resolve all problems of poverty and wealth, of health and sickness, of survival and famine ... **that the poor will be succored with the crumbs that fall from the rich economy's table!!**

In sum, both the left and the right have ideological conceptions of our society which correspond less and less with the realities on the ground.

B. The search for convergences and the march of history

Every self-respecting historian knows very well that **any historical fact is the result** not of chance but of the **convergence** of facts and influences which he must explain in the light of subsequent events. Nothing happens by magic; everything is conditioned in the inner recesses of the **collective unconscious** and in **everyday exchanges** between people.

Some specialists speak of "thresholds" (e.g. before or after Chernobyl; before or after the fall of the Berlin wall; before or after 9/11), of structural changes in situations, rather like the **butterfly effect** when a wingbeat may bring about a storm on the other side of the world.

Whatever we may think, we make **our socio-economic and ethical choices, unwittingly**, along sets of lines that converge towards the fulfilment of historical facts, be they major or minor ones depending on our point of view.

Every one of us, whoever we are, takes part in the march of history.

We have only to think of the struggles undertaken by so many people which have led to **abolishing slavery**, granting **votes to women**, making **education compulsory**, setting up **social security**, opening up frontiers by pulling down the **Berlin wall**, creating a **space of peace and well-being** in Europe, and marching in streets all over the world for **another kind of globalisation**.

These are all things that have had to come to a state of maturity before becoming part of human history.

C. The choice of sustainable human development

The choice of sustainable human development constitutes an option for a future that must be defined through **numerous exchanges of an intercultural nature**.

It is for responsible citizens, coming from the left, the right, the centre or any other direction, to promote and organise negotiated convergences for bringing about the COMMON GOOD.

We all agree in principle that there should be social justice – but first for me (monopoly). Now, the big forward step, promoted by some alternative movements, is to fight for the COMMON GOOD.

The problem is that the weapons in this struggle are ideological, and **so firmly anchored in the left** that they cannot throw off a certain intellectual terrorism (ideology) which renders them **incapable of drawing up practical lines of convergence** (negotiated) towards sustainable human development.

For convergences are brought about through negotiations between different forces which are able to agree and decide on a common path.

Thus, to blame employers and the rich for all the evils or to denigrate social demands are both ideological attitudes that prevent CONVERGENCE.

Now, the way to get away from fundamentalisms of right and left is to stand resolutely for **the practice (PRAXIS) of management**, which should rely on simple and necessary pillars.

"Europe will advance only with simple ideas", stated Jean Monnet, one of the fathers of Europe.

It may smack of **left-wing fundamentalism** to fight for a social justice that aims at levelling wealth (ideology); but to put in place, in a practical way, a BASIC INCOME is to create consensus – for everyone is included.

It may smack of **right-wing fundamentalism** to fight for lower taxes; but to institute a system of taxation for all at the point of consumption is to converge towards more social justice so long as it is accompanied by compensatory measures that guarantee a certain purchasing power (Basic Income).

To respect work – everyone's work – by freeing it both of taxation and of State assistance is a management practice on which most people may agree without difficulty.

And, to swear by economic growth or contraction (non-growth) does not solve the problems in the longer term.

But to converge toward sustainable human development thanks to the **Basic Income and abolishing taxation of work** is to guarantee measures of freedom and respect, which give room for initiative and competition – and they together maintain the socio-economic dynamism of our society.

Sustainable human development can come about only as the result of convergence of the forces of unshackled initiatives, of activities that pay heed to the fulfilment of mankind and respect for the planet.

Technical or financial inventions sometimes give rise to the false hope that growth is taking off again. They are part of the evolving dynamism of our societies, but their brief lives give no reason to believe in their solidity for the long term.

We may remember the booms in the sales of domestic appliances in the 1950s, of audiovisual goods in the '60s and of mobile telephones today.

Such novelties generate huge benefits and can contribute to progress.

But it is dangerous to found a sustainable socio-economic future on such passing commercial happenings – for they are not always aimed at the COMMON GOOD.

On the other hand continual convergence – maintained, *inter alia*, through participative democracy – of positive activities that respect the environment and each person's cultural envelope will **provide our fellow men with tools which may serve to guarantee growth for the COMMON GOOD.**

JEAN-PAUL BRASSEUR

* TIME-VALUE

In economic theory, "time-value" is taking the place of "work-value" as the basis of value. It is founded on the following observations:

1- Time is the only “rare good”.

2- Rational economic man attaches to any activity a usage value in proportion to the time he spends on it. Each part of his use of time has a usage value (even free time).

The Basic Income makes possible the use of this free time for non-commercial activities (including voluntary work), which increase social capital. **(1)**

3- Every exchange, or trade, is a trade of time.

4- When a part of the use of time (activity or its product) is traded commercially, its trade value in monetary terms depends not on the nature of the item but on the sum of time used and on the availability of money. It is these two parameters that determine the “time-value”.

(1) To guarantee a Basic Income is :

a. to grant individuals a modest degree of protection, or security, which allows them to fulfil themselves through the **ALLOCATION OF THEIR TIME**;

b. to recognise the value of time, for all choice is finally a choice of time allocation;

c. an economic policy deliberately **oriented toward growth of income** rather than growth of work that lacks human dignity; for without a modicum of income how can one exercise choice?

In practice, people are happy **when they believe they can** be active and thereby feel recognised and useful, in order to produce, to further socio-economic coherence by political action, to make cultural exchanges and promote culture, to develop various family and leisure-time activities.

In this way, through a range of occupations, they can fulfil themselves.

In fact people are not “short” of activities, rather are they “short” **of recognition, freedom and financial security**.

To guarantee this financial security through a Basic Income is:

a. to rid work and leisure from feelings of guilt, which always limit choice;

b. to develop policies for education and socio-economic integration, which will allow **multidimensional talents to flourish** – for sustainable human development.

****Yoland BRESSON :**

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