

Notes in Preparation for 'The Other Economic Summit' (April 1986)

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A brief note-form look at some of the dynamics underlying the outstanding agenda of 'The Other Economic Summit'. We are coming to understand economics and trading transactions as well as the relationship between species and environment as symptoms reflecting the underlying causal psychodynamics of social systems. [1986]

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1. **International debt**, or Third World debt - Need to move to higher level of system analysis in which you see financial imbalance as a system phenomenon, rather than debt as a sub-system part-phenomenon. In this higher level analysis, therefore, you see the imbalance as the responsibility of both sides of the transaction, instead of seeing the imbalance as generated by the weaker partner within the trading transaction.
2. **Seed Thought:** What about the issue of economics as the topology of psycho-social dynamics. In other words the way in which we interchange goods and monies and values at the boundary of social systems is a symptom of the underlying processes, dynamic force-fields emerging from the psycho-dynamic core, the defence structures, the construct, the value systems, which set up the kind of value force-field at a social level. Attempting simply to intervene at the interchange level of the economics is quite impotent while the value system and its underlying psycho-social dynamic matrix are left unchanged.
3. **James Robertson's** concentration on the reduction of dependency tends I think to be treating the dependent as the ones in power to take the initiative to change the situation. I question that. Again I think we need to look at the system as a whole rather than one subset of it and this is partly a problem of the subject of his paper which is local economics and therefore inevitably sub-system behaviours. Now if one of the underlying psycho-social dynamic traits is that we all seek to render other people dependent on us if possible, then those with greatest power to generate dependency in others become those on whom others become dependent. Those who thus become dependent lose the power to become independent of those upon whom they are dependent. To ignore the dependency carriers and to speak only as if those who are dependent ought to be able to have the power to become independent is to ignore the systemic dynamic generating the disparity between power and powerlessness, between those who are holders of dependency and those who are dependent. Now unless intervention is made at the systemic level the system goes on generating increased polarisation around the issue of dependency and therefore militates against economic transactions which cannot initiate but could only follow and reflect the changes in topology of the underlying psycho-social dynamic.

So again the issue between centralised national economies and localised decentralised economies is in fact one of the underlying dynamic at work within the value system of the society concerned. While that value system is held in the unconscious of our social planning and manipulation it persists in exercising dominant powerful influence upon the way the economics are actually carried through. We therefore need to shift level of the focus of analysis from the surface topology, the symptomisation of economics into the causal dynamics leading to that topology within the psycho-social processes of society.

4. **On International Trade** If the goal of the OECD Economic Summit includes the flexible rescheduling of international debt while the less developed countries begin to achieve trade surpluses, the underlying assumption must be that in a given set of n trading parties, trading commodities with each other, it is possible to achieve a stable state in which all parties trade at a surplus or net profit within the total system. Now I may be naive, but I do not see that that is a logical possibility. We have a fixed holding environment, a fixed rate of energy flow, and a limited capital deposit of raw material resources within any national boundary. It seems to me therefore that the goal of sustained total system surplus in conditions of gross, or exponential, growth can only be sustained at the expense of exponential degrade of the capital resources of the system. In other words, the assumed goal of the OECD economic international strategy is a logical impossibility, as well as practically unsustainable.

5. **The dynamics involved** could be modelled in a closed system of say, 50 people, working with certain value sets and certain commodity bases and certain capacity for increasing the value of those commodities by work. If the value system is an individual free-for-all, i.e. a free market, then those with greatest skill or greatest power in bargaining and transaction will begin slowly but surely to accumulate resources and wealth at the expense of the degradation of the resources and wealth of other members within the system. The process is only sustainable with a continuing series of economic sacrifices, the number and intensity of which increases as the centring of wealth into the powerful few goes forward. Note that no individual member within this group of 50 has any responsibility for the management of the system, they only have sub-system goals. However if the value system is changed, so that each member has responsibility for the sustaining of their own survival and well being, but also for the sustaining and survival of the system as a whole, including the sustaining of the well being and the survival of every other member within that system, then the transaction field has a bias towards equality, rather than a bias toward inequality. Clearly the psychodynamic matrix leading to a value shift is fundamentally different from the psychodynamic matrix sustaining the current value set.

Research recently done on the dynamics which generate transactional value systems between the insides and outsides of individuals, or groups, or institutions, or social systems as a whole is of fundamental importance in establishing ways of changing the economic transaction field at an international level. The fundamental parameter demanding such a value shift is the change from the conditions of the species as an insignificant element within a comparatively infinite environment. Under the original conditions sub-system growth with every-member trade surplus can be sustained under conditions of exponential expansion and resource utilisation which is again assumed to be sustainable ad infinitum within the infinite holding environment and resource base. This, of course, is now a myth and we are currently meeting the conditions in which the sub-system of the species homo sapiens is a significant element within a limited holding environment. As those limits to the system impinge upon the exponential criteria of the sub-systems' growth it is inevitable that we pass through a transitional phase of the most fundamental value shifts imaginable. They are psychological, cultural, religious, ethical,

ideological. Economics are minor symptoms of this causal matrix. So in the second TOES conference paper Redcliffe and Porritt note: 'Resource depletion and unsustainable development are a direct consequence of growth itself'.

6. **The link being made** between military spending and development aid confirms the need to look beneath the levels of the economic system to the underlying transactional analysis. The authors of Paper II say, for instance: 'Arms spending is probably the biggest obstacle there is to sustainable development'. Noting the 'close relation between military spending and development assistance' they say 'aid does not simply have political strings, it is clearly a political weapon'. Just as the dynamics of the New International Information Order reflect the same underlying matrix as the proposed New International Economic Order, so the present international armament order and its developing tendencies are also parallel constructs of the same underlying transactional matrix. It is the export of paranoid projection to the boundary conditions of the social system which determine the transactional weighting of flows across that boundary. Armouring, information flow, economics, wealth, energy, raw materials, as well as the more subtle cultural images and exchange and attitudinal message transactions, all reflect the deeper psychodynamic levels of social systems behaviour and unless we gain access and understanding at this level we have no power to intervene in the symptom levels. Moreover intervention in one symptom level is quite inadequate unless there are also interventions in all the other symptom levels, therefore we must move to a meta-level of intervention. Attempting to solve economic problems by economic interventions is simply not possible.

7. **By far the most powerful motivator** of unconscious adult individual and social behaviour appears to be the common fixation of foetal unconsciousness at the immediately prenatal point. The last experience of tolerable life-support system within the foetal environment is threatened by imminent catastrophe, mediated by placental failure, malnutrition, pollution, lack of oxygen and inadequate space for growth and movement. Any further progress into these conditions restimulates the repressed trace of the trauma of birth itself. Defensive behaviour therefore requires a return to the pre-failure foetal environment and an acting 'as if' imminent threat is about to onset. This leads to a treatment of here-and-now environments and boundaries as representing the there-and-then conditions of the fixated point of trauma. The only way that these fundamental and primitive anxieties can be met is not by sustained conditions of survival but by steady increase in the resources incorporated. Enough is not enough since what is provided has to satisfy the task not only of sustaining life itself, but also of sedating anxieties about 'what is sustaining life not being enough to sustain life'. Therefore whatever we get is not enough. The result is that, in order to sedate the primitive anxieties, we have to engage in a process of sustained growth, simulating the period prior to placental failure, in which sustained growth was normative. The elaboration of the foetal unconscious dynamic underlying social interaction with the environment, is an extremely important tool in understanding the dynamics of inter-group process, boundary conflict, armament and ecological rape. The environment is limited and cannot sustain exponential growth in order to satisfy the psychotic defences of a damaged foetal unconscious, repressed within the corporate behaviour patterns of homo (supposedly) sapiens.

It would appear to be the dynamics emanating from this matrix which determine the value set which means that each element of the human system operates in such a way as to generate net exponential gain in its transactions with its environment. Only so can the psychotic anxieties of individual and social consciousness be sustained in their repressed form. Any failure of this exponential growth rate triggers intense psychotic anxiety, requiring an exponential increase in armouring, or defence structures, mirrored outwards to the surface topology of the groups and nation-states concerned. Thus, any engagement of the species as a whole with the limited holding environment of the earth restimulates womb-failure and triggers massive armament expansion. In other words there is a reification of primitive defences at the boundaries and interstices of the complex social system which makes up the global village.

At another level, foetal assumptions are preserved in the transaction base - the assumptions being:

- that the foetal consciousness requires resources for sustained exponential growth;
- that the environment is an infinite source of nutrition, oxygen and cleansing;
- it is an infinite sink for pollution absorption;
- it is infinitely expandable in terms of the space utilisation.
- it is a self-regulating responsible environment for which the foetal unconscious has no responsibilities whatsoever.

Dependency is absolute and therefore abdication of responsibility for environmental management is also absolute.

8. **There are many boundaries**, many insides and outsides, many sub-systems and environments within the species. A sub-group may be treating a wider society as an environment, subject to foetal assumption projection and exploitation. The set of all such sub-groups makes up the market place, a jungle of psychotic paranoid projection mechanisms, seeking to sustain exponential growth of one sub-unit at the expense of all the other sub-units which constitute the particular sub-unit's environment. As a system of such sub-units the system itself exercises the same projection into its ecological environment at all levels and at all points of the system performance. A national unit represents a mega-foetal unconscious state, treating the international community as if it were some kind of depersonalised womb-world, threatening it with instant birth trauma, but also with instant and immediate, or imminent, placental failure. The fact that the species itself acts as a mega-humanoid foetus renders the limited and somewhat fragile ecological environment, of which that mega-humanoid molecule (in Chardin's terms) is now a significant element, open to catastrophic and vicious circle breakdown. The more sharply the species impinges upon the limits to growth, the higher the levels of psychotic anxiety triggered within its social system, and the more intense its paranoid behaviour. This in turn triggers more destructive ecological rape, so threatening the system even further. As a result, instead of moving fairly smoothly across the crisis of transition from exponential growth to stable balance of the species within its environment, a catastrophic transition is triggered. The end of the growth phase sets off behaviour which sharply accelerates the pace at which the transition occurs in a vain attempt to sustain the period of growth a little longer.

9. **It is, therefore, imperative that we understand** and resolve the psychotic core of these behaviours if the transition from sustained exponential expansion to maintained interactive stability is to be managed without the most catastrophic destruction of both species and environment.

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