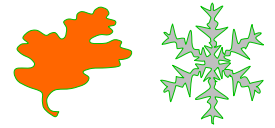


CREATION CARE



The World and all that is in it belong to the Lord, the Earth and all who live on it are His! –Ps 24:1

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Occasional Newsletter #25, Winter 2018, On the Web: nohcob.org, click: Resources, click: Creation Care



ANYTHING YOU CAN DO I CAN DO BETTER!

MIT and Boston University economists just completed a study which shows that between 1990 and 2007 robots displaced 670,000 industrial workers and influenced a steep decline in manufacturing wages. The same study estimates that job displacement will

quadruple by 2025 costing 3.4 million more jobs and will continue to lower wages. Pearson, Oxford University, and the Nesta Foundation estimate that **1 in 5 workers are in occupations that will shrink by 2030.** MIT's Daron Acemoglu and Boston U's Pascual Restrepo suggest that "each additional robot in the US economy reduces employment by 5.6 workers," but recent polls show that 70% of Americans feel that their jobs are safe from automation and robotics, at least through their life-times. According to a Pew survey only 6% said that they themselves have either lost a job or seen their hours or incomes cut because of automation.

Max Mackeown, in *The Truth About Innovation* writes, "Today robots stamp, cut, insert, wire, weld, seal, paint, and otherwise assemble everything from Ford F-150 pickups to Apple's latest iPhone." When you combine the effect of robots, trade deals, jobs sent off-shore, and international conglomerates, the USA blue collar job future looks very grim. But this is just the beginning. The once unthinkable is now becoming a reality.



Google and Uber are examples of those who are working on prototypes for fleets of driver-less trucks that can crisscross the country without rest breaks, sleep, or days off. Lilliputian robots are being tested to replace the multitudes of workers who load and unload trucks. AMOZON ROBOTICS is working to produce androids to staff its ware-

houses. As of August (2017), 55,000 of these Artificial Intelligence robots were added to its 100,000-strong warehouse workforce. You have, no doubt, heard about the tests being made on drone delivery systems – that are meant to deliver packages, etc., faster and more efficiently than truck/delivery persons can.

AI (artificial intelligence), now provide powerful, autonomous machines that are driven by a cognitive technology. As astonishing as it may seem, **these are machines that can think, learn, communicate, make decisions, and perform multiple tasks on their own!** It's a capitalist's paradise where the workforce doesn't call-in sick, take vacations, need coffee breaks, file lawsuits, or organize unions! Robots are also cheap compared to the productivity and cost of a human labor force. Obviously, **AI** now effects both blue and white-collar workers.



DOC-BOTS (doctor robots) are being used to diagnose and choose treatments because they can digest thousands of scientific articles, medical reports, patient records and apply all that information to the particular symptoms and test results of a given patient with greater accuracy than a human physician.



Robots have long served as surgical assistants for everything from colonoscopies and knee replacements to tumor removals with more accuracy than human physicians. Vinod Khosla, billionaire co-founder of Sun Microsystems said: "Much of what physicians do -- can be done better by sensors, passive and active data collections, and analytics." He went on to say that computers will eventually replace 80 percent of what doctors now do.

Killer-Robots. Smart machines can take on dull and dangerous military work like surveillance and mine clearance. **They can reduce the costs of war in terms of both human casualties and dollars, but can we really trust AI robots to handle the complicated and powerful weapons systems we**

have now and those that are in development? Even today, military personnel can press a button in a command center in the south-western U.S. and a drone, thousands of miles away, will release rockets to kill the “enemy.” But can we



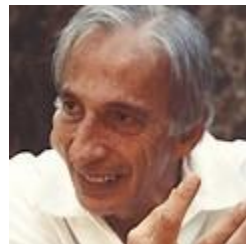
ever allow an “intelligent robotic machine” to decide when to take a human life?

126 founders of robotics and AI companies from 28

countries do not think so and have asked a new United Nations task force on autonomous weapons to “find a way to protect us all from these dangers.” In his confirmation hearing in July 2017, General Paul Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Senate committee: “There will be a raucous debate in the department about whether or not we take humans out of the decision to take lethal action.”

Touched or Wired? We know that God can touch the human mind with transforming insight and power, but can God reprogram an intelligent machine? Is humanity in danger of becoming the slaves of their godless machinery? We certainly know how the television, computer, and smart phone have dominated the time and social interaction of many adults and especially of our young people. Many experts believe that our youth have little real social interaction because of their addiction to texting. The lack of face-to-face interaction creates deep feelings of isolation and loneliness - driving an increasing number to suicide.

Ivan Illich (1926-2002), Philosopher and Roman Catholic priest, wrote: “People feel joy, as opposed to mere pleasure, to the extent that their activities are creative; while the growth of tools beyond a certain point increases regimentation, dependence, exploitation, and impotence.” He went on to point out that much of our production driven, machine dominated economic development does not lead to human flourishing, but to a kind of “modernized poverty” in which we become worn-down button pushers and lever pullers who seek satisfaction and meaning through money and consumption rather than finding it in human relationships and divine encounters.



Doing and Being. In the “Garden of Eden” right relationships between God and humanity and between man and woman were the focus. Production (*work: to keep and till*) grew out of those relationships. Being came before Doing! Human worth was based on the central fact of being created in God’s image. Society was not judged by “gross national product” but by the quality of life and the discovery

of happy living through meaningful relationships in the midst of the beauty of God’s creation. Machines are an expression of human creativity for the purpose of accomplishing tasks. They are tools which we control. The machines can only dominate us when we forget who and whose we are and what we are called to do and to be.

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That Terrible Word: **REGULATION**

Regulation: *An authoritative rule laying out definitive details or procedures that must be followed.*

Most of us began to learn about the word regulation when, for the first time, we heard our parents say “NO.” Since we all come into this world as self-centered little beings that must be humanized, our reaction to that trespass on our wills and wants is usually hard to take and it is natural for us to resist it or, if our temperaments are milder, to at least find out “why” that word has been used “against us”.

My first introduction to the broader meaning of the word “NO” came to me in Sunday School when I was required to memorize the TEN REGULATIONS (I mean Commandments!). I was taught that the “*Thou shalt Not’s*” of life were not meant to limit but to enable me to live effectively and harmoniously with God and with others.

The social, economic, and political application of that word “regulation” came when I was working my way through college and took a position, in the 1950’s, with my home city.

Our city was growing by leaps and bounds in those days. Everything was booming with new houses and businesses going up everywhere. It was hard for the city to keep up and to be vigilant. Farm land was being converted into new housing developments with the involvement of many out of town contractors. Part of my department’s job was to see to it that the city building regulations were being followed. In one of the new allotments several blocks of new 6” water main had been laid by an outside contractor. The new mains were not to be covered until we had a chance to inspect them. When we went for the inspection the mains had already been covered. I pulled the cap off of a shut-off valve access hole; reached in with my arm and felt the top of the shut-off valve with my hand. This meant that the line had been laid only 3’ deep. Our regulations called for 5’ standard cover over the main to keep it from freezing during our cold winters – thus protecting our citizens from the inconvenience of losing their water service during long periods of freezing weather. The contractor was required to dig up the mains and rebury them with a 5’ cover. In that same allotment another contractor was





building new houses. The code required roof sheeting of not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ " thickness. The first five houses that they were building had only $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick roof sheeting. They were made to replace the already shingled roofs with $\frac{3}{4}$ " sheeting. Both contractors knew that they were cheating in an attempt to save a little money. Their sins cost them a bundle instead! In the book of James 4:17 it is written, "*the man who does not do the good he knows he should do is guilty of sin.*" There are other examples of cheating and even attempts to bribe that I could talk about, but I must move on.

Romans 3:23 explains that all of humanity has a sin problem and in 7:21-25 how easy it is to do what is wrong even when we know what is right. The fact is that we live in a society in which we seek happiness through the endless consumption of goods and services. Capitalism is the economic system by which we organize business operations where money is the reward for our efforts and the primary measure of personal success. In such circumstances cheating becomes common and is written off as both normal and forgivable, because profit is the bottom line and "boys will be boys." In such compromising circumstances our democracy is threatened by a new "Golden Rule" –



"THOSE WHO HAVE THE GOLD, RULE." The pursuit of wealth is a dangerous business. Jesus said: "*it is much harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.*" (Matthew 19:24)

In a money driven society, elections also become money-driven and it is easy for candidates to become beholden to their major contributors so that they do not really represent the interests of their constituent population, but of the monied interests that paid their campaign bills. You see this all the time in polls that indicate what the general population wants compared to what the Congress actually does. Even a candidate's "political base" can become a special interest group that is out-of-step with what the majority of the population wants and the Constitution protects.

The word "regulation" is especially hateful when you put GOVERNMENT in front of it! Corporate America is eternally upset when those two words are combined. Think of the years that American Automobile manufactures resisted being forced, by the government, to install seat belts as standard equipment in their products! Their resistance seems foolish now, but it didn't seem foolish to them at the time. Part of their fear was that if you give in an inch the government will eventually take a mile. Isn't it interesting,

in our democratic society, how the government that we help to elect is seen as our enemy when we forget the difference between our own good and the common good?

Regulations are meant to guide and protect both consumers and businesses. Let's face it – only something as big and as far reaching as government can effectively regulate.

In the early years of our nation conflicts between the states became so irritating that the reach of the federal government was enlarged so that things like the Interstate Commerce Laws could open up the conflicting systems between the states that prevented equitable economic interaction.

Self-regulation seldom works. If you don't believe that just look at all of the over-weight people walking around and at those who face serious financial debt because of their indulgence. Look at all of the corporations who have spent millions to deliberately mislead the public about the negative effects of their practices and products – big tobacco and the fossil fuel industries head the list. Consider the dominance of mega-cooperation's on small business and entrepreneurship.

Deregulation is a big deal these days. For example, the EPA has become the Environmental Protection-less Administration as business-friendly politicians systematically rescind regulations meant to protect us from dozens of environmental dangers like water pollution and the removal of certain drilling safety standards - both of which affect public health. Most businesses are delighted, but those who consider the long-term impacts are very concerned.

Last, but not least, we cannot speak of REGULATION without considering its twin, **Discipline**. Discipline is defined: *punishment, instruction, training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties of moral character.*



Rules are meant to guard us against selfish people who hate the rules imposed by regulation because they do not have the inner stamina to keep them.

So many people clamor for their personal freedom and rights without taking the responsibility for the constructs through which freedom and rights can exist. Responsibility is where the rules come in and observing the rules requires self-discipline. Discipline lies at the heart of joyful and successful living. Paul, in I Timothy 4:8 points out, "*Physical exercise has some value in it, but spiritual exercise is valuable in every way, for it promises life both for now and for the future.*"

The history of the world may be understood as the struggle between the selfish and the unselfish. The first builds walls and the second builds bridges. Let's hear it for bridges! ⊕



SELFISH WEALTH

Ambrose of Milan, Italy (340-397) wrote: "The world has been created for everyone's use, but you few rich are trying to

keep it for yourselves. For not merely the possession of the earth, but the very sky, the air, and the sea are claimed for the use of the rich few...The earth belongs to all, not just to the rich." Ambrose was named a Saint by his church. A university bears his name in Davenport, Iowa.



TIMBER FOR SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

There Goes the Neighborhood!



In 2017 Scientists at Israel's Tel Aviv University completed a study of the relationship between human activities such as farming and logging in the nation's ancient history and its effect on climate in the Dead Sea region by using core samples that measure surface erosion and increased sedimentation. They reported that climate became warmer and the land was subjected to erosion as the natural vegetation (trees/plants) was replaced by crops, animals were domesticated (their grazing reduced the natural plant cover), and deforestation took place.

The building of Solomon's Temple (took 7 years) and his Royal Palace (took 13 years) required thousands of trees. The temple building story is found in I Kings 5-7. Cedar trees from Lebanon were used because their odor repelled damage from insects and mold. Today Cedars are a protected species in Lebanon because of the deforestation which began with the building of the temple and palace.

The bottom line is when you take away natural trees and plants you will heat things up - which helps to explain why forests are cool and cities and deserts are hot.



TREES ARE ON THE MOVE TRAVELING NORTH AND WEST!

The U.S. Forest Service reports that, over the last 30 years, unprecedented changes in warming and moisture are modifying the spread, growth, and survival of tree species. The Forest Service tracks 86 species of trees, some of which are dying while others are "on the move" sprouting outside of their traditional areas to the north and west. For example,

Southern evergreen saplings are sprouting further and further north while deciduous trees like oak and maple are primarily moving West. The scarlet oak, has moved more than 127 miles northwest from its Appalachian home.

The changing climate with its warming temperatures, deviation in rainfall, and their accompanying side effects, appear to be killing certain species while others are able to spread to more favorable new environments. Many trees grow slowly taking years to mature. Planting a tree is a long-term investment and with a rapidly changing climate we must revise our understanding of which species can flourish where. The rules are changing.



WHY IS HEALTH CARE IN THE U.S.A. SO MUCH MORE EXPENSIVE THAN IN OTHER SIMILAR COUNTRIES?



In 2016, we spent almost twice as much on health care, as a percentage of our economy, as other advanced industrialized countries, totaling \$3.3 trillion, or 17.9 percent of our gross domestic product. **We use about the same amount of health care as people in other wealthy countries, but we pay a lot more for it.** The statistics show that we have also gotten a bit healthier, even when you consider our aging population. The length of our hospital admissions did not change. Our doctor visits and our prescription drug use did increase.

Gerard Anderson, along with three others, published a paper in 2003 in Princeton University's Health Affairs, entitled, "It's the Prices, Stupid," explaining that our high costs are what they are simply because the health care industry can charge whatever they wish. Do you recall the pharmaceutical company that, last year, raised the price of one of its essential drugs 500%, not because of new costs, but simply to increase its profits? In one study it was found that U.S. hospital prices are 60 percent higher than those in Europe without providing better care.

We market Health Care much like any other product, except that there are no "special sales" and few, if any, competitors to choose from. The cost for products and services is difficult to uncover so that "comparison shopping" is almost impossible. Insurance companies often control our access to medical procedures and services.

We are the only advanced industrialized country without universal health coverage. Over 58 countries have some form of universal, single payer, health care including China which has the largest successful system in the world.

