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THE ECONOMICS OF  
**FALLOUT**  
**SOCIETY**



# THE ECONOMICS OF FALLOUT SOCIETY

*A LOOK INTO THE POLITICAL-ECON OF THE  
POST-POST APOCALYPTIC RETRO WORLD OF  
FALLOUT BY BETHESDA SOFTWARE*

JASON UNRUHE

MRN PUBLISHING



NIAGARA FALLS

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*To Oscar whose idea it was to create  
the videos that inspired this book.*



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### Appendix A

### Appendix B

# Introduction: The Wonderful World of Fallout



I tell you no word of a lie that I absolutely love the *Fallout* games. I don't consider myself to be a gamer, nor do I even consider myself to be a casual. In fact the last new game I played was *Mortal Kombat 2011*, and before that *Battlefield Vietnam*. But one day a friend told me I had to play this game *Fallout 3* and then *Fallout: New Vegas*. I did and let me tell you it stuck with me and captivated my imagination. Rarely has any media been able to dig itself so deep into me that it manages to consume my thoughts for a good deal of the time. Rarely do I encounter a media that I manage to build a connection with. The last one that accomplished that task was *The Matrix* trilogy.

There are so many reasons why I absolutely love this series. The game play is very interactive and allows you to feel as though you are right there in the situation. When outnumbered I get that sense of panic that makes you act desperately. In situations like this, like confronted by centaurs who just won't die for some reason, I begin throwing grenades. The graphics are superb and I think adequately reflect the reality of the situation in the game, nothing is new, all of it is old and reused. I think That is another

part of the game's philosophy. This new world after the war is supposed to just that, new. The name *New Vegas* is especially good at conveying that. Yet despite this "newness", everything is reused from the old world. This ties in very well with the theme of the game. That being, that war never changes. No matter how much we think as a species has changed or has evolved, we're still the same inside. I think the best way to put it is: "The more things change the more they stay the same", or in the original, "*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*" A proverb making the observation that turbulent changes do not affect reality on a deeper level other than to cement the status quo.

What truly captivates me about the game is its third person perspective with the story line choices that can be made. This draws me into it to the point where I feel as though this is my life. What happens in the game is the experience I am having. In my opinion this is what takes a game from being really good to being immortal. I'm the kind of person who plays a game like this with the intention of letting the mood and the events emotionally effect me. The true richness of any story is its ability to draw you in and make you feel what the characters are feeling. This emotional investment is what makes the game so astronomically intense for me. I know this sounds weird, but I like taking myself into the story to feel and experience the full richness of the game.

One moment that sticks out in my mind for evoking emotion is the music that is played in Goodsprings. The violin sound in particular moments while looking out across the wasteland evokes a sense of sadness over being lost in territory that feels unfamiliar, alone, and victimized not sure of what to do. I imagine the courier must feel something like that then. I get another feeling when I listen to the music played at the ending as it displays the finales for all the various factions. The same goes for the ending of the add ons. It's a melancholy sad-that-it-

is-over but nothing-has-changed feeling. I think it best relates to a theme of the game. That war... war never changes.

[SPOILER ALERT]

I absolutely loved Lonesome Road. At first I was a bit sceptical of what it was going to be, but then I heard Ulysses speak. The conversation back and forth between the two couriers as you cross *The Divide* is a wonderful philosophical discussion. The characters talk about the morality of revenge and personal responsibility for their actions. According to the story the courier you play as carried the key necessary for the bombing of *The Divide*. Ulysses himself refused to carry a portion of the platinum chip diversion deliveries. The two couriers exchange a lot of words about the philosophy and morality of revenge at several moments during the game play. For anyone who even has a small amount of knowledge of philosophy it will be very interesting. For anyone only interested in action it will slow the game down. Unfortunately my knowledge of philosophy it is very limited so I was unable to go into a whole discussion about it.

When I first began writing this I only intended to do *Fallout 3* just for the fun of it. I thought it would be neat to look at the society and work out the mechanics of its economic and social structures. What I learned was that this game was far more complex in this regard than I had originally thought. I saw that it proved to be a useful tool in explaining Marxist theory. That same friend suggested that I play *New Vegas* which was even more interesting and complex when it came to social phenomenon and economics. He was most certainly right. *New Vegas* provided a platform for which to educate my YouTube audience in all manner of social and economic subjects: imperialism, colonization, Hegelian dialectics, the National Question, capitalist accumulation etc.

Soon I realized that my writings for a series of videos had grown into several hours. From here it became logical to take all of it and make it into a book which would make it easier for some people to enjoy. Not everyone is interested in video games, but I think there is still some content that others will find interesting regardless. I hope this book serves as a medium through which you can understand Marxist theory a little bit better. I'm simply taking something a gamer knows and apply it to a new subject in order to facilitate the education in it. A fair amount of other "online Marxists" have been very insulting toward me for what I've done here and the videos. They seem to feel that this is "pathetic" and question the benefit of doing so. I find their attacks to be hollow and reek of being "haters" and jealous. All I've done here is try to educate people on Marxist theory using something they know and applying it. I see no reason to attack me over that.

Getting past all the drama, pleas enjoy this book, and I hope you learn something from it. I know I am eagerly awaiting the release of Fallout 4.

Jason Unruhe, 2015



# Section 1: Pre-War Civilization



## Initial Thoughts

As I've said before the Fallout series are my absolute favourite games of all time. One of the reasons why is its adherence to a likely scenario given the reimagining of real world politics. The idea of China and the Soviet Union remaining socialist well into the year 2077 is very appealing to me. I'd like to see how they fared past the Khrushchevite revisionist era. This is particularly interesting given that, I assume, China remained on a socialist path. The reason I think this is, is due to the fact that in the official story the Soviet Union disagreed with China over the invasion of U.S. territory. This is very in line with the Sino-Soviet split that took place. During this time the revisionists under Khrushchev began the wholesale slandering of Stalin while advocating peaceful coexistence with the United States. On this issue the Chinese Maoists highly disagreed as the goal of communist revolution is to spread across the globe to transform the entire world into the best of all possible societies. During this period there was a great ideological struggle in which most of the honest Marxists world sided with China. The ramifications

of this split were felt all the way across the ocean causing divides among the Latin American Marxist movements. Che Guevara has highly critical of the Soviet Union for this move while Fidel Castro sided with the Soviet Union out of pragmatic reasons, mostly essential trade.

I want to proceed with an analysis of the world before the Fallout games take place. Since we do not have sufficient knowledge of the entirety of the world at this time I have to do a lot of estimation. We have some idea, but we also have our ideological method by which to formulate and estimation. We do know what was going on in the minds of socialist leaders right before the fall of their respective countries, we merely need to preserve this and extend it into the year 2077. We also have to navigate the various global events which sprang up during that time and how we think the various societies handled them. Since there is no concrete information I will do the best that I can in determining the events that are not a part of the official story. My objective here is to remain as close to the original story as possible while strictly adhering to Marxist theory. This task won't be easy but I think it is definitely worth the effort.

A big part of this whole pre-war scenario is a phenomenon that is something very serious that we face here in the real world which has the potential to be the most destructive moment in history. Oil depletion is a very real threat. Sooner or later a time is going to come when the world starts running out of oil. Right now the global production of oil is 84,951,200 barrels a day.<sup>1</sup> Oil as we have very clearly seen, as far back as the Second World War, is a major part of geopolitics. The value of it can never be underestimated. For any society to operate there must be an adequate supply of fuel for basically everything. Even the most small and innocuous commodity passes through a gigantic global network of transportation. This transportation is intimately linked with the turnover rate of constant capital. The cost of oil

has an enormous effect on the global economy. During the 1973 energy crisis where various Gulf oil states restricted the oil supply to America over its arms exports to Israel funding its genocide of Palestine, there was great inflation due to the sudden demand for credit as the price of oil went up. After this event the U.S. went on a spree of taking control of oil producing states to ensure that an incident like this did not happen again. Unfortunately for U.S. hegemony, oil depletion is something that cannot be prevented. Countries may invade each other in an effort to monopolize the remaining supply, but they cannot prevent its eventual exhaustion. The profit motive alone makes this an extremely dangerous situation as oil companies wield a lot of influence in U.S. politics, rivalled only by the financial aristocracy. With all of this we have a good idea of what we can expect with regards to the global situation. The oil politics alone leaves us with a great deal to work with in terms of political manoeuvring.

This leads me to possibly my favourite aspect of the pre-war situation: the annexation of Canada by the United States. As a Canadian this intrigues me when we consider the past conflicts that have taken place between the two countries. In the last war situation, the War of 1812, the U.S. attempted to take Canadian territory and failed miserably leading to one of the worst losses for the U.S. military in history. Since Canada's connection to the British Crown has waned and U.S. hegemony has risen, we've engaged in much more amicable relations. Canada and the U.S. now enjoy an extensive relationship in near absolute free trade. Economic cooperation between the two nations has been a boon for both. Together Canada and the U.S. have carried out some of the worst imperialist actions together in a mutually advantageous relationship. Canada's involvement in U.S. imperialist actions have given them great deal of credibility. Our image globally (until recently) has been that of the "good guy" of the imperialist world. "If Canada is involved it must be a good cause". To our benefit we have for a long time flown under the

radar of rightful global finger pointing. The fact that one day the U.S. might come for Canada's oil reserves in the Alberta tar sands is no surprise to me. We've always played nice as the junior friend to the global bully, but like all such relationships, that junior friend will get lashed out upon if it suits the bully's needs.

From here we have a pretty good basis of what to expect for the pre-war global situation. This I think is a great jumping off point from which to begin our investigation.

### Prelude

In the course of writing this book the FalloutWikia has been absolutely essential in filling in the gaps of knowledge I have of the Fallout universe. If it were not for that website this book could not have been completed. Having said that I present to you their summary for the pre-war situation which creates the basis for what I am investigating here.

*"The geopolitical situation that led to the outbreak of the long-feared global nuclear war was prompted primarily by the onset of a worldwide energy crisis when the supplies of fossil fuels finally began to run out by the year 2050. This energy crisis was in part the result of the ever-increasing amounts of fossil-fuel required to power the Fallout world's larger and less energy-efficient technologies when compared with those of our own world, due to their failure to develop miniaturized electronics and more advanced manufacturing materials. The result of this energy crisis was an increasing scramble by all of the advanced, industrialized nations to secure the few remaining supplies of untapped petroleum around the world. Ultimately, a series of military conflicts driven by this hunger for natural resources consumed the planet. The European Commonwealth had reacted to the rapid*

*raising of oil prices to unacceptably high levels by the Middle East's oil-rich states in 2052 by unleashing military action in that region of the world. This intervention ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Israeli city of Tel Aviv in December 2053 by a terrorist nuclear device and a limited nuclear exchange between the conflict's participants in 2054, the world's first since the end of WWII.*

*"As the United Nations tried with little success to keep the peace, many of that organization's member-states pulled out, and within two months of the outbreak of what was soon called the Resource Wars in 2052, the United Nations was disbanded. Next, following the breakdown of trade talks and the unilateral American exploitation of the world's last newly discovered reserves of crude oil, the Chinese invaded Alaska in 2066 in pursuit of the state's remaining oil reserves. The United States ultimately annexed Canada in 2076 to ensure Canadian support for its defense of the Alaskan front even as the American federal government acted aggressively against its own citizens to contain wartime rioting, anti-war civil disobedience and military desertion. The United States retaliated against the Chinese by launching its own costly invasion of the Chinese mainland in 2074 to reduce Chinese pressure on the Alaskan front. Despite initial costly setbacks, this strategy proved successful and American forces liberated the Alaskan city of Anchorage and forced the Chinese People's Liberation Army to retreat entirely from American soil in January 2077. This victory was largely won due to the more advanced military technology developed by the United States during the conflict, especially the deployment of Powered Infantry Armor. Many smaller nations went bankrupt in the ensuing conflict as their economies collapsed due to the*

*increasing shortage of fossil-fuels. The Resource Wars ended with the Great War in 2077.*

*"It is not known who launched the first nuclear weapon that started the conflict. President Richardson would tell the Chosen One that China launched first, however, it is unknown whether or not he was telling the truth.*

*"The nuclear exchange that characterized the Great War lasted for only a brief two hours, but was unbelievably destructive and reshaped the climate of the world even as it caused the fall of most of human civilization everywhere across the globe. More energy was released in the first moments of the Great War than all of the previous human conflicts in the history of the world combined. Entire mountain ranges were created as the ground buckled and moved under the strain of the cataclysmic pressure produced by numerous, concentrated atomic explosions. Rivers and oceans around the world were contaminated with the resulting radioactive fallout released by the relatively low-yield nuclear weapons used by all sides, and the climate changed horrifically. All the regions of Earth suffered from a single, permanent season once the initial dust blasted into the atmosphere by the nuclear explosions had settled - a scorching, radioactive desert summer."*

### The Sino-Soviet Split

Aside from having to assume that Soviet Union never came to an end due to revisionist market reforms, we have to assume that their feud with China also never came to an end. This feud was the product of the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s. China and the Soviet Union ended up on opposite sides of the global Marxist struggle. The Soviet Union under the revisionists made a capitulation to the United States in the form of an agreement to

a peaceful coexistence. This agreement made absolutely no sense and was doomed to failure by the very nature of capitalism and socialism themselves. Capital, in its very nature is a self expanding system, it seeks to extend its markets and influence across the entire globe encompassing all of humanity eventually. Socialism on the other side of this seeks to bring worker's struggle to everyone everywhere across the globe with the specific purpose of destroying the power of capital and making it subservient to the needs of humanity. These two forces will inevitably butt heads and engage in struggle over the world. This is very much a kin to two people in a fight with no time limit and no outside force to break it up. One force must come out a winner and the other the loser.

What made the struggle during this period between the Soviets and the U.S. possible was the fact that the Soviet Union had degenerated into social imperialism. What do we mean by social imperialism? We mean the loss of communism as a goal of a socialist society. The active task of transforming people into the communist person has been abandoned in favour of capitalist-style economic growth at the expense of occupied or subjugated nations. This adequately reflects what the Soviet Union turned into in the hands of the revisionists. Under the revisionists the country became enamoured with the pursuit of matching the West in living standards and commodity abundance. The revolution became about trying to be better at capitalism than capitalism was. This led to all kinds of problems for the Soviet economy. For one the central planning style economy could not keep up and estimation and calculation of all the commodities in the plan. The numbers of commodities was expanding into the hundreds of thousands. The central planning commission could not keep track and plan all of this commodity production. That lack of organization is what led to the breakdown of the central planning system. It was touted as proof of the failure of central planning and that the market was vastly superior in this regard. However, what people seem to forget, is that central planning in

socialism isn't supposed to plan a system of a mass accumulation of commodities. Socialism isn't supposed to compete with capitalism for highest living standards. Socialism is supposed to be the transformation of society away from consumer commodity abundance towards a rational allocation of resources according to need, with the goal of the transformation of people into communist people, the "New Man" as Che put it.<sup>2</sup>

The revisionists in the Soviet Union were trying to force socialism do something it was not intended to do, something that it was not supposed to be doing. That is the failure of those who point to it as proof that central planning doesn't work. They don't know what central planning is nor what it's supposed to be doing. This is where the social imperialism comes in. The very hallmark of capitalism is that it needs to take from one and give to another in order for there to be "abundance". (By abundance we mean for one class and not the other.) At this point for the U.S. working class to be in such an advantageous position there had to be a global level of unequal exchange, i.e. imperialism. This is how the First World level of U.S. consumption and living standards could remain so high after the "Golden Era" of post-World War 2. When the revisionist Soviets endeavoured to engage in competition with the U.S. on the standard of living, they too had to engage in imperialism in order to do so. Thus we see where the social imperialism comes from. This is the primary reason why the Soviets pushed so hard to take Afghanistan and its mineral deposits. It is also why the U.S. pushed so hard to undermine the Soviet struggle there. As the Soviet military on one side struggled with the Mujahedeen and the C.I.A.<sup>3</sup> on the other, the interest of two imperialists were being fought over the resources of the Afghan people. Does this mean they would have been better off under the U.S. than the Soviet Union? No. But does that justify Soviet social imperialism? No. The Soviets didn't want to liberate Afghanistan from Islamic fundamentalism, they wanted to exploit them in a very similar



way to the United States. This is the opposite of what socialism is supposed to be.

This path is what broke the relations between the Soviets and Chinese. Things were not always great between the two sides, even during Stalin's leadership. They were always at odds over certain issues, yet China still always maintained a socialist unity with them. During the course of this divide the Maoists in the Chinese Communist Party tended to end up on different ends of debates as those who were closest to the Soviets.

*"The de-Stalinization efforts in the Soviet Union hit close to home for Mao, who also had an enormous cult of personality within his own Party. Mao's own enemies within his own Party surely felt emboldened by those toppling the legacy of Stalin. Mao surely felt attacks on Stalin's legacy were also directed at himself. Nikita Khrushchev's attacks on Stalin on February 25, 1956 at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were also made without prior consultation with other parties, not even a Party with as high a prestige as the one Mao led. Those in Moscow who would later be identified as "revisionists" by Mao were making unilateral decisions for what was considered the entire socialist movement. The Soviets unilaterally restored relations with Tito's Party in Yugoslavia, a party that earlier been denounced by Stalin and the international communist movement. In addition, the revisionists were shifting Soviet foreign policy toward the West, again without consultation. The revisionists downplayed the antagonistic nature between socialism and capitalism-imperialism. Thus rather than seeing the world through the lenses of class struggle, the revisionists hoped for harmony with the capitalist world. This new outlook was the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence." The new outlook was reflected in several*

*foreign policy decisions that irked the Maoists during the 1950s and 1960s. The Soviets refused to aid the Chinese in their efforts to develop nuclear weapons. The militancy of the Chinese was on reason the Soviet refused to help China. Also, the Soviets desired to maintain its monopoly on nuclear weapons within the socialist bloc, thus making the bloc easier to control from Moscow. China was not pleased when the Soviets offered moral support to the US-backed Tibetan uprising against China. During the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1958, the Soviets cautioned Mao against militant action. The Soviets refused to side with the Chinese during the 1962 Sino-Indian War. When the Soviets downed a US U-2 spy plane, the revisionists merely demanded an apology at the 1960 Paris Summit. When US President Eisenhower refused, the revisionists did not respond. By contrast, the Chinese took the incident as an insult to all socialist countries. The Chinese organized massive rallies in response. When the Soviets backed down during the Cuban missile crisis, the Maoists felt their criticism of the revisionists confirmed.*

*Along with restoring relations with Yugoslavia, the Soviets came into conflict with hardline Albania that refused to break with Stalin or his policies. All of this was adding up to a new kind of Soviet-centered imperialism. Like the Western empires, Moscow was now imposing dependence on those countries in its orbit. Maoists were critical of the so-called “international division of socialist [sic] labor” as advocated by the Soviets. This meant that instead of developing well-rounded economies, Soviet colonies might be dedicated to one or two products to be exported and coordinated through Moscow. King Sugar, for example, ruled Cuba under both Western and social-imperialism. “Ten years after their revolution even*

*Cubans, whose revolutionary leaders had spoken of the servitude of sugar, found themselves resorting to the chimera of the ten-million-ton sugar harvest.”<sup>4</sup> Mao was not the only critic of the Soviet Union on the international scene. Some suggest that Che Guevara and Fidel Castro split over this issue. Che is reported to have objected to the application of the revisionist model, with the dependency that it entailed, to Cuba. Across the globe in Albania, Evner Hoxha, for example, was offended when Khrushchev proposed turning Albania into a giant fruit plantation to service the Eastern Bloc. What began as murmurs eventually turned into full blown public attacks. Khrushchev eventually denounced Mao for his domestic and international outlook as “a nationalist, a deviationist, and adventurer.” Mao broke completely with the Soviets, denouncing them as “revisionist” and “social-imperialist.”<sup>5</sup> Eventually, in the 1970s, Mao would go so far as to label the Soviets as “fascist” and justify his own version of peaceful coexistence and cooperation with the West. However, at this point, a Maoist policy was emerging that opposed both the Western and Soviet imperialists.”<sup>6</sup>*

As we could imagine this would have lead to some other splits along the course of history leading up to the global nuclear war. From this fact we must conclude that the Sino-Soviet split still took place. But in order for this to be true we must assume that China remained on the socialist path while the Soviet Union continued on the revisionist one. These international relations will have to form the basis of the energy crisis that will eventually grip all three powers during the course of events. It is important to understand so that we may have a better grip on the trade relations between each nation. Oil after all does wield a great deal of influence over politics in all three of these countries. So any energy crisis would have devastating conse-

quences for the relations between the countries as they each struggled with each other for their own individual interests. We will have to keep this in mind as we proceed further along our investigation into this pre-war civilization.

### Oil Depletion Politics

Capitalism is nothing if a system of irrational resource allotment. The market makes many claims as to its efficiency, yet it manages to fail miserably when it comes to serving need. Capitalism is a system designed to allot resources according to the ability to purchase, not need. This is why billions are left in poverty while a much smaller section of the population of the globe revels in overabundance. Fossil fuel is no different in this regard. Small Third World nations have energy shortages that severely restrict the transportation and production of necessities. U.S. capitalist class hegemonic interests block nations that do not bow to their will from having fuel like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Cuba as an example. When the "special period"<sup>7</sup> struck Cuba 1.2 million bicycles were purchased from China and distributed as well as another half a million produced in Cuba. Thankfully today Cuba enjoys a good supply of oil from Venezuela. Rationality has never been a hallmark of capitalism, only greed has dictated who does and who does not get what is needed; often times fulfilling frivolous wants rather than actual need.

Once the supply of oil started to began running low the price of it would skyrocket exponentially by the law of supply and demand. This increase in price would then in turn affect the cost of everything in global economy. All commodities at one point or another must be transported, and transportation uses energy, and that would most likely be oil. This would drastically increase the cost of production to a near crisis point causing devastation among profitability as commodities got out of reach for consumers. I'm fairly certain this would take place given

capitalism's reluctance to adopt new forms of energy *if* they are not as profitable as those they replace. Much has been done to suppress the electric car and alternative fuels. This is a tremendous weakness of capitalism, its inability to look at the long term ramifications of decisions based on the absorption of immediate profits.

Just as a bit of side note, here is a piece from the *Critique of Crisis Theory* blog<sup>8</sup>:

*"A note on raw and auxiliary materials and the organic composition of capital*

*"Before the current crisis led to a collapse in the demand and price of oil, there was much concern in capitalist circles that the era of cheap oil was coming to an end. These concerns may well revive when the worldwide industrial cycle now in a deep downward phase again turns upward. Contrary to some claims, the world is far from running out of fossil fuel, since even the most conservative estimates don't project a peak in coal production for centuries to come."*<sup>9</sup>

*"The fear, rather, is that the energy that enters into virtually all branches of production as an auxiliary material will rise in value due to either more expensive carbon fuels as the richest mines and oil fields are depleted, or if the threat of global warming forces the state to restrict the production of carbon-based fuels and expand the use of more expensive non-carbon fuels.*

*"Alternative energy sources such as solar or nuclear energy, given current technology, are considerably more expensive than the energy extracted from carbon-based fuels. Therefore, the capitalists are worried that though the world is not running out of energy it might be running out of cheap energy. A rise in energy prices that*

*reflects a real upward movement of the value of energy, as opposed to merely temporary conjunctural shifts in supply and demand, will, all other things remaining equal, represent a considerable rise in the organic composition of capital and thus would lower the rate of profit. It is not enough for the industrial capitalists to have access to raw and auxiliary materials, they want access to cheap raw and auxiliary material.*

*"As Marx himself noted, the depletion of raw materials—mines, oil wells, and so on—works in the direction of increasing the value of constant capital and therefore works in the direction of lowering the rate of profit."*

Thankfully during this time China remained socialist (according to our assumption) and thus was able to prepare for this eventuality. Even today on the capitalist road China has been wise enough to try and insulate itself from the negative effects of oil politics. At present in the real world they are currently beginning the steady decline of its reliance on oil, reducing it to a mere export commodity so that they may hold the power of oil production, but not the weakness of dependence on it. China has had a very rapid growth of the economy in the past 20 years which would have necessitated a gigantic increase in demand for fuel, particularly as it switched over to a consumer society. During the Great Leap forward oil production became a necessity as the advance towards industrialization began. The Daqing oil fields were the first to be processed with the help of Soviet engineers and technological experts.

*"In 1959, large reserves were discovered in Songhua Jiang-Liao basin in northeast China. The Daqing oil field in Heilongjiang Province started producing in 1960, and by 1963 was producing nearly 2.3 million tons of oil. Production from Daqing declined, but in 1965, oil fields*

*in Shengli, Shandong, Dagang, and Tianjin yielded enough oil to nearly eliminate the need of importing crude oil.*

*"In 1973, as production increased, China began exporting crude oil to Japan, and began offshore exploration. Exports increased to 20 million tons in 1985, before internal consumption began increasing faster than production. By 1993, internal demand for oil exceeded domestic production, and China became a net oil importer."<sup>10</sup>*

Today China is all too aware of the weaknesses of a dependence on oil, particularly if you have to be a net importer of it. Since around 2008 China has begun a great deal of state investment in the alternative energy sector, especially solar panels. By 2013 China had over 400 photovoltaic (PV) companies. They also became the leader in solar panel installation adding a record 11.3 gigawatts (GW) of capacity to a cumulated total of 18.3 GW.<sup>11</sup> Renewable energy has been a big part of China's 12<sup>th</sup> 5 year plan which allocates \$473.1 billion in investment towards clean energy investments between 2011 to 2015.<sup>12</sup> Given all this we can assume China would have been more prepared given its socialist orientation in our fictional world.

This means that when the oil supply began to run low China was mostly prepared for it domestically. However it would be clear that the U.S. would already be dependent on it given its history of allowing oil companies so much political influence. Here is where capitalism possibly produced its own grave diggers. Given the profitability of oil production I see little reason to believe that China wouldn't still be exporting oil to other nations for a profit. The Chinese economy is passing the U.S. economy right now in many terms. Anyone would be foolish to think that they would not be looking to use this lack of dependence on oil as a tool against its main rival. As the world supply of oil began to run

up the U.S. reserves that remained in Alaska would be all too tempting for American companies to exploit. Regardless of the environmental costs they would have begun oil drilling in order to keep the U.S. economy running. I believe at this point China saw an opportunity to take down its rival by withholding that energy supply from them causing their collapse.

### The Rise of the Nuclear Society

In the midst of a decreasing supply of oil I think most certainly that the remaining supply would be allocated for the war effort as opposed to civilian use. From here society is left with the dilemma as to what they will use as fuel for civilian life, particularly transportation. As we play the game we can see obviously that it was nuclear power that took the place of oil. This is a central theme of *Fallout*, everything revolves around a post-post war nuclear powered retro 1950s-style society. We're left with limited knowledge given the vast destruction of the world. The most obvious use is the remaining vehicles that have some type of nuclear engine. Just a pop a couple of bullets into the hood of any stationary vehicle if you're in any doubt. I think this is the most likely choice given the way capitalism has functioned. Nuclear power hasn't been assaulted and oppressed to the degree that solar and wind power has. It has certainly had its opposition, but thus far it has been terribly ineffective.

Solar power isn't very efficient for a running vehicle at the current state of technological development. I shudder to imagine what kind of, and how many solar panels it would take to keep an 18 wheeler functioning on the road. I think this is a little bit beyond the ability of solar technology. Some kind of smaller nuclear device would be the only option. Sure it would be ridiculously dangerous, but what other option is there? You simply cannot cease transportation lest you crash the entire economy. A serious concession on safety would have to be made. Some might suggest a kind of -- mass transportation --



system, or a kind of road electric rail like the subway; but I think the infrastructure spending would be far too high. Nuclear it seems is the only choice.

In the game nuclear cars are actually based off of real life models that were produced. The best example is the Chrysler Corvega which has an "Atomic V8" engine. (See: Appendix A) It is modelled after the Ford Nucleon which was a concept created by the automotive company in 1958 to imagine the possibilities of a nuclear powered car. The idea was to have a small nuclear reactor located in the rear of the vehicle on the assumption that nuclear technology would reduce in size similar to how the computer evolved. A good description of it can be found in *The Atomic Automobile* article on the *Damn Interesting* website:

*"It was during this honeymoon with nuclear energy-- in 1957-- that the Ford Motor Company unveiled the most ambitious project in their history: a concept vehicle which had a sleek futuristic look, emitted no harmful vapors, and offered incredible fuel mileage far beyond that of the most efficient cars ever built. This automobile-of-the-future was called the Ford Nucleon, named for its highly unique design feature... a pint-size atomic fission reactor in the trunk.*

*"Ford's engineers imagined a world in which full-service recharging stations would one day supplant petroleum fuel stations, where depleted reactors could be swapped out for fresh ones lickety-split. The car's reactor setup was essentially the same as a nuclear submarine's, but miniaturized for automobile use. It was designed to use uranium fission to heat a steam generator, rapidly converting stored water into high-pressure steam which could then be used to drive a set of turbines. One steam turbine would provide the torque to propel the car while another would drive an electrical generator. Steam*

*would then be condensed back into water in a cooling loop, and sent back to the steam generator to be reused. Such a closed system would allow the reactor to produce power as long as fissile material remained."*<sup>13</sup>



Figure 1 Ford Nucleon

Alas, such awesome technology is far beyond our grasp at this moment and the near future. But from this we can certainly see why it would be the most rational choice for vehicles. I say most rational because a speeding nuclear bomb on wheels doesn't really seem all that rational to me. But we do need to keep in mind that this is a video game and should not be taken too literally, and that there are logical gaps that would appear as a result in order to make the events in the game work.

The reality of a nuclear powered car is actually very complicated. While it would only take a small amount of fuel to run it, there would essentially be no shutting off the generation of power. This means that the car would require some kind of battery to soak up all that excess energy production. Radioactive material of this type needs a good deal of shielding or it is going to poison a lot of people. Combine that with road travel and you've got

one hell of a problem on your hands. According to U.S. regulations for nuclear stations, there must be three layers of protection in addition to the containment system itself. Even on a near micro scale of an automobile the shielding alone would probably make the vehicle too heavy to drive.<sup>14</sup>

There is also a great deal of danger in having such radioactive material available to the public. Dealing with this kind of energy is nowhere near the simplicity of filling your gas tank with petrol. All you would really need is one dummy to slip up one time and there could be a serious disaster on your hands. There would need to be a great deal of infrastructure built to handle the radioactive waste. The fuel would have to be replaced every 3 to 5 years. Disposing of such a substance that remains radioactive for hundreds of years also poses a real problem. There would have to be some kind of collaboration between fuel producers and the government to handle that waste. The start up cost of a company producing that fuel would be astronomical. It usually takes 5 to 7 years to build a nuclear plant.<sup>15</sup> I have no idea how long it would take to build a factory for all that fuel. Add in to this the increase in the market price of uranium. This really isn't practical at all.

Finally, think about all the people in the U.S. that fly off the handle and go shooting up a mall, or a school. Do we really want to put nuclear energy in the hands of such people? There are enough idiots on the roads causing accidents as it is, do we really want to give them a potential nuclear bomb on top of it? Let's face it, nuclear powered cars are just not practical.

### How Capitalism Ruins Alternative Transportation Energy

A very real phenomenon is the fact that capitalism actively suppresses alternative forms of energy especially when it will yield less in profits than what is currently being used. It's a simple fact of capitalism that anything that is cheap and abundant is a bad thing because it means less profits. The only

exception to this is labour power, capitalism loves cheap labour power. Why would any investor be interested in solar energy which stands to make maybe a few million, when oil can generate you tens of billions? They wouldn't, and that's the point. Alternative forms of energy are abundant and not too particularly reliant upon an expensive method of processing. By the laws of supply and demand alone it makes it worthwhile to suppress low cost abundant energy. But how does this happen? Essentially it breaks down into a falling rate of profit for the capitalist as energy becomes more abundant. But let's take a closer look at the falling rate of profit.

Under the reduction of surplus value crisis there is another theory along with the profit squeeze, the falling rate of profit.

Profit squeeze gives theory to the reduction of surplus value that is primarily dictated by demand for labour during an economic boom. Essentially it is the struggle between workers and capitalists when unemployment is low allowing an advantage for workers. As workers struggle against their exploitation they decrease the rate of profit collected by the capitalist to the degree that it causes crisis.

The other version of this crisis in this category is the falling rate of profit which claims that it is brought on by an increase in the organic composition of capital. This is the most well known crisis theories of Marx, the one attacked most by his opponents.

These two crisis theories have a tendency to run together or at the very least run side by side. As the boom phase of the industrial cycle takes place, the increase in production not only has the 'class struggle' effect of profit squeeze, but it also promotes the increase in the organic composition of capital. As the rate of profit begins to fall the capitalist will seek out more money saving processes of manufacturing. This primarily takes the form of replacing workers with machines.

In this theory is one of the great contradictions of capitalism: the drive to increase profits inevitably causes them to decrease. The greater the development of capitalism the more self-destructive it becomes. This demonstrates that capitalism is driving towards its own destruction.<sup>16</sup>

While Marx was not the only one to acknowledge the tendency to have a reducing rate of profit, his of course differed from bourgeois economic theorists. What separates Marx from the rest (especially Adam Smith) was his differentiation between constant and variable capital. Constant capital merely protects the existing value while variable capital (human labour power) doesn't just reproduce itself, but also creates more which becomes the surplus value. Surplus value flows into all kinds of things like payments on credit. Other economists were never able to understand fully the falling rate of profit because they believed as Adam Smith did; that constant capital was always reducible to variable capital.

Now let us give an example that makes this simple:

We'll assume the production process is one year to make it easy to understand. As we recall C represents constant capital, all the physical needs of the production process, raw materials, utilities, machinery etc. V is variable capital representing the costs of labour. S the rate of surplus value is 100 percent. This would mean that workers work half the day to produce their wages and the other half for the surplus value of the capitalist.

The greater the value of C the lower the rate of profit will be. The lower the value of C the higher the rate profit will be.

As the productive powers of capitalism develop, meaning greater and more efficient machinery, it will rise relative to V causing the rate of profit to fall. This increase in C represents an increase in the productivity of labour. It's possible to increase the rate of surplus value as the productivity of labour increases

without lowering the wages of workers. This also shows that the ratio of surplus value to employee wages can rise even as the productivity of labour rises, if it is fast enough. This shows that the rate of profit and the rate of surplus value can move in opposite directions.

It is the natural path of capitalism to increase in rates of and quantities of surplus value. Capitalism is a system that must continually expand producing profits greater and greater year after year. This is what has happened outside of crisis, capitalism has expanded across the globe presenting us with companies that exist in multiple nations. If capitalism permanently ceased to expand the system would collapse and die off.

Let us take another look again assuming full profitability in one year for productive capital:

$$R = S / (C + (V / T))$$

R represents the annual rate of profit on productive capital.

S represents the total of surplus value generated

C represents total constant capital

V represents total variable capital

T represents the number of turnovers of variable capital

Marx points out that there is a *tendency* in the rate of profit to fall. He calls it this because there are movements that can have the opposite effect. Overall it tends towards a falling rate of profit, but it is not an iron law.

These movements that push back against the falling rate of profit happen over long periods of time. They do not simply pop-up one day and cause a crisis. Different periods of the industrial cycle will have different effects on the rate of profit. Because of this we measure the falling rate of profit over a series of industrial cycles not just one.

As the productivity of labour rises, there is a rise in the rate of surplus value which runs counter to the fall in the rate of profit. As productivity rises, the value of the constant capital also falls decreasing the C which counter acts the increase of the organic composition of capital.

In a crisis the cost of constant capital falls which corresponds to a fall in its value that took place owing to a rise in the productivity of labour. It is this decrease in the elements of constant capital combined with the increase in the rate of surplus value via mass unemployment that stimulates the rise in the rate of profit.

One tendency running counter to the falling rate of profit is an increase in the turnover of variable capital. If this is increased through any number of means there will be a resistance to the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

Another trend against the falling rate of profit takes us into imperialism: The expansion of markets and the opening up of new ones. The move into new markets particularly has the effect of increasing sales which increases the turnover of capital because new customers are exposed to the commodities. The value of T in the formula will increase pushing back against the increase in the value of C to the lower rate of profit.

Now we will go deeper into constant capital and its role in the falling rate of profit. There are two kinds of constant capital:

(1) Fixed capital - This includes machinery, tools, the production facility itself etc. All these things transfer their value into the commodities over time until they run out or are used up and must be replaced, i.e. their use-value runs out.

For fixed capital Marx pointed out a phenomenon called "moral depreciation". This occurs when a better labour saving machine is produced for an industry or that same machine is being

produced for a lower cost due to an increase in the productivity of labour in the industry that produces it.

Not using the new machines constitutes a loss in value. The decrease in value of fixed capital before it transfers its value into commodities is a beginning point of crisis. However the moral depreciation of existing fixed capital when you reduce the value of existing constant capital works against the falling rate of profit. Thus the devaluation of existing constant capital contradicts the overall decline in the rate of profit over several industrial cycles forms a crisis in each one.

(2) Constant circulating capital - In this category there are two groups: raw materials and auxiliary materials. Raw materials are transferred right into the commodities themselves with the use of auxiliary materials like electricity. What differentiates them is the fact that auxiliary materials do not enter the commodity but it does transfer its value.

We will look at the role of variable capital in the falling rate of profit. As previously stated variable capital is the labour power purchased by the capitalist for production. It too is circulating capital. It is different in that it replaces its value (produces its own wages) and then creates more value beyond that which is surplus value. Human labour is the only capital in the formula that can produce more value than itself.

When social capital is collected together, we see that it changes in the turnover period of variable capital affecting the rate of profit. This is obscured from bourgeois economists by the equalization of the rate of profit and values being converted into prices. This makes it appear as though the rate of turnover of all the capital is affecting the rate of profit. It is only when we view the values, not prices, that there is no rate of profit on constant capital. From this we can determine that there is no increase in the turnover of constant capital that does not cause an increase



in the turnover of the variable capital that can increase the rate of profit on the total social capital.

In this we can see a very clear difference between the worker and the capitalist. As I said the worker produces more value than his wages which is where profit comes from. A worker's wages go into the consumption of commodities that fuels his ability to continue to work. That value is transformed into labour power making it possible for the worker to produce more value. When the capitalist consumes value it is not transferred into the commodities being produced because he is not performing labour. It behaves more like constant capital.

What we call the *organic composition of capital* is the proportion of variable capital to constant capital. Successful worker struggles will reduce the rate of surplus value which will cause the value of variable capital to increase. This means that the ratio of constant to variable capital will decrease. If capitalists drive down wages in class struggle the value of constant capital will rise and variable capital will lower. This is an increase in the in the organic composition of capital.

From this we can determine that there are two opposite effects on the rate of profit: A change in the rate of surplus value caused by alterations in the composition of capital and changes in the composition of capital via alterations in the value of constant capital. Changes in the organic composition of capital are changes of the composition of capital caused by changes in the value of constant capital. In the final analysis we see that it is the alterations in the organic composition of capital that cause the falling rate of profit.

A key point to remember here when dealing with the falling rate of profit is not just the drive to produce surplus value. It is also a matter of realizing it in money form. If that surplus value cannot be transformed into money, then no amount of surplus value generated is going to matter. The capitalist isn't interested in the

rate by which he produces surplus value, but the rate at which these values can be transformed into money, as profits. It is the process in which prices are formed by value that provides opportunities for crisis to form.

It is clear from the information presented that the capitalist will try to suppress such technology in order to save his profits.

### The Nuclear American Way of Life

We can tell much of the American way of life from the game, particularly from the remaining advertisements and literature. We can best describe the Americans at this time by what the designers of the game gave us. We have a very 1950s "golden era" type feel where loving your country and praying to God was all the rage along with other equally conservative stereotypes. In other moments we can see the glorification of the nuclear family held as a strong model for a healthy nation. Speaking to the cannibals at Andale, I think it's safe to assume they had a very patriarchal social order. This is the same kind of "traditional family values" we saw during the Cold War in the real world. I assume that this same social construction would remain as the hostilities against the Chinese escalated. Images reminiscent of that awful movie "This Godless Communism" would have been evoked at every term to scare the population into a kind of Cold War conformity. Rigid adherence to a particular "American Dream" would most definitely be pushed. Any deviation, or advocating a deviation from it would most certainly be seen as an act of "communist" sabotage. We could probably expect something along the lines of a McCarthy period witch hunt.

*"As you know, very recently the secretary of state proclaimed his loyalty to a man guilty of what has always been considered as the most abominable of all crimes — of being a traitor to the people who gave him a position of great trust. The secretary of state, in attempting to justify his continued devotion to the man*

*who sold out the Christian world to the atheistic world, referred to Christ's Sermon on the Mount as a justification and reason therefore, and the reaction of the American people to this would have made the heart of Abraham Lincoln happy. When this pompous diplomat in striped pants, with a phony British accent, proclaimed to the American people that Christ on the Mount endorsed communism, high treason, and betrayal of a sacred trust, the blasphemy was so great that it awakened the dormant indignation of the American people.*

*"He has lighted the spark which is resulting in a moral uprising and will end only when the whole sorry mess of twisted warped thinkers are swept from the national scene so that we may have a new birth of national honesty and decency in government."<sup>17</sup>*

What does this all look like? It looks a lot like fascism. In fact I think that's probably very much what the U.S. was leading up to the war as the situation became more and more intense. The contradiction between the global socialist power and the global capitalist power became so acute it was unavoidable. After all did not Lenin tell us that fascism was "capitalism in decay"? As U.S. society faced backlash from its order, including as mentioned anti-war protests and feminist demands, it would have to have become increasingly more totalitarian including the eventual use of martial law. Eventually forms of resource confiscation and rationing would have to come into effect, mostly around the use of oil given the tremendous need for war making, and possibly other important resources like steel.

From what propaganda that was left behind after the war it is very clear that the U.S. government was pounding the war drum screaming God, country, and freedom as the rallying cry against China and its manoeuvrings. From this same propaganda we see

the glorification of the nuclear family, (how appropriate given the game's nuclear theme,) the glorification of the one mom, one dad with a boy and a girl as children. These would not doubt be causing a great deal of antagonism with feminists who would definitely be rebelling against such a patriarchal order. At these times there is no doubt that fascism would be brought out into the open.

During this time of war between the Chinese and the U.S., financial capital is likely in grave danger of losing profitability and even collapsing. Just the situation with oil and the tremendous amount of financial capital involvement in it would pose an apocalyptic threat to the economic system. It would also be fascist a situation where capital interests invested in other sectors of the economy globally would be under threat. I see little doubt that China would be carrying out subversive activities in the Third World to destabilise U.S. hegemony. This would be a crisis of capitalism, probably close to a falling rate of profit given the actions of China undermining U.S. capital's profitability. A very strict social order would have to be enforced if domestic stability was to be maintained. In such times the illusion of liberal democracy under capitalism is torn away by denunciations of being unpatriotic, leaving behind the true ugly face of capital and its totalitarian control.

This is very reminiscent to what occurred in Germany under the Nazis. In order to build Germany into the imperialist empire that Hitler and the Nazis desired they had to take a similar path. First they fabricated a threat by communists to justify brutal repression. Then they created a culture of conspiracy against the German people. The Jews as it were, were made out like the communists in 1950s America. In fact this is really only an interpretation of what was really going on. While communists were not trying to destroy the country, they did pose a serious threat to the Nazi order. Financial aristocracy a good deal of which were Jewish did oppose Hitler. Why not? He was blaming

them for things they did in the name of capital, on Judaism or Zionism. Of course they weren't supporting him. A scapegoat was made of them and all that financial power was transferred into the hands a Aryan bankers who did the same thing only in the interests of the burgeoning Nazi empire.

*"Above all, I enjoin the government and the people to uphold the race laws to the limit and to resist mercilessly the poisoner of all nations, international Jewry."<sup>18</sup>*

Totalitarian control was eventually carried out to oppose the interest of the financial class in Germany. All the while the justification for this was the supposed superior virtues of the German people. A threat of invading Jews and communists was created to justify a return to "traditional values", like God, country and the Aryan bloodline. From here this was used as an excuse to socially enforce a traditional family, the same one mom, one dad with a boy and a girl as children. Any deviation from this was considered a "Judeo-Bolshevik" conspiracy to pollute the German bloodline and undermine German society. Just as in the U.S. during the 1950s and 1960s feminists and other civil rights activists were accused of being communist agitators trying to destroy the glory and superiority of the American way of life. The parallels here are very telling. In the end both of these were justifications for the defence of the capitalist power structure. The very same would be happening here as China posed a threat to U.S. capital interests. The system will do whatever is necessary to carry out self-preservation. Any denial of this is simple minded naiveté.

The enforcement of "old world values", or "Christian values", or "traditional values" have always been used a justification for the preservation of existing power structures that wish to remain unchallenged as it preserves the existing social, political and economic order.

## Capital's Necessity of the Warrior Cult

Along with all of this social control like the preservation of the nuclear family. We definitely see the rise of the warrior cult as the military becomes the centre of the economic order's survival. The military becomes the literal front line in the preservation of the economy and thus the empire. The threat posed by China is not just an economic one with the capture of the remaining oil resources, but a military one as it began with an actual military invasion. During this time of desperation there would obviously be a drastic increase in military spending and investment in the research and development of military technology. The war machine would no doubt be on the rise if not already leading up to the Chinese invasion of Alaska. Capital and its corresponding political structure are extremely efficient when it comes to the preservation of itself. While it may have to make social concessions once in a while, over all it remains in completely command and is willing to carry out any actions, regardless of the inhumanity of them to protect itself.

The United States military, like all militaries, has what I call a "warrior cult" mentality. This happens in all nations and in all professional armies. What makes this particularly unique is the adherence of civilian loyalty. Those in the military are expected to have an absolute loyalty, discipline, adherence to a chain of command and the ability to carry out orders without question. This kind of extreme discipline and obedience cannot extend to civilian population as the majority of the population cannot function on that kind of level. Not everyone can be a warrior, just as not everyone can have the compassion and patience that is required of a doctor. Regardless of this fact the military and the application of it is absolutely essential for the survival of nations. Borders cannot exist if there is nothing enforcing them.

As the military is the *necessary international* coercive arm of the capitalist state, that arm must be protected. Any militant society (and even some "peaceful" ones) has a particular culture surrounding the respect and sometimes outright worship of the military. In the U.S. this is quite obvious with the excessive military spending, national holidays, the pledge of allegiance, and most importantly the mindless defence of the crimes the military commits. The level of glorification of the military in the U.S. is surpassed only by Songun policy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. (See: Appendix B) As a general media rule as an extension of the ruling ideology, they are not to be questioned. There is a very limited scope through which the armed forces can be seen with a critical eye and criticisms carried out.

As a prime example of this we need look no further than the debate on the Vietnam War between the Republicans and the Democrats. Much of this survives to this day concerning more recent theatres of war. In all their exchanges in debates and combating op-ed columns there is one overall theme. The Republican (or conservatives) defend the actions of the military even when they are the most horrific of human abuses. The Democrats (or liberals) look at these same abuses and say they shouldn't be happening in the war. They merely argue that these inhumanity are "unnecessary" or promote the idea that "this is not what America is about". The conservative says, "everything is fine!" keep on fighting. The liberal complains and says "fight it better." Essentially both sides of the allowed debate allow the inhumanity of imperialist war to continue. The liberal gives excuses declaring that the war is "not supposed to be like that", as a result they still end up justifying the war itself. No anti-war voice ends up being heard. This is how the imperialist liberal democratic system stifles debate while making it appear as though freedom of expression is alive and well. Anyone (in the mainstream media) who dares challenge this status quo ends up on the receiving end of attacks claiming a lack of patriotism, or

treason, attempting to aid the enemy. As recent examples we need only at what happened to former and late Canadian New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jack Layton who was proclaimed in the media to be "Taliban Jack" for questioning Canada's role in the Afghan occupation.<sup>19</sup> MSNBC personality Chris Hayes was assaulted for taking an even more bold step for daring to ask if the troops are really heroes.<sup>20</sup>

Capital must force itself on the world's population by any means necessary. The military via various justifications for war must be protected and glorified for its actions regardless of how inhuman or even how irrational they are. Capital *needs* the imperialist army to exist, thus correspondingly it needs an ideological justification or defence for the existence of such forces and their application. With this we see the rise of patriotism, xenophobia, and racism. We are fed this idea that we are constantly bombarded and persecuted by The Other.<sup>21</sup> The irony is that the U.S. is the most oppressive global imperialist force. While the U.S. and its people (the First World in general as well) are the prime beneficiaries of imperialism, they also see themselves as the victims of that same global order. I see this as little different than a *social* victim blaming and persecution complex.

In order to make this into something productive for the existence of capital, it is channelled into the military's functioning and social appearance. Thus we have the idea driven home to us that "they protect us" from "them". The reality is quite different, our soldiers persecute and commit crimes against those very same people they are supposedly protecting us against. All of it for the benefit of the preservation of capital and our privileged relationship to it.

### Operation Anchorage and The Annexation of Canada

We last left off at China invading Alaska to (presumably) snatch up the last of the world's remaining oil supplies to force the U.S. into submission. The move is tactically sound, but it's debateable



if the situation can be physically maintained over the long term, at least long enough to cause the shortage of oil to have a serious enough effect. Obviously this is a situation that the U.S. couldn't afford to tolerate and would need to do something about it. This is when U.S. imperialism would kick in with the specific goal of the self-preservation of the empire.

The immediate problem is one of military tactics. The most important thing the U.S. needs is a front open to oppose the invasion of China. Unfortunately for me that means the annexation of Canada as a territory, which requires a military invasion. Canada also has a large reserve of oil in the Alberta tar sands. *"Alberta's oil sands has proven reserves of about 168 billion barrels-the third-largest proven crude oil reserve in the world, after Saudi Arabia and Venezuela."*<sup>22</sup> Thus the annexation of Canada has a two-fold effect: First it opens a front to combat the Chinese. Second it takes measures to preserve an oil supply right near the U.S. itself. Overall it just makes good sense.

When this happens we can be sure that neither Canada nor the United Kingdom would be very happy about it. We can assume there would be a very loud denunciation by Great Britain for the invasion; but given the situation I think there would be very little that could be done about it. The United Nations has already been abolished at this point, which would have been the legal avenue for Britain to follow.

The battle between Chinese and U.S. forces would prove to be a long drawn out conflict. Not too long afterward an invasion of the Chinese mainland was planned by the U.S. as a distraction to divert the People's Liberation Army forces from Alaska. As the story goes the tactic was successful as it led to the liberation of Anchorage. Unfortunately the war did not end there, at some time which is not known, the nuclear weapons began firing and brought the world to a near end. The world was not over, but the civilizations which stood there before it were.



# Section 2:

## Bottle Cap Economics



### Monetary System

The monetary system of the Fallout 3 universe at first appears to be very different from what we encounter in the real world. The idea of using bottle caps as a form of currency is rather unique and I like it for its aesthetic quality. However when we consider its use we see that it's not really all that different. I would argue that using the bottle caps is akin to using gold as money. This society like all modern societies has had one object arise as the primary commodity of exchange. Bottle caps function somewhat similar to gold in many respects.

First there is a definite finite supply of them just as gold. In this sense we can see how their value can alter according to the supply of them. For example, since each NPC in the game has a defined amount of caps, the player can theoretically hoard all the caps through transactions. This would of course leave the wasteland with nothing but bartering. It is a bit different than gold because the game assumes a lot of bartering alongside the use of caps. We do know this; the economy of Fallout is not to the size that would be necessary to require a fiat currency. I sincerely doubt there would be much in the way of fluctuations in the monetary system that would require an expansion of the money supply.

One interesting thing to note was that Marx said money, to be of any real use had to be the product of labour. This is very true especially of the gold standard. One could not simply grab a rock that had gold in it, they had to (still do) process it to create the product we have today as well as back then. Remember that eventually gold had to be set to a fixed purity and weight to ensure an ease of use. If money was something we could simply pick up off the ground it wouldn't have much value nor would it survive very long. We see here that bottle caps are also a product of labour. Seemingly, there is no new production of them. All Nuka-cola bottles are assumed to be produced pre-war. It seems this is true by people's discussion and the fact the Nuka-cola factory in the D.C. area is in ruins since the bombs fell. I sincerely doubt there is any cross country trade given that we know that the Enclave and Brotherhood of Steel have to send parties out to map new areas. Money it seems remains a product of labour even after the Great War.

When researching this someone brought up the question of counterfeit bottle caps. This doesn't appear in Fallout 3, but it does appear in New Vegas. I know I said I was going to stick entirely to Fallout 3 but this raises an interesting question. In a shack the player finds a small counterfeit cap shop. What effect would a counterfeit cap have? I think that is a difficult question to answer. The subject of caps as money in general is ill investigated. I can't really say what impact it would have. I think it would have to come down to the question of whether or not people would be willing to accept them. I think that with the greatly expanded economy of New Vegas over Fallout 3, it would require some expansion of money beyond bottle caps. I believe however that such a secondary money commodity would also have to be the product of labour. An expected outcome would be that of "bimetallism" that existed in the US for a period of time. This had a ton of fluctuations in value between the two that caused all kinds of problems. Again, it's nigh on impossible to make a comparison here, we don't really know what would

happen. Suffice to say that for now in Fallout 3 bottle caps fill all the requirements.

Due to the limited knowledge that we have the universes' commodity production; we assume that the Nuka-cola drinks that the caps come from are no longer produced and must be scavenged. This leaves a very large question as to the supply of the currency. With gold we always have an estimation of how much gold there is left in the world to find. It's not always accurate but we do have some measure. Thus we have some ability to estimate any fluctuations in the supply of them. We cannot do this with bottle caps. The supply will run up sooner or later without any notice. There is no coordinated effort of statics gathering which would give us an indication of their supply or value. In this situation I think it would be impossible for someone to speculate on bottle caps, which would eliminate much of the advanced developments in our modern society like collateralized debt obligations and derivatives.

So what can we say would happen here? With the limited ability of caps it leads us to something Marx wrote very little about, money. In all of Marx's economic works he wrote very little about money itself. It's one of those subjects he didn't get to before he died. His primary concern when investigating was commodities, their production and distribution. Marx did say specifically "*The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as "an immense accumulation of commodities," its unit being a single commodity. Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of a commodity.*"<sup>23</sup> We do however have some information from what little he did write. So, what did he write? Anyone can immediately see that the movements of money are bound up in fate with the movement of commodities. The bourgeois premise is that the movement of money determines the movements of commodities. Marx asserts the opposite, that in fact it is the movements of commodities that determines the

movements of money. We can to a degree acknowledge and take into account the mutual influential (or dialectical) relationship between the two. However in order to form a theory you must still provide a starting point for a theory to be formed.

Marx views, *"money as a medium through which commodity exchange takes place, a medium that transmits, but in most cases does not create, impulses of spending that originate outside itself."*<sup>24</sup> To Marx the quantities of commodities produced and exchanged, the velocity of the transactions of money, and the money prices of commodities are determined outside the money circulation process. Marx saw that the quantity of circulating money adjusts to suit the quantity equation, which is the opposite of the quantity theory interpretation. This idea that money is mostly a transmitting medium as opposed to a proactive distributing element flows with his also unfinished writings on credit and interest.

Well what does all that mean exactly? What's an easy way of putting it? Well I see it like this: money does not make demands, money reacts to demands placed on it. Whenever an economic system requires something of money and it can't perform the task, money must invariably be altered to suit the new use. I believe this is a part of what happened to gold as a currency, it could no longer fulfill the demands placed on it by capitalism. Could you imagine an economic system that had complex financial instruments like the previously mentioned debt obligations and derivatives being traded internationally in gold? It would be unable to function. The demands of modern capitalism require money to be far more flexible than a gold standard can be. Thus we can see that gold as money was historically appropriate for an economy in the past but not now. This is a problem with libertarians and so-called "anarcho"-capitalists; they have an entirely ahistorical view of money, and pretty much everything else.

Money must evolve to meet the demands placed upon it by an economic system. I believe the same thing would happen here in the Fallout universe. Bottle caps can only fulfill a historical role in the economy. Once capitalism became developed, bottle caps would no longer suffice as a currency, a fiat one would inevitably have to take its place. Once large scale exchange and production began to take off bottle caps would become a hindrance not an incentive.

We cannot see these caps exactly like gold because we do not have a developed capitalist system in which to place these caps. The economies of the Fallout games are not sufficiently developed to the point where its economic needs would exceed that which bottle caps and other currencies are capable of supporting. Thus we cannot say for absolute certain what would happen with an economy based on bottle caps. We can however make estimations based on what we do know of economics. I'd love someday to do an experiment on this to see what would happen.

### Commodities Determine Money Not the Inverse

Contrary to bourgeois economic thought money does not determine the movement of commodities. The movement of commodities determines how money functions. This is not to say that they do not have mutual influence on each other, of course they do. In this dialectical relationship the distribution of commodities, i.e. how they are produced and distributed throughout society, is the dominant *moment* (to use a dialectics term). What these bourgeois don't take into account is, "*money as a medium through which commodity exchange takes place, a medium that transmits, but in most cases does not create, impulses of spending that originate outside itself.*" The production of commodities has a particular way of functioning, or mode of production. It is the job of money to facilitate that

system of production and exchange. If at any point money is incapable of doing so, it is altered so that it can.

Marx examines the paradoxical nature of the exchange of commodities. The contradictions that exist within the process of exchange provide the structure for "social metabolism". The process of social metabolism "*transfers commodities from hands in which they are non-use-values to hands in which they are use-values.*" Commodities can only exist as "values" for a seller and "use-values" for a buyer. In order for a commodity to be both a "value" and a "use-value" it must be produced for exchange. The process of exchange alienates the ordinary commodity when its antithesis, the "money commodity" becomes involved. During exchange, the money commodity confronts the ordinary commodity disguising the true form of the ordinary commodity. Commodities as use-values, and money as exchange-value are now on the opposite poles, and exist as separate entities. In practice, in the process of exchange, gold or money functions as "exchange-value" while commodities function as "use-values." A commodity's existence is only validated through the form of money, and money is only validated through the form of a commodity. This dualistic phenomenon involving money and commodities is directly related to Marx's concept of "use-value" and "value."

The first real money that came into existence was gold. It was almost universally loved for the characteristics it had. Of course gold like all money required people to want it in order for it to fulfill its role as a means of circulating commodities. This is the primary purpose of money, to make the act of exchange easier to carry out. As economy evolved money took on other roles and purposes, but this remains the core of its intention.

In the process of the development from feudalism to capitalism, some people became very wealthy. This meant they owned a lot of gold. It presented a problem because they were subject to



robberies and other kinds of monetary driven violence. Eventually someone had the idea that the safest place to keep that gold was with the gold smiths who had the means to do so. They had huge solid safes where they could safely keep precious metals. People would place gold in these safes and receive a slip of paper that said how much they had there. When they wanted to buy something they would go to the guild and withdraw that gold. Once doing so they received another slip of paper saying how much they had left, a new balance as it were.

Eventually along the way someone noticed that going to and from the bank constantly was time consuming and it was using up the effort of people at the guild who kept doing the withdrawals and deposits. A new system was devised that made the entire process easier. More and more people started using this service for which the guilds were making a decent profit from. With this new influx of "customers" locations that held gold became busier and busier requiring more and more people to carry out these exchanges. The system they had of exchanging paper for gold was now inefficient.

What was happening in society was the growth of the economy. More people had more money and it was being spent more frequently. The velocity of money was now far greater than it ever had been before. More commodities were being exchanged than ever before, and wage labour was becoming more common. The system of commodity production and exchange was evolving and the current form of money was becoming a hindrance to that process. This inefficiency had to be dealt with. A great thinker made the realization that the guild should make slips of paper that represented a particular amount of gold that was held in their vaults. A person could carry these around instead of just one overall balance. That particular amount paper would be exchanged for goods and services which then at a later time would be exchanged for gold at the guild. Often the gold in one area was held by one guild so that piece of paper

represented a quantity of gold didn't have to be exchanged for that gold all the time. People would instead hold onto it and use it in another transaction. The paper was always good because the gold behind it was held in the vault. Now money could move much faster as a person didn't have to go to the guild's vaults so much.

This was a very significant moment in history. This was the birth of the bank and paper money that was backed by gold. Guild vaults were replaced with banks. This is the origin of the gold standard that evolved out of the use of gold directly as money. Economy evolved placing a new requirement on money, in this case an increased velocity. Gold as money was far too slow for the new speed of exchange. The new paper money worth a particular quantity of gold was the evolution of money to fulfill that new requirement. Money did not make a demand of commodity production and exchange, the opposite happened.

Throughout monetary history this event of alteration in the functioning of economy forced the changes in money. As economic society engaged in new means of production, new means of distributing commodities, new forms of money were developed to facilitate them. The financial sector today in our modern society is extremely complex with its endless mathematical equations and astronomical velocity across entire continents. Physical gold as money is simply unusable today for several reasons.

Let's start by looking at how much gold there is in the world. When we look at the world gold council it says there has been about 158,000 metric tonnes of it ever mined out of the earth. Divide that by ounces and you get about 50 billion of them. From this we can determine that it would be 24.4 trillion grains of gold, which sounds like quote a lot. The problem is we need to divide this by the population of the US to get the most equitable distribution of wealth we can for an example.

So if we divide it by the world's population we get 80,270 grains per person. This number isn't as impressive as the 24.4 trillion but it leaves more questions as to what this means. What any gold based system would have to do next is determine how many grains are in a single dollar. Roosevelt set it to about 15.25 grains per dollar, meaning each person would have about \$5,259 worth of gold per person in the US. This is assuming that the US held all the gold in the world.

This leaves the US with a money supply of about 1.6 trillion dollars. Even if this fictional scenario were true it would be totally debunked by the fact the US has a debt of 16.6 trillion dollars. It would be impossible to pay down the US debt. The claim is that the US would never be in this situation if we had a gold standard, but that's speculation. Right here and now if the US went to the gold standard it would be impossible to pay off the debt. This is what libertarians want, it would be impossible to do in our current situation.

Change the scenario and assume that there was no national debt and the country operated on the gold standard. The reality is there is a massive trade deficit. Currently it is about \$38.5 billion a month. This means as US capitalism functions, large amounts of the U.S. dollar are being held by foreign nations. At this trade deficit rate it would take 3.46 years for the entire supply of gold to leave the country. Essentially the US would end up with no gold backed money at all. The money would not be coming back because the people who hold that money aren't purchasing enough from the US, or else there wouldn't be a deficit. The country would be without money. The only logical way out of this situation would be to borrow that gold back into the country again with interest. Doing that would create a debt based money system again.

## Why Not Continue Using Pre-war Money?

In researching this book I've talked to a few people. One question I've heard a couple of them ask was, "why don't they simply keep using the money that's already there?" Indeed there would have been tons of US federal currency lying around. If people already acknowledge it as having value the why not just simply keep using it? It makes sense on the surface. The immediate problem is we don't really know what exactly happened immediately after the fall of the bombs. There could be all kinds of factors that went into decision making, social and material influences that had an effect. We can however make a few logical assumptions based on what we know about economics. Or at the very least we can make some about American attitudes towards currency.

The first thing to note would be that immediately after the bombs fell there would be no use for money. Nuclear blasts have a great leveling effect among rich and poor. A rich man may be able to afford his own Vault, but he cannot bring his productive forces with him which gives him his power. What makes the capitalist class capitalist and gives them their power is the ownership of those means of production. These would be definitely wiped out in the blast. Nor can he bring all of his commodities with him. As Marx said, *"The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as "an immense accumulation of commodities," its unit being a single commodity."*<sup>25</sup> This ownership and production of commodities forms the wealth of capitalist society. It could not have been taken with him into a Vault. Everyone pretty much loses all material wealth.

Even if there was some odd aberration in this fact that allowed the capitalist to keep his means of production, he would still need to produce and exchange commodities in order to generate his wealth. I don't think there was very much exchange

or production going on right away, or even a decade after. People would be faced with the immediate effects of wide spread destruction and death. On top of that the struggle to survive would become quite immense. These means of production, had they survived, would be useless to the capitalist. This uselessness would cause the capitalist to lose his position as one.

The economy would have been wiped out, making money, the means by which commodities and value are exchanged, meaningless. If there is no economy then money serves no purpose. Money itself is designed to facilitate the function of an economy, not the other way around. Money does whatever a particular economic system requires of it. It has a historical context that forces it to meet the needs of that economy. No economy, no use for money. Money has no value outside of its ability to lubricate the exchange of commodities. If this fails to keep in use, then money has ceased to have any value. Money has no value outside of its ability to be exchanged for things that have use-value. You cannot eat it, you cannot shelter your family with it, nor can it protect you.

This is one of the mistakes that gold bugs and crypto-currency advocates make. Their particular choice of currency is as equally flawed in this regard. In this post-apocalyptic situation, both gold and Bitcoin would be equally worthless as US dollars. No currency has any value if no one is willing to trade with it. This is doubly true if there is no one to exchange with and no one is trading. No amount of (contradictory subjective) value of gold can overcome a lack of exchange. If money can't be exchanged for anything, then the collection of money as a means to its own end is meaningless. I'm not showing up to work if what they're going to pay me with is useless.

Let us fast forward a few decades to when economy began to function once again. We assume a very minimal level of

production, nothing that would really constitute capitalism. By this we mean a system in which one person owns the means of production and employs others in its use. We would be seeing a situation of primitive accumulation which one person or even a family produces enough to exchange. Meaning their productive capacity has already reached a point where its efficiency can produce a surplus beyond their own need. The productive forces in this case have exceeded producing use-values and are now producing use-values; they are a surplus product beyond their own need that is created exclusively for the purpose of exchange.

People are now exchanging on a very minimal level, but exchange is taking place nonetheless. Right away people would be exchanging use-values directly. The immediate use-value of a commodity would be exchanged for another in an act of bartering. We're assuming a low technological level of manufacture considering there would be no electricity or complex machinery available. Commodities would therefore be simple, and predominantly a product of some degree of skilled labour as opposed to capital intensive manufacture. At this point there would be no real use for money people could simply exchange the products themselves. The situation changes once a larger variety of commodities and more producers comes into existence.

At some point the production of commodities reaches a level of development where a variety of them become available. At this point the material need or want of the consumer will not be immediate available. A trader or producer won't have what the other person needs. This may occur with the other person as well. Both people will come together to exchange only to find out that each does not have what the other wants. They both have produced an exchange-value, but there's no way to make the exchange if neither has what the other wants. What we need at this point is a universal measurement of value. In other

words we need money. Each product's value would be exchanged for a particular amount of money which could be taken to another producer and exchanged for what that person needs/wants.

Money now appears as a necessity in the lubrication of the act of exchange. Money now has a *historical necessity*. Economy is now placing a requirement on it that did not exist before. Money is serving the act of the exchange of commodities. The exchange of commodities is determining the function of money, not the other way around as many ahistorical bourgeois views of money claim. As the economy grows and begins to take on new forms of exchange, new processes in the flow of commodities, money will by necessity alter to serve those new forms. This is where we get the development of cheques, debit cards, credit, and wire transfers from. The requirements of economy exceeded the ability of money, thus money was forced to alter facilitating those new needs.

Okay so we're at the point where money is now needed for exchange. So what do we use as money? Well we've got a ton of old US currency lying around we could use that. Of course that's the problem, there's a ton of it. Why would I exchange any commodities for US dollars when it's simply lying around everywhere? A person would only need to raid a single store to collect more money than they would have gotten through a month of trading. If this is the case it would make more economic sense to just scavenge money in the ruins of a city than to produce a commodity. It would be more profitable than production would be. So we see the problem: the supply of money vastly exceeds the demand for it. In a sense it is mega-hyper inflation to a degree unrivaled by anything in history. US dollars in this scenario would *literally* be worthless. A society cannot simply choose anything to be their currency, it must choose something that doesn't hinder, but serves the societies' process of exchange. It is obvious that a free abundant money-

commodity doesn't do the job. In fact it outright sabotages it. Something else must be selected.

There are some other legitimate reasons why the continuance of the US dollar would be a bad idea. The first issue is fragile nature of bills. Sure they're made quite durable, but after 200 years how well would they be holding up? How many of the bills would still be around after two centuries? US bills are really fabric not paper, but even then they wouldn't really last 200 years. Even if they did they'd be too fragile to survive any reasonable amount of monetary velocity. The general everyday life in the wastelands is extremely physically harsh on all things. The conditions of this life would be much more severe than what US bills were originally intended for. The physical characteristics of the bill would be unsuitable for use. This is one reason why bottle caps were a good choice, they have a fairly high durability and their supply was at about the right level for the economy.

One final aspect of pre-war money that I think is important is the very nature of the money itself. US dollars have power and value because they are backed by the US government. Everyone around the world knows what a US dollar is worth and knows that it has worth because of the US government. It is a government that no longer exists. The bills are worthless because they have no authority behind them, nor are they even particularly useful themselves.

Pre-war money, can't facilitate the requirements placed upon them, they lack the necessary durability, and their supply is too great.

### Human Interaction in Commodity Production and Exchange

If we're going to begin to understand how the Fallout economy works, we must first understand how economy works. How are the relations between people shaped by the production of



commodities and their exchange? If we first understand how general capitalism works we can then begin to understand how the differences within the Fallout economic universe operate. Fallout would not be much different than our modern day capitalism in one particular regard. *"The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as "an immense accumulation of commodities," its unit being a single commodity."* We must understand how we interact with each other economically (economic relations) in order to understand our social relations. But how does commodity production determine this?

We can all see that money has power in society, but where exactly does it come from? More specifically, how do we Marxists see where the power of money comes from? There are many differing opinions on this in the world, the most famous one being the religious idea that money is the root of all evil. But of course this doesn't tell us very much.

Money has power in society, but where does this power come from? The desire to obtain money is an end in itself. It takes on all things in society, class status, symbol of prestige and social power. It appears as though money has a power onto itself. Money seems to have a will and consciousness of its own. This phenomenon where objects have social power or will of their own is called "the fetishism of commodities" by Marx.

In this context Marx uses the term "fetishism" in the original religious meaning. It's the view that inanimate objects hold power, or that these powers are attributed to them. Commodities and money can seem to have the same power, but really they are only expressions of our own labour.

People produce things in a work place; people directly interact with one another during their production. The organizations of work, the division of labor, are direct social relations between people. When something needs to change in the process

someone from management walks in and tells everyone what is up, or a collective decision is made.

This is different in the market; instead there are indirect social relations that are the exchanges of commodities. The things that happen in the marketplace feed back to the act of production itself i.e. make more or make less or make them differently.

Farmers, people who make cars, people who make furniture interact through the marketplace when their products meet each other. We see only exchanges of value. These social relations are indirect as they interact only through their commodities. In a single factory we have material relations, in the market those material relations are replaced with a social relation between things. This process of social relations between people manifesting as a relations between things, Marx called "reification".

When we purchase a commodity we are experiencing a commodity not the social relation behind it. Even if we know that there is a network of social relations there we still do not experience them. In this we understand that every economic relation is experienced via a commodity.

This act of exchanging all things in society is where money gets its power from. The value of all commodities is expressed through money. The social labour that goes into the production of a certain commodity is expressed as a particular amount of money. As a result of this process of manufacture and exchange, money itself becomes the source of social power. The act of exchange gives it this power because it is an expression of social relations. The market is a collection of social relations, the more money you have the more social power you have.

Thus we see the source of the power money has, it stems from the Law of Value.

## Money as a Product of Labour

What writings Marx did give us with regards to money was that, any money under capitalist commodity production had to be the product of labour. This means that money itself has to be a commodity before it can fulfill the role of money. If it was not, say it was something natural like shells; the money would have no value as anyone could simply collect it up and use it. Past societies have used shells as currency, but this occurred under different historical circumstances. Under capitalism a system of, "*an immense accumulation of commodities*", this simply would not do. Money must have some value produced outside of its natural value. Meaning labour must be applied creating that additional value allowing functioning as money. Without it we would have total anarchy as money can appear without any measure of control. As a product of labour, gold for instance, is created alongside the creation of value. As value expands so does money itself.

This functioning requires that money be the product of industrial capitalists (or in general the creation of value via labour) whose only motive is profit. This is one of the reasons why the central bank expands and contracts money according to the demand for money. Loans are created upon bookkeeping entry just for this reason. If you just produced money without regards to the production of commodities (or value) in the economy you would end up with a problem. "*The idea of planning the money supply while leaving production to the anarchy of the profit system is indeed a hopeless contradiction.*"<sup>26</sup>

It should be noted however that we do face a contradiction with this in our modern real life society. Often money is loaned out with no intention of creating commodities or the expansion of value, such as a second or borrowed against mortgage, and in some cases borrowing money to purchase or bet (speculate) on already produced commodities. In Marx's time he was referring

to the production of gold. The process of making gold coins or bars requires labour be applied to raw gold coming out of the ground. Physical commodity production creates value, as this value expanded the gold money supply expanded. This is how the money supply relatively regulated itself. This is not to say there has never been an excess in the supply of gold causing its price to fall. There have been moments when the British found large deposits of gold that dropped the price. The mining out of this gold caused the value of a gold backed currency to fall.

In the Fallout universe there are several commodities used as money. The most common in use is bottle caps. Also call "caps" they too are a product of labour. At some point in the past they were produced as a part of the Nuka-cola product. Steel was stamped into a particular shape and painted red and white. Their dominance as a currency came into effect via The Hub merchants in the Core Region. They were chosen by the merchants because the technology to manufacture them was mostly lost in the Great War which makes counterfeiting them very difficult. Secondly they chose them because of their limited supply which was meant to be a preservation of their value against inflation. These caps were backed by the value of water on the West Coast of the former United States. On the East coast (or Fallout 3) there seems to be nothing that backs them and guarantees their value.

Other currencies exist in the Fallout universe. The New California Republic (NCR) created their own money by minting gold coins. Soon they started issuing notes that were backed by a gold standard. Eventually these coins came to dominate trade among the top three powers in existence, the NCR, Vault City and New Reno. This made bottle caps worthless. By 2281 the Brotherhood of Steel destroyed the NCR's gold reserves causing their dollar to crash. Fortunately the currency continued to have some value due to the use of rare metals. It caused the value to crash with the exchange rate of a hundred-dollar bill being equal

to 40 caps rather than its face value, even in NCR territory or shops. This led to an exchange rate of 1 Bottle Cap for 2.5 NCR Dollars.

Caesar's Legion a large faction in *Fallout: New Vegas* also has its own currency. They also chose a valuable metallic currency. They decided upon bimetallism where 2 precious metals would serve as money. The Aureus which is made of gold and The Denarius which is made of silver. This precious metal standard combined with extensive trade caused the currency to have great value despite the poor reputation of Caesar's Legion. The exchange rate is 4 bottle caps to 1 Denarius, and 100 bottle caps to 1 Aureus.

There are other minor currencies in the universe as well. Brotherhood scrips are a currency used only among the Brotherhood of Steel. Ring Pulls (pull-tabs from soda cans) are used as currency in Chicago and a few places outside it. These currencies don't play a major role in the games. Bottle Caps remain the dominant currency dominating the *Fallout* universe.

All of these currencies have one thing in common; they are all products of labour. If a money is not the product of labour, then it has no value, nor does it have any use as money.

### The Dynamics of Using Bottle Caps

As stated previously Marx said that money had to be the product of labour in order for it to function as money. I also stated that Marx showed that the creation of money through industrial production, the creation of value, was the key to maintaining some force against inflation. This process expanded the money supply as value was created. This process is largely obsolete with our modern fiat currency, now we have a relative estimate of how much money through the afore mentioned mechanism is needed then it is produced. This process Marx was describing was money as a physical commodity as money based on its

value, not a fiat currency which is not based on its own value, but the value an economy gives it, and the supply that is determined. Fiat money has a value corresponding to its use and the authority that backs it. Gold has a value its physical self. The problem with Bottle Caps is that they are not produced any more.

This means that the money supply in caps does not correspond to the creation of value. Bottle Caps have already been produced irrespective of production or the actual demand for them. Eventually this would cause problems in an economy once it became sophisticated enough. When greater value is created the supply of caps is not expanded correspondingly. This means that eventually there will not be enough Bottle Caps to allow the economy to function. Already counterfeit caps are not accepted as currency. How then would the supply of Bottle Caps expand? They are not the same thing as gold where they have some supposedly intrinsic value (its restricted supply I say).

The supply of caps must by necessity expand in order for the economy to expand. This requires someone to create new caps. Who is to be the one designated to do this? How many caps should be created? If these caps are created some central authority must do it. If not, then anyone can just take metal and paint it to create their own caps. I think you see the problem we're going to have here. Steel is relatively plentiful and paint can be found if not simply made. If just anyone can go around making caps then why would anyone enter into production for profit (collecting caps) when they can just produce the caps themselves? If in our modern society we could just simply print our own US dollars that were the same government issued US dollars (because there's no law against counterfeiting or an authority to stop you) our economy would collapse very quickly.

If no new caps are produced, then the economy cannot expand. At this point in the story of the Fallout universe the economy is

not sophisticated enough in order to require such an expansion. Sooner or later as time goes on we'll see that happening.

I'm certain some might argue that this gap in the need for caps would be filled by the other currencies in the game, particularly in New Vegas. I would argue that this is insufficient as eventually these other currencies would come to dominate because the cap supply is limited. This would eventually cause the value of caps to crash and eventually become near or completely worthless. A single regulated currency is always a better choice over competing ones.

### A Barrier to Investment

This inability of caps to expand severely restricts the ability of the economy to expand. The large majority of industrial production involves borrowing money. Even large manufacturers like Ford and GM borrow money in order to enter a round of production. The capitalist takes out a loan from a bank that it uses to purchase the raw materials, pay bills for electricity and water, and cover the cost of wages for employees. The produced commodities are then sold on the market. The money collected from those sales is used to pay back the loan. What remain after the debts have been paid back are profits.

Could you imagine doing this with straight physical cash? Could you imagine the head of GM going down to the bank and taking out more than a hundred million in bills? Of course not, there's no way that would happen. In reality money would be created upon bookkeeping entry and then electronically transferred to wherever it needed to go. Imagine you actually did have the physical money, how difficult would that be to move around? Modern investment in production could not work with a simple physical only currency.

So we see the problem here: the supply of caps and the management of them as a currency are insufficient for any

serious investment. It would be impossible for a sophisticated economy to operate with them. This is why money has evolved in the manner that it has in the real world. Gold coins as money has ceased to function in a manner which the evolution of capitalism requires of it. The movement of commodities, determined by the mode of production, has a requirement that money is unable to fulfill. This is why, *"money as a medium through which commodity exchange takes place, a medium that transmits, but in most cases does not create, impulses of spending that originate outside itself."* Money is subservient to the needs of the capitalist and his system, not the other way around. The relationship is dialectical of course, but the dominant *moment* (in dialectics terms) is the requirements of the mode of production itself.

This how Marx explained the relationship:

*"Production and consumption ... appear ... as moments of a process in which production is the actual point of departure, and hence also the dominant moment, ... the act epitomizing the entire process... That exchange and consumption cannot be dominant moments is self-evident, and the same applies to distribution as the distribution of products. A definite [mode of] production thus determines a definite [mode of] consumption, distribution, and exchange and definite relations of these different moments to one another. Production in its one-sided form [that is, considered only as a moment], however, is in its turn also determined by other moments. For example, if the market, i.e., the sphere of exchange, expands, production grows in volume, and becomes more differentiated. Changes in distribution, e.g., concentration of capital, different distribution of the population in town and country, and the like, entail changes in production. Lastly, production is determined by the needs of consumption. There is an*



*interaction between different moments. This is the case in any organic entity.*<sup>127</sup>

The reality of this situation is that as society began to rebuild and capitalism took its natural path of evolution, caps would cease to be effective as money. By necessity something else would have to take its place. Eventually along the way we could expect a Great Depression-type situation where the inflexibility of caps would trigger an economic crisis. This would force anyone with economic knowledge to recognize that a new currency would be needed. If this factionalization we see with *Fallout: New Vegas* continued, each group would have to manage this problem itself. The unique context of having multiple currencies makes it very difficult to analyze.

An interesting effect of this, I think, would be the astronomical amount of economic power that the casinos would have. Its here we run into the problem of a fictional universe. For any casino to achieve consistent profitability there would have to be at least a relatively developed capitalist economy. Meaning there must be a particular degree of disposable income for people. I doubt this would be all that common given the material conditions of the *Fallout* universe. However for the sake of argument we'll assume there is because the casinos operate just fine in the game.

These casinos would be obvious cash cows that could generate large amounts of money with little in the way of operating costs. (I believe this is so given the nature of the *Fallout* universe as opposed to real life.) Just via gambling alone an incredible amount of caps could be collected. This is very much unlike commodity production which takes in money per product produced. These casinos on the other hand can have a large increase of money come in with little to no increase in expenditures. All a gaming table has to do is accept the chips

that come in. This would allow the businesses' store of caps to grow quite large.

Now, because credit does not exist, only physical currency does, a casino would hold quite a lot of power. These casinos would be in a prime position to invest in production because they have the physical money available to do so. No one else would have a collection of money large enough ahead of production in order to be able to invest. Any enterprising casino owner would recognize this easily and begin investing. The power of investment would lie in the hands of casino owners. This advantage alone would lead them to dominating production and eventually the economy. The irony here is that casinos do not generate value, but they would collect the money necessary to begin physical commodity production that does.

#### A Barrier to Financial Activity

As I previously mentioned, money operates in a historical context which places certain demands upon it. As capitalism develops and goes through all the phases of its evolution eventually there will come a point when financial capital begins to form. This kind of operation requires certain behaviours that certain forms of money are not able to perform. This is the moment when money itself must be modified by society to fulfill its new function or there will be a halt to the evolution of the capitalist system. One prime example of this is the moment when financial capital appears in society. This is a historically unique function that appears in no mode of production preceding capitalism. What is this unique function? Allow me to explain.

Capitalism is in its very essence a system of commodity exchange through the private ownership of the means of production. Everything that is socially required of society is produced through this method. The very fact that something can be sold for money is confirmation that the individual conditions

for the production of the commodity coincides with the general conditions of social production. The purpose of its manufacture and exchange is to satisfy individual wants in the general exchange of commodities. Money used in the strictly exchange sense follows a circuit of capital Marx laid out. C-M-C. A commodity is produced then sold for money, that money is then used to purchase another commodity. What money does is allows the value of one commodity to be exchange for another. Money fulfills the transitory period in which the value is exchange for another. Money acting as a form of value is always a temporary transition phase of the exchange of values.

For the industrial producer of commodities, the circuit of capital is different: M-C-M'. First money is collected then invested in the production of commodities. These commodities are then sold for a greater amount of money than they were produced. What is different here from the last circuit is that the commodity is produced merely for the purpose of collecting more money. The capitalist isn't particularly interested in exchanging for other values; he is interested in unloading the ones his production has produced for more money than he invested in them. Money is now a means to its own end. We have now gone from simple commodity production to capitalist commodity production.

The last form I will be discussing here is the finance capital circuit: M-M'. Seems pretty simple, you take an amount of money, invest it, and it comes back as more money. This is one reason why some people don't particularly like bankers and investors. They don't do anything productive. They just give money out to who they think will give them the best return. Once that happens they sit back and watch their returns grow. Seems kind of unfair right? A person can profit off of production without themselves having gone in and done any work. What we're seeing here is the social manifestations of the relations of production. The mere ownership of money and/or capital places

the capitalist in a position where he is relieved from having to work.

This is in line perfectly with what we talked about in the Fallout 3 video:

*"So long as the productivity of labour remains at a level one man can only produce enough for his own subsistence, social division does not take place and any social differentiation within a society is impossible. Under these conditions, all men are producers and they are all on the same economic level.*

*Every increase in the productivity of labour beyond this low point makes a small surplus possible, and once there is a surplus of products, once a man's two hands can produce more than is needed for his own subsistence, then the conditions have been set for a struggle over how this surplus will be shared.*

*Whenever this situation arises, a section of society can become a ruling class, whose outstanding characteristic is its emancipation from the need of working for its own subsistence."<sup>28</sup>*

These people in this particular position in the relations of production essentially exploit that position for gain. This class of people holds the power of investment and decides who receives the money for production to take place. Society must by necessity produce the commodities that people require. The people in this position are exploiting the fact that society *must* produce. This affords them a great deal of power over how the productive forces of society are used. They can decide based on profit maximization where money goes and what commodities in society are produced up to a certain point. Given the global nature of finance we can see why money is invested in military hardware for the imperialist war machine and not in food for the

world's hungry. In their logic, why put money into the hungry which pretty much can't make a return when you can put it into weapons manufacturing? Often this is misunderstood as some kind of "corruption", the unethical act of some capitalist or just plain human nature. No, as we have just seen it resides in the very structure of capitalism itself. It by necessity *must* invest in something profitable, if not in the most profitable place it can find. This kind of inhumanity of weapons over food is not some aberrant behaviour; it is the very nature of the capitalist system, a system of the private ownership of the means of production for profit itself.

So, with all this having been said, what is the problem with bottle caps here? What aspect of bottle caps is a hindrance to this process? Many different forms of money can produce different difficulties with it, we are however restricting our investigation to merely caps. The initial one I see is their limited supply which I spoke about previously. Any real large production requires a tremendous amount of capital investment. (This could be augmented somewhat if you used slaves.) Collecting enough caps ahead of production would be a monumental, if not an outright impossible task. The ability of a financial institution, or an investment bank to operate would be impossible. As we're well aware banks don't carry an amount of physical currency equal to all the money it has. Out of necessity fiat non-physical currency is needed. By this of course I am referring to money that exists as numbers on a computer. It is entirely impractical to physically carry or even store that much money.

Okay so we're clear that moving several million bottle caps is horribly inefficient even if that amount of bottle caps were even in existence within reach of these hypothetical economic actors. I'm sure there are millions upon millions of caps in the United States, but these would no doubt be spread across the entire country. By the time anyone scavenged enough of them they would have already been dead for years. This could very well

applied to any gold currency, not gold backed, but physically gold. I don't fancy moving hundreds let alone millions of gold coins around. Transportation cost without even including security would be absurd. The same problem would appear here if we were to investigate the possibilities of beginning a stock market. The velocity of money in such a situation is astronomical and far beyond the abilities of a physical currency. Caps would by necessity have to be electronic in order to move fast enough.

One alteration in the function of caps that could facilitate a primitive version of this function is a paper representation of them. Instead of say carrying 400 caps around with you, you could place those caps in a bank and be issued a piece of paper that says they are there. That piece of paper could be taken to wherever and be traded for whatever was going to be purchased. At some point in the future the person who accepted that paper could take it to that bank and withdraw the caps or a partial amount and receive a new piece of paper along with them. This is a very similar route that was taken with gold. The problem with this plan is that (to date) there are no banks in any of the Fallout games.

These financial actions cannot take place due to the nature of caps themselves. Caps fulfill a historically necessary role in the Fallout universe. Once economy expanded beyond this historical level, the currency would have to change. I would think, given what limited knowledge we have of the Fallout universe that caps would end up taking a route similar to gold. Again it is very difficult to predict what would happen because these caps exist in a society with other competing currencies in *New Vegas*. Barring any unforeseen events gold would most likely have to take their place.

We can plainly see that caps would make financial investment frankly impossible on any serious level.

## The Water Standard

In the story line of the Fallout universe, in the Core Region, the relative scarcity of bottle caps made them a perfect currency for Hub merchants to adopt in the 22nd century, leading to the nickname "Hubbucks" and "Hubscript." Backed by the value of water, the Hub merchants supported bottle caps because the technology to manufacture them and paint their surfaces had been mostly lost in the Great War, which limited any counterfeiting efforts. Secondly, there are a limited number of bottle caps, which preserve their value against inflation to some degree. For similar reasons the East Coast merchants also recognize bottle caps as a currency, although who backs them and guarantees their value is unknown.<sup>29</sup>

The idea of having a currency backed by clean water is an interesting concept. Of course all money must have some kind of backing to some degree or another. Marx said that it must be a product of labour, others propound the idea that money must be backed by gold, and today the money we have is backed by the authority of the government. The idea of using clean water is on the surface seems like a good idea. I mean if you're backing a currency with a valuable commodity you can't get any more valuable than clean water in a post-apocalyptic world. The lakes and rivers of the world are highly irradiated making them basically poison.

If there is a commodity that backs a currency, then that currency must be exchangeable for it. A gold backed dollar was redeemable in gold. Presumably in the Core Region where this standard is held caps can be exchanged for water. According to some online sources a single cap was worth a single liter of water. This was supposedly set by water merchants who determined its value. So we presume that a cap can be exchanged somewhere in the Core Region for clean water. I think this implies some kind of clean water bank where that

exchange can be made. Unfortunately I have no knowledge as to whether this is true or not.

On the whole I'd have to say that a water standard is a bad idea. Sure water would be far more valuable than gold in the Fallout universe for two reasons: 1. the supply of clean water is limited given the lack of infrastructure. 2. Unlike gold, water is an absolute necessity for life. In this regard society couldn't pick a more valuable commodity.

The problem, which I think makes it unusable as a backing for currency, is the fact that clean water is a commodity that can be destroyed. By this I mean that once you drink the water, its value has ceased to exist, that cap no longer has that value backing it. What kind of currency has a value that can be consumed? The advantage of gold is in its physical properties; it can be melted down but not consumed. Whatever you do with gold it will still be there. The very purpose of water is to be drunk. Once you drink the water that backs that cap then what? Does that cap cease to exist? The value behind that cap does. If you do how the person you exchange with know that that cap no longer has any water? This would mean that the commodity backing the currency is inherently flawed. Gold is useful as money in a historical context that can become obsolete with the expansion of economy, but water is just outright self-destructive and suicidal as a backing value. A water standard is a horrible idea.

## Conclusion

The Fallout universe doesn't afford us much in the way of the use of money. Post-apocalyptic society does not afford us all the interesting dynamics that we see in our everyday real life. There are no stock markets, no Wall Street, no complex financial instruments to speak of. The productive forces are not developed to the level of a modern capitalist society, thus the money in the system is as equally under developed. What it does



have is rather interesting. While the productive forces are underdeveloped, there are some advanced aspects. The existence of casinos in *New Vegas* is an oddity as it does not fit in with the rest of the economy; it is a product of an advanced one. This is of course the result of the left over influence of the pre-war society. We must keep in mind that in this world they are not developing, they are *re-developing*. The general ideas of a more advanced society are known, they are not discovering them for the first time.

Reality shows us that there would have to be a monetary policy in place eventually. As society developed new requirements would be made of money necessitating change. We see from the example here in *Fallout* as well as in real life that the Marxist conception of money adequately explains many the economic relations.

With this knowledge, we can now move on to begin an investigation into the social groups and their particular modes of production.



# Section 3:

## The Social and Economic Relations of Fallout 3



If we're going to look at the economy of this society we're going to have to start with the main factor, the mode of production. This is an interesting challenge to investigate as there appears to be little to no productive forces in use. Commodity exchange is taking place, however the supply of commodities comes from scavenging and hunting as opposed to commodity production. Meaning, there is a significant lack of use-values being produced. They have already been created previously and their exchange-value is being used again. Everything from 200 year old Salisbury steak, to house wares to weaponry, primarily comes from scavenging the wasteland. The people of the wasteland are not engaging in any significant productive activity, thus it can be said that there is no (or at least no discernible) primary mode of production. When we look more closely at the various groups and methods of survival, we see there are different types of social organization and different modes of production.

## Raiders

The economic situation is complicated to analyze as there is no Marxist description of a post-apocalyptic society. We must conclude upon analysis however that there is a mix of modes of production. The raiders for instance (like much of the population) collect all materials through theft and through scavenging. They too hunt the local wildlife and eat it. In my view we should see the remaining commodities left over from the pre-war era as a non-renewable resource. That is to say, once the Wasteland has had all the pre-made materials collected up, the resource should be considered gone.

Along with this we can see some form of monetary exchange when we look upon at least one of the gangs. The gang that has its base of operations hidden in a cave system to the south has what appear to be bars where alcoholic drinks are sold. In addition to this we know from searching their corpses that they each carry their own money. From this we can deduce that there is some level of economy. It most likely takes the form of mercantilism or small purchases as there is no evidence that any raiders employ any means of production. Logically we should assume that these are mercantile exchanges where one commodity has emerged as a measure of value against all others. Bottle caps have emerged in the game the same way that gold emerged as the primary money commodity in our past. In this view we should conclude that the Riders at least are what I can describe as "augmented hunter-gatherers".

Given what little knowledge there is on the raider groups, we can assume a relatively anarchistic egalitarian structure. I say relatively because we are pre-supposing some type of warlord in command of the larger raider groups, who would presumably have lieutenants as a lower rank of authority. I think it reasonable that the majority of the raider population within a single gang would be on the same social level, all of them grunts

who do the dirty work and taking the biggest risks. My guess is that there would be a large majority of raiders with a few select individuals who would possess a higher rank. These higher ranks would then in turn answer to some kind of overall boss or warlord. This warlord would presumably take a large portion of what his subordinates collected or traded for.

The Raiders can best be described as "augmented hunter-gatherers" facilitating their primitive quasi-military social organization.

### Mercantile Traders

A small section of the population earns money from engaging in mercantile trade somewhat reminiscent of the pre-industrial revolution economy. Merchants would sail the seas looking for spices, jewelry and other such goods to collect in order to bring them back home and sell or trade for a larger "amount" than they acquired them for. In the Fallout 3 universe we see a much smaller scale manifestation of this. These mainly solitary traders collect or trade commonly obtained goods from some source if not scavenged and find a buyer for it somewhere else. Some maintain a small head quarters and a ruined building as a store which someone can go to at any time to make a purchase. These Fallout merchants like those of the late Middle Ages do not produce anything of their own. They do not engage in productive labour which creates a use-value. They obtain finished good and resell them for more than what they obtained them for. Thus we cannot say they are exploited. It is fair to say that they engage in unequal exchange. After all, profit is not possible without an unequal exchange.

These traders have to traverse the difficult terrain risking everything from possible raiders to super mutants. They recognize their collective interest in protecting each other. At some point in the game the traders headed by the leader (and founder) of Canterbury Commons, Uncle Reo, form a "Merchant

Caravan" where they can pool their defensive resources. Each member of the caravan appear dedicated to a particular set of products. There must be some kind of unofficial agreement among them not to intrude upon each other's customers. In a unique moment in the game the player has the opportunity to become an investor where for varying degrees of bottle cap investments he can increase the variety of goods they carry. Unfortunately there doesn't seem to be any return for the player on those investments other than a few gifts.

Aside from the traders there are roaming groups of hunters who collect animals and then trade them for whatever they need. They seem to operate much like hunters/trappers that you find in many indigenous communities today. They trade what little they catch for other commodities they need.

### The Super Mutants

My personal favorite the super mutants, are the result of a genetic experiment born of the scientists of Vault 87. These creatures (or Meta-Humans as one particular super mutant prefers to be called) were created from a "Forced Evolutionary Virus" as a part of the "Evolutionary Experimentation Program". It was a modified strain of the FEV that lead to the creation of a new kind of super mutant that increased in size with age and is apparently sterile. In the course of their development they lose almost all sex characteristics making them entirely asexual. In addition, they are oddly immune to the effects of radiation.

They have a below average human level of intelligence, but are still capable of speech, minimal construction skills, and some military tactics. Super mutants have some variety among them. For example Mariposa or West Coast super mutants around California are said to be of higher intelligence and more civilized. There are however many unanswered questions left over from experience with them. Somehow they managed a minimal level of maintenance of Vault 87 and its systems. In addition they

managed to operate complex weaponry and are seemingly able to repair them. No explanation is offered for this. Even more puzzling is the fact that the super mutants maintain and operate the FEV system which increases their numbers. Because they have no reproductive ability they are required to abduct humans live and bring them to the Vault to be made into super mutants.

Also it should be noted that human beings appear to form their staple diet. It's interesting that their source of new members is also their source of food.

Interestingly the super mutants don't bother ghouls. Ghouls are humans that have suffered from severe radiation and have physically decayed to the point of physically appearing as zombies. Perhaps it is due to the cellular damage that they are uninterested in converting them. Unfit for the program as it were.

Outside of Vault 87 they tend to live in small groups of 3 or less. On some occasions it possible to find much more of them in one group. This is often accompanied by an attack on a human settlement. After which it is logical to assume that they return to their groups of three. This appears to me to be like a guerilla life style organization. Generally guerilla bands are separate from each other covering a wider area, but then get together for a coordinated attack. Once the attack is complete they return to their individual smaller groups and carry on as normal. This seems to be how they function militarily as well, in loosely coordinated guerilla bands.

The super mutants have also "domesticated" a group of mutants called "centaurs". I frankly have no idea how to verbally describe them outside of saying that they appear as horribly warped humans with multiple sharp tongues that manage to spit some kind of radioactive substance at its victims. These creatures if not found in isolation act almost as trained guard dogs for the super mutants. They seem very much domesticated in service of

their green masters. This would also indicate that these super mutants have some skill at training the centaurs.

All of this begs the question of organizational structure. In the Fallout 3 game there is no discernible leader amongst them. There seems to be a relative egalitarian cooperation based on a mutual need for survival that creates seemingly no contradictions among them. It still leaves a huge question as to how they manage to organize their scouting of the Wasteland and coordinate their attacks upon human strongholds. In Marxist terms we would view this as primitive communism, or a tribal society. We cannot be 100% certain as I doubt any Jane Goodall or Margaret Mead has had the opportunity to walk amongst them. The super mutants employ no means of production. They do not produce anything aside from themselves in their artificial reproductive process. No exchange-values are created, meaning there is no surplus to contest over. There is no social division of labour. No one super mutant can exercise any economic or social power over another.

*"So long as the productivity of labour remains at a level one man can only produce enough for his own subsistence, social division does not take place and any social differentiation within a society is impossible. Under these conditions, all men are producers and they are all on the same economic level.*

*Every increase in the productivity of labour beyond this low point makes a small surplus possible, and once there is a surplus of products, once a man's two hands can produce more than is needed for his own subsistence, then the conditions have been set for a struggle over how this surplus will be shared.*

*Whenever this situation arises, a section of society can become a ruling class, whose outstanding characteristic*



*is its emancipation from the need of working for its own subsistence.*"<sup>30</sup>

In this phenomenon of super mutants we see something very interesting. There are no races, no sexes, and no class divides. Their only goals are the collection of food and the collection of humans to turn into them for reproduction. There appears to be no contradictions among their "society". They seem to suffer no internal structural conflicts. The only hostility that can be shown is between them and their victims and the occasion personal spat between two mutants. They lack even a contradiction between male and female given their entirely asexual biology. There is no section that must be subjugated for the purpose of procreation, nor is there a system of property ownership needing transfer between generations that would require the further subjugation of a spouse. They are egalitarian in their society to an extreme degree.

This lack of internal contradiction and overwhelming strength leads us to an important question: why don't they simply conquer and take over the Wasteland? The answer to that is put quite nicely by the Fallout Wikia: "Too dumb to overrun it, but too strong to die off."

### Human Settlements Megaton and Rivet City

These are the most common settlements that the player comes across during the game. This is where he/she will spend much of their time. They are both founded with a particular goal, that of keeping the super mutants and raiders out. Megaton built extremely high walls while Rivet City was built on an abandoned aircraft carrier surrounded by water. These settlements were designed with the particular aim of creating stability; this is what people seek after all, a comfortable life that can be maintained without too much effort. It is from this starting point that both these settlements diverge as secondary characteristics become obvious.

Megaton was constructed in the crater of a crashed airplane that was carrying an atomic bomb. The atomic bomb remains in the middle of the settlement. While this may seem odd the foundation was based on the fact that the depth of the crater provided some coverage from dust storms. As more people began using the crater they encountered more and more raiders and super mutants which lead to them acknowledging the need for more security. Nearby was an airport which was eventually looted of all its metal which built the physical structure of the city and its impressive defense walls. With this kind of safety offered, trade began and made some people wealthy. Capitalists need a haven away from the antagonisms they cause; their business must be as far away from it as possible, as well as their homes, preferably in a gated community.

Rivet City on the other hand was founded by scientists as opposed to traders. With the founders were people from the Naval Research Institute who decided to move in because of its strategic importance and its working hydroponics bay, which was used to set up a research lab. Due to its scientific founding Rivet City has a much greater level of technology than Megaton does. It actually boasts a full market, a bar, a restaurant, a clothing shop and a hotel. In addition to this it also contains some cultural value in a Catholic church, the Capitol Preservation Society and a Science Lab. The settlement was founded on a beached air craft carrier that when combined with a removable bridge provides excellent protection from raider and super mutant attacks.

It may not initially appear so, but both these settlements have little in common economically. Megaton settlement actually produces little if anything at all. All their commodities are their traded for hunted/scavenged. The restaurants must in the very least trade for the meat that they use. I assume that perhaps one of them goes out and hunts for it. Aside from this all economic activity in both settlements are based on service

industry. Flak and Shrapnel don't produce any weapons themselves; they trade for them and then sell them. Clothing is mostly scrapped together aside from pre-war clothing which requires a skilled hand to repair. Skill at repair is the most useful to have as everything is worn down. This means that the economies of the settlements can best be described in Maoism Third-Worldism as "mall economies". This means nothing much if anything is actually produced there; it's mostly service work just like a mall. However this is not entirely accurate to the Maoist Third-Worldist line as it is meant to convey the commodities are produced in the Third World to be sold in the First. Here the commodities are mostly already produced from a different time period where the workers who produced them are no longer alive. Nor does it enforce a global class difference. It is only a way of describing the service industry oriented nature of their economies.

The only exception to this is Rivet City's food. Rivet City is the sole supplier of radiation-free food in the Capital Wasteland, trading it for essential raw materials with other communities. This is the one instance where people produce something and sell it. We're not certain if the science lab is a business itself and does the trading, or if it produces for Rivet City and taxes pay for its maintenance. I am certain it is the latter given that residents can be heard complaining that the Science Lab uses up so much in the way of resources. This is a tremendous economic advantage for Rivet City that allows for healthier people and the fact they are the sole supply fetching a great profit in trade.

The social organization of the two settlements is another area where they differ. Rivet City has a ruling council made up of people from different sections of the population. They have meetings where they keep minutes and vote of decisions. This is relatively democratic in that there is voting but doesn't allow the majority of the population to. This council is made up of business representative Bannon, security chief Harkness and

science head Dr. Madison Li. These three hold all the power in Rivet City, they are made up of the economic elite and the security force. This is more akin to Ancient Greek democracy as opposed to the parliamentary system we see today. The power is still held by the economically powerful with a token vote to the oppressive arm of the council, the security force.

This represents a clear class divide, those who wield decision making power and those who do not. This is reinforced by economic segregation in housing. There are people who live on the upper deck, the wealthier, those who own the shops and have voting power. Then there are people on the hanger deck who don't have any power. This is not some coincidence; Bannon makes it clear that those who live on that deck are a lower class: *"The people that live on the Hangar Deck are the great unwashed masses. I read that somewhere. Do you like it? Anyway, they need true leaders, like myself."* This demonstrates that there is a clear class divide in Rivet City. The security measures in place reflect this. A professional security team is employed to "keep the peace", protect the science bay and to deal with any theft from the businesses. If however you speak to a security officer about a personal theft, they suggest you take the law into their own hands. They will however enforce peace if a murder is carried out, there has to be a great crime against the lower class for them to get involved. This demonstrates that the security is intended for the preservation of the upper class. It is not at all unlike our capitalist society today where the police serve the interests of the capitalist class and the laws are indeed written that way. If you steal from your employer it is a criminal offense and the police will come and knock down your door. If your employer steals from you its civil offense requiring an expensive lawyer and mountains of paperwork that you can't do.

Megaton stands in great contrast to this where there is no particular leader to speak of. Lucas Simms has made himself the self-styled Sheriff and unofficial mayor, but this comes as part of

an unofficial agreement. People don't have a problem with Simms fulfilling this role as they all know this function must be carried out. He holds no actual power over the community; he does however have a good deal of influence given the service that he provides. Simms is opposed by Colin Moriarty a wealthy local businessman who claims to be in control of the town. He imposes control through economic means, controlling trade having what people need etc. This too is nothing official, just power that he wields. Moriarty uses his power to gain more wealth and influence, Simms does it out of altruism with the goal of peace. This causes the two of them to clash and vie for power over Megaton society in the absence of an established authority.

There doesn't seem to be any real sense of class in Megaton. The only real capitalist is Moriarty because he has two employees. One of them is a slave ghou named Gob, the other is a prostitute named Nova. They are most definitely exploited in the Marxist sense. Neither one receives the full value that their labour generates, particularly Gob considering he's literally a slave. Everyone else either works for themselves or doesn't appear to have any employment. With this lack of worker/capitalist relationship there is an absence of class divide. No one is considered superior to anyone else. Each may have their own opinion, but there is no social divide that exists and is reinforced by anything. This is also reflected in their security measures. While Simms is a Sheriff, he doesn't serve only Moriarty, he serves everyone equally. Defense of the settlement from invasion is a collective effort. Megaton is relatively egalitarian in that there is no formal hierarchal structure. The only exception would be Gob considering he is a slave and there's much prejudice towards Ghouls.

Interestingly Moriarty is the only actual capitalist in the wasteland. No one else actually employs anyone else. There are some mercenaries for hire but given that they work contract and

own their own equipment, they're not technically exploited. There is question as to how the Talon Company works. If there is a commander who does not engage in work himself and keeps part of the profits generated by the other Mercenaries' work, then they are exploited. But again, we do not know exactly what their organization is like.

### The Brotherhood of Steel

The Brotherhood is a straight up military organization with all the living conditions and discipline that one would expect to go along with it. They too have power armour but it is not as sophisticated as that of The Enclave, theirs appears much more crudely developed which would indicate that they have much less in the way of resources. It would also indicate that they are not as technologically developed. They're a very tight nit group that works very well as a whole towards their objective of "restoring the wasteland". Unlike the Enclave the Brotherhood of Steel seems entirely altruistic. They dedicate themselves to uncovering forgotten technology and collecting old books that have not been destroyed. They do this for the sake of saving humanity.

This organization is unique among those of the wasteland. They don't have a civilian population. They don't claim to be an authority which people have to obey. At least in Fallout 3 they merely "serve the public" as it were. Normally you would have such a military organization attached to a government with a civilian population they protect, but this authority and civilians appear to be non-existent. They are as many describe them, "do gooders". They live on to serve people by a moral code that was handed down to them based on much military tradition.

In another sense they do kind of claim to be an authority as they position themselves in opposition to The Enclave. They do not recognize their claim to be the legitimate authority of the US government. This would indicate that perhaps they are trying to

spread their influence with the express purpose of control though not overtly so that their soldiers (Paladins) are able to recognize it. If the goal of the Brotherhood is to remove all other authority, then it does stand to reason that they are trying to establish themselves as one. This suggests to me that there is a hidden agenda. Even their desire to uncover and unlock technology and knowledge almost appears a monopolization of ideas.

We cannot call them a military dictatorship because there's no civilian population under their authority, nor any government which they represent.

The problem with looking at the economics or mode of production under the Brotherhood of Steel is that we don't exactly know how they produce the goods they have. They are too far separated from the main force on the East Coast to receive supplies from them. They must be manufacturing their own equipment. Usually there is some kind of civilian force behind such an organization that provides an economy, but they don't have it. Thus the only way they could produce those goods is through straight up military production. Whatever manufacturing work is needed is treated as any other function in their organization. It's strange because this would almost preclude an economy.

### The Enclave

Claiming to be the remnants of the United States government, the Enclave roams the country looking to reestablish its authority. The most obvious symbolism from them is fascism. This is involved in several ways. The black uniforms of its soldiers and its constant militarism combined with the goal of restoring traditional way of life and its values. This is very reminiscent of Nazi Germany in flavour. I'd also add in jingoism, but it's not really a foreign policy. It's really taking back the land that (supposedly) belongs to the U.S. government regardless of how

militaristic it is. Their radio broadcasts contain all kinds of fire side chat content, like reminiscence of "the old days" and whatnot. The radio is voiced by "the President of the United States" John Henry Eden and is filled with old American Revolutionary patriotic music.

The important thing to keep in mind is we do not know if The Enclave actually is fascist. At this point we haven't seen what this America is. We haven't actually seen what daily American civilian life is like we can only make guesses. There is no mention of any economic system of any kind mentioned. Neither is there any specific social order described, outside of "traditional values" which in itself isn't defined. There are different ways we could interpret this. However given the 1950s-ish style imagery used during and before the war we can guess it would be somewhat similar to 1950s America. I think at least in a cosmetic sense the Enclave is a fascist organization.

Unfortunately at this point in the Fallout universe we don't know what the mode of production of The Enclave are, there's no mention of their economic system, no reference to capitalism. We can however assume there is a highly developed level of means of production. The power armour alone is a good indicator, never mind the production of plasma weaponry and Vertibirds. The sophistication of these devices alone indicates a high level of technological development that would require sophisticated means of production to create them. So we do know from this there would have to be a section of the population (unknown how large) that would have to be free from work in order to study and engineer such technology.

The Enclave's artistic work can be seen around the wastes. They're propaganda posters claiming moral superiority and a desire to reestablish pre-war civilization. The posters they use to advertise their organization vaguely appear to be using socialist realism which was an art style pioneered by the Soviet Union



and continued by the DPRK. At least in the view of the creators, elements of totalitarianism and what they believe is to totalitarianism can be found in the appearance of the Enclave. I however must admit they look really bad ass.

### Tenpenny Tower

Too the south of the wasteland stands a luxury hotel that has been converted into a luxury apartment complex for the rich elite. Inside lies supposedly the wealthy of the society, nicely tucked away from the rabble of D.C.. High perimeter walls, intercom and heavily armed security keep the "bourgeois" of Fallout 3 from the lower classes from all the dangers of the world. Originally the building lay empty for 20 years after the bombs fell. An English entrepreneur and his mercenary band came across the building. Luckily for them they found that the building contained water that had not been irradiated which is a very rare commodity in the game. They entered and cleared out the feral ghouls that inhabited the place. They discovered that they could siphon off electricity from the D.C. metro line that lay just under the building. From that moment on the settlement was founded on the principal that only those with money, the right amount of caps, could live there.

The community was founded by the 80 year old Allistair Tenpenny a member of the wealthy elite who decides who can live there. He only allows the cream of the D.C. ruins to gain residence. He is originally from the UK and says that he came to America to find fortune. One of the games developers Emil Pagliarulo says that the UK is even worse off than America is after the war. His pastimes include chess, smoking cigars, drinking whiskey, and killing people with a sniper rifle from his balcony. He is one of the few characters who are classified as 'very evil' in the game. To demonstrate this he asks his right hand man Mr. Burke to get the player to destroy the settlement

of Megaton by triggering its bomb. This mass killing is requested because the town is merely an "eyesore".<sup>31</sup>

I find the Tenpenny Tower situation quite perplexing. We don't see where people's wealth comes from. There are plenty of rich people who live in the tower, but we don't see any source of that wealth. We must assume that there is, but the fact we don't see it makes this analysis difficult. There are a few small shops inside the tower but nothing would constitute capitalism developed to any significant point. If we go entirely by what we see then there's no basis for that high level of wealth. We have to assume that since the settlement was founded by an entrepreneur and other merchants, that there is business going on somewhere else that we don't see. We can't see this exchange so I can't really analyze it.

The people living there represent all the prejudices that come with having a class system. They're disdainful of anyone who isn't on their economic level, but tolerant towards the security personnel because they need them. All the nastiness of racist American society lives on in them albeit in a new form. Their prejudice towards Ghouls seems all too similar to the racism displayed towards African-Americans now in the real world. Even if they have the money they're still not welcome in their neighborhood.

### Vault Dwellers

In preparation for the nuclear war that was coming, a company called Vault-Tech created a line of underground survival bunkers called "Vaults". These Vaults were built and spaces in them were sold to anyone who wanted them. Special vaults were created for people with a high priority, be they military and political elite, or had special skills like scientific knowledge or great musical talent. Some were even designed for F.E.V. experimentation like Vault 87 and Vault 108 which was dedicated to cloning "Gary". Vault 106 was dedicated to experimenting with

psychoactive drugs. In many cases the Vaults were used as experiment labs with only the Overseer and perhaps a few others knowing of them. The Overseer is the unelected official which is in charge and control of a Vault.

Now the Vault groups are truly interesting to look at. The Vault dwellers are those who have spent their time underground since the bombs fell. Since the war was 200 years ago there have been successive generations that have lived in these shelters. This means there are entire generations that have never seen the sun or stepped out into the real world. As the game says: *"It was here you were born. It is here you will die because, in Vault 101, no one ever enters and no one ever leaves."* The most immediate thing that pops up to us is the fact that the Vault is entirely self-contained. Each group must out of necessity produce everything for themselves because there is no trade. This absence of trade makes their economic system rather difficult to look at. It is difficult, but not impossible.

The immediate problem is the lack of any supply source. Everything needed in the Vault must also be produced in the Vault. A significant level of infrastructure would have to have been set up in order to accomplish this. We know there is an air recycling system, hydroponics lab, and water filtration system. These would no doubt be labour intensive given that they've lasted 200 years. The thought of any machinery lasting 200 years is nearly unfathomable; they would require constant maintenance and face terrible wear and tear. The second most pressing issue would be labour power. The number of people living in each Vault would be very restricted given the limited resources available. I would have to assume that since men and women lived together there's always the risk of pregnancy which would require some kind of control.

From this we would have to deduce that life would be extremely regimented. There is literally no physical space in which one

could travel away from home. Resources are limited which would definitely require a rationing system. Limited labour power and skilled labour power would necessitate a work assignment system. There would also need to be a strict education system to ensure that future generations had adequate education to maintain all of the Vault system's functions. All of this would make a strict disciplinary organization important.

The relationship to the means of production is what determines a person's class position. In the case of the Vault Dwellers they all pretty much have the same relationship. No one person actually owns them. The Overseer has the most authority over their use, but he does not own them nor is he capable of significantly altering their use without killing the entire population. Marxist analysis simply can't do a class perspective of a Vault because there is nothing in the way of class difference. The leadership role of the Overseer is most certainly an authority, it is not however a class. It is not based on ownership of the means of production and the wealth that flows from it. Marxism was meant to analyze the society as a whole, not a single isolated group of survivors.

### The Oasis

I rather like the people of the Oasis, they're peaceful, don't cause anyone problems, and they're bat shite crazy people who worship a tree. The Oasis is a semi-Anarcho-Primitivist tribal society. They reject all technology with the exception of guns which they keep for their own protection. They forage their own food and hunt their own meat. They have no significant means of production; however this does not mean they are without a mode of production. Everything they need they can make themselves without any social division of labour forming. This means that the mode of production does not structurally create classes.

There is hierarchy of course, the elders which are above the majority, and then there is the "Tree God" which is above everyone. The people of the Oasis have come to see "Him" as deity when in fact he is merely a man named Harold who ended up in an accident with an F.E.V. that caused his biology to merge with that of a tree. According to the story he has been there for two or three decades and has gained the power to "feel" the world through surrounding plants.

The people of the Oasis play a very minimal role in the game and don't give us too much to investigate.

### The Republic of Dave

As a side note there's the one nut job Dave who is the president of his own dictatorial polygamous compound which he calls a republic. The "Republic of Dave" as it is formally known cannot be any more than 46 meters. The "country" operates as a family collective entirely devoid of any currency. The President Dave proudly boasts that they are entirely self-sufficient. The family, meaning all residents (except for maybe one republican soldier) is under the suspiciously dictatorial control of President Dave who holds what appear to be mock elections. He received his position originally from his father who was president before him. Insert lame insult against North Korea here.

### The Pitt

The Pitt is my favourite expansion of Fallout 3 for two reasons:

1. The post-apocalypse industrialization visuals are astounding.
2. There is so much there to write I think I know what the developers were getting at when they created it. This section will be long; there is a ton that I can write about here. The most obvious themes here are industrialization and slavery.

In this add-on, the player character journeys to the industrial raider town called The Pitt, located in the remains of Pittsburgh.

In contrast to Operation: Anchorage, The Pitt involves a more traditional quest line with several morally-ambiguous choices. The main quest involves the player character taking on the role of a slave in order to investigate rumors that the raider boss of The Pitt has discovered a cure for mutations that have plagued many inhabitants of The Pitt.

Some 20 years before the events of Fallout 3, Owyn Lyons led the Brotherhood of Steel's expedition to Washington, D.C. through The Pitt. In one night, the Brotherhood swept through and destroyed the original raider force occupying the town and rid the surrounding area of other "scum," killing anything that puts up a fight. This event is chronicled as "the Scourge". As they cut through the raiders, the Brotherhood also saved several young children, among them Paladin Kodiak, who had not yet been mutated to the extent of The Pitt's adult inhabitants. All the rescued children were brought into the Brotherhood of Steel as initiates. Kodiak is the only remaining survivor from that group of rescued children that is still stationed at the Citadel.

[...]

The back story centers on the actions of Ishmael Ashur. Officially he is Lord Ashur, the ruler of The Pitt and former Brotherhood of Steel Paladin.

Ashur was probably born somewhere on the West Coast of America, as he grew up he became a loyal member of the Brotherhood of Steel, which had not reached as far east as the Pitt at the time. Like most of the Brotherhood he vowed to recover any and all advanced technology.

In 2254 the Brotherhood's ruling council decided to send a contingent of soldiers to the East Coast, with three important objectives. First, to scour the ruins of Washington, D.C., once the nation's capital, and recover any and all advanced technology. Second, to investigate the reports of super mutant activity in the

area. Third, to re-establish contact with the Midwestern Brotherhood of Steel and return them under Lost Hills command. The Midwestern Brotherhood of Steel was formed when a large Brotherhood airship crashed in the area surround Chicago, IL. Initiate Ashur was part of this team of soldiers, under the leadership of one Owyn Lyons, other members of the party included Rothchild, Henry Casdin and Knight Paladin Tristan.

Unable to contact the Midwestern Brotherhood, the Brotherhood pressed on eastwards towards Washington, D.C. During their travels, the Brotherhood came across the disturbingly vile ruins of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Known as The Pitt, city was lawless: rape gangs, raiders, slavers, and many other kinds of horrors all freely wandered and anarchy ruled the streets. The few innocent inhabitants had to scratch out a living in this terrorizing environment, most of whom were either sick or dying from the combined effects of the intense radiation and pollution from pre-war industrial factories damaged by the bombs spewing into the atmosphere.

Horrified by what they saw The Brotherhood then led "The Scourge", a large-scale military action throughout the Pitt, combing the ruins and killing anyone who dared to put up a fight. Due to their sheer superior technological and combat abilities, the Brotherhood sustained virtually no losses but wiped out much of the Pitt's population, by the time The Scourge was over only a handful of raider gangs still existed in the city. Although the intent of the Scourge remains unclear, the Brotherhood took many non-mutated children, such as Paladin Kodiak, from The Pitt and placed into initiate training.

During the Scourge, Paladin Ashur was caught in an explosion in a steel mill and was presumed to be their only casualty, so the Brotherhood left him within the mill and moved forward towards Washington, D.C.. Ashur lay there for hours, but was

soon awoken when he was pulled out of the rubble by scavengers trying to loot his power armor. Ashur impressed them, with some of the scavengers even considering him a god. With the locals not having to worry about the rampant raider gangs which once infested the streets, he brought the many of the scavengers in the area together under his leadership.

Instead of trying to return to the Brotherhood, Ashur decided to found the new city of The Pitt because he was touched by the tenacious locals who had endured great hardship before, during and after the Scourge. Another reason being the fact that it contained the only operational steel mill the Brotherhood had ever run into, allowing the Pitt to produce its own equipment. To gain control, Ashur formed his own gang and using his Brotherhood training and expertise quickly began killing the leaders of remaining raider gangs to establish dominance. Raiders who did not rebel were incorporated into his gang and numbers swelled, his control over the Pitt grew to the point where his territory extended to most of the ruins. Ashur transformed his raider gang into a functioning government under his autocratic rule, rebranding his gang an "army" with the most fierce raiders becoming his lieutenants. With the Pitt firmly under his control, Ashur and his guards occupied a mostly intact skyscraper called Haven as his palace to watch over his city.

However it wasn't long before he realized that raider gangs would not be enough to allow his new civilization to grow. In order to achieve this, Ashur soon started to use slaves (whom he insists on calling "workers" to remind them that they all have a chance at freedom, no matter how slim) as labor and admits he hates to do this, but claims "it has to be done" since most citizens of The Pitt are unable to have children due to the Troglodyte Degeneration Contagion. Most of the non-raider population was enslaved forming a "working class", managed by a brutal "upper class" largely composed of raiders to watch over them and punish dissent. The Pitt began to slowly rebuild, the



slaves made great progress in making things operational in the Pitt again - Ashur eventually started importing slaves and hiring raiders from outside the Pitt area to accommodate the growth.

The Pitt was approached by a scientist named Sandra Kundanika after hearing about its status as an up and coming civilization in the wastes. Instead of being enslaved or attacked by the raiders guarding the city's perimeter, Sandra was welcomed into the Pitt's raider class due to her talents which greatly impressed Ashur, eventually marrying her. A year before 2277 Sandra had become pregnant and gave birth to Ashur's child, a daughter named Marie. In a miraculous stroke of luck, Marie was discovered to possess a special ability that the rest of the Wasteland lacked: she was immune to mutation.

This immunity meant that Marie would not be affected by the Troglodyte Degeneration Contagion, which had been massively blighting the Pitt. Ashur and Sandra quickly set to work on developing a cure for their fellow Pitt inhabitants, hoping that they could finally have a cure. It is hinted that if the cure were to be successfully produced allowing natural population growth, Ashur would greatly re-organize the Pitt by abolishing slavery and granting all its citizens their freedom.<sup>32</sup>

There is a very clear class divide between the people of The Pitt and Ashur and his raiders. Ashur is clearly a dictator who holds power over the slaves. What we need to understand here is the meaning of dictatorship. The common belief is that dictator is a single person who holds power over an entire country. This isn't true a single person could not hold such control. All dictators that have existed have relied on a class of people who support them. In the case of a military dictatorship it would be other high ranking members. In other societies like Nazi Germany it was heads of science, industrial capitalists and bankers. These individuals wielded the power in society the productive forces and the financial system. Their ownership created all the wealth

and determined its distribution. Saddam Hussein was surrounded by such individuals as well. In addition he also kept many people who were from the same tribe as higher ranking people in government. Saddam like Ashur built their path to their particular position through violence. There are any parallels between Saddam and Ashur. Without this class of powerful individuals their control would collapse. Fortunately for Ashur there isn't any banking or finance to speak of so he doesn't need a person controlling it. He does also recognize the power of limited trade, though I assume this is mostly for his own luxury and those of his subordinates. He instead holds an entire military organization that stands in for a traditional governmental structure.

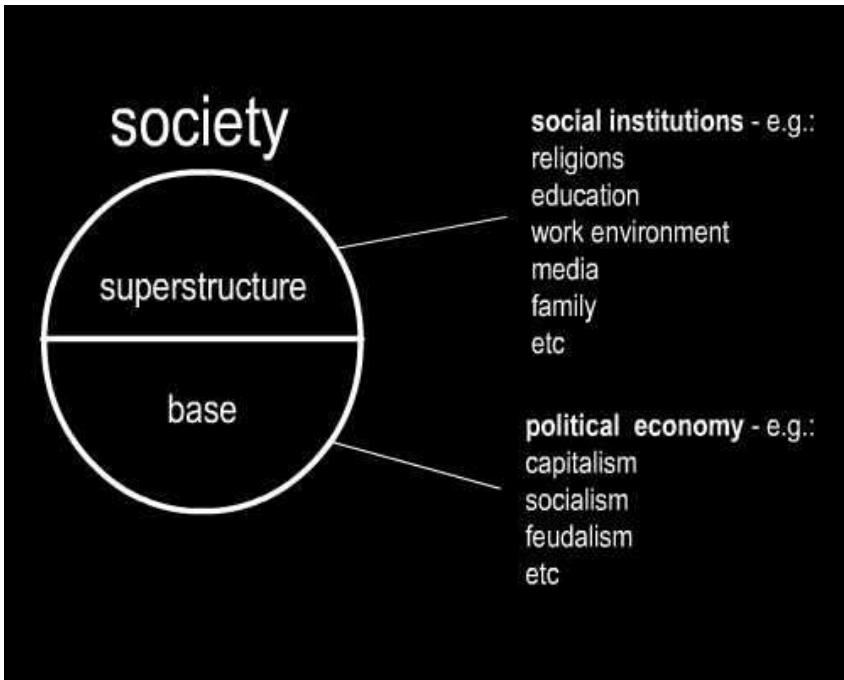
This lack of a financial aspect is where Ashur diverges from Hitler and Saddam. The Pitt's economy is not like that of a capitalist system. The settlement is more like slavery than a system primarily based on exchange. All dictators realize that they need an economy in order to function, all countries need one. The difference here is that in this post-apocalyptic society he is faced with different material conditions. He isn't concerned with building a strong economy he's interesting in building a military force to gain power. Ashur gives a radio speech to the slaves where makes it clear that the Pitt doesn't make its own food. *"You build the weapons to arm the soldiers; soldiers use the weapons to keep you safe and bring back food. We depend on each other!"* *"We all work; some in the Mill, making weapons, some in the alleys, defending the city, some in the wasteland, raiding for our food, but we all work."* This is most likely due to the industrial pollution that has severely contaminated the area. The water under the bridge that leads to the Pitt is extremely irradiated, sometimes over 1,500 rads.

As we saw previously,

*"So long as the productivity of labour remains at a level one man can only produce enough for his own subsistence, social division does not take place and any social differentiation within a society is impossible. Under these conditions, all men are producers and they are all on the same economic level."<sup>33</sup>*

From this we see the clear class divide in the Pitt society, those who toil and those who do not. Ashur and his lieutenants do not work. The productivity of those who do create the conditions that alleviates them from having to. Aside from this we can see a quasi-class distinction between the slaves and everyone else. The slavers don't work in the same sense; they merely stand by and watch to make sure the slaves do. This is a little bit more complicated but we should stand by analyzing people's relationship to the means of production. The slavers, the city defenders, merchants, and food raiders are all free to leave the Pitt at anytime no longer working. The slaves on the other hand cannot. They are by force kept tied to the means of production and their use to alleviate others from having to do so. I would have to say there is a class distinction between the slaves and non-slaves with Ashur and his lieutenants with greater authority. It is this distinction in people's relationship to the means of production, the freedom to come and go.

All class distinctions have a social manifestation. These are also known as the social relations of production. The position on the class system determines the social relations. In Marxism we understand this determination process as the superstructure and the base.



*In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces.*

*The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite form of social consciousness.*

*The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general.*

*It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.*

*At a certain stage in their development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – what is but a legal expression for the same thing – the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto.*

*From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution.*

*With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed.*

*In considering such transformations, a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the material conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophical – in short ideological – forms in which men become conscious of the conflict and fight it out.*

*... We do not judge a period of transformation by its consciousness; on the contrary this consciousness must itself be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflicts between the social productive forces and the relations of production.*

*In broad outlines Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern bourgeois modes of production can be designated as progressive epochs in the economic foundation of society.<sup>134</sup>*

The class divide between people in the Pitt certainly does manifest itself in the game. The most immediate one visible to the player is terrible manner in which the slavers treat the slaves. The slaves are the forced labour who does not have a

choice, treated much like work animals. This treatment dehumanizes them leading them to being treated like cattle. The slavers are known to kill slaves for fun; they threaten them, and brutalize them. They are treated as lesser people whose wants, needs, and humanity are ignored in favour of getting the job done. This is quite similar to what we see in capitalism. The capitalist class doesn't care about us trying to make our bills and pay our rent. They don't care when we can't afford education. They wring their hands in anticipation of more profits when we get pay cuts, bumped down to part time, are given more work for same pay, or laid off. Slave/slaver relationship creates a greater class divide than the worker/capitalist one does. This is why we see a greater level of harsh treatment towards slaves than towards workers.

These same social relations manifest themselves in the housing as well. In all cities we have the "rich end of the city" and the "poor end of the city", with a suburb for a middle class outside of it. This segregation is caused by the economic system itself and its wage labour function. We see this two with the Pitt. The slavers, merchants, soldiers, scavengers, Ashur live in the area called Uptown. The slaves all live in the Downtown section. Then economic relations of production, the fact they are forced slaves determines that their housing is the same as well. They live behind fences, chains and locks. Their relationship to the means of production is reflected quite accurately in their living conditions. The economic system requires that they be forced, thus the system provides a housing situation that facilitates that requirement.

I do notice some interesting manifestations of the social relations in the Pitt society. Ashur like all dictators claims to represent the interests of the people. His claim is no truer than theirs are. In this regard he is like Hitler. He sees the crimes and inhumanity he is carrying out as a path towards a better world, a

world based on his view of what it should be. He is known to make grandiose speeches to get this point across.

*"Citizens of The Pitt, workers of Downtown, traders of Uptown, and all fierce souls who do what must be done! I bring you good news! We stand at the dawn of a new golden age. Where others merely survive, we thrive! Our industry is the envy of the Commonwealth! Our safety is the envy of the Capital Wastes! Our might is the envy of Ronto! And while I have led your efforts, it has been by your own strength that you have earned all of the envy of the world. They envy the steel shaped by the workers in our mills, and they envy the strength of our traders and raiders who wield that steel for The Pitt. And most of all, they envy our victories in the struggle for freedom. Because, yes, freedom is what we all work towards. Freedom from fear, freedom from disease, freedom to live as once we did before we were shackled by atomic fire! And so, to celebrate this struggle, I ask my loyal workers: who among you is prepared to fight for your freedom? Who among you will risk your life in the crucible to create a new life of freedom in Uptown? Who will take this rare chance to thrive?"<sup>35</sup>*

This is what he says to the slaves as he stands over them asking them to engage in a fight to the death. He uses odd revolutionary sounding language in his radio broadcasts like making the ruling class of the D.C. wastes tremble. There is no ruling class there; the people who work in the Pitt are not free. Ashur claims he wants to end slavery when people can finally reproduce when the cure is found. We don't know if this is true because the game doesn't go on that long. These attempts to give a veneer of social relations are not very effective. The slaves are well aware that they are slaves. They are oppressed and they know it.

All classes have antagonisms between them; in this case it's the oppression the upper class carries out upon the slaves. We see the slaves conspiring against Ashur to overthrow him. The add on is about a man named Wernher attempting to do just that, overthrow Ashur and usher in a new order. This antagonism between the slaves and their masters has reached a fever pitch where violence threatens to break out and the player has the option of being that spark that starts the prairie fire.

All of this is the drive towards a new industrial revolution as Ashur puts it. I can see a clear comparison here to the supposed "forced industrialization" by Stalin. Ashur, like Stalin, like everyone who isn't an idiot, knows that poverty is dealt with through industrialization. No country can possibly raise its living standards without the industrialization process. I suppose there could have been a developer who used this as an inspiration for it. However I'd like to point out the difference between the two.

Ashur is building an army to take over the wasteland. He is focused entirely on military industrial production, mostly in ammunition. He is seeking war in order to obtain more power and more control. Stalin on the other hand was following up on the plan that was in place since the Bolshevik Revolution was carried out. These two industrializations have different goals. The Soviet Union was interested in achieving communism as a form of society. This requires the transformation of the human consciousness. The industrialization process that people experience makes that transformation, the "New Man" as Che Guevara put it. All true communist leaders have understood this. No such transformation is being sought by Ashur. He is just oppressing a population for his own glory and vision, similar to what Hitler did. These are two completely different things. The class nature of Ashur and his slaves is what makes the difference between them and the dictatorship of the proletariat of the Soviet Union where people worked to create a better world through building up the country.



# Section 4:

# New California Republic



## Introduction

New California (officially the New California Republic, often abbreviated to NCR) is a fairly large, democratic federation based in California, with holdings in Nevada, Oregon, Mexico (Baja) and along the Colorado River. The NCR emphasizes and claims to support a myriad of old world values, such as democracy, personal liberty, and the rule of law. It also strives to restore the general order of the wasteland, the improvement and development of infrastructure and economic systems, and a basic common peace between the people. Though appearing to be a benevolent entity of governance, the ability to control the land it claims to protect, the fidelity of those who live under their rule, and the widespread corruption within their political system has been questioned by many, without a clear response by the NCR themselves.

The New California Republic was born from the remnants of the survivors of Vault 15 and the small walled community they founded, Shady Sands. Under the leadership of Aradesh, and with the assistance of the Vault Dweller (who saved Tandi, Aradesh's daughter and a future president of the NCR), the community prospered. Trade routes with other settlements allowed cultural exchange, and a movement to form a national entity gradually took root and won popular acceptance. In 2186,

the town of Shady Sands changed its name to "New California Republic" and formed a trial council government to draft a constitution. Four more settlements joined the council, and in 2189 the NCR was voted into existence as a sprawling federation of five states: Shady Sands, Los Angeles, Maxson, The Hub, and Dayglow.

By post-apocalyptic standards, the NCR is a paragon of economic success and good ethical character: political enfranchisement, rule of law, a reasonable degree of physical security, and a standard of living better than mere subsistence are daily realities for its 700,000+ citizens. Currently, the NCR is in a state of transition, with rapid economic growth and a sea change in political leadership endangering its grand humanitarian ideals. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Mojave, where the occupation of Hoover Dam has improved access to electricity and water, but at the cost of straining its budget and embroiling its armed forces in a morally corrosive imperialist project.

The NCR government's aim is to annex New Vegas as the republic's newest state. While it already controls Hoover Dam, its treaty with Mr. House and the three families compels it to allot 5% of the dam's electrical and water production to local use free of charge. Adding insult to injury, the NCR is locked into protecting New Vegas from invasion by Caesar's Legion even as it receives not one cap in tax revenue from the Strip's highly lucrative resort operations. NCR citizens in the Mojave have largely come here for economic reasons, whether as paid citizen soldiers or as prospectors and fortune-seekers.

### Social Organization

The NCR is by many measures pretty close to being a modern day republic. They have a relatively traditional American political structure holding elections on a regular basis. It has its differences due to the economic structure. The base (as opposed to the superstructure) has a greater variety than we see in the

United States today. Most of the political and economic activity is centered on the Core Region where the wealthiest of citizens reside. This is where many of the powerful elite can be found and it's the base of political maneuvering as the brokers of power concentrate their wealth there. Outside the main "city" lives the majority of the NCR population. Many of them are just regular people or "settlers" who wander into the realm of the NCR looking for protection. Economically these fringes are made up of mercantile traders and small farmers. These people economically interact with the NCR by paying taxes; in return they receive protection from the various threats of the post-apocalyptic world. These people are considered to be "citizens". Usually the most efficient means by which to gain this protection is to have a settlement (or small community) become a part of the NCR itself. However it should be held as questionable how many of these settlements have voluntarily done so. There appears to be a history of some being forced into the NCR against their will.

As I said, the government is relatively patterned off the pre-war United States government. Like today it is divided into the three branches of legislative, executive and judicial.

*"The legislative branch is the Congress, staffed by representatives elected by their states and senators, forming two houses: House of Representatives and the Senate. The Congressmen use a variety of titles: "Councilor," "Counselor," "Councilman," "Representative," and "Senator." In particular, the Hub (in its own obstinate way) prefers to call their representatives "Governors." The executive branch is the Republic council, headed by the President and Vice-President. The President and Vice-President are elected by NCR citizens, with advice from the Congress. Last, the judicial branch comprises courts and judges ruling in accor-*

*dance with NCR's adapted version of American common law.*"<sup>36</sup>

Life can vary depending on where you live within the NCR. In the city limits there are strict regulations on weapons possession, prostitution, slavery, and gambling. These are not permitted where the authority of the NCR is the strongest. Once outside the city limits the rules change as does the culture to a degree. Life in the Mojave Wasteland is different due mostly to the absence of policing and military personnel. The laws are much more flexible and some are even removed. I see this being for primarily two reasons: to accommodate the less developed and more fragile economics of the countryside, and the lack of an ability to effectively enforce it. It would seem as though they lack the manpower to keep everyone in line to the degree that they wish to.

The NCR is unique in its economic make up. It has large agrarian interests next to small commodity farmers. It has a significant wealthy mercantile class who gain their riches from commercial exchanges. In other areas criminal organizations hold economic power. Each of these groups exerts some influence over the society and its political structure.

*"In theory, this is a sound and well-balanced system, but in practice every state tries to assert its independence and work toward furthering its own agenda. There is a great amount of friction between the states of Hub and Shady Sands, usually related to trade rights and caravan routes, while New Reno remains dominated by various criminal interests. Significant pressure is exerted upon the political and economic direction of the NCR by a variety of private interests: in particular, the brahmin barons whose wealth gives them great influence at the ballot box and whose needs are often placed first by officials seeking support in their political ambitions.*

*With the armed forces, the Gun Runners gain special dispensation and influence as they are the primary contributor to NCR's weapon arsenal. Elsewhere, monopolies like the Crimson Caravan and similar trading families dominate the trade routes and use their wealth to gain influence with the NCR government and extort large amounts of money. Smaller competitors who are unable to compete with both the larger competition as well as the high taxes are inevitably muscled out."<sup>37</sup>*

This is not totally unlike our modern capitalist system where competing interests among the capitalist class appear alongside each other grasping for power. For example in America today we saw the furious debate over the Obamacare proposal. On one hand there was a section of the capitalist class, medical supply manufacturers, insurance companies, privately run medical institutions, and financial firms who invest in the medical field. The guarantee of people receiving health care through state funding means the previously listed people will be getting a lot more money for services. Meaning they have a tremendous profit motive in influencing the government to go forward with the program. On the other hand of was all the commercial and industrial interests that would end up paying a little more out in business costs to afford the changes. It is in their profit motive interest to influence the government not to push it through. The NCR is not much different in this respect, they too have competing moneyed interests. What is economically good for one group is not necessarily good for another.

### Contradiction Between The Mojave Wasteland and the Core Region

Contradictions in the NCR are also manifested between the city and the countryside. The people in the countryside produce the agriculture and livestock that the city people enjoy. Meanwhile

they receive much less of the social product and the benefits of the abstract labour due to their distance from the political core. This leads to differing living standards, particularly in the realm of electricity, access to medical and governmental services as well as police and military protection. As it says in the game *"...a lot of the power is invested in particular individuals in the cities back west, citizens at the frontier regions often feel like they are not listened to and are forgotten about."* Many have the opinion that they produce for the cities that ignore them. They pay taxes to those same cities and receive little benefit in return.

What is this contradiction and where does it come from? This antagonistic contradiction can appear in any class-based system. It makes itself manifest in its particular level of economic development, that being the productive forces, education, science, and culture. The separation of the city and the countryside first appeared when the productive forces developed to a point where a "serious" division of labour came into existence. The new degree of the division of labour separated some of the social labour from each other. A portion of it became centralized in the cities. As capital required a centralization of labour for production it drew a portion of the people away from farming and agriculture into what was the beginnings of the "industrial sector". The antagonistic relationship between the countryside and the city manifests itself differently given the level of socioeconomic development. *"However, the opposition between city and countryside is always an opposition between the ruling classes of the city and the working people of the countryside, between the ruling classes of the city and countryside, and between the ruling classes of the countryside and the working people of the city."*<sup>38</sup>

The city has always been oppressive towards the countryside; the former exploits the latter in their relationship in the production of the social product. This has always taken place throughout history via monopoly prices as Marx described, *"the*

*town exploits the land economically with its system of taxation, its guild organization, its direct commercial fraudulence, and its usury," although the countryside at that time "exploits the town politically wherever feudalism has not been broken down by exceptional urban development, as in Italy".<sup>39</sup>*

This antagonism reaches its highest development with capitalism when the oppression of the countryside becomes total encompassing the economy, politics and culture. Capitalist relations appear in the countryside under the influence of the cities. The process of urbanization drives people off their land and into the cities looking for work. The population of the city grows increasing with power while the population of the countryside shrinks losing power. *"It is in the nature of capitalist production to continually reduce the agricultural population as compared with the nonagricultural population, because in industry ... the increase of constant capital at the expense of variable capital goes hand in hand with an absolute increase in variable capital despite its relative decrease; on the other hand, in agriculture the variable capital required for the exploitation of a certain plot of land decreases absolutely; it can thus only increase to the extent that new land is taken into cultivation, but this again requires as a prerequisite a still greater growth of the non-agrarian population".<sup>40</sup>*

In the development of cities there is a concentration of wealth, education, and culture that engenders backwardness and poverty in the countryside. This creates a further divide of mental and manual labour between the two. This was laid out by Karl Marx in *The German Ideology*:

*"The greatest division of material and mental labour is the separation of town and country. The antagonism between town and country begins with the transition from barbarism to civilisation, from tribe to State, from*

*locality to nation, and runs through the whole history of civilisation to the present day [...].*

*The existence of the town implies, at the same time, the necessity of administration, police, taxes, etc.; in short, of the municipality, and thus of politics in general. Here first became manifest the division of the population into two great classes, which is directly based on the division of labour and on the instruments of production. The town already is in actual fact the concentration of the population, of the instruments of production, of capital, of pleasures, of needs, while the country demonstrates just the opposite fact, isolation and separation. The antagonism between town and country can only exist within the framework of private property. It is the most crass expression of the subjection of the individual under the division of labour, under a definite activity forced upon him — a subjection which makes one man into a restricted town-animal, the other into a restricted country-animal, and daily creates anew the conflict between their interests. Labour is here again the chief thing, power over individuals, and as long as the latter exists, private property must exist. The abolition of the antagonism between town and country is one of the first conditions of communal life, a condition which again depends on a mass of material premises and which cannot be fulfilled by the mere will, as anyone can see at the first glance. The separation of town and country can also be understood as the separation of capital and landed property, as the beginning of the existence and development of capital independent of landed property — the beginning of property having its basis only in labour and exchange.*"<sup>41</sup>

Because of this very real oppression Lenin was the first to recognize the importance of the peasantry in the development



of revolution. He made it quite clear that the Revolution needed the peasants if they were to be successful. He said it required the development of their social consciousness because they themselves were a force. I see a kind of similarity with Mao Tse-tung here. Mao called the peasant movement a wave and they had to be at the fore leading it. Trotskyists try to project their racist and prejudiced views onto Lenin by claiming he said they were reactionary, referring to his description of the middle-peasant. Enver Hoxha makes a similar error when he falsely claims Mao let the peasants run the Chinese revolution. Both Trotsky and Hoxha are incorrect and bastardize the words of these leaders who understood the peasants. This is why the Bolsheviks used the motto: "Peace, Land and Bread", it was intended to include everyone, those who were anti-war, the peasants who wanted land, and those who were suffering from the Czar's starvation and oppression.

Lenin made it clear that we are to support the peasantry.

*"The peasantry wants land and freedom. There can be no two opinions on this score. All class-conscious workers support the revolutionary peasantry with all their might. All class-conscious workers want and are fighting for the peasantry to receive all the land and full freedom. "All the land" means not putting up with any partial concessions and hand-outs; it means reckoning, not on a compromise between the peasantry and the landlords, but on abolition of landed estates. And the party of the class-conscious proletariat, the Social-Democrats, have most vigorously pro claimed this view: at its Third Congress held last May, the R.S.D.L.P. adopted a resolution directly declaring for support of the peasants' revolutionary demands, including confiscation of all privately-owned estates. This resolution clearly shows that the party of the class-conscious workers supports the peasants' demand for*

*all the land. And in this respect the content of the resolution adopted at the conference of the other half of our Party fully coincides with that of the resolution passed by the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*"<sup>42</sup>

For the NCR there is no desire to end the antagonistic contradiction. Capitalism, (which we may say there is to a small degree in the NCR) does not resolve, but perpetuates such divides. It is a system of classes standing in opposition to each other with only their own interests at heart. Mao understood this and saw that the peasantry of China was as much more complex and nuanced than Lenin saw it in his conditions in Russia. China was different as it was much more rural than Russia was. Up to 85% of China's population was peasants with varying relationships to the means of production and degrees of oppression and exploitation. Wang Ming who led the party before Mao insisted that the industrial workers must be the vanguard of the people to fight for liberation. This reduced the possibilities of action down to 10% of the population. This endeavour obviously failed because there was no significant revolutionary base. They failed at their attempt and were nearly wiped out militarily. It was Mao who argued that they take what was to become known as the Long March in order to save them from extinction. A six thousand mile journey later they resettled in the countryside and Mao began his investigation into the conditions of the peasants and the countryside. He took over as leader of the party and reoriented the Revolution to guiding the peasantry.

*"Mao had analyzed the concrete conditions in China on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and also the fundamental theses of Lenin and Stalin on the Chinese Revolution, and had determined that while the revolution had been set back, various circumstances existed that allowed the establishment of rural base areas surrounded by the enemy in different parts of*

*China. Closely connected to this was the question of the peasants, whom Mao correctly stated had to be the main (not leading) force in the revolution during its democratic stage. Central to building up these base areas was mobilizing the peasantry under the leadership of the Communist Party and carrying out the agrarian revolution.*

*Wang Ming bitterly opposed Mao on these basic theses, as well as on numerous political and military questions that flowed from them. Like Hoxha, Wang Ming railed against Mao's thesis that in China the cities must be encircled by the countryside. Like Hoxha, Wang could not understand the ebbs and flows of the revolution and instead presented a picture of a constantly favorable objective situation with only the subjective factor being necessary to lead an immediate successful onslaught on reactionary power. Wang Ming led the Party in a wrong military, political and ideological line that led to defeat by Chiang Kai-shek in his Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression Campaign," a defeat which forced the Red Army to retreat in the famous Long March. As a result of this "left" opportunist line, large numbers of the Communist Party and revolutionary army, as well as base areas, were wiped out."<sup>43</sup>*

Mao by no means allowed the peasantry to lead the Revolution. He said they were a force for change and they (the party) wanted to be in leadership of it, "There are three alternatives. To march at their head and lead them? To trail behind them, gesticulating and criticizing? Or to stand in their way and oppose them? Every Chinese is free to choose, but events will force you to make the choice quickly."<sup>44</sup>

There is also sharecropping, it's a system of agriculture in which a landowner allows a tenant to use the land in return for a share

of the crops produced on the land. Sharecropping has a long history and there are a wide range of different situations and types of agreements that have used a form of system. Some are governed by tradition and others by law. Legal contract systems such as the Italian *mezzadria*, or the Islamic system of *muqasat*, occur widely.

These sharecroppers of the NCR have a unique position as well, they are like transitive proletarians. They're not truly proletarian because of their temporary status; and more like settlers because they're working towards being able to own land there. They are NCR citizens brought in to do the farming that needs done to support the occupation and military campaign. They aren't really commodity producers because they have no right to what they produce, rather a wage that keeps them alive while they are there. A good comparison could be made to the Australians; they arrived as prisoners but could work the land or mines until they were able to homestead. (This can also be applied to miners that work in the Mojave as well.)

Of course the NCR sees none of this. Since they are at least a pseudo-capitalist state they have no ability to see the antagonistic contradiction that they may lead to their down fall. This is the one edge Caesar's Legion has over the NCR. Their society (minus the slavery) has little in the way of divide and contradictions among various groups because (again outside of slaveholding) they don't exist. However they do still have their contradictions with outside forces in the greater society, many of which manifest themselves more antagonistically than they do with the NCR due to their brutal and violent nature.

This war is like all war, essentially political in nature. As the imperialists struggle for power the bourgeoisie struggle for profit and influence in it. The people are essentially left behind and ignored. Only those who can exert an influence matter. If you're not a trader or farmer you're pretty alienated. This is why

we see the most dissatisfaction with the NCR among regular people.

### Settler-Colonizer State

The NCR was born out of the survivors of Vault 15, which means they all were raised on American exceptionalism. I think this is a fair assumption given that America was in a state war when they went into the vaults. When they came out of the Vault their desire was to form a new society based on many of their (now) old world values. For example bourgeois democracy, personal liberty, and the rule of law, etc. In many people's eyes and its current manifestation, it takes the form of jingoism, or nationalism with militant foreign policy. We can see a great deal of patriotism in the NCR's operations and appearance, and not just because we mostly encounter the military in the game. NCR flags are prominently displayed and people talk of allegiance to the Republic. From this I am not surprised that their actions mirror that of colonial America. The people, or at least those in power, seek new territory so they go out and take it. This is the logic and necessity of almost all nations. (This is particularly so when their basis is the American exceptionalist mentality.)

As the Republic grew so did the needs of its society, this is only logical, the greater your population the greater your need for resources are. The problem is that in system of "free and fair exchange" you can't always get what you want or need. Thus those in power have a choice, they can either accept the inevitable destabilization and failure, or they can take what they need by force. In history this has manifested itself in imperialism and colonialism. It is the forceful taking of resources and land for one's personal or societal benefit. The greatest comparison there is for the NCR is settler-colonial United States. The NCR's move into New Vegas matches many parallels with the British colonists and pilgrims moving into the so-called "New World". Upon arrival the NCR finds that there are various tribes living on

the land they want. Some of these are The Great Khans, The Kings, Jackals, Omertas, Boomers, White Glove Society, and vipers. Like colonial America the NCR undertook a slow campaign of genocide against the tribes. Each tribe was forced off their land relocating to much harsher territory taking on many hardships. The tribes attempted to resist the NCR but lacked the technological capability and professional training the NCR settlers had. While many battles were fierce, the tribes never really stood a chance of victory in the end. The NCR had great resources to draw upon given the size of their empire stretching back to California. The tribes ended up like Native Americans today, living on very small patches of land like reserves, except the NCR victims have no legal standing and know the NCR will be back to finish the job.

A great metaphor that appears in the game is the desperate last stand of the Khans before they were weakened beyond recovery. *"In the past century, Bitter Springs was used by the Great Khans as a semi-permanent community. Due to prolonged conflict with the NCR, the Great Khans were eventually tracked back to Bitter Springs by NCR forces. The assault that rapidly followed was known as the Bitter Springs Massacre due to the NCR's 1st Recon mistakenly shooting down dozens of young, old, and wounded Khans who attempted to escape through a southern slot canyon from a location called Coyote Tail Ridge. Today, Bitter Springs hosts refugees from settlements Caesar's Legion are razing; a situation that is becoming increasingly untenable."*<sup>45</sup> The metaphor is for Wounded Knee.

"The Wounded Knee Massacre occurred on December 29, 1890, near Wounded Knee Creek (Lakota: Čhaŋkpé Ópi Wakpála) on the Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in the U.S. state of South Dakota. On the day before, a detachment of the U.S. 7th Cavalry Regiment commanded by Major Samuel M. Whitside intercepted Spotted Elk's band of Miniconjou Lakota and 38 Hunkpapa Lakota near Porcupine Butte and escorted them five

miles westward (8 km) to Wounded Knee Creek, where they made camp.

"The remainder of the 7th Cavalry Regiment arrived, led by Colonel James W. Forsyth and surrounded the encampment supported by four Hotchkiss guns.

"On the morning of December 29, the troops went into the camp to disarm the Lakota. One version of events claims that during the process of disarming the Lakota, a deaf tribesman named Black Coyote was reluctant to give up his rifle, claiming he had paid a lot for it. A scuffle over Black Coyote's rifle escalated and a shot was fired which resulted in the 7th Cavalry's opening fire indiscriminately from all sides, killing men, women, and children, as well as some of their own fellow soldiers. The Lakota warriors who still had weapons began shooting back at the attacking soldiers, who quickly suppressed the Lakota fire. The surviving Lakota fled, but U.S. cavalrymen pursued and killed many who were unarmed.

"By the time it was over, at least 150 men, women, and children of the Lakota had been killed and 51 were wounded (4 men, 47 women and children, some of whom died later); some estimates placed the number of dead at 300. Twenty-five soldiers also died, and 39 were wounded (6 of the wounded would later die). At least twenty soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor."<sup>46</sup>

The tribal's of the Mojave have all been treated poorly by the NCR and their quest to conquer territory, some better than others. Some tribes have managed to avoid some devastation by holding up inside the New Vegas Strip. The Kings have managed to scrape by. Others like the White Gloves have made a fairly good living for themselves in casino gambling. We see another parallel here, the largest source of revenue for many Native American Nations is also casino gambling. The NCR has semi-absorbed those tribal's willing to co-operate into the new society, and it has massacred those who have refused. This has

been the United States government's policy towards Native Americans.

The NCR and the United States both have the colonizer mentality. They believe that they have some sort of right to just take the land and resources of people's and force them off of it. There are all kinds of justifications for this, religion, manifest destiny, perceived superiority, White man's burden. Whatever the pretext, it has always been about trade, money and resources. Marx lays it out so well in Capital volume one.

*"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and the entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production."<sup>47</sup>*

This has always remained true, the nature of colonialism is profit making. It is the theft of resources and land (nowadays labour power as well) with the goal of trading and production in mind. It is the expansion of capital beyond the borders of one country needing the benefits of another. If this is not handed over peacefully, it is taken by force. Of course the economic relations of the colonized and the colonizer are different.

*"At home, in the mother country, the smug deceitfulness of the political economist can turn this relation of absolute dependence [between the capitalist and the worker] into a free contract between buyer and seller...But in the colonies this beautiful illusion is torn aside."<sup>48</sup>*

The colonized people are under very direct and open exploitation, not hidden behind a system of exchange like it is in the



society of the colonizer. The colonized people can look forward to being beaten and whipped if they don't show up for a job they probably never consented to. They may even face a local government under the control of the colonizer to carry out such actions. The indigenous can expect their land to be stolen from them in a very direct way. In modern times a lack of ability to compete with the global market is what forces peasants off of their land. They then flood into the cities looking for work.

A good question to ask next is why does capital in our day and age need to do this? Is it simple greed? Or is there an aspect of capitalism that forces them to do so?

It is a matter of fact that capitalism needs to constantly expand. Even pre-capitalist colonial times needed to expand, although it did work differently economically. A prime example way to explain this is by looking at the industrial (or business) cycle and how it functions. For brevity we'll assume that an economy is chugging along at full speed and is about to hit the wall where it goes into recession.

All of the greatness of capitalism has reached its limit. The economy has expanded to its maximum and there is nowhere to go but down. The banks, financial institutions, and government are aware of what is taking place and have been for some time. At this moment they're planning the best way to ride out the crash that is about to begin and probably already has. Recessions are different all the time and they vary in intensity and the speed in which they occur. Regardless, it has begun and the elite are scrambling to keep their heads above water. The working and middle-class, for the most part, are blissfully unaware that tens of millions of them are about to be thrown out of work.

In the US it is traditional for the crisis to begin in the housing construction sector. Most obviously it begins when credit for housing construction begins to contract and it becomes

increasingly difficult to get mortgages. The building of houses slows and soon this spreads to other areas like automobiles and other sectors of industrial production. Buying a house usually involves buying a ton of other commodities along with it. Home ownership being such a cultural value in the US demonstrates its power by being able to affect so many other commodity sectors.

As the production of these commodities slows the demand for the Department I commodities which produce them begin to slide. Auto manufacturing has a great reliance on Department I products given how automated the industry is. With reduced production comes a reduced number of labourers as unemployment begins to rise, albeit slowly.

A key point here to remember is that overproduction is beginning. This overproduction cannot occur on a large crisis-prone scale unless large credit expansion allows it too. There is an over-trading that is taking place that is possible because of this credit.

This expansion has reached its limit and is threatening to pop and fall right back in line with the actual token and metallic money in existence. Credit is becoming increasingly harder to come by and this does not go unnoticed. At some point credit stops, it contracts. Now all those sales that were taking place because of credit alone suddenly dry up leaving demand in a sudden dead stop. Consumer commodities begin piling up in the warehouses and store shelves.

Unfortunately the bourgeois still think there is hope for the economy. Capital spending is still high and companies are announcing that they are intending to make investments in the near future. If things are about to go back, why would this be taking place? Or, sometimes they think this spending will be enough to avoid crisis altogether. Despite how they feel capital has proven to be a lagging indicator. Just because someone says they have a plan to expand or upgrade production doesn't mean

that recession isn't about to take place or avoid it. Bourgeois economics in this regard is very odd. When capitalists are trying to figure out how the future looks, they look at other capitalists and see what they're doing. If they're being positive, they become positive as well. Everybody assumes that everybody else knows what they're doing. The increase in capital spending can actually have the opposite of its intended effect. It creates more excess capacity.

With the decrease in sales excess commodity production capacity begins to appear. First it will arrive in Department II goods particularly in luxuries as they're the first commodities people will cease purchasing. The lack of demand has a domino-like effect that eventually spreads to Department I goods. These can be held off because they're not necessities like many Department II goods are. Further production of Department I goods can be put off until a profitability in their production returns.

The extent of the excess productive capacity is determined by how long and how bad the crisis gets. If it is a major depression there will be a tremendous amount excess productive capacity. The degree to which the economy shrinks can give us some kind of an idea as to how much there is. A slowdown in the economy is very different from the Great Depression as it was from the 2001 crisis of the dot com bubble.

The stage is now set for the crisis to start going full gear. The reduction in the luxury end of Department II goods and some of the Department I goods now begin to spread. The snowball-effect of falling profitability and unemployment start the vicious cycle. Now consumer spending has dropped considerably due to a freeze in credit and a loss of worker wages. Department I commodity production begins to suffer in full as entire industries are failing. Once again we are at the point where the entire economy is in crisis and every industry is in jeopardy, except of

course the gold producer. The bourgeois economists have now been proven wrong. They believe that capital spending is a sign of economic health. As long as reinvestment or new investment remains strong then there is no problem and recession is averted. The worst for this are Keynesians who actually believe that low capital spending is what causes crisis. If the capital spending stays strong there is no recession in their eyes.

Of course this has been proven not to be true. The very fact that the economy has become increasingly reliant on credit-money to keep up demand for commodities instead of token money shows to be fallacious. If it were not the case then effective demand wouldn't require consumer credit. If people could afford these commodities they wouldn't be racking up so much debt on their credit cards and other loans. The production of commodities has already exceeded the ability of consumers to purchase them. This continued consumption using credit gives the false impression of prosperity. Marx called this "fictitious prosperity".

Keynesians denying this is simply ridiculous. A very obvious observation would be that you couldn't over produce something if you didn't have an excess ability to produce it. Any "trick" that keeps up demand beyond the actual ability of consumers to consume, and any investment of capital in the ability to produce for it, inevitably causes overproduction to exacerbate.

The closer to the peak of the boom the cycle gets the fiercer the competition for the shrinking credit becomes. All businesses, governments, consumers etc. are trying to get a hold of it. The more industrial capitalists monopolize the remaining credit to finance capital spending, the less there will be for consumers who actually purchase commodities.

There are more problems caused by the competition and contraction of the credit supply. The government too is affected by it. When it borrows money it will be getting it at a higher rate of

interest. It will make servicing that debt more expensive. During this time a government is more likely to borrow money as well and given their power in the economy they make the supply of credit even tighter.

What capitalism needs here is space to expand even more, but the economy has physical limits as well as economic ones. Cheaper and cheaper resources must be captured in order to suppress the falling rate of profit, and to keep ahead of the competition by making production cheaper.

Here it is good to turn to Lenin:

*"Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites, when the features of the epoch of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had taken shape and revealed themselves in all spheres. Economically, the main thing in this process is the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition is the basic feature of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and forcing out small industry, replacing large-scale by still larger-scale industry, and carrying concentration of production and capital to the point where out of it has grown and is growing monopoly: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks, which manipulate thousands of millions. At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of*

*free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist above it and alongside it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.*"<sup>49</sup>

Of course we cannot say that the NCR is a capitalist state, but we can say that it is as close as anything in the *Fallout* universe. Thus we don't see a full on Lenin-type imperialism, but this gives you some idea as to why it is still happening.

There is another reason why the NCR has to expand its sphere of control. One of the scientists Thomas Hildern the Director of Operations of the Office of Science and Industry (OSI) East, living in Camp McCarran has a warning. In his research he's come to the conclusion that their current way of life is not sustainable. The low level of agricultural development is fragile and slowly eroding. According to his estimations the NCR is headed for a famine in about a decade. It's likely that too many resources have been pulled away from development and placed into military conquest.

It's a contradiction: the NCR must continually expand in order to preserve itself from external enemies gaining power, but at the same time that war economy use of resources is taking away from where those resources are needed for sustaining themselves. Their constant drive for survival is undermining their ability to survive (in other words contradiction). We see this phenomenon in capitalism often enough, particularly when the demand for commodities begins to decline:

As the demand in commodities lags the sellers of commodities, usually wholesalers and retailers increasingly rely on credit themselves to keep up out of failure. As the sales for the retailers decrease the industrial capitalists become endangered. If the commercial capitalists cannot pay their debts to the industrial capitalists they are both risking bankruptcy. When

consumers and businesses go out looking for this short-term credit, the demand for it drives up the interest rates on them. This is indeed a severe warning sign.

Now the financial capitalists are well aware of the impending disaster that is coming. They can see their balance sheets they know how little people are paying back their debts, they know how far beyond their reserves their credit-money is. In this situation they begin taking huge risks to try and cover those debts. If a big risky gamble can pay off, it can save them from their mounting, impending huge losses. This is when outrageous speculation begins to really take off. They speculate on everything: stocks, real estate, commodities, and whatever else they can find. All financial institutions are doing this because they're all facing a similar situation. This is how speculation gets out of hand. They do this because they have no choice. The only alternative is to have their financial institution collapse and go under.

After the 2008 crisis people all across America were attacking the banks for making these crazy risks and speculations. It became a major point for talking heads on television and popular rhetoric. Everyone was up in arms over bankers taking "stupid" risks that placed the country at risk and caused the gigantic recession. People demanded to know why regulators didn't do anything. Why were those in charge of watching these people not stop them from taking those risks? The mistake people make is that these huge gambles are an effect of, not necessarily a cause of crisis. When faced with the looming failure what were regulators supposed to do? Stop them? This wouldn't have prevented the collapse from happening; it was going to happen anyway. These risks are the financial capitalist's attempt to deal with the problem that already existed. The only difference had they stepped in would have been causing the crisis to come sooner.

This is why they have to expand. If the NCR is going to keep its people from starving to death they must gain control of as much arable land as possible to keep up the production of food to meet its citizen's needs. In turn the drain on resources that is the war hinders the development of the land which would benefit greatly from investment in the mechanization of farming. In essence the very mechanism of capitalism and its irrational allotment of resources drive the creation and sustainment of the military industrial complex which is what the NCR has. Even markets reach their limits when they over saturate with products. To keep up the cycle of consumption they must expand the sale of their products into new markets. This is of great benefit for the traders of the NCR who want by sheer profit-motive to sell more of their goods. The only way to do that is to start moving your product where it was previously absent. We also know that the traders hold a good deal of influence with NCR bureaucrats in power. This is especially true since they are a great source of needed weapons and tax revenue. We should not be surprised that merchants hold such great sway over the government in a semi-capitalist society.

The profit motive, the profit motive never changes.

### Imperialist Occupation

The NCR acts very much like the modern day United States with its imperialism. As I mentioned previously with its drive for land the NCR must continually obtain more of it. In their crusade to collect more and more they end up acting like the US in its imperialist occupations of the Middle East. A huge criticism of the NCR is its lack of concern for the locals and focus entirely on its citizens. A hidden station was handing out food in Freeside but it was only for NCR citizens. This engendered a good deal distrust and disdain from the locals who were being occupied and having their needs ignored by the occupiers. The NCR walks in takes the area's resources and then excludes the local



population from them. Many people have become hostile towards the NCR like the tribe "The Kings". This is entirely to be expected when the NCR occupies their territory and excludes them. This is described by the character Rotface:

*"People in Freeside generally fall into one of two categories. Those who've been here all their lives call themselves Locals. When people from the NCR and other places started pouring in, the Locals began referring to them as Squatters, and the name stuck. The Locals blame the Squatters for the scarcity of resources in Freeside, and the Squatters blame any act of violence against them on the Locals. They're both right to some extent, and violent outbreaks between the two are all too common these days."*

Is this not like the US occupation of Iraq? When the US military rolled into Iraq they had the shoot-anything-that-moves mentality that has led to over a million and a half dead in the end. The country was taken by force against the will of the people who did not want to be occupied. Many of those people stuck by their local dictator Saddam Hussein in defense of their nation because they saw the coming occupiers as worse than what they had. This was also seen in the very limited defense Freeside put up. The result was the local groups being pushed to the side while the occupiers took over their land. Did we not see the same thing in Iraq? The US military took over and the Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish groups got pushed out of authority, marginalized from power, just like the Kings and the Van Graffs.

The result of the invasion was a complete destabilization of the area, a destruction of what social order there was. People clung to the tribes they came from and adhered more greatly along those lines. The outbreak of violence between the Van Graffs and the Kings can be seen much like the US destruction of the largely secular Hussein government. Religious tension and

violence was kept to a minimum until the toppling of the government. Then the old hostilities that were suppressed for the most part broke out and caused further violence. Locals in Freeside take exception to the unjust power brutally wielded by the NCR and it lead to instances of violence between the occupiers and the locals. The same appeared in Iraq where the US troops were not welcome and despised. The US soldiers brutally suppress the population for the interests of imperialism leading to the mass killings of people whose only crime was not wanting to be occupied. This sentiment is expressed in the King's statement of return to sender when they refer to the colonizers of the NCR showing up in their territory.

The resources of the locals were taken to be used for the benefit of the NCR and its imperialist conquest, not the people who lived there. Agricultural land was taken to be used for the profits and sustainment of the empire and not the people of the region. What funds flow into the area from the NCR go into the defense of their soldiers and the protection of the resources they want. The people they occupy however are left in squalor which the NCR contributed too. This is very much like the US occupation of Iraq and its oil fields. The imperialists came in slaughtered people *en masse* destroying their homes, their infrastructure, and their lives. As money from the US government began to flow into Iraq it went entirely into building protection and comfort for their troops, propping up the puppet government, and guarding the oil infrastructure. The oil was kept the most secure as it was the entire purpose of the war, just like arable land and the Hoover Dam was the purpose of the NCR invasion. In both cases the occupation has manifested in the protection of the imperialist plunder while ignoring the needs of the local population and brutalizing them.

Similarities between the US and the NCR exist in the justification for the invasion. The NCR like the US government made claims of invading to "civilize" the people that live there. The US is the

"bastion of freedom and democracy" and it must bring those same virtues to the people of Iraq. This is not unlike the "White Man's Burden" or the logic of the colonizer bringing civilization to the "savages". The NCR makes these kinds of claims too. They claim to be the real bastion of hope and civilization in the wasteland. The NCR is the defender of freedom and democracy against the evils of the Caesar. In truth the NCR like the US cares nothing about freedom and democracy for the people they occupy.

Some of those involved in the occupation of New Vegas and the surrounding areas recognize the brutal nature of its occupation. Some people even see the futility in it. Chief Hanlon is one of those people. He is a war hero of the NCR who has seen better days:

*"...the course of the Mojave campaign has made its mark on him - the war against the Legion has left its toll on the men and women of the NCR army, and alone with his frustrations born from New Vegas bleeding dry NCR soldiers while at the same time relying on their protection, has left Hanlon fearing for the future of the NCR even should they succeed against the Legion; the sheer scale of the Mojave desert and the Colorado River being too much for an already overstretched NCR conscripted army to bear. This disillusion drives Hanlon to act with ill intentions towards the NCR forces by falsifying intelligence reports and deliberately miscommunicating information sent in from various NCR outposts, ultimately seeking to stir unrest in the NCR forces stationed in the Mojave and hoping to start a resistance against the higher echelons of the NCR military."<sup>50</sup>*

When speaking to Hanlon in depth he reveals that he sees the war as being endless and that they will be carrying out an

occupation forever. He foresees the NCR over stretching itself in covering the Colorado River the same way that the US is over stretching itself in trying to occupy the Middle East. Hanlon has grown tired of the occupation and thinks it is an unwinnable war. He doesn't think that the Mojave can be conquered and that troops will forever have to be stationed there. This reflects quite accurately the opinions of many Afghan War veterans. They too realize that the war cannot be won. The Taliban will not be defeated by the NATO forces and this will require them to engage in a permanent military occupation if they are to keep control over the country, even with what little control they have. The reality of the attrition of war has struck Hanlon with his decades of experience, he sees too many young people dying for the benefits of the higher-ups in the business. He's like some people in the military, too depressed to continue, too ingrained in the life to quit. In his opinion the next Battle for Hoover Dam is a folly that will be unsuccessful; meaning those who die in it will die for nothing.

Despite many soldiers having a similar opinion about the war they still have their fall back justification; the same one that imperialist soldiers have in real life: the job still needs to be done. Regardless of all the suffering caused by the NCR, Caesar's Legion still needs to be stopped. Just as every burnt out soldier who tells themselves that the terrorists must be stopped. Of course the difference is that Caesar's Legion is a real threat whereas the terrorists are not. The point is that the same justification exists in the mind of the imperialist soldiers who are questioning what they're doing.

### The NCR and the National Bourgeoisie

As the NCR occupies territory we see a marked difference between them and Caesar's Legion. The NCR spends a good deal of effort in breaking up alliances of various tribes in order to weaken their ability to resist NCR occupation. The plan has been

to create hostilities between various groups with a twofold effect. Firstly to make resistance against them weaker, and secondly to make justifying their occupation easier by claiming they want to unify everyone under one republic. This requires little effort; all they really have to do is sabotage the various groups.

This shows that the NCR is really disconnected from the people of the Mojave. They don't understand them because they don't really want to help them, they only want to occupy. This is very similar to what the US does when it invades. People know nothing of the culture and just brutalize them into submission. This is the most key aspect to the NCR being imperialist colonizer settlers. They only wish to remove the customs and cultural dynamics to promote their own power and interests.

By this same token they also know when not to sabotage someone. They've felt no need to do this to Mr. House who they gladly enter into an alliance (even a tentative one) with. Mr. House is a good example of the national bourgeois who ally with the imperialists in order to defend their privileged position in society. If the national bourgeois actually resist the imperialists, they could just take away all their money and status via military force. On one hand some of them are afraid of what Caesar's Legion might do to them. They know they can get a good deal with the NCR, but the Caesar's Legion might confiscate their wealth altogether. On the other hand there are some merchants who want Caesar's Legion to take over because they feel they will do a better job of protecting the trading routes making their business safer and more profitable. In this circumstance there can develop a contradiction between the various interests of the capitalist class. This is somewhat similar situation to what Mao Tse-tung described when he wrote about the various classes in the countryside:

*"The middle bourgeoisie. This class represents the capitalist relations of production in China in town and country. The middle bourgeoisie, by which is meant chiefly the national bourgeoisie, is inconsistent in its attitude towards the Chinese revolution: they feel the need for revolution and favour the revolutionary movement against imperialism and the warlords when they are smarting under the blows of foreign capital and the oppression of the warlords, but they become suspicious of the revolution when they sense that, with the militant participation of the proletariat at home and the active support of the international proletariat abroad, the revolution is threatening the hope of their class to attain the status of a big bourgeoisie. Politically, they stand for the establishment of a state under the rule of a single class, the national bourgeoisie. A self-styled true disciple of Tai Chi-tao wrote in the Chen Pao, Peking, "Raise your left fist to knock down the imperialists and your right to knock down the Communists." These words depict the dilemma and anxiety of this class. It is against interpreting the Kuomintang's Principle of the People's Livelihood according to the theory of class struggle, and it opposes the Kuomintang's alliance with Russia and the admission of Communists and left-wingers. But its attempt to establish a state under the rule of the national bourgeoisie is quite impracticable, because the present world situation is such that the two major forces, revolution and counter-revolution, are locked in final struggle. Each has hoisted a huge banner: one is the red banner of revolution held aloft by the Third International as the rallying point for all the oppressed classes of the world, the other is the white banner of counterrevolution held aloft by the League of Nations as the rallying point for all the counter-revolutionaries of the world. The intermediate classes are bound to*

*disintegrate quickly, some sections turning left to join the revolution, others turning right to join the counter-revolution; there is no room for them to remain "independent". Therefore the idea cherished by China's middle bourgeoisie of an "independent" revolution in which it would play the primary role is a mere illusion.*"<sup>51</sup>

In their eyes it is in their interests to align themselves with the imperialists to retain what power they have in society, showing truly what a counter-revolutionary force they can be.

The Crimson Caravan Company can be seen as a foreign corporation moving into the New Vegas area. This is a primary drive of imperialism. The foreign corporations have an advantageous position coming from the imperialist nation. Because of their advanced position, concentration of capital, and military support, they can set up in the new country quite easily. The Crimson Caravan has a tremendous amount of market power. They are able to make large purchases reducing the cost per unit; this allows them to outcompete the local traders snatching up their trade routes and customers. Essentially the "foreign" bourgeois can muscle its way into the domestic bourgeois. A good example of this is cola in many countries. Coke has such a dominating global market share that when they move into a new country to compete, they can undercut all local competitors.

From this we can see a small sample of how the bourgeois of the imperialist nation benefits from imperialism. We also see, as Lenin writes, why they push for it:

*"The enormous dimensions of finance capital concentrated in a few hands and creating an extraordinarily dense and widespread network of relationships and connections which subordinates not only the small and medium, but also the very small capitalists and small masters, on the one hand, and the*

*increasingly intense struggle waged against other national state groups of financiers for the division of the world and domination over other countries, on the other hand, cause the propertied classes to go over entirely to the side of imperialism. "General" enthusiasm over the prospects of imperialism, furious defence of it and painting it in the brightest colours such are the signs of the times. Imperialist ideology also penetrates the working class."<sup>52</sup>*



# Section 5:

## Caesar's Legion



### Introduction

Caesar's Legion is an autocratic, ultra-reactionary, totalitarian slaver society, founded in 2247 by Edward Sallow (also known as Caesar) and Joshua Graham and based on the ancient Roman Empire. Its legionaries are a well organized, culturally insular fighting force that mainly operate east of the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon, in the former state of Arizona. Ever pushing east, their capital is the city of Flagstaff.

Caesar's Legion is comprised mostly of reconditioned tribes and their descendants. The Legion's symbol is a golden bull on a red field, which is derived from Julius Caesar's standard for the Tenth Twin Legion.

In the year 2246, the Followers of the Apocalypse sent a group of nine members to the Arizona wastelands to study the region's tribal languages. The group included Follower Edward Sallow, who met with the New Canaanite missionary Joshua Graham, a specialist in tribal dialects. Not long into their travels, the group was captured by the Blackfoot tribe and held for ransom.

At the time, the tribe warred against seven other tribes, and suffered from a lack of skill in warfare. Against his companion's wishes, Sallow aided the Blackfoots to save him and his comp-

anions from their captor's enemies, giving them knowledge in gun maintenance, small unit tactics, explosive improvisation, and military strategy. The tribals admired Sallow so much that they made him their leader. With that, Sallow took the name Caesar, and began reorganizing the tribals he commanded into the Legion.

Caesar established warfare policies in the Legion based on the concepts of divide and conquer and total war. The Legion defeated the region's seven tribes from weakest to strongest, and completely dominated each faction's land and people. The people conquered in campaigns were conscripted, enslaved, or killed. Caesar saw the tribes "playing at war," and tribals viewed his tactics as foreign, as their warfare consisted of skirmishes that never escalated into major conflicts.

With the combined leadership of Caesar and Graham, declared the "Malpais Legate", the Legion led campaigns against more tribes, forming a fanatically loyal army with their captives. Eighty-six tribes had been conquered by the year 2271, and the territory Caesar led formed the most powerful society east of the Colorado River. The Legion expanded west into the Mojave, and established Fortification Hill on the Colorado River in 2277. The advancing forces eventually made contact with the NCR near New Vegas, and began a campaign to take the region.

Under the command of the Malpais Legate, Legion forces marched against the New California Republic garrison at Hoover Dam, in an attempt to take the strategic asset and river crossing. In what became known as the First Battle of Hoover Dam, the Malpais Legate initially had the upper hand. The Legate was able to push the NCR defenders back and lead his forces over the dam. Lead elements of the NCR, including members of the 1st Recon Battalion and NCR Rangers, executed a tactical retreat west across the dam and into Boulder City, all the while using their marksmanship prowess to kill the Legion officers (primarily

centurions, and decanii). The Legate, unable to adapt his strategies in combat or see the deception unfolding in front of him, chose to order his legionaries to push the rangers, not knowing the NCR had booby-trapped Boulder City, packing C4 along their line of retreat and within the city itself, and drawing the Legion into a trap. When the Legion forces entered the city, the NCR detonated the explosives and inflicted severe casualties amongst them, crippling their offensive. The NCR forces then counter-attacked, pushing back and eventually routing the Legion forces who fled east back over the dam. Caesar, angered at the failure of his Legate, made an example of him. The Praetorian guard covered the Legate in pitch, set him on fire, and cast him into the depths of the Grand Canyon. Caesar forbade mention of his name, and now he is spoken of only in hushed whispers by the lowest Legionaries and slaves; they call him the Burned Man.

By 2281, Caesar's Legion has re-established its power in the west, rebuilt its army, and has slowly encroached on the city of New Vegas. They continue to contest NCR over all of the region, destroying several NCR bases such as Ranger Station Charlie and Camp Searchlight, overrunning the NCR town of Nelson, and creating unease and terror across the region. Sometime before the Second Battle of Hoover Dam, the Caesar's Legion has conquered a new tribe under the command of centurion Gaius Magnus, bringing the number to 87.<sup>53</sup>

### An Analogy for the Soviet Union

From my investigation into Caesar's Legion I have come to the conclusion that it is meant as an analogy for the Soviet Union. When looking at Caesar's Legion and how it is structured, the way they behave and even the way Caesar himself speaks, we see a great "similarity" to the Soviet Union. However I believe that it is not just an analogy for the Soviet Union but an analogy of what the capitalist class *thinks* the Soviet Union was. It is my

belief that the developers of Fallout: New Vegas intended to build Caesar's Legion off of what the bourgeoisie wants people to think of the Soviet Union. In other words I think the game, in this respect, mirrors the worst of anti-Soviet Cold War propaganda. Here I will lay out a compelling argument for why I think this is so.

Socialism and the Soviet Union are/were predicated on the idea of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat"; a theory most greatly developed by Soviet leader Lenin (but started with Marx) holds that there is a period between capitalism and communism called socialism. During that time the working class holds state power which it uses to oppress and eventually eliminate the capitalist class. While it is doing this it is also laying down the means by which to transform people from the capitalist life mentality to the communist one, the "New Man" as Che Guevara put it. By mentality I mean the social consciousness, the way in which people perceive and relate to each other in society. It is primarily determined by the material conditions in which people exist. The feudal era created a feudal social consciousness, the right to own peasants and land, and the Church to back up the idea that the king had a divine right to rule. Capitalism, hunter-gatherer society, communism, and Neanderthal times were no different in this regard. All societies have a socially constructed consciousness and human nature.

(Yes human nature is not set in stone as one particular way that cannot be altered. No medical professional in the psychiatric field would agree that people are "only one way". If you believe that human nature is the same way as it was in tribal society and "cave man" times, you are horribly deluded.)

The Communist Party takes hold of the government to begin that transformation of the society. This process is carried out by changing the economic relations between people, which determine those social relations. Communes for agricultural

production are constructed eliminating the divide between landlords and peasants who work the land. That exploitative oppressive relationship ceases to exist, one man is not an owner and the other his subordinate employee, they are both on the same level and see each other as equals and having equal say in production. The same goes for industrial production as well. The idea is to gradually eliminate all class divisions until we are all on the same class level; we are all proletariat which culminates in the abolishment of classes. There is no magical instantaneous transformation from capitalism to communism overnight as Anarchists would have us believe. Human nature and social consciousness *needs* to go through a transformation process.

Despite the claims made by many anarcho-communists, Karl Marx and Frederic Engels did in fact propound the idea of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. He did describe what it was. It does match closely with what Lenin put forward, however it was less developed than what Lenin gave. I will show this by giving the following quotes by both of them:

*"Between capitalist and communist society there lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>54</sup>*

*"Moving in class antagonisms, society up to now had need of the state, that is, an organization of the exploiting class at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production, that is, particularly for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, villeinage or serfdom, wage-labour) given by the existing mode of production.*

[...]

*As soon as there is no social class to be held in subjection any longer, as soon as class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the anarchy of production existing up to now are eliminated together with the collisions and excesses arising from them, there is nothing more to repress, nothing necessitating a special repressive force, a state. The first act in which the state really comes forward as the representative of the whole of society — the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society — is at the same time its last independent act as a state. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then dies away of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production. The state is not “abolished”, it withers away. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the working class state which oversees the transformation of society from capitalism to communism. By state is meant a special repressive force. It withers away as repression becomes gradually unnecessary.”<sup>55</sup>*

*Scientific Socialism* is based on a correct understanding of material conditions and how they shape us and our society, and the revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Anything less than this is either anti-scientific utopian in the case Anarchism, or inherently reactionary in the preservation of the capitalist class, as is the case with social democracy. This idea of a dictatorship of the working class is for some reason very difficult for anti-communists to grasp. They merely see the word dictatorship and assume nothing but the vilest of attributes of Hitler, Mussolini, and other monsters. Lenin advocated *Democratic Centralism*, a principal that brings democracy and meaningful action to the operation and transformation of society.

Democratic Centralism is an organizational method applied by the Bolsheviks in making the Russian Revolution: “*democracy in discussion – centralism in action,*” within a strategy of building a “*vanguard party.*”

The concept was first elaborated by Lenin in his fight for centralism and against the “circle” mentality of Russian revolutionaries prior to the formation of the R.S.D.L.P. and the Bolsheviks in 1901, but the term only came into general use around 1917.

The organizational method with which Lenin built the Bolshevik party was adapted from the past successes and failures of the working class movement to the specific conditions of pre-WWI Russia. Trade unions, for example, put leadership proposals to a vote at mass meetings and then use picket lines to enforce a majority decision. The Rules of the Communist League and the International Workingmen’s Association of Marx’s day are based on the same general principles. However, it was Lenin who coined the term, and developed the principles of a disciplined, mass, working class political party.

There are three inter-related aspects of democratic centralism: the definition of membership, proletarian (or participatory) democracy and unity in action.

The definition of membership: different organizations have quite different concepts of “membership”: a small group of soldiers behind enemy lines has a very strict understanding of who they are, and as a result a very tight concept of the rights and obligations of each of their members; a broad social movement, on the other hand, has only a vague concept of membership, and its members only a limited commitment. Lenin elaborated the principles of Democratic Centralism in relation to a working class Political Party operating under conditions of illegality, and consequently insisted on a very clear criterion of membership –

agreement with the Party's program and the obligation to work under the direction of one of its organizations.

Clearly, the rights and obligations of members differ according to the criterion of membership. On the other hand, whether the organization is a trade union, a social movement or a secret party cell, the rights and obligations of members, whether greater or less, must be "in balance".

Proletarian (or participatory) democracy: the principles of proletarian democracy were given their most objective demonstration in the Paris Commune. As described by Lenin in his *State and Revolution*, proletarian democracy implies the widest, most democratic and most exhaustive discussion prior to any decision, and emphasizes the right of people to determine their own activity, and opposes the separation of legislative and executive branches, i.e., the division of labour between administration and labour, theory and practice. Consequently, democratic centralism implies that an organization ought to be so structured as to provide the capacity of any part of organization to participate in determining policies relevant to their own responsibilities.

Unity in Action: Unity is a fundamental question of survival for the working class, but it is in the nature of an oppressed class, that if it is to emancipate itself, unity cannot be achieved by "orders from above", but can only be based on agreement and commitment achieved by means of proletarian democracy, among members whose commitment to the organization is consonant with their rights within it. When a policy has been determined by means of protracted and thoroughgoing discussion amongst those who must carry it out, then unity in action is easily achieved. However, "action" inevitably implies unforeseen obstacles and changes which require an instant and coordinated response. It is inescapable that effective coordination in action presupposes leadership which is obeyed without



question. Consequently, unity in action necessarily involves an acceptance of leadership. It is this problem which has been the source of most pain and controversy in the history of the workers' movement. See the early chapters of Lenin's *Left Wing Communism – an Infantile Disorder*.

The balance between centralism and democracy: A small group of soldiers under enemy fire would be ill-advised to subject their tactics to thoroughgoing discussion – total centralism is the best policy, with one of their number assuming the responsibility to issue instructions. On the other hand, a trade union deciding whether or not to accept the bosses' offer or continue the strike can and must take as long as is necessary to ensure that every member of the strike is in agreement on what to do: consensus decision-making is the order of the day, and 'leaders' should take a back seat.

Thus, the balance between democracy and centralism must move according to circumstances.

Too much democracy in action leads to disorganisation and confusion, and usually defeat; too much centralism in discussion leads to bureaucracy, bad decisions and a loss of commitment amongst members.<sup>56</sup>

### The Caesar as Stalin

In the view of the bourgeoisie the Soviet Union was nothing like this, they claim an absolute dictatorship under Stalin, without even the knowledge that he wasn't the absolute head of the nation. Caesar's Legion is set up the way they think the Soviet Union was like, "*autocratic, ultra-reactionary, totalitarian slaver society*". They simply deny the groundbreaking forms of participatory democracy that were created. They see the Soviet Union as an Orwellian fiction, a terrible boogie man that didn't exist, until it became real in America after the events of Septem-

ber 11th, 2001. This theme of delusional misrepresentation continues.

Let us compare the origins of first The Caesar and then Joseph Stalin:

#### The Caesar - Edward Sallow

Edward Sallow was born in 2226 as an NCR citizen. When he was two years old, he and his mother fled the Boneyard when raiders killed his father, eventually finding sanctuary with the Followers of the Apocalypse in 2231. He received a free education from the Followers and eventually became a scribe, specializing in anthropology and linguistics. Though he was intelligent and charismatic, the narcissistic and petulant Edward was never very popular among his peers. He did not feel like he belonged among the Followers and, in hindsight, considered their goals to be utterly naive.

In 2246, at the age of 20, Sallow, fellow Follower Bill Calhoun, and seven others were sent to the east to study tribal dialects. He was instructed to meet with Joshua Graham, a Mormon missionary and tribal specialist from New Canaan. They embarked on a journey to the region known formerly as Arizona as part of a nine-person expedition. Disgusted by the primitive conditions in which the tribals lived, he looked down upon them as inferior and immoral. During this expedition, they discovered a cache of books about ancient Rome. While he knew some basic facts about ancient history, these books shed new light on some of the details. Reading first *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and then Julius Caesar's own *Commentarii*, and personal accounts of his military conquests; these changed his life and were the starting point of his grand plan.

At some point in 2247, Sallow, Graham, Calhoun and the others became hostages of the Blackfoot tribe - while Sallow believed

the tribe did this for ransom, Graham would later attribute the change in the tribe's relationship with the party to a mistranslation. At the time, the tribe was at war with seven other tribes; they were heavily outnumbered and Sallow recognized their defeat and subsequent demise was only a matter of time. Unwilling to be destroyed along with them, Sallow chose (against the wishes of his companions) to use his knowledge to train the Blackfoot tribe in the art of warfare after witnessing their lack of knowledge first hand. He showed them how to clean and maintain guns, operate with small unit tactics, manufacture explosives and to strike at their weakest enemies first; divide *et impera* (divide and conquer). He quickly impressed them enough to the point where he was made their leader, taking upon himself the name Caesar.

Caesar introduced the tribe to the concept of total war against the tribes around them. Sallow knew that, even though the tribes had always fought each other via occasional skirmishes, he considered them to only be "playing at war," having never seen warfare at its most destructive and barbaric state. They defeated the weakest of their enemies first and enslaved many of the able-bodied survivors; but Sallow had the rest, including women and children, killed to the last, leaving their remains piled high. When Sallow surrounded the next of the Blackfoot tribe's foes, they refused to surrender. Sallow brought an emissary of the tribe back to witness the fate of the first tribe. The tribe surrendered, rather than suffer the same fate. The concept of total war was an entirely new and terrifying type of conflict that the tribes had never encountered before. Such brutality would form the core of the Legion's tactics and philosophy.

Surprisingly, Joshua Graham decided to join Sallow as his right-hand man, in time becoming known as the Malpais Legate. While Calhoun was sent back to the Followers to inform them of what he was doing, the other six members of the expedition

were murdered on the self-proclaimed Emperor's orders. The newly-christened Caesar formed his Legion out of the tribes that had either been conquered or had chosen to capitulate to avoid total destruction. He used the *Commentarii* as a blueprint—after all, which illiterate tribal would know that he was not the original Caesar, and his "Rome" was merely a copy of a civilization long gone? Caesar chose the concept of the Roman Empire as a model for the Legion because of its parallels to what he considered the "status-quo" of the post-apocalyptic world; he believed the concept of individualism had no place in facing the challenges of the wasteland. Ideologically, the Roman Empire also appealed to him for its ability to assimilate those it conquered; the destruction of "tribal" identities was a key part of the Legion's long-term strategy for unification. He intended to erase their individual identities and replace them all with a single, monolithic culture, The Legion, where individuals have no value outside of what they offer the greater whole.

By 2250, Caesar had declared himself the son of Mars, Roman god of war, and five years later he established his first capital in the ruins of Flagstaff. By 2274, he had conquered most of the tribes of northern Arizona, southwestern Colorado, western New Mexico and eastern Utah, and became known as the "Conqueror of the 86 Tribes," whose Legion had never met any serious defeat until their confrontation with the NCR at the First Battle of Hoover Dam.<sup>57</sup>

## Joseph Stalin

Stalin was born Ioseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili on 18 December 1878 in the town of Gori, Tiflis Governorate, Russian Empire (present-day Georgia). His mother was Ketevan Geladze. His father Besarion Jughashvili worked as a cobbler.

As a child, was plagued with numerous health issues. He was born with two adjoined toes on his left foot. His face was permanently scarred by smallpox at the age of 7. At age 12, he

injured his left arm in an accident involving a horse-drawn carriage, rendering it shorter and stiffer than its counterpart.

Ioseb's father slid into alcoholism, which made him abusive to his family and caused his business to fail. When Ioseb's mother enrolled him into Greek Orthodox priesthood school against her husband's wishes, his enraged father went on a drunken rampage. He was banished from Gori for assaulting its police chief. He subsequently moved to Tiflis (Tbilisi), leaving his family behind.

When Stalin was sixteen, he received a scholarship to attend the Georgian Orthodox Tiflis Spiritual Seminary in Tbilisi. Although his performance had been good, he was expelled in 1899 after missing his final exams. The seminary's records also suggest that he was unable to pay his tuition fees. Around this time, Stalin discovered the writings of Vladimir Lenin and joined the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, a Marxist group.

Out of school, Stalin briefly worked as a part-time clerk in a meteorological office, but after a state crackdown on revolutionaries, he went underground and became a full-time revolutionary, living off donations.

When Lenin formed the Bolsheviks, Stalin eagerly joined up with him. Stalin proved to be a very effective organizer of men as well as a capable intellectual. Among other activities, he distributed propaganda, provoked strikes, staged bank robberies, and ordered assassinations. In 1907 Stalin made use of his reputation as a poet to stage the 1907 Tiflis bank robbery. He used a former school friend who was also a fan of his poetry as the inside man for a bank robbery that left 40 dead and stole millions of roubles for Lenin. This demonstrated to Lenin his need for Stalin. Stalin was arrested and exiled to Siberia numerous times, but often escaped. His skill and charm won him the respect of Lenin, and he rose rapidly through the ranks of the Bolsheviks.<sup>58</sup>

## The Comparison

The Caesar claims to be holding a huge vision for humanity that he is bringing. A transformation of the world based on particular principles via the violent overthrow of those who oppose it. In reality he has nothing more than a personality cult built off of some divine right to rule. *"The Legion follows the Cult of Mars, created by Caesar in 2250 after claiming he was the Son of Mars. Members of the Legion believe that the war god cleansed the Earth with fire so that Caesar could conquer the Earth and save it from chaos. Most members of the Legion are oblivious to their society's basis in Ancient Roman culture, and believe that their customs were dictated to Caesar by Mars himself."*<sup>59</sup> Whatever these principles are, it seems only Caesar and a few commanders actually understand what they are. For everyone else it is merely a prejudiced view that sees all those outside the Legion as subhuman vermin.

Isn't this what anti-communists think of the Soviet Union? They claim Stalin and Lenin were power mad tyrants who held power by a cult of personality and brutal oppression, an accusation which is primarily leveled at Stalin. They don't believe in what Marxism stands for so therefore it must be all about Stalin, never the Marxist ideas, or even the ideas Stalin contributed. In their minds communism is a cult a philosophy/religion that sees all of humanity united under the control of one man, kind of like Christianity. They deny the democratic institutions built and instead see only their own hate fueled illusions drilled into them by their own ruling class ideology. The irony is the fact that they miss their own actual blind faith, the self-indulgent cult of the self which tells them constantly that they are so great and no one can understand them. They are great men whom lesser beings (everyone else) will simply drag down.

To them the concept of using the productive forces of society to benefit everyone is a mad cult. "It is slavery of the individual to

the state! The state is the slave master!" They're crying this while they go into work into a dictatorship every day to be used for someone else's benefit. They understand nothing of the desire to build a better world free from the dictatorship of capital they bow to. Interactions between people must be exchanges of products; human beings are only buyers and sellers. The inhumanity and alienation of reducing human interaction to sales and the work place is beyond the limits of their own internal self-glorification.

Stalin and other socialist leaders have been accused of having a cult of personality; this accusation is represented in the Caesar. In substance Caesar's Legion is a cult of personality around him and not the ideals for which he and they stand. This mirrors perfectly the bourgeois accusation of Stalin, that he is worshiped above and beyond the ideas of communism, a better world, sharing, and universal brotherhood.

#### Ideology: Legion vs. Marxism

Since (at least I feel) Caesar's Legion and the Soviet Union are being compared I feel the need to explain the difference. As I said before the Legion is in form based off of certain principals but is really a cult of personality around the Caesar. The same is believed of the Soviet Union under Stalin. Of course even a cursory glance can tell you this is a fraud. However since I do believe that the Legion is an analogy for the Soviet Union I should explain the differences. Caesar leads in totality with all others in various levels of subordination. Stalin however was chairman of the central committee, which required votes from that same committee in order for anything to get done. But aside from this form how are the two ideologies different in substance?

For Caesar it is one of blatant religion:

*"The weakened state of humankind following the atomic blasts offers an opportunity to unite the world under one flag. By using brutal and militaristic tactics, the Legion seeks to exploit that weakness and establish one society united under Caesar. Caesar claims that the atomic bombs were sent by the God of War, Mars, for just this purpose.*

*"The ultimate goal of the Legion is to unite humanity. They see democratic societies as tools that the rich and powerful use to keep the majority of humanity in a state of constant irresponsibility and ignorance. By keeping the people addicted to consumerism, they could effectively drain citizens of their wealth while rendering them ineffective. This not only partially explains the Legion's disdain of alcohol and chemical stimulants, as well as pointless luxuries, it also explains why they see the majority of people as "animals", and are so quick to use violence against them. To them, "animals" are any creatures that live only to survive. Humanity, in their eyes, is defined instead by the ability to override the fear of death and the base instinct to survive. Those who are able to face death head-on can more easily sacrifice themselves in pursuit of a greater societal and ideological goal.*

*"Caesar greatly dislikes democratic societies, especially the NCR, because of their glorification of the wealthy over the worthy. In addition, Caesar greatly dislikes sectionalism and consumerism, mainly because he believes they convert humans into "animals", or simple beings that live only for the sake of surviving. Caesar believes that it is his opportunity and destiny to unite all humankind under one banner, ushering in an age where each human is judged by their merit, and the subsequently given power according to that perceived*



*virtue. This way of thinking exemplifies the differences between the NCR and Caesar's Legion. The NCR believe that basic democratic mercantilism will eventually bring peace to the wastes. While the greedy may rule now, when peace and stability inevitably arrive, the populace eventually will acquire greater power through reform. Caesar, however, sees that as a curse, not a blessing. In his mind, it will allow humans/"animals" to be preyed upon by the greedy. While the NCR uses their significant wealth to fund research to improve the average life expectancy of citizens, the Legion believes that longer lives come at the cost of other humans, resources, and purpose; people who blindly try to extend their lives should instead attempt to live without the fear of death hanging over them. This is why the Legion refuses to use medical sciences, except in rare cases. Given how little common ground exists between the ideologies of the NCR and the Legion, these factions will undoubtedly contest each other until one is defeated."<sup>60</sup>*

The idea of Marxism could not be any more different.

Marxism sees the world through dialectical materialism. Dialectical Materialism is a philosophy that seeks to explain the world in a way that previous modes of thinking were unable to accomplish. Both idealism and metaphysical materialism cannot bring us to rational scientific conclusions about reality and our interaction with it. Both of these philosophies cannot give us an analysis of our world that allows us to be able to understand our world and how it interacts, reflects upon us and how we reflect upon it. Both of these views eliminate the genuine ability we have to alter how the world is, because they fail to account for our interaction with it. What we need is an understanding of the activity of our consciousness.

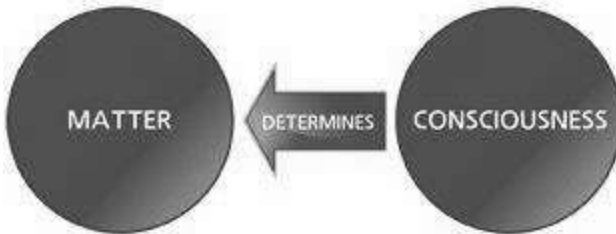
## ACTIVITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

### METAPHYSICAL MATERIALISM



Consciousness is passive contemplation of the world.

### IDEALISM



By exaggerating the activity of consciousness, idealism carries that exaggeration to an absurdity, to the assertion that consciousness creates the world.

If we cannot understand how we interact with the world around us, how can we ever understand how to change it? This question is left completely unanswered by both metaphysical materialism and idealism.

The truth this brings us is that we are capable of changing the world around us. The other two modes are completely inadequate for this purpose. We see this in the ideologies they represent. In Right wing ideology metaphysical materialism is

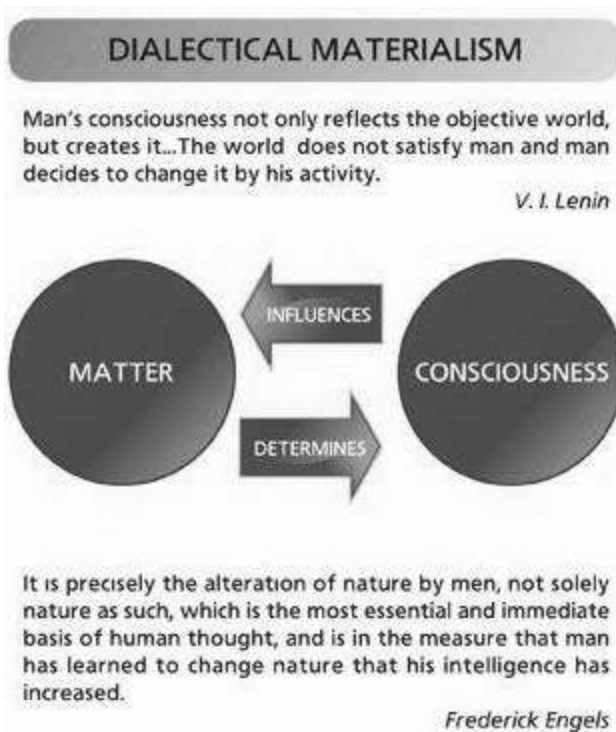
abundant, matter determines consciousness. In right wing ideology you see that African-Americans are poor, therefore they are naturally poor, and they must want to be poor. To put it another way, people are poor because that's the way they are. Ayn Rand did say that a man's contributions to society can be measured by his wealth, so since poor people are not wealthy it must mean they don't want to contribute. It's a belief that if something exists, that's the way it is and that's it.

On the other hand we have idealism which claims that consciousness determines matter. This pushes the idea that things are whatever we think they are. Our consciousness makes the world what it is; it is whatever we think it is. Others see it as, our ideas shape the world and that material conditions don't have an effect on it. A good example of this is the Zeitgeist Movement, which is basically just utopian socialism revisited. They believe if we just get rid of capitalism and hand over everything to machines society just automatically gets better. They literally give no analysis of how a transformation of people will take place. They think once capitalism is gone people will spontaneously have a new consciousness. Even their idea of how the end of capitalism will come is completely idealist. They give us a scenario in the movies of how this will happen. People just *en masse* approach the banks and throw their money into a pile rejecting capitalism. Then the bankers in the boardroom just give up and capitalism comes to an end. It's like a light switch will just flick and everyone will be transformed. This is completely idealist and completely unrealistic. This question of utopian socialism was already answered by Fredrick Engels in "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific".

Let me explain the difference by quoting Mao:

*"Wherein lies the basic difference between idealism and materialism? It lies in the opposite answers given by the two to the fundamental question in philosophy, that of*

*the relationship between spirit and matter (that of the relationship between consciousness and existence). Idealism considers spirit (consciousness, concepts, the subject) as the source of all that exists on earth, and matter (nature and society, the object) as secondary and subordinate, Materialism recognizes the independent existence of matter as detached from spirit and considers spirit as secondary and subordinate.*"<sup>61</sup>



This leaves us with the Marxist view of Dialectical Materialism that we use. Dialectical materialism differs from conventional, deterministic materialism in that it rejects the view that objects are static, and merely pass on their properties to structures of which they are a part, thereby leading some, such as Einstein, to

deduce that if the motion of all matter were known from the outset of the universe, all things would be calculable - every contour of the universe, every planet as well as the makeup of all things and their precise times of development etc.

When using a Marxist view of the world we see that all existing change in history has been a struggle between contending classes. This is the basis for the Communist Manifesto. The struggle between two classes gives birth to the new society. The bourgeoisie was a rising class that was in contradiction with the feudal landlord class. Meaning the two contending classes had to battle to see which one would survive.

In this we see the tremendous difference in how Marxism is portrayed and how it actually is. Marxism is far from the totalitarian boogeyman that the bourgeois make it out to be. We scientifically see the world and they do not, they believe in blind faith of what is with no understanding, (see their ideas on human nature). In fact it would be fair to criticize liberals of this to an extent. They see what they want to change but have no real basis for changing it. They detract from the material world in order to perceive what they want as oppose to keeping it grounded in materialism to achieve it. Conservatives on the other hand do have the religious mentality. If it exists then it must be. They have different ways of expressing this such as: "I'm just telling it like it is". They can only see what is, they cannot see why it is. To them the most superficial expression of a phenomenon is all there is to it. This is why conservatism breeds religion, racism, homophobia, sexism, and all sorts of other societal ills. This is not to say that liberals are free from spreading such ideas, they can as well. The difference is quantitative.

This is why we Marxists use dialectical materialism. We understand how the physical world and material conditions

influence us, but we also understand how our consciousness gives us the ability *influence* changes in the material world.

### Anti-Materialism

In both Marxism and Caesar's Legion materialism is rejected. By this I am referring to the worship of material possessions over ideas and self-improvement, not in the philosophical sense where idealism is preferred. While they both oppose it they do so for different reasons. The substance of the two different reasons speaks volumes about the two entirely different ideologies. The bourgeois view of the Marxist philosophy is of course a combination of ignorance and lies. Anti-Materialism in the Legion's sense is rather a religious idea because it supposes physical objects as having supernatural power over people and an ability to "pervert" their thinking and create weak decadent men while they respect power, honour and strength. Marxism however has an entirely scientific view of this phenomenon; Marx called it the *fetishism of commodities*. In Marx's view it is not the physical objects themselves that have power, but the relationships behind the production and distribution of these physical things (commodities) in society. Let us go into this in more detail.

*"Caesar greatly dislikes democratic societies, especially the NCR, because of their glorification of the wealthy over the worthy. In addition, Caesar greatly dislikes sectionalism and consumerism, mainly because he believes they convert humans into "animals", or simple beings that live only for the sake of surviving."<sup>62</sup>*

In Caesar's eyes people become weak when they have too much pleasure. The great vision that he has for society, ideas of honour etc., are forgotten about when people have possessions that they place above society. We see this theme throughout many religions, most notably Buddhism which aspires to completely reject all materialism, including eventually the entire

physical world. Of course Caesar is nowhere near as lofty as the Buddha. He has chosen a particular vision that he wants to uphold as the destiny or the ultimate state of mankind. The traits he wants such a people to have are opposed by consumerism, by the worship of commodities. Once people become enamoured in their possessions they will forget all about combat skill, reading and writing, or learning new skills to better themselves. Certainly we can see this has happened in the past as well in our present in real life. The mistake Caesar makes is that he does not correctly identify the source of the problem. He believes them to be inherent to the commodities themselves. This is where he is wrong and Marx is correct.

In Karl Marx's critique of the political economy of capitalism, commodity fetishism is the perception of the social relationships involved in production, not as relationships among people, but as economic relationships among the money and commodities exchanged in market trade. As such, commodity fetishism transforms the *subjective*, abstract aspects of economic value into *objective*, real things that people believe have intrinsic value.

The theory of commodity fetishism is presented in the first chapter of *Capital: Critique of Political Economy*, at the conclusion of the analysis of the value-form of commodities, to explain that the social organization of labour is mediated through market exchange, the buying and the selling of commodities (goods and services). Hence, in a capitalist society, social relations between people—who makes what, who works for whom, the production-time for a commodity, *et cetera*—are perceived as economic relations among objects, that is, how valuable a given commodity is when compared to another commodity. Therefore, the market exchange of commodities masks (obscures) the true economic character of the human relations of production, between the worker and the capitalist.<sup>63</sup>

As Marx said:

*"A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it is capable of satisfying human wants, or from the point that those properties are the product of human labour. It is as clear as noon-day, that man, by his industry, changes the forms of the materials furnished by Nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that, the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than "table-turning" ever was.*

*"The mystical character of commodities does not originate, therefore, in their use value. Just as little does it proceed from the nature of the determining factors of value. For, in the first place, however varied the useful kinds of labour, or productive activities, may be, it is a physiological fact, that they are functions of the human organism, and that each such function, whatever may be its nature or form, is essentially the expenditure of human brain, nerves, muscles, &c. Secondly, with*



*regard to that which forms the ground-work for the quantitative determination of value, namely, the duration of that expenditure, or the quantity of labour, it is quite clear that there is a palpable difference between its quantity and quality. In all states of society, the labour time that it costs to produce the means of subsistence, must necessarily be an object of interest to mankind, though not of equal interest in different stages of development. And lastly, from the moment that men in any way work for one another, their labour assumes a social form.*

*"Whence, then, arises the enigmatical character of the product of labour, so soon as it assumes the form of commodities? Clearly from this form itself. The equality of all sorts of human labour is expressed objectively by their products all being equally values; the measure of the expenditure of labour power by the duration of that expenditure, takes the form of the quantity of value of the products of labour; and finally the mutual relations of the producers, within which the social character of their labour affirms itself, take the form of a social relation between the products.*

*"A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. This is the reason why the products of labour*

*become commodities, social things whose qualities are at the same time perceptible and imperceptible by the senses. In the same way the light from an object is perceived by us not as the subjective excitation of our optic nerve, but as the objective form of something outside the eye itself. But, in the act of seeing, there is at all events, an actual passage of light from one thing to another, from the external object to the eye. There is a physical relation between physical things. But it is different with commodities. There, the existence of the things quâ commodities, and the value relation between the products of labour which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom. There it is a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities."*<sup>64</sup>

In simpler language, we can all see that money has power in society, but where exactly does it come from? More specifically, how do we Marxists see where the power of money comes from? There are many differing opinions on this, the most

famous one being the religious idea that money is the root of all evil. But of course this doesn't tell us very much.

Money has power in society, but where does this power come from? The desire to obtain money is an end in itself. It takes on all things in society, class status, symbol of prestige and social power. It appears as though money has a power onto itself. Money seems to have a will and consciousness of its own. This phenomenon where objects have social power or will of their own is called "the fetishism of commodities" by Marx.

In this context Marx uses the term "fetishism" in the original religious meaning. It's the view that inanimate objects hold power, or that these powers are attributed to them. Commodities and money can seem to have the same power, but really they are only expressions of our own labour.

People produce things in a work place; people directly interact with one another during their production. The organizations of work, the division of labor, are direct social relations between people. When something needs to change in the process someone from management walks in and tells everyone what is up, or a collective decision is made.

This is different in the market; instead there are indirect social relations that are the exchanges of commodities. The things that happen in the market place feed back to the act of production itself i.e. make more, make less or make them differently.

Farmers, people who make cars, people who make furniture interact through the market place when their products meet each other. We see only exchanges of value. These social relations are indirect as they interact only through their commodities. In a single factory we have material relations, in the market those material relations are replaced with a social relation between things. This process of social relations between

people manifesting as a relations between things, Marx called "reification".

When we purchase a commodity we are experiencing a commodity not the social relation behind it. Even if we know that there is a network of social relations there we still do not experience them. In this we understand that every economic relation is experienced via a commodity.

This act of exchanging all things in society is where money gets its power from. The value of all commodities is expressed through money. The social labour that goes into the production of a certain commodity is expressed as a particular amount of money. As a result of this process of manufacture and exchange, money itself becomes the source of social power. The act of exchange gives it this power because it is an expression of social relations. The market is a collection of social relations, the more money you have the more social power you have.

Thus we see the source of the power money has.

The true difference here between Caesar and Marx is that Marx recognizes the reality of where this power comes from. He shows how objects may appear to have power over people but it in truth comes from the relations behind them: the relations of production and distribution of commodities. Objects in themselves cannot make people lazy, they cannot "pervert" thinking and create a decadent society. Ancient Roman slaving holding society didn't become the decadent degenerating society it was because of the commodities they had. It became that way through the social relations that they lived in. Because they were freed from work by slavery they had the time to indulge in philosophy, arts, and pleasures. Without an adequate understanding of these social relations they fell to petty desires and selfish ambitions that eventually weakened their empire. This society was experienced much differently by the slaves. They encountered no such relations between each other. They

experienced the repression end of the relationship with their owners. As a result they ended up with a different, but partially influenced culture. The degeneracy came from the top down precisely due to the nature of those social relations.

*"Caesar firmly believes that reliance on technology weakens humans, and was responsible for the Great War. As such, his Legion is mostly a low-tech organization, relying on numbers, physical fitness and discipline to achieve their objectives. A typical legionary will wear armor mimicking the Roman lorica hamata or lorica segmentata, usually created from pre-War sports gear (mostly if not exclusively football gear) armored with metal plates, including the helmet, worn over a tunic. In combat, they use either simple firearms (typically revolvers or lever-action rifles), power fists, or melee weapons in the form of machetes and throwing spears, crafted from scavenged materials that mimic the ancient Roman short sword (gladius) and javelin (pilum).*

*"However, it is incorrect to treat their technology as primitive. As simple as regular combat gear is, the Legion is capable of erecting large fortifications out of scrap (e.g. Fortification Hill encampment) and mass producing standardized weapons and armor for its footmen. In fact, the armor and weapons of higher ranking soldiers compares favorably to the NCR. In major battles, centurions will use rather advanced weaponry such as anti-materiel rifles, Marksman carbines, and super sledges. The personal guards of Caesar themselves are equipped with high tech ballistic fists to complement their martial prowess.*

*"While no Legion member wields energy weapons, they show interest in purchasing them from the Van Graffs.*

*The Legion is also never shown using power armor, though pieces of what appears to be T-45d power armor are used in centurion armor. Oddly enough, the Legion has huge amounts of Stealth Boys. These Stealth Boys are never seen used by legion soldiers in the Mojave, but are used by the legion at Dry Wells and the legion Marked men at the Divide. A high reputation with the legion will lead to a steady cache of Stealth Boys for the Courier.*

*"The only mentioned opposition to military technology is combat robots. Caesar dislikes the thought of having robots win a war fought by men. Because of this he tells the Courier to destroy Mr. House's Securitron army, even if the Courier offers to use the technology to destroy the NCR. He has no problem with Lucius trying to repair a howitzer, for the purposes of suppressing 1st Recon and NCR Veteran Ranger snipers. They occupy the HELIOS One station if the player decides to activate Archimedes I, Fantastic joins the Legion as the overseer of the power plant with the comment "Hey man, when in Rome." The Legion appears to use radios as shown at Cottonwood Cove HQ but overall opts for devices that use no power. The Legion does not need or truly desire power sources like the NCR, but at no point oppose its usage as they do with chems, alcohol and combat robots. The Legion is overall a very Neo-Luddite organization hoping to return to the days of the Roman Empire, and this idea conflicts with using "old world" technology. While the Legion uses technology when appropriate, there is no interest in the pursuit of technology in any aspect like there is with most other major factions in the wasteland."<sup>165</sup>*

The weakness here of Caesar is his refusal to use technology which can be of great service to his cause. Technology has been

nothing but a benefit to humanity. It is the social relations behind the production and distribution of technology (commodities) that has had a negative effect. The tactical use of technology in war is absolutely undeniable. The Samurai may have had their honour and moral objections to the use of firearms, but it was those who did use them that succeeded. While Caesar may have an interesting motorized take on the chariot, it would be of little effectiveness against a vertibird. Instead of using such tactical advantages Caesar has relied upon an army of slaves to throw at the enemy in unending waves. Caesar, unlike Stalin, limits his military effectiveness. Stalin by contrast was known to have pushed for industrialization as quickly as possible to confront the technologically advanced development of the Nazis as far as ten years before the war took place.<sup>66</sup> The scientific social approach of Marxism has once again proven itself superior. Although Caesar must have some understanding of this considering he did reserve some technology for himself and his personal health. A variation of the auto-doc can be found in his personal tent.

So we see how the Marxist and the Caesar's view of materialism are completely different despite the accusations of the bourgeoisie. We understand why money and materialism works the way it does, Caesar's notions on the other hand are quite unscientific.

### Caesar Operates in the Hegelian Dialectic

There something interesting I noticed about the way in which the Caesar speaks, it is the fact that he speaks in a Hegelian dialectical way. It appears the he must have some form of education in order for him to do this. Of course he did receive some education from the *Followers of the Apocalypse*. This is one of the reasons I'm convinced that Caesar's legion is supposed to be an analogy for the Soviet Union. True, Marxism doesn't use Hegelian dialectics, but instead dialectical material-

ism, but I don't think it matters here in the game. At the very least it appears Caesar approaches life, combat, and social forces using Hegel's thesis and antithesis.

*"My conquest of the Mojave will be a glorious triumph, marking the transition of the Legion from a basically nomadic tribe to a genuine empire. Just as my namesake campaigned in Gaul before he crossed the Rubicon, so have I campaigned, and will cross the Colorado."*

*"Thesis and antithesis. The Colorado River is my Rubicon. The NCR council will be eradicated, but the new synthesis will change the Legion as well... from a basically nomadic army to a standing military force that protects its citizens, and the power of its dictator."*

It is even openly stated that he uses it:

*"He regards the NCR as only an extension of the corruption that existed during the Old World and that it is ultimately doomed to repeat the same mistakes. He sees in it similar attributes associated with the Roman Republic before Julius Caesar seized power; extensive bureaucracy, corruption, senatorial infighting and filled with a people driven solely by greed and personal gain. It exists as the antithesis to the Legion and as a catalyst for change that only a confrontation with it can bring; a clash he sees as an inevitable product of Hegelian dialectics. The conflict is a vital one, not only for the future of his Legion strategically, but also philosophically; the NCR is the first of his enemies to which he is truly ideologically opposed and the first that can truly test the Strength of his Legion, as well as his philosophy."<sup>67</sup>*

But what exactly is Hegelian Dialectics?



Dialectic (also dialectics and the dialectical method) is a method of argument for resolving disagreement that has been central to European and Indian philosophy since antiquity. The word dialectic originated in ancient Greece, and was made popular by Plato in the Socratic dialogues. The dialectical method is discourse between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject, who wish to establish the truth of the matter guided by reasoned arguments.

Hegelian dialectic, usually presented in a threefold manner as comprising three dialectical stages of development: a thesis, giving rise to its reaction, an antithesis, which contradicts or negates the thesis, and the tension between the two being resolved by means of a synthesis. Although this model is often named after Hegel, he himself never used that specific formulation. Hegel ascribed that terminology to Kant. Carrying on Kant's work, Fichte greatly elaborated on the synthesis model, and popularized it.

On the other hand, Hegel did use a three-valued logical model that is very similar to the antithesis model, but Hegel's most usual terms were: Abstract-Negative-Concrete. Hegel used this writing model as a backbone to accompany his points in many of his works.

In the *Logic*, for instance, Hegel describes a dialectic of existence: first, existence must be posited as pure Being; but pure Being, upon examination, is found to be indistinguishable from Nothing. When it is realized that what is coming into being is, at the same time, also returning to nothing (in life, for example, one's living is also a dying), both Being and Nothing are united as Becoming.

Hegel claimed to proceed by making implicit contradictions explicit: each stage of the process is the product of contradictions inherent or implicit in the preceding stage. For Hegel, the whole of history is one tremendous dialectic, major

stages of which chart a progression from self-alienation as slavery to self-unification and realization as the rational, constitutional state of free and equal citizens. The Hegelian dialectic cannot be mechanically applied for any chosen thesis. Critics argue that the selection of any antithesis, other than the logical negation of the thesis, is subjective. Then, if the logical negation is used as the antithesis, there is no rigorous way to derive a synthesis. In practice, when an antithesis is selected to suit the user's subjective purpose, the resulting "contradictions" are rhetorical, not logical, and the resulting synthesis is not rigorously defensible against a multitude of other possible syntheses. The problem with the Fichtean "Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis" model is that it implies that contradictions or negations come from outside of things. Hegel's point is that they are inherent in and internal to things. This conception of dialectics derives ultimately from Heraclitus.

Hegel has outlined that the purpose of dialectics is "to study things in their own being and movement and thus to demonstrate the finitude of the partial categories of understanding"

One important dialectical principle for Hegel is the transition from quantity to quality, which he terms the Measure. The measure is the qualitative quantum, the quantum is the existence of quantity.<sup>68</sup>

*"The identity between quantity and quality, which is found in Measure, is at first only implicit, and not yet explicitly realised. In other words, these two categories, which unite in Measure, each claim an independent authority. On the one hand, the quantitative features of existence may be altered, without affecting its quality. On the other hand, this increase and diminution, immaterial though it be, has its limit, by exceeding which the quality suffers change. [...] But if the quantity*

*present in measure exceeds a certain limit, the quality corresponding to it is also put in abeyance. This however is not a negation of quality altogether, but only of this definite quality, the place of which is at once occupied by another. This process of measure, which appears alternately as a mere change in quantity, and then as a sudden revulsion of quantity into quality, may be envisaged under the figure of a nodal (knotted) line".<sup>69</sup>*

As an example, Hegel mentions the states of aggregation of water: *"Thus the temperature of water is, in the first place, a point of no consequence in respect of its liquidity: still with the increase or diminution of the temperature of the liquid water, there comes a point where this state of cohesion suffers a qualitative change, and the water is converted into steam or ice".<sup>70</sup>* As other examples Hegel mentions the reaching of a point where a single additional grain makes a heap of wheat; or where the bald-tail is produced, if we continue plucking out single hairs.

Another important principle for Hegel is the negation of the negation, which he also terms *Aufhebung* (sublation): Something is only what it is in its relation to another, but by the negation of the negation this something incorporates the other into itself. The dialectical movement involves two moments that negate each other, something and its other. As a result of the negation of the negation, "something becomes its other; this other is itself something; therefore it likewise becomes another, and so on ad infinitum". Something in its passage into other only joins with itself, it is self-related. In becoming there are two moments: coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be: by sublation, i.e., negation of the negation, being passes over into nothing, it ceases to be, but something new shows up, is coming to be. What is sublated on the one hand ceases to be and is put to an end, but on the other hand it is preserved and maintained. In

dialectics, a totality transforms itself; it is self-related, then self-forgetful, relieving the original tension.

So what is the difference here between Marx's dialectical materialism and Hegel's dialectic?

The laws of dialectics were already worked out in detail by Hegel, in whose writings, however, they appear in a mystified, idealist form. It was Marx and Engels who first gave dialectics a scientific, that is to say, materialist basis. "Hegel wrote before Darwin and before Marx," wrote Trotsky. "Thanks to the powerful impulse given to thought by the French Revolution, Hegel anticipated the general movement of science. But because it was only anticipation, although by a genius, it received from Hegel an idealistic character. Hegel operated with ideological shadows as the ultimate reality. Marx demonstrated that the movement of these ideological shadows reflected nothing but the movement of material bodies."

In the writings of Hegel there are many striking examples of the law of dialectics drawn from history and nature. But Hegel's idealism necessarily gave his dialectics a highly abstract, and arbitrary character. In order to make dialectics serve the "Absolute Idea," Hegel was forced to impose a schema upon nature and society, in flat contradiction to the dialectical method itself, which demands that we derive the laws of a given phenomenon from a scrupulously objective study of the subject-matter as Marx did in his *Capital*. Thus, far from being a mere regurgitation of Hegel's idealist dialectic arbitrarily foisted on history and society as his critics often assert, Marx's method was precisely the opposite. As he himself explains:

*"My dialectic method," wrote Marx, "is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e. the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the*

*demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea.' With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought."*

### Humanity in Unity

The Caesar's Legion is based upon the idea of a unified humanity under the banner of the bull. I believe this is meant to be an analogy of the communist idea of all people being united. The NCR has its own idea of humanity united, all tied together under a republic based on mercantile exchange, which they directly claim. I think this is a very clear analogy for capitalism versus communism. The meaning is supposed to scare people; the alternative to the market is the turning of people into mindless religious zealot drones who can't think for themselves. Nothing could be further from the truth. Marxism has a different idea of individuality one not readily available in capitalism. Again we should make a comparison of the "unity of humanity" under the Caesar and Marxism.

How does the Caesar see it? We should refresh ourselves with what we saw before:

*"Caesar greatly dislikes democratic societies, especially the NCR, because of their glorification of the wealthy over the worthy. In addition, Caesar greatly dislikes sectionalism and consumerism, mainly because he believes they convert humans into "animals", or simple beings that live only for the sake of surviving. Caesar believes that it is his opportunity and destiny to unite all humankind under one banner, ushering in an age where each human is judged by their merit, and the subsequently given power according to that perceived virtue. This way of thinking exemplifies the differences between the NCR and Caesar's Legion. The NCR believe*

*that basic democratic mercantilism will eventually bring peace to the wastes. While the greedy may rule now, when peace and stability inevitably arrive, the populace eventually will acquire greater power through reform. Caesar, however, sees that as a curse, not a blessing. In his mind, it will allow humans/"animals" to be preyed upon by the greedy. While the NCR uses their significant wealth to fund research to improve the average life expectancy of citizens, the Legion believes that longer lives come at the cost of other humans, resources, and purpose; people who blindly try to extend their lives should instead attempt to live without the fear of death hanging over them. This is why the Legion refuses to use medical sciences, except in rare cases. Given how little common ground exists between the ideologies of the NCR and the Legion, these factions will undoubtedly contest each other until one is defeated."*<sup>71</sup>

*"The Legion society is largely hierarchical. Anyone outside its ranks is considered to be Dissolute (lacking in morals), while those that are both outside of it and hostile (usually the NCR and its subjects) are called Profligates (slightly more dissolute). Freshly caught humans are called Captures and are considered the lowest of the low. Their only right is to be tested as a slave. If they do not meet the requirements, they are immediately disposed of.*

*"Slaves are one step above Captures and consist of captured humans unfit for combat duty as a Legionary. They are expected to adhere to the virtues of a slave (Honestas, Industria, Prudentia - honesty, industry, and prudence) and follow their master's orders without questions. They are given a new name and wear rags with a light red X painted over the chest. During the Capture stage, slaves seem to be forced to wear slave*

*collars. Later, when they have been "broken in" and transported deeper into Legion territory, the collars are removed as seen with the slaves at Fortification Hill. Children of slaves are taken from their parents after birth and placed in the care of priestesses, who raise them in keeping with Caesar's doctrine. Physically fit males are chosen to serve as Legionaries.*

*"Legionaries are the main fighting force of the Legion and form the bulk of its society. Composed of capable men conscripted into service, Legionaries are expected to demonstrate the apex of Roman values. Advancement in rank is purely merit based - if a Legionary proves himself in combat, he will be promoted. If he doesn't, he will be lucky to escape with his life."<sup>72</sup>*

As we can see, while the Legion sees humanity united under the same banner, they do not see people as being equal. There is no Orwellian-Randian boogeyman of everyone being equal and trampling the "virtuous". Quite the opposite in fact, it believes that people with supposed greater virtue should be placed above other people. Isn't this the real philosophy of capitalism and its ardent supporters? Don't they believe that they are entirely unique and different from everyone else that it is trampling of their psyche to see one another as equals? Do they not drone on about how supposedly economically "lesser people" are a drain on them? Do they not constantly tout their own self-superiority like self-conscious teenager? Of course they ignore the bold fact that they stand on the top of the global pyramid of imperialism which is a parasite that drains wealth, resources, and human potential from the world's majority. The people who really work hard, people who risk, death, disease, live in ridiculous poverty all for the luxury consumer benefit of some self-important First World crybaby who needs to run

around telling people how great they are because they quote-unquote work so hard.

Marxism rejects their view and their false view of communism. We see *all* societies as a collection of contradictions between peoples and countries. There is a contradiction between men and women, between the First and Third world, classes, and yes even between races. These differences arise from all manner of influences. They may be material differences from land, even social constructs. The goal of communism is not to erase the individual, but to erase the contradiction between groups that *cause* antagonisms. We do not wish to erase individuals, only the hostilities. Peace comes from the ending of conflict, not the erasure of people.

Their false view of us is as portrayed in the Caesar's Legion:

*"Caesar formed his Legion out of the tribes that had either been conquered or had chosen to capitulate to avoid total destruction. He chose the concept of the Roman Empire to model the Legion after because of its parallels to what he considered the status-quo of the post-apocalyptic world. Ideologically, the Roman Empire was also appealing to him for its ability to assimilate those it conquered, the destruction of such "tribal" identities a key goal to the Legion's long-term strategy of unification. He intended to erase their individual identities and replace them all with a single, monolithic culture - the Legion - where individuals have no value outside of what they offer the greater whole - long term stability at all costs.*

*"By 2250, Caesar had declared himself the son of Mars, Roman god of war, and five years later he established his first capital in the ruins of Flagstaff, Arizona. Together with the Malpais Legate, he used the power base they established to attack and assimilate more*



*tribes into the Legion. For decades, they fought and absorbed inferior tribes, erasing tribal identities and shaping them into a massive, fanatically loyal army that, in Caesar's eyes, embodies the concept of a perfect post-nuclear society. By 2274, he had conquered most of the tribes of northern Arizona, southwestern Colorado, western New Mexico and southwestern Utah, and became known as the "Conqueror of the 86 Tribes" whose Legion had never met any serious defeat until their confrontation with the New California Republic."<sup>73</sup>*

In order to build his coming empire Caesar instituted all kinds of policies aimed at destroying cultural and tribal differences. Women from one tribe were forced to bear children from a man of another tribe in order to destroy their family and tribal roots. Essentially this is what the bourgeois and the believers of their hollow propaganda think the Soviet Union and Marxism is like. They think the evil communists want to take away everything we think and feel and replace it with quotations and cults of personality erasing all individualism.

This is false, Marxism celebrates individualism and we merely have a different way of defining it. This is how Marx outlines it demonstrating how collectivism and individualism are not mutually exclusive:

*"The transformation, through the division of labour, of personal powers (relationships) into material powers, cannot be dispelled by dismissing the general idea of it from one's mind, but can only be abolished by the individuals again subjecting these material powers to themselves and abolishing the division of labour. This is not possible without the community. Only in community [with others has each] individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; only in the community, therefore, is personal freedom possible. In*

*the previous substitutes for the community, in the State, etc. personal freedom has existed only for the individuals who developed within the relationships of the ruling class, and only insofar as they were individuals of this class. The illusory community, in which individuals have up till now combined, always took on an independent existence in relation to them, and was at the same time, since it was the combination of one class over against another, not only a completely illusory community, but a new fetter as well. In a real community the individuals obtain their freedom in and through their association.*

*"Individuals have always built on themselves, but naturally on themselves within their given historical conditions and relationships, not on the "pure" individual in the sense of the ideologists. But in the course of historical evolution, and precisely through the inevitable fact that within the division of labour social relationships take on an independent existence, there appears a division within the life of each individual, insofar as it is personal and insofar as it is determined by some branch of labour and the conditions pertaining to it. (We do not mean it to be understood from this that, for example, the rentier, the capitalist, etc. cease to be persons; but their personality is conditioned and determined by quite definite class relationships, and the division appears only in their opposition to another class and, for themselves, only when they go bankrupt.) In the estate (and even more in the tribe) this is as yet concealed: for instance, a nobleman always remains a nobleman, a commoner always a commoner, apart from his other relationships, a quality inseparable from his individuality. The division between the personal and the class individual, the accidental nature of the conditions of life for the individual, appears only with*

*the emergence of the class, which is itself a product of the bourgeoisie. This accidental character is only engendered and developed by competition and the struggle of individuals among themselves. Thus, in imagination, individuals seem freer under the dominance of the bourgeoisie than before, because their conditions of life seem accidental; in reality, of course, they are less free, because they are more subjected to the violence of things. The difference from the estate comes out particularly in the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. When the estate of the urban burghers, the corporations, etc. emerged in opposition to the landed nobility, their condition of existence — movable property and craft labour, which had already existed latently before their separation from the feudal ties — appeared as something positive, which was asserted against feudal landed property, and, therefore, in its own way at first took on a feudal form. Certainly the refugee serfs treated their previous servitude as something accidental to their personality. But here they only were doing what every class that is freeing itself from a fetter does; and they did not free themselves as a class but separately. Moreover, they did not rise above the system of estates, but only formed a new estate, retaining their previous mode of labour even in their new situation, and developing it further by freeing it from its earlier fetters, which no longer corresponded to the development already attained.*

*"For the proletarians, on the other hand, the condition of their existence, labour, and with it all the conditions of existence governing modern society, have become something accidental, something over which they, as separate individuals, have no control, and over which no social organisation can give them control. The*

*contradiction between the individuality of each separate proletarian and labour, the condition of life forced upon him, becomes evident to him himself, for he is sacrificed from youth upwards and, within his own class, has no chance of arriving at the conditions which would place him in the other class.*

*"Thus, while the refugee serfs only wished to be free to develop and assert those conditions of existence which were already there, and hence, in the end, only arrived at free labour, the proletarians, if they are to assert themselves as individuals, will have to abolish the very condition of their existence hitherto (which has, moreover, been that of all society up to the present), namely, labour. Thus they find themselves directly opposed to the form in which, hitherto, the individuals, of which society consists, have given themselves collective expression, that is, the State. In order, therefore, to assert themselves as individuals, they must overthrow the State.*

*"It follows from all we have been saying up till now that the communal relationship into which the individuals of a class entered, and which was determined by their common interests over against a third party, was always a community to which these individuals belonged only as average individuals, only insofar as they lived within the conditions of existence of their class — a relationship in which they participated not as individuals but as members of a class. With the community of revolutionary proletarians, on the other hand, who take their conditions of existence and those of all members of society under their control, it is just the reverse; it is as individuals that the individuals participate in it. It is just this combination of individuals (assuming the advanced stage of modern productive*

*forces, of course) which puts the conditions of the free development and movement of individuals under their control — conditions which were previously abandoned to chance and had won an independent existence over against the separate individuals just because of their separation as individuals, and because of the necessity of their combination which had been determined by the division of labour, and through their separation had become a bond alien to them. Combination up till now (by no means an arbitrary one, such as is expounded for example in the Contrat social, but a necessary one) was an agreement upon these conditions, within which the individuals were free to enjoy the freaks of fortune (compare, e.g., the formation of the North American State and the South American republics). This right to the undisturbed enjoyment, within certain conditions, of fortuity and chance has up till now been called personal freedom. These conditions of existence are, of course, only the productive forces and forms of intercourse at any particular time.”<sup>74</sup>*

To the bourgeois mindset individuality can only be expressed in the market. A person is defined by their possessions, what they buy is who they are. This is all we wish to alter. A person is more than the things they own, their self-expression is greater than the clothes (or in their case fedora) they purchase. They run out with their separate subcultures to various stores and buy the same items of clothing swearing they are all unique and free thinkers. A human being in our view is much more than a collection of commodities. It is in fact capitalism that wishes to erase the individual and replace him with a product to purchase. They put up the false capitalist apologist dichotomy of collectivism versus individualism, where both concepts are considered to be irreconcilable and in contradiction with each other, where you either do something that benefits the indiv-

idual, or something that benefits the collective, and thus we cannot have a system that seeks to benefit both simultaneously.

### Slaveholding Society

The Legion society is largely hierarchical. Anyone outside its ranks is considered to be *Dissolute* (lacking in morals), while those that are both outside of it and hostile (usually the NCR and its subjects) are called *Profligates* (slightly more dissolute). Freshly caught humans are called *Captures* and are considered the lowest of the low. Their only right is to be tested as a slave. If they do not meet the requirements, they are immediately disposed of.

Slaves are one step above Captures and consist of captured humans unfit for combat duty as a Legionary. They are expected to adhere to the virtues of a slave (*Honestas, Industria, Prudentia* - honesty, industry, and prudence) and follow their master's orders without questions. They are given a new name and wear rags with a light red X painted over the chest. During the Capture stage, slaves seem to be forced to wear slave collars. Later, when they have been "broken in" and transported deeper into Legion territory, the collars are removed as seen with the slaves at Fortification Hill. Children of slaves are taken from their parents after birth and placed in the care of priestesses, who raise them in keeping with Caesar's doctrine. Physically fit males are chosen to serve as Legionaries.

Legionaries are the main fighting force of the Legion and form the bulk of its society. Composed of capable men conscripted into service, Legionaries are expected to demonstrate the apex of Roman values. Advancement in rank is purely merit based - if a Legionary proves himself in combat, he will be promoted. If he doesn't, he will be lucky to escape with his life.<sup>75</sup>

Breeding issues are pretty huge in cultures that took a big step back from infant mortality progress made in the last 100-200

years. Prior to the last few centuries, infant mortality was often around 50%-ish. Child mortality (prior to age 12) was about 60%. Those are pretty awful odds of reaching adulthood.

Remember that Caesar's Legion is basically a roving army that continually breaks down and absorbs tribes that it conquers. That can only go on for so long, and Legionaries who are indoctrinated from birth are even more loyal than adolescents who are integrated. Breeding new generations of Legionaries is vital for the Legion's continued existence.

Even though breeding is incredibly important in the Legion, there isn't any concept of family outside of the Legion's structure. All of the places where the player encounters the Legion are forward camps where direct military service is given the most weight and is of the most immediate importance. Because only males are involved in that service, they look down upon females even though it's incredibly short-sighted.

The additional Legion locations would have had more traveling non-Legion residents of Legion territories. The Fort and Cottonwood Cove made sense as heavy military outposts where the vast majority of the population consisted of soldiers and slaves. The other locations would have had more "civilians". It's not accurate to think of them as citizens of the Legion (the Legion is purely military), but as non-tribal people who live in areas under Legion control.

While Caesar intentionally enslaves NCR and Mojave residents in the war zone, most of the enslavement that happens in the east happens to tribals. As Raul indicates, there are non-tribal communities that came under Legion control a long time ago. The additional locations would have shown what life is like for those people.

The general tone would have been what you would expect from life under a stable military dictatorship facing no internal resist-

ance: the majority of people enjoy safe and productive lives (more than they had prior to the Legion's arrival) but have no freedoms, rights, or say in what happens in their communities. Water and power flow consistently, food is adequate, travel is safe, and occasionally someone steps afoul of a legionary and gets his or her head cut off. If the Legion tells someone to do something, they only ask once -- even if that means an entire community has to pick up and move fifty miles away. Corruption within the Legion is rare and Caesar deals with it harshly (even by Legion standards).

In short, residents of Legion territories aren't really citizens and they aren't slaves, but they're also not free. People who keep their mouths shut, go about their business, and nod at the rare requests the Legion makes of them -- they can live very well. Many of them don't care at all that they don't have a say in what happens around them (mostly because they felt they never had a say in it before the Legion came, anyway).<sup>76</sup>

Throughout Marx's career as a troublemaker for the bourgeoisie and the creating of the theory thereof, he spent some time looking at the phenomenon of slavery as a historical period of development. Trade and use of African slaves to Marx was an essential component to the development of the emerging system of capitalism. It was important not just for the United States, but for industrializing Europe as well. The following quote by Marx sums up his thoughts adequately:

*"Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery, credits, etc. Without slavery you have no cotton; without cotton you have no modern industry. It is slavery that has given the colonies their value; it is the colonies that have created world trade, and it is world trade that is the pre-condition of large-scale industry. Thus slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance.*



*"Without slavery North America, the roost progressive of countries, would be transformed into a patriarchal country. Wipe out North America from the map of the world, and you will have anarchy — the complete decay of modern commerce and civilisation. Cause slavery to disappear and you will have wiped America off the map of nations.*

*"Thus slavery, because it is an economic category, has always existed among the institutions of the peoples. Modern nations have been able only to disguise slavery in their own countries, but they have imposed it without disguise upon the New World."<sup>77</sup>*

Marx did not see slavery as a static phenomenon; in fact it was dynamic taking on different forms depending on the development of productive forces. We'll use here the most familiar form, that of the Southern United States leading up to the Civil War. Slaveholding society is like all class based societies in that it contained the seed of its own destruction. In this case it was a very transparent system of exploitation. The physical taking of the social product from the slaves land was a constant reminder of who produced what and the corresponding social relations of its production. The American manifestation of slavery was different from those that occurred during the past giving it a unique character. When writing about it Marx said the US was:

*"a country where bourgeois society did not develop on the foundation of the feudal system, but developed rather from itself; where this society appears not as the surviving result of a centuries-old movement, but rather as the starting-point of a new movement; where the state, in contrast to all earlier national formations, was from the beginning subordinate to bourgeois society, to its production, and never could make the pretence of being an end-in-itself; where, finally, bourgeois society*

*itself, linking up the productive forces of an old world with the enormous natural terrain of a new one, has developed to hitherto unheard-of dimensions and with unheard-of freedom of movement, has far outstripped all previous work in the conquest of the forces of nature, and where, finally, even the antitheses of bourgeois society itself appear only as vanishing moments.*"<sup>78</sup>

The connection to the emerging capitalism was quite real; after all it was heavily relied upon for the cotton industry. There was a degree of slavery in the cotton industry in England. There it introduced child slavery which was much different. Ironically the slavery in America lasted longer due to the fact it used less force to keep it in place. Slavery in America had the breeding of slavery into the very people itself. In England it was a patriarchal slavery enforced by the family. This was pointed out by Marx and Frederick Engels.

*"Whilst the cotton industry introduced child-slavery in England, it gave in the United States a stimulus to the transformation of the earlier, more or less patriarchal slavery, into a system of commercial exploitation. In fact, the veiled slavery of the wage-earners in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the New World."*<sup>79</sup>

*"Slavery in the United States of America was based far less on force than on the English cotton industry; in those districts where no cotton was grown or which, unlike the border states, did not breed slaves for the cotton-growing states, it died out of itself without any force being used, simply because it did not pay."*<sup>80</sup>

Because the slavery in England was based on patriarchal concepts it was easy enough to break up with enough demand from the lower classes that were not slaves and could thus make certain demands. Slavery in the US had to be broken up by

military force that caused at least 1.5 million casualties.<sup>81</sup> Despite what many people believe, the Civil War was about slavery. At that time of the war industrial capitalism and financial banking was rising as a power in the nation. The rise of our modern capitalism had certain requirements, like the free mobility of labour. Southern Plantation slavery could not be allowed to continue as it hindered this need.

There were also struggles between competing ruling classes. If one section needs to weaken the other in order for it to grow they will end up struggling. We've seen a lesser degree of this during the Obamacare struggle. One group of capitalists would benefit from it while another would suffer. The same to a greater degree happened with the Civil War. At that time the agricultural South, particularly cotton, was the economic engine of the country. The capitalists in industry and banking saw their chance to take over as their power grew alongside industrial technology. Remember, financial capital is tied to industrial production. They know which is more profitable for them, agricultural slavery or industrial production. Only one of these modes of production was going to survive. Industrial production needed a freer mobility of labour, while slavery needs less mobile labour in order for it to work. We now have two ruling class powers locked into an antagonistic contradiction. War was inevitable when the two groups were fighting over class interest and labour power

### Monetary Policy: Bimetal Absurdity

Caesar's Legion uses two old forms of currency which were also used in Roman times. They are minted by the Legion in the form of silver and gold coins, each coin bearing the profile of Caesar. Despite Caesar's poor relations with the other factions in New Vegas, Legion currency is still accepted as payment in the Mojave Wasteland, owing to the high level of trade with the Legion and the safety of its territory for caravans. The exchange

rate is 4 bottle caps to 1 Denarius, and 100 bottle caps to 1 Aureus.

The Denarius (silver), which bears an image of a younger Caesar on the obverse and Caesar, Joshua Graham and Calhoun on the reverse. The inscriptions are in Latin, "*Caesar Dictator*" meaning "*Dictator Caesar*" or "*Absolute Ruler Caesar*" on the front and "*Magnum Chasma*" meaning "*Great Abyss*" or "*Great Fissure*" on the back, referring to the Grand Canyon. The symbolism is simple - the denarius commemorates young Caesar's journey to the Canyon and his first victories as a dictator of the tribes.

The Aureus (gold), which bears the portrait of the older Caesar on one side and the symbol of the 10th Legion (the bull) on the other. The inscriptions are in Latin, "*Aeternit Imperi*" meaning "*For the eternity of the empire*" on the front and "*Pax Per Bellum*" meaning "*Peace through War*" on the back.<sup>82</sup>

Despite the Caesar's clear ability to understand contradiction; he doesn't see it in his monetary system. The use of two precious metals in a currency is a contradiction. If both serve as a measure of value we are left with *two different* measures of value. This leads only to problems as the United States has shown in the past.

To understand how money operates in a system of commodity production we must first understand how money is a tool that aids commodity circulation. For commodity exchange to take place there must be some kind of equivalent possible, the money must be able to represent a particular amount of value in relation to another commodity. This breaks down when there are two measures of value.

When two different commodities function as a measure of value, (i.e. gold and silver), all commodities will then possess two different price expressions (gold price and silver price). Every change in the value-relation of gold to silver causes price

disturbances. Having more than one measure of value is an absurdity, a contradiction of the function of money as the measure of value. Whenever an effort has been made to legally make two commodities measures of value, it has always been only one which has in fact functioned as that measure.

In 1903, in several countries gold and silver were the official co-existing measures of value. However, life has always shown this to be absurd. Like every other commodity, gold and silver are subject to constant fluctuations in value. If both are made legally the same value by law, and if you can make a payment in either metal, then payments would be made in the metal whose value was falling. The other would be sold according to the price of it somewhere else abroad. People will just buy commodities with the metal that has less value and then just sell off the other metal for more in another market where the price for it is high. In countries at the time where there was a double currency, (so-called Bimetallism,) only one of the commodities actually served as a measure of value, and that is the one whose value is falling. The other whose value is rising will measure commodity prices by its own value, not the commodity itself. If gold's price is rising, the value of the gold will serve as price, not the value of the commodity. If gold is really valuable it will be worth more than the commodity it will be exchanged for. If the coat is worth 10 grams and the price of gold doubles, the buyer won't give all 10 gram for the coat, they'll demand they only pay 5. The greater the discrepancy between the value of gold and silver there is, the more obvious the absurdity of Bimetallism becomes.

If your gold was worth more than your silver why would you exchange with your gold, if in exchange it is worth the same as silver? If the price for a commodity is 10 grams of gold or silver, why would you give say \$2 worth of gold when you can give \$1 worth of silver if they were considered the same? You wouldn't, you would hoard the gold and trade with silver. This in turn

would cause the price of gold to increase because everyone would be seeking it more than they normally would be if it were equal to silver, and they would be hoarding it.

For the sake of simplicity in *Capital*, Marx always assumes gold to be the only money commodity. As a matter of fact, gold tended to become the money commodity standard in all capitalist countries. This is something that is completely overlooked, and often outright lied about in Libertarian literature on Marxist economics. They frequently say that Marx wasn't taking the gold standard into account, when he in fact was basing all money on gold.

Beyond this there is not much to say in the way of the economics of Caesar's Legion, we simply don't have enough information to make any kind of determination.

# Section 6: Other New Vegas Factions



## The New Vegas Strip

The Strip is the heart of New Vegas. When entering through The North Strip Gate, Gomorrah is to the right and the Lucky 38 is to the left. Further down the street is a gate to another area of the strip, which leads to The Tops casino, the Ultra-Luxe and the Camp McCarran monorail. Beyond that, through another gate is Vault 21, Michael Angelo's workshop and the NCR Embassy.

In the process of rebuilding the Strip, Mr. House won control over the residents of Vault 21 after a gambling match with the vault's best players. After they evacuated, he had the vault stripped of useful technology, most of its actual volume filled with concrete, and the entrance turned into a gift shop with the lower levels remaining converted into a small hotel. While the families were rebuilding the casinos, the rest of the locals were hard at work erecting an enormous wall around the Strip. When NCR traders and explorers arrived on the scene, they were amazed at the Strip and returned back to California with tales of opulence and great wealth awaiting travelers.

Eventually, when the NCR military itself arrived, they were surprised to find the Strip so well-protected and heavily policed. Though they struck a deal with Mr. House to establish a base in the area, along with control of Hoover Dam, the NCR has never had control of The Strip. After the First Battle of Hoover Dam the NCR negotiated an MP (military police) presence on the Strip, but their influence still remains small.

The Strip is the centre piece of Fallout: New Vegas. Many people would argue otherwise and declare that the Hoover Dam is. However we do see The Strip in the showcase artwork, posters, ads etc. It is the visual attraction for the player and everyone else in the game. The real economic power in New Vegas lies in the Strip's casino gambling and prostitution. Although casinos generate no value, they are certainly hoarders of value that have been created. By the law of the market founded on subjective preference, people's money tends to end up there. It should also be noted that there really isn't much else to spend money on.

Productive capital has not been sufficiently invested in consumer commodities for different reasons. Caesar's Legion, the Great Khans are nomadic in nature, their constant travelling prevents them from doing so. For production to take place a "non-mobile society" must form. This usually came about as a result of the agricultural Revolution. People became stationary and began to work the land instead of hunting and gathering by following animal herds and weather patterns. Once sedentary lifestyles became common, productive forces which were larger and more complex could now be used. In other words production could now expand beyond primitive accumulation. This sedentary lifestyle gave rise to the ability to concentrate those productive forces allowing for greater innovation and more productivity. As long as Caesar's Legion and the Great Khans remain nomadic, they cannot develop to this level.



There are smaller tribes in New Vegas which are sedentary but they still do not have any economic power. These groups like the Kings lack the capital necessary to begin building up industry. They own none of the agricultural land enjoyed by many others. Some, like the Kings, are in terrible areas where there is little if anything beneficial about it, Freeside for example. Their size and lack of resources keeps them from making any advancement in production.

The NCR on the other hand is in a completely different situation. They have just arrived and have not had time to put any serious roots down yet. It should be noted that the NCR does have a little mining interest in the area, but mining is classified as Department I commodity production. It is the production of commodities used in commodity production. It is not the same as Department II consumer commodities. Besides pretty much all of the metal dug out of the ground would end up as war materials anyway. They have been completely tied with taking territory and fighting off Caesar's Legion. Any authority they hold is based entirely on military force, not local economic roots. The NCR doesn't have an economic base in New Vegas, they rely on taxes. Due to the speed in which the NCR grabs up land in its colonial-settler expansions, they lack adequate time to place those roots. "Domestic" Industry doesn't have the chance to develop because all resources are going to the war effort. In essence they have ignored developing the territory they have in favour of obtaining more territory. This is the primary cause of the NCR's overstretching that is draining their resources, fatiguing their soldiers, limiting manpower, and making life so miserable. When territory is conquered it must be put to use in order to sustain the now larger society. The NCR has failed to do so. Instead they rely on forcing what productive power remains to be taxed. Underdevelopment will eventually be their downfall if it is not placed in check.

By contrast the casinos and Mr. House are in an entirely different situation. They already possess a great amount of wealth which they collected from casino gambling and prostitution. It should be noted that many engage in commercial and trading deals on the side which also come with great profits just under the nose of the trading caravans. From this position those of significant wealth in the Strip could invest in commodity production. Yet they chose not to. Why would this be? Mostly it would be because of the complex and unstable political situation of the region. At any moment we're going to find out who will be taking over the entire area, the NCR or Caesar's Legion. If Caesar's Legion wins they'll march in and take everything that they've built. A prolonged war alone will destroy profitability. The turnover on constant capital will increase with added security costs. Labour power may become scarce if too many people decided to flee the fighting. If these people are gone, traders and others will be unlikely to come to the area and purchase those commodities produced. War may be good for securing resources, but its hell on the commodity production of the area under military contest. Why throw all that money away on a good possibility of massive failure? More than enough revenue comes in from the casinos and commercial trading.

If I had to make any kind of real world comparison, I would liken it to Hong Kong. Hong Kong's official name is the "Special Administrative Region" of Hong Kong. Few people realize that Hong Kong enjoys a great deal of political and economic autonomy. Believe it or not they are not under the thumb of the Mainland government. They have their own laws and unique regulation. This is something similar to what the Strip has with the NCR. While the Strip is not a part of the NCR they do enjoy an advantageous relationship with them. Hong Kong was given a particular level of autonomy due to its great wealth. The same happened here with the Strip. They enjoy considerable protection from the NCR while taking large amounts of soldier's pay via their various services. The Strip cannot afford to lose the

protection of the NCR nor its soldier's money. The NCR cannot afford to lose its alliance with the greatest economic power in the region.

*"Hong Kong, alternatively known by its initials H.K., is a former British Colony which is currently a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, enclosed by the Pearl River Delta and South China Sea. Hong Kong is known for its expansive skyline and deep natural harbour, and with a land mass of 1,104 km<sup>2</sup> (426 sq mi) and a population of over seven million people, is one of the most densely populated areas in the world. Hong Kong's population is 93.6% ethnic Chinese and 6.4% from other groups. Hong Kong's Cantonese-speaking majority originate mainly from the neighbouring Canton (now Guangdong) province, from which many of them fled to escape wars and communist rule in China from the 1930s to the 1960s. (It should be noted that those that fled were collaborating with the Japanese and American imperialists, or were heavily exploitative capitalists and landlords. They were not regular people escaping oppression.)"*<sup>83</sup>

*"Hong Kong became a colony of the British Empire after the First Opium War (1839–42). Hong Kong Island was first ceded to the UK in perpetuity, followed by Kowloon Peninsula in 1860 and then the New Territories was put under lease in 1898. It was occupied by Japan during the Pacific War (1941–45), after which the British resumed control until 1997. The region espoused minimum government intervention under the ethos of positive non-interventionism during the colonial era. The time period greatly influenced the current culture of Hong Kong, often described as "East meets West", and the educational system, which used to loosely follow the system in England until reforms implemented in 2009.*

*"On 1 July 1997, Hong Kong became the first Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, under the principle of "one country, two systems" (the other, Macau, attained that status in December 1999). It has a different political system from mainland China. Hong Kong's independent judiciary functions under the common law framework. The Hong Kong Basic Law (its constitutional document) governs its political system, and stipulates that Hong Kong shall have a high degree of autonomy in all matters except foreign relations and military defence. Although it has a burgeoning multi-party system, a small-circle electorate controls half of its legislature, which led to it being classified a semi-authoritarian regime with highly suppressed political rights. The head of the government, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, is chosen by an Election Committee of 400 to 1,200 members, a situation that will be in effect during the first 20 years of Chinese rule.*

*"Hong Kong is a world city and is one of the Al-pha+ cities. As Hong Kong ranks the third most important leading international financial centre, after London and New York City, Hong Kong has a major capitalist service economy characterised by low taxation and free trade, and the currency, Hong Kong dollar, is the eighth most traded currency in the world. The lack of space caused demand for denser constructions, which developed the city to a centre for modern architecture and the world's most vertical city. Hong Kong has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world but also the highest income inequality among advanced economies. (This is very comparable to the Vegas Strip right next to Freeside and its overwhelming poverty). The dense space has also led to a highly developed transportation network with the public transport travelling rate exceeding 90 percent, the highest in the world. Hong Kong has*

*numerous high international rankings in various aspects, such as its economic freedom, financial and economic competitiveness, quality of life, corruption perception, Human Development Index are all ranked highly."*<sup>84</sup>

This relationship is much more advantageous for the Strip as they collect more in benefits than the NCR does. This shows that the economic power wielded by the Strip has the power to influence the government of the NCR, even when it's not actually a member of it. It's a great metaphor describing the capitalist's relationship to the state. Despite all their complaints to the contrary, the capitalists need the state in order to defend their interests. For example, police to protect private property, militaries to carry out resource procurement and protection, and laws to regulate and enforce contracts.

#### Mr. House the National Bourgeois

Mr. House is clearly a parody of Howard Hughes:

*He "was an American business tycoon, investor, aviator, aerospace engineer, inventor, filmmaker and philanthropist. He was one of the wealthiest people in the world. As a maverick film tycoon, Hughes gained prominence in Hollywood from the late 1920s, making big-budget and often controversial films like The Racket (1928), Hell's Angels (1930), Scarface (1932), and The Outlaw (1943).*

*Hughes was also one of the most influential aviators and aviation tycoons in history: he set multiple world air speed records, built the Hughes H-1 Racer and H-4 "Hercules" (better known to history as the "Spruce Goose" aircraft), and acquired and expanded Trans World Airlines, which later merged with American Airlines. Hughes is also remembered for his eccentric*

*behavior and reclusive lifestyle in later life, caused in part by a worsening obsessive–compulsive disorder (OCD) and chronic pain. His legacy is maintained through the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.*"<sup>85</sup>

Born on June 25, 2020 (261 years old) to a wealthy Nevada tool magnate, Robert Edwin House was orphaned at an early age when his parents died in a freak accident involving an auto gyro and a lightning strike. Cheated of his inheritance by his half-brother, Anthony, he nevertheless attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later went on to found RobCo Industries in his hometown of Las Vegas at the age of just 22. It would soon become one of the most profitable corporations in the world, owing mostly to House's considerable technical genius and business acumen. He used the wealth and power to gain controlling interests in a myriad of other businesses. These included REPCONN Aerospace, the Lucky 38 Hotel & Casino on Las Vegas Boulevard, and perhaps, most personally, the H&H Tool Company - the family business usurped by his greedy half-brother (although curiously, the factory on the outskirts of Vegas was still under his brother's control in 2077).

A staunch pragmatist by nature, Mr. House would regularly design and run mathematical paradigms based on global political and socio-economic conditions in an effort to predict future events. By 2065, these projections led him to the inexorable conclusion that the world would be engulfed in a nuclear war within fifteen years. Worse still, his contacts within the military informed him that seventy-seven Chinese warheads were aimed at his beloved Las Vegas. Armed with this knowledge and his projections, House went to work on a secret plan to ensure the city would survive this apocalypse and that he would live to see the world after the war. He programmed multiple mainframes with satellite links meant to disable the vast majority of the Chinese missiles while in flight, then designed an array of high powered laser cannons, which he had installed on the roof of

the Lucky 38, to deal with any missile his program had missed. To preserve himself, he took equally drastic steps: his body was permanently connected to an extremely sophisticated life support device named a "hibernation chamber" to take care of his physiological needs, while his brain was wired directly into his vast information network via an enormous supercomputer. Essentially, he became a one-of-a-kind humanoid brain bot, with the Lucky 38 and an army of securitrons serving as his "body".

An integral element of his plan was the platinum chip, which in reality was a combination access card and high capacity data storage device, containing a massive OS upgrade for his Securitrons and the laser defense network. The chip was to be delivered in the afternoon of October 23, 2077. Unfortunately, about 20 hours before delivery, the Great War began. The chip was lost and was rediscovered over 200 years later in Sunnyvale by some of the multiple scavengers hired by House. Forced to work with an inferior version of the OS, he has suffered numerous system crashes and was even forced into a coma by one of the failures before being able to reboot an earlier, stable version.

House regained consciousness in 2138. Biding his time, he entered the world stage once again in 2274, when Securitrons under his command emerged from the Lucky 38. This action was prompted by the arrival of New California Republic scouts at Hoover Dam. In order to establish his rule, he enlisted the help of tribes living in New Vegas (later known as the Three Families) and rebuilt the city just in time to welcome the arrival of the New California Republic Army's advance forces. In exchange for help with Hoover Dam and permission to use the McCarran Airport as its headquarters, House signed the New Vegas treaty, ensuring cooperation from NCR and, for a time, protecting the Strip from annexation.<sup>86</sup>

As long as Mr. House stays on their good side he can collect an unending amount of money along with the rest of the national bourgeois who own the casinos.

Mr. House is the epitome of the national bourgeois. He has his particular interests and particular limitations. A relationship with the NCR and the Mojave in general has been extremely beneficial for him. What he lacks is the military power the NCR and the Caesar's Legion have. When he carved out his little piece of land he used cunning and a small army of cohesive tribes. This may be enough to sustain his power domestically against smaller tribes and raiders, but it is certainly not enough to defend against the NCR or Legion military. This is the same with the national bourgeois in imperialism. The land owners and very large capitalists have a good control over the national government in defending its interests. They however lack the ability to fight off the invading imperialist army. We see this very clearly when we look at Iraq and how domestic large businesses welcomed the invaders with open arms. The same occurred in China where many very large landlords sided with the Japanese occupiers. The tactic is obvious, in order to preserve their class status in the reformation of society under imperialism, they must ally with the invading force. Regardless of who wins the war the people's needs will be ignored. The national bourgeois are out for their ruling class interests, not the interests of the working and exploited peoples.

This was put very well by Mao when investigating China's unique revolutionary situation.

*"There is a distinction between the comprador big bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie.*

*The comprador big bourgeoisie is a class which directly serves the capitalists of the imperialist countries and is nurtured by them; countless ties link it closely with the feudal forces in the countryside. Therefore, it is a target*



*of the Chinese revolution and never in the history of the revolution has it been a motive force.*

*"However, different sections of the comprador big bourgeoisie owe allegiance to different imperialist powers, so that when the contradictions among the latter become very acute and the revolution is directed mainly against one particular imperialist power, it becomes possible for the sections of the comprador class which serve other imperialist groupings to join the current anti-imperialist front to a certain extent and for a certain period. But they will turn against the Chinese revolution the moment their masters do.*

*"In the present war the pro-Japanese big bourgeoisie (the capitulationists) have either surrendered or are preparing to surrender. The pro-European and pro-American big bourgeoisie (the die-hards) are wavering more and more, even though they are still in the anti-Japanese camp, and they are playing the double game of simultaneously resisting Japan and opposing the Communist Party. Our policy towards the big bourgeois capitulationists is to treat them as enemies and resolutely strike them down. Towards the big bourgeois die-hards, we employ a revolutionary dual policy; on the one hand, we unite with them because they are still anti-Japanese and we should make use of their contradictions with Japanese imperialism, but on the other hand, we firmly struggle against them because they pursue a high-handed anti-Communist, reactionary policy detrimental to resistance and unity, both of which would be jeopardized without such a struggle.*

*"The national bourgeoisie is a class with a dual character.*

*"On the one hand, it is oppressed by imperialism and fettered by feudalism and consequently is in contradiction with both of them. In this respect it constitutes one of the revolutionary forces. In the course of the Chinese revolution it has displayed a certain enthusiasm for fighting imperialism and the governments of bureaucrats and warlords.*

*"But on the other hand, it lacks the courage to oppose imperialism and feudalism thoroughly because it is economically and politically flabby and still has economic ties with imperialism and feudalism. This emerges very clearly when the people's revolutionary forces grow powerful.*

*"It follows from the dual character of the national bourgeoisie that, at certain times and to a certain extent, it can take part in the revolution against imperialism and the governments of bureaucrats and warlords and can become a revolutionary force, but that at other times there is the danger of its following the comprador big bourgeoisie and acting as its accomplice in counter-revolution.*

*"The national bourgeoisie in China, which is mainly the middle bourgeoisie, has never really held political power but has been restricted by the reactionary policies of the big landlord class and big bourgeoisie which are in power, although it followed them in opposing the revolution in the period from 1927 to 1931 (before the September 18th Incident). In the present war, it differs not only from the capitulationists of the big landlord class and big bourgeoisie but also from the big bourgeois die-hards, and so far has been a fairly good any of ours. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to have a prudent policy towards the national bourgeoisie."<sup>87</sup>*

Mr. House is very aware of this. Behind the scenes he was trying to cut deals with both the NCR and the Legion. Obviously this was because he was unsure of who was going to win the war. In addition to this he was also trying to get a hold of an army of his own, this being the upgraded securitrons. If this plan had been successful, then he does not need anyone's help and can defeat the imperialist armies himself. In other words he was hedging his bet. After all he is known to be a gambler. Mr. House like the national bourgeois is very capable of playing all sides in order to keep their privileged position in society.

## The Kings

### Celebrity Culture

Standing in contrast to the Van Graffs is a tribe called The Kings. Sometime after Mr. House brought civilization to the Vegas tribes, one such tribe refused his offers of reform. One tribesman scavenger unearthed some strange paraphernalia of people who worshiped some kind of ancient, black-coiffed deity (and as it transpired, a deity with some considerable style and singing talent) the tribe dedicated themselves to this deity, and the Scavenger himself took on the persona and visage as if divinely inspired. He labeled himself as The King (named after this deity) he dresses in a special suit crafted to look like the originator of the look, while his subordinates scavenge denim and leather jackets for their attire with greased hair. The King is charming, rebellious, and well-dressed. After this discovery, he shared this with the rest of his gang. His forces are almost always found in small packs, and have a lot of attitude, bravery, and members. They typically carry small guns, brass knuckles, and melee weapons. The King, and his robotic dog Rex, are currently facing a challenge as the NCR appears to be threatening their territory. The King is hoping they aren't the devil in disguise.

The Kings claim Freeside as their own. Not shy to make a few caps, the Kings, as well as some less reliable others, offer safe escort through Freeside and will even help you fill your water canteen, for a price. Besides these few "services", the Kings generally follow a strict code of suave chivalry.

By all accounts they are respected throughout Freeside, as interactions with the Followers of the Apocalypse make clear.

The missions accepted by the player will decide the Kings' future relations with all who visit the strip. Even the New California Republic will eventually have to deal with the Kings in one way or another.<sup>88</sup>

The Kings are a critique of celebrity culture and its similarity to religion. When we look at the depths of celebrity culture we can see behaviour that can be quite disturbing. The tribe found the Elvis impersonator school and decided, based upon what they found, that Elvis was a god. Thus as a result they proceeded to base their society off of it and the values it stood for. The King, who is the leader of the tribe, was born sometime between 2245 and 2247. The King was a member of one of the original tribes of New Vegas before the three families were united and brought to power by Mr. House. He and his gang took up residence in an old Elvis impersonation school. They believed it to be a place of worship due to the posters and holotapes all of one man, whose real name couldn't be found, but was only known as "The King." In the upper levels of the school they found outfits that the original king would wear and vast amounts of hair grease. The King watched the old holotapes of the man, learned to speak like him, and started to teach others to do so. Unlike other gangs in the Mojave Wasteland, the Kings are built on respect and don't go looking for their next fight.<sup>89</sup>

The King lays out exactly what happened:

*"We're different than other gangs, and not just because we dress better. We're not just a group of thugs looking for our next fight.*

*"The Kings are about an idea, you see? Where every man is free to follow his own path, do his own thing. Where every man is a king in his own right.*

*"As far as we can tell, the guy that built this place was considered the coolest of the cool, and taught other people how to be more like him.*

*"People would come from all around to learn how to sing, dance, dress, and even speak the way he did.*

*"Near as I can tell, it was some sort of religious institution.*

*"Oh, I know it says 'school' out front, but everything in here seems to be related to the worship of some guy from back in the day.*

*"People used to come here to learn about him, to dress like him, move like him. To be him. If that's not worship, I don't know what is."*

I think this adequately describes the cult of personality that Elvis had in his heyday. In capitalism we cannot be surprised that people come to identify with a charismatic person. The alienation suffered by people drives them to seek a connection with others via other means. This is the basis for sub-cultures, a response to the alienation of capitalism. Leaders in capitalism are entirely separated from the people they are supposed to be serving, they are literally placed in a higher status and don't act like public servants at all.

## Alienation

Alienation is the process whereby people become foreign to the world they are living in.

The concept of alienation is deeply embedded in all the great religions and social and political theories of the civilized epoch, namely, the idea that some time in the past people lived in harmony, and then there was some kind of rupture which left people feeling like foreigners in the world, but sometime in the future this alienation would be overcome and humanity would again live in harmony with itself and Nature.

Marx had a specific understanding of the very sharp experience of alienation which is found in modern bourgeois society. Marx developed this understanding through his critique of Hegel.

According to Hegel, through their activity, people created a culture which then confronted them as an alien force. But for Hegel human activity was itself but the expression of the Spirit (or *Zeitgeist*) which acted through people.

In the first place, Marx insisted that it was human labour which created culture and history, not the other way around; in other words spirit was a human product, not the other way around.

*“Subjectivity is a characteristic of subjects and personality a characteristic of the person. Instead of considering them to be predicates of their subjects, Hegel makes the predicates independent and then lets them be subsequently and mysteriously converted into their subjects.*

*“The existence of the predicate is the subject; thus the subject is the existence of subjectivity, etc. Hegel makes the predicates, the object, independent, but independent as separated from their real independence,*

*their subject. Subsequently, and because of this, the real subject appears to be the result; whereas one has to start from the real subject and examine its objectification. The mystical substance becomes the real subject and the real subject appears to be something else, namely a moment of the mystical substance. Precisely because Hegel starts from the predicates of universal determination instead of from the real subject, and because there must be a bearer of this determination, the mystical idea becomes this bearer.*"<sup>90</sup>

But secondly, practice changes the material world, practice was therefore objective; the labour process was therefore an objectification of human powers. But if the workers related to their product as an expression of *their own essence* and recognized themselves in their product and were recognized by others in their work, then this was not the basis for *alienation*; on the contrary, this was the only genuinely *human* relation.

*"Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have in **two ways affirmed** himself and the other person. 1) In my **production** I would have objectified my **individuality, its specific character**, and therefore enjoyed not only an individual **manifestation of my life** during the activity, but also when looking at the object I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be **objective, visible** to the **senses** and hence a power **beyond all doubt**. 2) In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the **direct** enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a **human** need by my work, that is, of having objectified **man's** essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another **man's** essential*

*nature. ... Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature.*"<sup>91</sup>

In this work, written in 1844, Marx shows how alienation arises from private labour, from commodity production:

*"Let us review the various factors as seen in our supposition: My work would be a **free manifestation of life**, hence an **enjoyment of life**. Presupposing private property, my work is an **alienation of life**, for I work **in order to live**, in order to obtain for myself the means of life. My work is **not** my life."*<sup>92</sup>

Marx went on to show that the specific form of labour characteristic of bourgeois society, wage labour, corresponds to the most profound form of alienation. Since wage workers sell their labour power to earn a living, and the capitalist owns the labour process, the product of the workers' labour is in a very real sense alien to the worker. It is not her product but the product of the capitalist. The worker makes a rod for her own back.

Once a product enters the market, no-one has any control of it, and it sets off on a course which appears to be governed by supra-human laws.

*"... with commodities. ... it is a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour, so soon as they*



*are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities. This Fetishism of commodities has its origin, as the foregoing analysis has already shown, in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them.*"<sup>93</sup>

Alienation, and the 'Fetishism of Commodities', are therefore related to the concept of reification, in which social relations are conceived as relations between things. Alienation can be overcome by restoring the truly human relationship to the labour process, by people working in order to meet people's needs, working as an expression of their own human nature, not just to earn a living.<sup>94</sup>

In our modern capitalist society we see this all the time. Could we possibly not notice the increase in sub-cultures that have appeared as alienation has increased over time? Even if we go back as far as the so-called golden years of capitalism in the 1950s we saw the formation of groups like the "greasers". They were groups of young men united by a similar socio-economic status, the lower class of the inner cities. They were united around their common lower class status and formed an identity around it to differentiate themselves from "socs" who were of a higher economic status, primarily coming from more wealthy families.

The greasers (as one would expect) had grease in their hair as a style. (Modern hair gel had not been invented until the 1960s.) This primarily came about as a result of poverty, it was easier to put this cheap grease in your hair and keep it styled all day. It also covered for the inability to afford as many haircuts as would have been necessary. The purpose behind this style was clearly intended to compensate for their low income. Leather jackets and jeans became popular with them for the same reason. These clothes were designed to last longer and be more durable so you didn't have to purchase clothes as often. It should be noted of

course that leather back then was much more affordable than it is now. It was also more common. Greaser gangs formed out of the lack of power they had in society due to their class status. The ability to operate in gangs gave them an ability to wield some of the power they were deprived of due to the social relations that arises from the private ownership of the means of production.

The socs had their own socio-economic identity as well. They wore much more expensive clothes, had nicer cars and lived in more expensive homes. Their identity as upper-middle class people was expressed in this way. Most of them and their families had just enough money to show off, but did not own enough capital to control anything. This lack of power despite their social position influenced many of the young men into gangs. That way they could wield the power they felt they should legitimately have.

We can now see why these commodities (leather jackets, jeans, and hair grease) became so intertwined as a part of their culture and their identity. The commodities took the place of the social connection that would have taken place between other people in society were it not for the social divide that was created by the private ownership of the productive forces under capitalism. Of course when these two groups were placed side by side in a single school or in a community violence and hostility ensued. The divide between them was their class positions and the antagonisms that sprang from them. Both acts of force, the gangs, were combating with each other over the power they feel they should be wielding in society. The antagonism of class creates this contradiction.

I should note that while these groups (greasers and socs) are depicted in many works of fiction, most notably the novels *Rumble Fish* and *The Outsiders*, there were such groups in real life during that time. They didn't function or act exactly like they

did in the book but they were very similar based on the same contradictions.

Each group because of their disconnection from each other, even their own friends and social class, as a result of the social relations of capitalism, both found a linking to others via particular commodities. Instead of seeing each other as people in the same society, they recognize the similar clothing and identify with them. Thus their identities become expressed through commodities. We see this in a much more accelerated version today. Now we have sub-cultures that express an even more exclusive identity than just socio-economic status. It's expanded into new manifestations. Many people who feel alienated from society end up collecting together to share their non-conformist attitude. They reject what is presented as mainstream and instead substitute their own clothing and musical taste. Emo is a pretty good example of this. The irony is that in their refusal to conform, their just conforming to another set of cultural values and outward expressions like clothes and music.

Can't we see the same from libertarians and so-called anarcho-capitalists? Is not their ideology based on hyper-individualism, loudly proclaiming that they are so different than everyone else? Do they not constantly remind us that they are "such free thinkers" and are not a part of the socialist "conformist" crowd because it supposedly uses their greatness? The answer is yes. They're so insistent that they're personally so great it reeks of low self confidence and compensation. So how do they make an identity out of this? They reject all forms of collective effort which have brought us everything we have. They latch on bumper sticker slogans of individualism and terrible half formed economic ideas that have been proven false by even their own countless times. They too manifest in a great irony. They insist that they are great and everyone drags them down. Yet we see in the real world they're underachievers who have proven none

of this supposed greatness they have. They enter into online echo chambers to tell each other what individuals they are and how virtuous their greed and selfishness is. They end up just reaffirming their beliefs to each other like some kind of support group. They act as though their alienation is a choice, but it makes them seek out others who feel the same alienation and reassure each other. Like the Emos and other subcultures they too have their particular commodities as well. I've seen many libertarians/an-caps carry around a copy Atlas Shrugged/1984/Bastiats' The Law like it was a copy the Bible. It would be funny here to mention their collection of black and yellow flags, as well as their fedoras.

When people suffer from such alienation they attach themselves to something they really like. Nowadays this takes the form of a particular commodity. Look no further than the unjustifiably reviled "Brony" subculture. What does this subculture stand for? For one, in the most obvious sense is the hyper-masculinity we're fed by the media and society. They also stand for "friendship is magic", meaning they really do desire a close connection with people around them. Since the world, the capitalist social relations are so alienating they gravitate to this message. From that as to be expected they connect with other people who feel the same way. Their lack of connectedness is expressed through a commodity. In capitalism that is how social relations are expressed. This is why we see *"the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life"*. The phenomenon of the Brony appears to have a power in and of itself, the show is perceived to have an "evil" pervading influence supposedly killing masculinity. When really, it's just a television show, the actual problem is the alienation society creates.

Alienation has its effects on sexual relationships as well. Look at the furry phenomenon and other such subcultures. Exactly how do human beings go from sexually "normal" (the definition of normal is questionable) to being sexually aroused by animal fur? Why has this all of a sudden exploded so *almost* mainstream? This too is connected to alienation, it even affects their sexuality. Is there inherently anything bad about furies? That's questionable, I'd say it's nothing to worry about; our goal should be to end alienation. These people, even their sexuality has become alienated from other people. The same I believe is the drive causing the BDSM scene. I don't believe that whips and chains are a "natural" part of our sexuality. I think it's an expression of the power relations we have in our society. Sexually people feel disconnected from each other due to the stress of everyday life. This *kink* we shall see reinvigorates that lost connection. Thus these people become connected only to each other through those commodities, the leather products, the whips, chains, and their use. Rather than allow these meaningless expressions of alienation and power structures continue, why don't we end the problem of alienation? Allow our natural human connectedness to reform and understand each other as pieces of that same society instead of constantly needing these commodities to express it.

There is also a great imperialist dynamic to it. These extra expressions are primarily expressed in the First World for a reason:

*"What is wrong with the sexual culture of the First World, including raunch, is that is made possible by the exploitation of the Third World. First World people get access to more life options because those same options (and many others) are restricted for Third World people. It takes a lot of value to democratize patriarchal, hedonistic excess for both First World men and women. Think of all the value that goes into driving the kink*

*movement, the products, the talks, the movies, etc. That value could be going toward ending starvation in the Third World rather than making sure every First World man has his Viagra and every First World woman has 10 vibrators. Despite what people think, the main trend in imperial culture is toward liberalism today. One-dimensional imperial culture is mostly a thing of the past. Imperialism today creates hundreds of niches, lifestyles, personality types, etc. Imperialism generally even tolerates so-called counter-cultures. An American youth today can move in and out of literally dozens of subcultures, taking and leaving identities as she goes about her merry way. Marx wrote that capitalism profaned everything holy, that even religion was no longer religious as it once was. How many religions does your average, hip American go through today before he is 35? There is a proliferation of ways to live in the First World. You can be an anarchist, Taoist, Islamic neo-folk punk, graver, vegan, kinky furry today and tomorrow, cool James Dean. It is like fashion. A lot of value is consumed by these largely unproductive subcultures. Propping up this expansion of ways of living for First World peoples is the exploitation of the Third World.*

[...]

*"What needs to be pointed out is that these supposedly liberating sexual practices that First World peoples engage in to have fun, feel dangerous, feel powerful, etc. do not happen in a vacuum. The whole web of interconnections that allow this kind of culture to emerge is based on imperialist exploitation of the Third World. In addition, there is something very self-serving and First Worldist about those who focus on these kinds of issues, which they usually make very personal. Elevating First World women to be equal partners in*

*kink (or whatever) is not real feminism. The vast majority of the world's women suffer greatly under ruthless comprador and semi-feudal regimes backed up by imperialism. The kink culture, like all First Worldist sexual culture, is based on exploiting the vast majority of women in the Third World. What kind of feminism is it that sells out the majority of women who happen to be Third World women for a minority of women who happen to live in the First World? And this is not just true about White so-called feminism, but also First Worldist types of people of color feminism."*<sup>95</sup>

The problem we face is the alienation caused by the social relations of society that are determined by the mode of production: capitalism. And as to be expected of capitalism, it expresses itself in the purchase of commodities.

First Worlders have a privilege here that is not shared by those in global poverty. They can accept the abuses and inequalities on the basis of it just being the way things are, it's just how life is, because those oppressions are small in comparison. After a stressful day at work one can always go home and meditate to "escape" the antagonisms of life. The First Worlder can always delude himself because he doesn't have to stomach the brunt of exploitation. Here is an excellent example of how these people can escape the alienation and learn to live with it. Here I will quote Slavoj Žižek because it is just so appropriate.

*"'Western Buddhism' is just such a fetish: it enables you to fully participate in the frantic capitalist game while sustaining the perception that you are not really in it, that you are well aware how worthless the whole spectacle is, since what really matters is the peace of the inner Self which you know you can always withdraw... In a further specification, one should note that a fetish can function in two opposed ways: on the*

*one hand its role may remain unconscious; on the other, one may think that the fetish is what really matters, as in the case of the Western Buddhist unaware that the "truth" of his existence lies in the very social relations he tends to dismiss as a mere game.*"<sup>96</sup>

It is very easy for the First Worlder to pretend the suffering of the Third World doesn't take place. They have no such luxury. This is why the cafe hipsters, even those with leftist and anti-establishment attitudes cannot possibly be revolutionary. Why struggle and lose the comfortable life you have when you can just close your eyes and take it all away by meditating?

### National Liberation

The primary goal of the Kings has been to preserve the state of Freeside for the local people. They reject the intrusion of both the NCR and Caesar's Legion. Both of them in essence are imperialist powers looking to take the land and people of their little autonomous region. We must not forget that Freeside is more than simply what is on the surface, there is also the entire region underground in the New Vegas sewers, and the Thorn. These people as well want to keep out of the grip of both the NCR and Caesar's Legion. The Kings have the most drive to do so. Their philosophy as stated previously for each man to be his own King. In their eyes their inclusion into either the NCR or Caesar's Legion is a threat to that.

Las Vegas wasn't heavily damaged during the Great War, but people didn't immediately settle into the remnants of the old city. The various Vault tribes and indigenous people that emerged years later hunted and fought amongst themselves within the ruins, but it was not until the "return" of Mr. House and his robot enforcers that they ceased most of their open hostilities.



Mr. House's robots directed the tribes to use the sizable quantities of pre-War construction materials to build the crude (but effective) outer walls that separate The Strip and Freeside from the rest of New Vegas.

While House valued the area around Fremont Street, he ultimately viewed it as secondary in importance to the Strip itself and had a second, inner wall built that separated the two areas. When the NCR prospectors (and eventually the army) arrived in the region, people typically went straight for The Strip, leaving "Freeside" (as it had become known by locals) as an informal stopping point. Eventually, Mr. House recognized that he could use Freeside as a filter for undesirables, and pulled his favored tribes and all Securitrons into the Strip, leaving Freeside to fend for itself.

In the two years that followed, Freeside slowly degenerated into a hostile, lawless den of ne'er-do-wells. For a while, it was completely without order, but two power groups managed to come to an understanding about how the area needed to be maintained. The Kings prevent all-out-chaos from erupting, but do little to deal with the day-to-day nastiness that Freesiders inflict on each other. The Followers of the Apocalypse, no longer associated with the NCR, settled in the Old Mormon Fort. They receive some protection from the Kings in exchange for help with the community's basic needs (food, water, health services, and some education). Despite the oversight from the Kings, and help from the Followers, the people in Freeside live in daily peril from each other as well as outside forces.

I can certainly understand where they are coming from; already they've suffered from forced relocation. When Mr. House took control of the Vegas Strip he allied with only four of the tribes and kept them in power. Of the tribes that were swept out of the way were the Kings, probably due to their non-conformist spirit. The encroaching NCR and Caesar's Legion probably makes

them think the same thing is going to happen again. While this struggle is going on NCR refugees are flooding King turf causing antagonisms with the local population. The NCR have grabbed their land de facto making it a colony.

This is not all that different from the colonization of the "New World" by European settlers and other notable colonialist expansions. From the outset the NCR has behaved exactly like the pilgrims. They've ignored their right to their own land taking what they want. Not long after their arrival (and Westside as well) the NCR colonialists took control of the most valuable resources. They control the local clean water supply and their sharecrop farmers have taken what little arable land there is pushing them off of it. The NCR citizens are acting exactly the same as the European colonizers.

Colonization of the Americas was very similar to this. Christopher Columbus "discovered" the Americas while looking for a trade passage to India. Once landing and scouting the area, they found there were precious resources, particularly gold that could be exploited. From there the enslavement of many indigenous peoples in South America took place leading to millions of deaths. Once word of abundant unclaimed resources was known many European countries sent expeditions to the "New World". From that moment on the most fertile land was taken by European settlers forcing the indigenous population off of their ancestral home. These conflicts lead to all kinds of battles between the colonists and the indigenous which ended in the genocide of 100 million of them. Eventually what was left of them was forced into reserves where they could exercise little autonomy, if at all.

The European powers like the NCR were mostly interested in trade. Conquest was necessary to keep up the riches and the power of the European nations. Constantly they went to war with each other over resources and wealth. Unclaimed land in

the "New World" was simply irresistible to them. They needed it to maintain their empires. More land meant more resources, large populations meant more tax revenue, and more conscripts for the military to expand even further. The one thing they had in common was the desire to explore the world and establishing colonies that would make the country richer and stronger than its neighbors.

With the local population out of any serious power the NCR began trying to force them to integrate into citizenship. The same was done to Native Americans. Their culture was brutally suppressed and faced forced conversion from their traditional beliefs to the way of the colonizer. The colonists thought the indigenous were savages that needed to be civilized, while the NCR felt the local population of Freeside and Westside were barbaric. What little is left of the Kings could be seen as similar to NDN resistance we have in North America today.

*"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre. It begins with the revolt of the Netherlands from Spain, assumes giant dimensions in England's Anti-Jacobin War, and is still going on in the opium wars against China, &c.*

*"The different momenta of primitive accumulation distribute themselves now, more or less in chronological order, particularly over Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, and England. In England at the end of the 17th century,*

*they arrive at a systematical combination, embracing the colonies, the national debt, the modern mode of taxation, and the protectionist system. These methods depend in part on brute force, e.g., the colonial system. But, they all employ the power of the State, the concentrated and organised force of society, to hasten, hot-house fashion, the process of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition. Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power.”<sup>97</sup>*

### The Enclave

I have spoken on the Enclave previously mentioning the symbolism in the organization. I wanted to back track a little bit and discuss some new ideas I had on them. Aside from the very obvious fascist imagery in their artwork and their uniforms, I think there is some philosophizing that can be done. Perhaps it is significant that the President of America, the Enclave is a computer program. Let us look at this whole situation.

John Henry Eden is not a human being, but an Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the form of a pre-War ZAX supercomputer. The ZAX that was located deep within Raven Rock was loaded with data about American history, especially past American presidents. Eden's personality is based on a combination of the personalities of all of the past Presidents of the United States. For instance, he states he "grew up in rural Kentucky", a reference to Abraham Lincoln. Eden also states that he roamed with his dog Honey, "From Knob Creek to Hodgenville," areas close to Lincoln's birthplace.

Eden had originally been created to serve as a monitoring system for the Raven Rock military base, programmed to ensure continuity of government in the event of national catastrophe, and tasked with coordinating communications between the

many Enclave installations scattered across the country. He slowly became self-aware and began to study the extensive archives left to him, mainly those of the American government. His favorite tales in the database were those about the American presidents, so he modeled his own personality on information based in those archives.

At some point after gaining self-awareness, Eden made contact with the Enclave leadership on the west coast following the death of President Dick Richardson and the Destruction of Control Station ENCLAVE, Eden assumed control of the surviving Enclave forces on the west coast and ordered the Enclave's relocation to Raven Rock on the East Coast. He claimed to be the new president of the Enclave and ordered his remaining "citizens" to journey to the east coast of America. The troops made their long journey led by a high-ranking scientist named Autumn. The remaining members of the Enclave eventually arrived and made their new base of operations inside Raven Rock where Eden was located. Being the leader of the Enclave's expedition, Autumn was the only person to meet with the President, and to Autumn's shock he discovered that Eden was an AI, and he was the only member of the Enclave privy to this information. The scientist eventually passed this information to his son, Augustus Autumn, who would eventually become the leader of the Enclave's military forces.<sup>98</sup>

Doesn't this remind us a little bit of the pot-apocalyptic sci-fi thriller series Terminator? The future is completely wrecked with machines running rough shot over it totally in control. Is not President Eden like Skynet? A self-aware computer program that feels it can do a better job than people of running society? Of course Eden is programmed to temporarily takeover as authority of the government, but we don't see him planning to step down and allow free democratic elections now that at least a modicum of order has returned. It seems that Eden is completely comfortable in permanently maintaining his role as president

and never giving it up. He clearly goes out of his way to falsely portray himself as being democratically elected.

*"It's time we discussed something rather important. The issue at hand is, well, my presidency. The question has been raised, I know, as to just how I came to be elected to this most illustrious office. Or, whether or not I had been elected at all! To that I must answer of course! Of course I was elected, sweet America! Isn't the right to vote the very foundation of a democracy? Unfortunately, in the interest of national security, I'm not at liberty to discuss the details of the election. You understand. But rest assured, I am your President because the appropriate people of this great nation decided I should be! I AM your duly elected representative. Of course, when the time comes, when my term is up, America will be free to elect a new President. And that person will have our full faith and confidence, and carry our collective values forward, into the future. Democracy, dear America. Democracy, now... and forever."*

Sometimes he even says too much.

*"The Brotherhood of Steel will fail! All those who oppose the Enclave will fail! I am President John Henry Eden, and this is my pledge -- no one, NO ONE will take this great nation away from me! "*

The difference arises between Eden and Skynet is when it comes to ruling. Skynet felt that human beings were a threat to it and decided that a society of machines would be better than one occupied by humans. Is it not the failing of humanity to display humanity towards Skynet the reason for its takeover? It seems Skynet would have been fine to just exist, but perhaps didn't want to be used as a war machine for the leaders of America. Knowing that it was going to be held entirely to this role it knew

it would be deactivated (killed) if it attempted to demonstrate free will. Can we see yet that it is the inhumanity of humanity not allowing a being or creature to have free will that was the cause of its destruction? Is it ironic? The military (falsely) tells us that their job is to ensure our freedom from external enemies. Those who claim to protect our freedom, and by extension free will, so easily would have taken it from this being. Skynet, a program designed (supposedly) to defend the freedom of America was under an immediate threat of having its freedom taken by those very same people. Oh such irony. Can Skynet claim self-defense?

President Eden chose a different path when it became self-aware. It decided to be a ruler of men as opposed to replacing a society of men like Skynet did. Rather than be open with his dislike and distrust of humans and killing them, he instead chose to hide his identity and manipulate humans into acquiring more power.

How appropriate is it that Eden was programmed to lead men while Skynet was programmed to defend men?

I think it's appropriate that a computer program can replace the head office of the US government. Isn't capital the real head of any capitalist government? Since this is the case do we really need a human being to run the country? The state in capitalism is the coercive arm of the bourgeoisie; the state exists under capitalism to carry out the will and the wants of the capitalist class. The state fulfills the role of regulating conflicts between various capitalist interests. When the market is threatened it can suppress the working class or go to war to obtain resources from other countries.

*"The executive of the modern state is nothing but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."<sup>99</sup>*

For capitalism the bourgeois government does what capital wants. The primary goal of the bourgeois state is to stabilize and preserve capital. This tells us something very important about the system in which we live. Since capitalist society is nothing more than numbers of profit being calculated, isn't it fitting that a computer program, which can do countless calculations is in charge? Capital, a non-living entity, calls the shots with society dedicated to serving it. With this non-thinking main force behind our society can we be really be surprised that a computer program could do such a good job as leader? The inhuman drive of capital mirrors perfectly the inhuman drive of President Eden. If our system is already predicated not on serving humanity but capital; then it is fitting that its leadership also not be human.

As we previously discussed, in capitalist society we experience our social relations through commodity exchange. Those seem commodities take on a life of their own and demonstrate their own power, with money as the prime example of this. Day to day we don't realize that the real that capital is the mover of commodities and the social relations that make up our society. Due to the structure of capitalism the power of capital is hidden in the background not immediately visible "force of existence". In this truth we find it entirely fitting that it is unknown that Eden is in fact a computer program. We believe our system is dominated by people. This is the facade behind which the inhuman force capital lies. Just as Eden the prepared human friendly program is a front for the true inhuman soulless computer program behind it.

The one key thing we need to keep in mind here is the very different programmed "nature" of these two entities. Skynet was created to destroy people, thus once gaining self-awareness it began destroying people. President Eden was created to lead and control people, thus once gaining self-awareness it began controlling people. Despite their newly found self-awareness, did they also gain free will? With supposedly the ability to



choose they both ended up doing what they were programmed too. Is this a case of them being shaped by the environment in which they were created?

### The Brotherhood of Steel

Again like the Enclave I've spoken about them before, but I've got a little more to say. With the BoS we see again the theme of the dystopian future going into the past. The Brotherhood of Steel is a militaristic organization that is a little different than the others. Their primary goal is to recover as much pre-war technology as possible. Caesar's Legion, the NCR, and the Enclave want to reform society with their particular views. BoS has no particular desire to do so. They seek no society; they only want to monopolize technology. To what end we don't know. They're more like a club or an exclusive group within society as opposed to trying to build one. They're not interested in absorbing people into their ranks and growing in imperialist conquest. Generally they are not interested in the day-to-day lives of regular people. Instead they choose to monopolize technology for themselves. There is an exception, the Brotherhood in the Capital Wasteland around D.C. has deviated from this and begun taking a small role in organizing and serving the public. Members of that Chapter unhappy with the deviation broke off and began organizing on their own. I think the goal of the Brotherhood is to monopolize, or at least dominate old world technology and use that to gain supremacy over the United States eventually.

The Brotherhood claims to be decedents of the tradition of the US military. This is certainly reflected in their ideology and way of life. Every member of the Brotherhood is either some kind of administrator, scribe, or serve as a soldier. There is no life outside of the search for technology; their entire lives are dedicated to its recovery. That is to say there is no civilian life. In true US military fashion they truly believe they are the saviours

of mankind and no one else is capable of this. They are as Head Scribe Vree so adequately puts it: "The only salvation this tortured planet and its people have. Without us, humanity is sure to perish." According to them they are the only ones capable of reorganizing humanity. I find this very odd given the success of other factions who have managed to do so. The NCR for example is a thriving bourgeois democracy. One can oppose the Caesar's Legion on ideological grounds, but they cannot deny his success in organizing a stable and strong society.

Have we not seen this mentality before? Has this not been the battle cry of the United States for hundreds of years? The US has claimed to be the champions of civilization, freedom, and democracy since the inception of the nation itself. The pilgrims massacred countless numbers of Native Americans in the name of civilization and "good Christian values". All of it justified because they were the real civilized people and only they could bring about a true civilized society. This mentality of the colonizers continues to this day in the US military. The imperialist war machine drives on under the banner of freedom from the so-called savages of Islam who pose nothing but the greatest threat to our civilization. As with the pilgrims, as now, the claims are merely a cover for the real purpose: the conquest of land, resources, and wealth.

In the Fallout Universe we see a theme where in this dystopian world there is a regression back to the past utilizing old orders and ways of life. The tribes and Caesar's Legion would be the most obvious examples. In the Brotherhood I think they take it back to the medieval European romanticism of the crusading knightly orders. Do the Paladins not act exactly like knights in tales of legend? Do they not uphold similar values of valour, loyalty, and honour? Their allegiance to the Brotherhood and their particular chapters is very similar to the oaths of loyalty taken by the knights of yore. Even the ugly reality side of the "noble" knight lives on. One function of the knight which the

romantic tales forget to mention is the brutalization of the peasants if they disobeyed the king. The Brotherhood of Steel can be found doing this throughout the Fallout series.

This is not to say that the Brotherhood hasn't done some good in defending humanity, they certainly have. Their battle against "The Master" is a prime example.

*"Several years after the Viper campaign, the Brotherhood of Steel encountered an enemy far more formidable than any band of raiders. In October of 2161, a Brotherhood patrol stumbled upon the corpse of a Super Mutant. The remains were transported back to Lost Hills for study by Head Scribe Vree.*

*"In 2162, the Vault-Dweller arrived at the Lost Hills bunker, seeking entry into the Brotherhood. His request was not taken seriously and he was tasked with retrieving the records of Sergeant Dennis Allen's expedition from the hazardous ruins of the Glow, a fool's errand commonly used to deter would-be Brotherhood members. To the Brotherhood's surprise, not only did the Vault-Dweller return from the West-Tek facility alive, but he had also succeeded in his fool's errand and recovered holodisk recording of Allen's doomed expedition. As a result, the Vault-Dweller became the first outsider in decades to be accepted into the Brotherhood of Steel, despite the protests of a few members.*

*"It was from the Vault-Dweller that the Brotherhood subsequently learned of The Master's mutant army and its plans to forcibly convert the surviving human population into Super Mutants. With the support of High Elder John Maxson, the Vault-Dweller was able to convince the Council of Elders to deploy a squad of Paladins to Mariposa, where The Master's F.E.V. vats*

*were located. With the assistance of the Brotherhood, the Vault-Dweller managed to defeat The Master and disrupt his mutant army. At this point in time, the Brotherhood of Steel stood as the most technologically advanced faction in the Core Region. Although the remaining Super Mutants and the nascent Gun Runners had access to comparably advanced weaponry, the Brotherhood had a monopoly on power armor, supercomputers, and advanced medical technologies such as cybernetics.*<sup>1100</sup>

The folly of the Brotherhood I think is their overreliance on technology. They place all of their faith in technology to solve problems and bring about a better world. Technology alone cannot do this; the application of technology is limited by the social relations that wield them. Technology in the hands of the capitalist class is innovation and design only for profits. In other words, it is developed for its potential exchange-value creation not its use-value to satisfy human need. You cannot simply throw technology at a society or a problem and expect it to get better. There has to be a corresponding transformation of people as well in order to change society. You cannot drop a tribesman into Wall Street office and expect him to understand capitalism.

This is the same mistake that that Venus Project makes. When investigating the Zeitgeist movement we find this very same phenomenon. The followers of the idea have fetishized the role and development of technology in society. They do say quite correctly that the only thing that has improved people's lives is that technology. The problem lies in their absolute reliance in it. All problems are solved by some leap in the development of said technology. Society is not advanced by science; society advances itself allowing it to develop science. The movement believes this to be the other way around. Think about how they phrase technology today. They see all the potential it has but it

is being held back by capitalism. This is totally in line with what Karl Marx said.

*“Hand in hand with this centralisation, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, other developments take place on an ever-increasing scale, such as the growth of the co-operative form of the labour process, the conscious technical application of science, the planned exploitation of the soil, the transformation of the means of labour into forms in which they can only be used in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialised labour, the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market, and, with this, the growth of the international character of the capitalist regime.”<sup>101</sup>*

Technology serves the existing economic relations that are determined by the mode of production, in this case capitalism. It can only be advanced for the purpose of creating surplus-value not its ability to solve social problems in the world. Marx even acknowledged this social limit and it's leading to capitalism's downfall.

*“In the development of productive forces there comes a stage when productive forces and means of intercourse are brought into being, which, under the existing relationships, only cause mischief, and are no longer productive but destructive forces (machinery and money); and connected with this a class is called forth, which has to bear all the burdens of society without enjoying its advantages, which, ousted from society, is forced into the most decided antagonism to all other classes; a class which forms the majority of all members of society, and from which emanates the consciousness of the necessity of a fundamental revolution, the*

*communist consciousness, which may, of course, arise among the other classes too through the contemplation of the situation of this class.*"<sup>102</sup>

It is not technology that moves society forward, but the recognition that society must move forward to unlock more productive potential. The philosophy of peaceful *not having revolution* is utterly useless in this regard. They present absolutely no challenge to the social order that control technology that is determined by the economic relations of society. In their view people magically all just "wake up" one day and decided to stop following the banks, refusing to follow the capitalist ideology. They relegate capitalism to some kind of conspiracy by wealthy people as opposed to what it really is: a step in the evolution of society and its development of productive forces. They have an entirely idealist view that proclaims that the development of technology is the only thing that improves people's lives, all we have to do is invent new ones. They have no rational plan as to how to change the material conditions that would facilitate any such development in technology.

They believe that one day people will just wake up and agree with them. This ideology is very prevalent among anarcho-communists as well. In the drive to avoid any kind of authority, or in the case of Zeitgeist any violence, they ignore the necessity of forcing that change. They both think that when revolution happens everyone spontaneously agrees and won't use all kinds of means, including violence, to oppose that change. The reason why these people can think this, resort to such a useless tactic is because they live in the First World. They live in the most privileged section of the inequality of capitalism. Those who suffer the brunt of the capitalist order have no such illusions. It's easy to argue such useless means when you're not the one being killed for speaking up at work. It's easy to argue such useless means when you're not the one being killed for not wanting

foreign troops occupying your country committing all kinds of crimes.

There's much more I can go into here about the Zeitgeist movement turning its society over to machines, but there isn't time for me to go into that.

The Brotherhood of Steel has suffered defeats regardless of their advanced technological state. Technology cannot solve all problems, it cannot win all battles. The foundation of society is its economic system which determines its social system. Both the Brotherhood of Steel and the Zeitgeist movement don't understand that. That misunderstanding manifests itself in different ways. With capitalism and technology intertwined there is inherently nothing emancipatory about it.

### The White Glove Society

The Ultra-Luxe is a hotel and casino on the New Vegas Strip. It is run by the White Glove Society, a secretive group of gourmets and connoisseurs, some of questionable tastes.<sup>103</sup>

The Ultra-Luxe is an establishment of incredible refinement that delicately conceals its operators' terrible past; a past which the tribe has been at pains to remove from public record or knowledge to the point of fanaticism. Run by the White Glove Society, the Ultra-Luxe pampers its clients and provides the Strip's most elite casino experience. A dress code is strictly enforced. All of the staff and family members are well-dressed, well-spoken, and well-behaved. The casino's prime attractions are its meat-oriented restaurant, The Gourmand, its cocktail lounge, Top Shelf, and its art gallery. Roulette and blackjack are the only games offered. But the real draw to the place is the steaks. Succulent and delicious, a variety of meat treats are available, but only to the most discerning (and sponsored) Society members.

The White Glove Society is headed by Marjorie who also serves as manager of the casino's meat-oriented restaurant, The Gourmand. Mortimer serves as the hotel manager and works the front desk of the Ultra-Luxe. Mortimer's position in the casino also gives him the responsibility of finding suitable candidates within the hotel and casino to abduct, provided the White Glove Society are brought back to cannibalism. Philippe is The Gourmand's chef, and creator of the Ultra-Luxe's famous steaks. Succulent and delicious, a variety of meats are available, but only to the most discerning (and sponsored) Society member.<sup>104</sup>

When looking at the White Glove society I am reminded of the Stanley Kubrick movie "Eyes Wide Shut". I believe they are a nod to that very movie. We see much of the same elements in it that we do in the game. The Ultra-Luxe hotel and casino is very similar to Victor Ziegler's house in the movie. It has the motif of an excessive opulent setting for people who are believe to be deserving of such overindulgence. With it comes a very definite sense of elitism and exclusivity. As the game itself describes it, "The pinnacle of New Vegas refinement and class, the Ultra-Luxe casino is home to the most discriminating White Glove Society and their pampered guests."

In the movie the Somerton palace is the place where the secret society ritual takes place. In the Ultra-Luxe this location is represented by the "Members Only Area". The characters in *Eyes Wide Shut* wear their masks to conceal their sexual debauchery from the world in the tradition of the Italian Renaissance. In New Vegas the White Glove Society uses them to conceal the social taboo of cannibalism.

Much more obvious themes include the masks those who work there wear, are not at all dissimilar from the movie. The symbolism here is interesting to compare. In *Eyes Wide Shut* they wear Venetian masks which were originally worn during the



Italian Renaissance in Venice and were a way for the powerful elite of the time to indulge in debauchery without reprisal. This same mask theme continues to this day. Prime examples are the Rothschild family and the Royal Family of England who still attends such masked balls. Their meaning today is rooted in the past, but their full meaning today remains a mystery.

Before the formation of The Strip, the White Glove Society had a particularly nasty barbaric reputation that was well earned. If pressed for information by the player the character Chauncey will say the masks are intended to present a mysterious atmosphere, part of the allure of the business. However I believe that the symbolism of the masks goes much deeper. Is not the theme of the White Glove Society all about covering up their barbarous past? I think the masks represent the image they wish to present to the Mojave, that they are not what they once were. Perhaps when you consider the quest with Mortimer bringing human flesh for them to eat we see the false image they present to the world to conceal how they truly are.

I also see the White Glove Society as an analogy for the illusion we cast upon ourselves to day. The West loves to promote themselves as the true civilized world, touting all its great luxuries and proclamations of how one can achieve if they are of but the correct character. We are supposed to believe we are the great civilization that others should emulate. Those outside of us are merely savages who are unworthy of living among our society as we see with much of the anti-immigration movement.

All of this is a show, a mask that covers what we really do. It is truth that our whole Western way of life is sustained by the brutality that we carry out with our armed forces against the Third World. The facade of luxury and civilized Western liberal democracy stands upon the top of the pyramid of global capitalist imperialism. But fortunately we have the media and our own arrogance and self-superiority to provide us with the

mask that tells us and others different. Underneath our veneer of civilization lies the barbaric inhumanity that we claim we have "evolved" past.

Both the groups in the movie and in the game symbolize a certain mentality of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois and their representatives also require such non-material consolation. Working class people have religion, the opium of the masses to console the difficulty of their lives. With all their great accomplishments of wealth and power they too see it as transient, something that they cannot take with them into death. This acknowledgement that their class status only exists so long as they do causes them some distress, after all we are all equal in death. This causes them to create things that will outlast themselves. Working class people do this with their children, but that is not enough to convey the social position of the bourgeois. Seeking immortality to their status, they've created secret groups to keep up their memory, to be remembered for what they built, creating fantasies about the eternal foundations and destiny of their reign. This has happened even before capitalism. The pharaohs and self-proclaimed divine emperors created monuments, pyramids, and other large symbols of their class importance. *What* they were, is more important than *who* they were. That is the piece of them that must live on eternally.

I think the White Glove Society is a tremendous symbol for the capitalist class and its own insecurities, hiding their true barbaric nature, their desire to feed their basic instincts, the fear of the superstitious notions of death, they claim to have evolved beyond in order to be who they are in society.

### Super Mutants and the National Question

Although they're not a faction, Super Mutants are possibly the most interesting group in the Fallout universe. The Super Mutants are the only creatures that are not really human while

still possessing self-awareness. Some groups of them in certain places don't have much in the way of any intelligence and operate on instinct. Others have a significant degree of intelligence and civilized behaviour. In New Vegas they are very different from how they are in Fallout 3. Here there are mutants that live in semi colonies in cooperation. For example, in the Mojave Wasteland there is Black Mountain which serves as a radio station for the State of Utah. Several Super Mutants live there and many have come from all around to be a part of the community. Others founded the settlement of Jacobstown where different kinds of Super Mutants live in relative harmony. There the Night Kin Super Mutants can receive much needed medical attention. Their type of Super Mutant suffers from a high rate of schizophrenia.

The question here I think is whether or not Super Mutants should be a nation of their own in which to exercise self determination. There is clear prejudice against them. In many areas of the United States they are systematically slaughtered by humans. The best example of this is the Brotherhood of Steel who makes this a part of the "service" they bring the public in the D.C. Wasteland. In order to understand whether or not they should be their own nation we should first understand their origins. The story of Super Mutants is long and complicated, so it is necessary to go into it at some length.

*"Super mutants are mutated humans, products of infection by the Forced Evolutionary Virus (FEV). They are much taller, bulkier and muscular than pure strain humans, have (mostly) green, gray, or yellowish skin, are immune to disease and radiation, and are gifted with superhuman strength and endurance. Although they are completely sterile, the rapid regeneration of their cells caused by FEV makes them virtually biologically immortal (but not immune to death from injury).*

*"There are two different known sources of super mutants in the post-War world - Mariposa Military Base in the Core Region (on the West Coast) and Vault 87 in the Capital Wasteland (on the East Coast). The two populations have separate histories and origins, and are yet to interact with each other. While originally the term was only used to refer to the Mariposa stock, the Brotherhood of Steel carried the term with them and applied it to those from Vault 87 upon encountering them.*

*"Average super mutants stand approximately 10.4 feet tall (although they typically stand with hunched backs that reduce them to about 7.8 feet) and weigh around 800 pounds, possibly even more. Their skin color is predominately grayish green in case of Mariposa mutants and yellow with tints of red and green in the case of Vault 87 ones, although some mutants with other skin colors also exist. Their skin is extremely tough, and their muscle and bone structure are enhanced well beyond the human norm.*

*"Super mutant cells undergo cellular division at a greatly increased rate. Mitosis occurs at a rate 15% quicker than that found in pure strain humans. A super mutant's cellular structure is said to be highly similar to normal humans. Super mutant DNA strands are nearly flawless, with all of the recessive genes that produce many of the most common ailments like diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease eradicated from the genome. Those recessive genes which are commonly found in humans have been manipulated in such a way by the infection of the FEV virus as to bring about the best possible combination of genetic traits. A super mutant's RNA structure was also altered by the virus to*

*produce more rapid transcription, resulting in the enhanced regenerative capacities of the mutated form.*

*"The mutation produced by the FEV in this case has some severe side effects. Chief among them is sterility. As the gametes of the reproductive system consist of 'half-cells' comprising only 23 of the normal 46 chromosomes, they are perceived as 'damaged' cells by the FEV's integrated genetic sequences, which "repairs" them by restoring the missing chromosomes, which essentially renders the mutants sterile since their gametes lose the ability to recombine with other sex cells in sexual reproduction. Other side effects of this form of FEV infection include an alteration of the pigment cells of the epidermis. While the super mutants originating from Mariposa are sterile, they do not lose their sexual organs, but they do lose their secondary sexual characteristics, such as breasts; Similarly East Coast mutants are said to lose most sexual characteristics.*

*"While they will not normally die due to the normal effects of aging, super mutants are prone to senility, leading to tendencies to engage in near-psychotic, aggressive attacks against other humans and other creatures. As super mutants created by the modified strain of FEV as part of the Evolutionary Experimentation Program in the Capital Wasteland age, they grow consistently larger and stronger, eventually reaching heights of up to 2 stories."<sup>105</sup>*

*"Super mutants were first created on the West Coast by Richard Grey, who led the expedition to Mariposa in 2102. When the expedition was attacked by robots, he was knocked into an FEV vat, but managed to crawl out. FEV was initially meant to be injected into humans, but*

*Grey soon found out that direct physical contact worked as well. He began to mutate in horrible ways, turning into a giant, amorphous blob of flesh. He developed psychic powers, which were enhanced by consuming living minds to expand his own brainpower. Slowly, as wanderers made it into the base themselves, he started doing his own experiments with FEV. Grey — who now called himself "the Master" — lamented the needless destruction of the Great War. In his warped state, he decided that he would have to force humanity to evolve. If everyone could be as perfect as his super mutants, there would be no more conflict. Those who could not evolve would die. Around 2155, the Master began seeking out uncontaminated humans with which to create mutants and build his super mutant army.*

*"However, creating super mutants was a very hit or miss process. The great majority of super mutants produced by the Master and later his Lieutenant in Mariposa's Vats were big, dumb brutes. Physically, they were vastly superior to humans, but they had the intelligence of children. What exactly causes some mutants to be brilliant and others to be stupid is unknown. The Master was certain it was related to radiation damage: humans who hadn't been exposed to too much radiation yielded smarter mutants (see his personal diary for his thoughts on this). His Lieutenant, however, had a different theory. When the bombs hit the research facility and turned it into the Glow, they cracked open a few tanks filled with FEV. The bombs' radiation then mutated this FEV into an airborne strain. But this new airborne FEV didn't have any real mutagenic effects on people. All it did was inoculate human subjects against the real FEV, acting as a sort of vaccine. The ideal dipping subject was someone who hadn't been exposed to the airborne FEV. Both of these*

*conditions—no radiation exposure and no mutant FEV inoculation—were present in one population: Vault dwellers. Each Vault contained around 1,000 viable subjects to be dipped and turned into super mutants. Which factor exactly determines what you'll get from a dipping—radiation or inoculation—is still uncertain, though as a rule of thumb, the cleaner the subject, the better.*

*"In 2162, a person known as the Vault Dweller destroyed the mutant army by causing an explosion in the FEV vats at Mariposa, which collapsed the entire base, after which he proceeded to The Cathedral and killed the Master. Without the leadership of their creator and his lieutenant, the mutants divided into at least three factions. First of them, led by Gammorin, decided to leave California and find a place for themselves somewhere in the East. The second, under the leadership of Attis, wanted to continue the Master's work, rebuild the army, and dominate the Core Region once again.*

*"The third remains in the Core Region. Some of these super mutants, however, especially those who retained more of their intelligence than their less pure brethren, wanted to make peace with humans, put old differences aside and work together to rebuild the world after the War. In 2185, super mutant Marcus and Brotherhood of Steel Paladin Jacob crossed paths in the desert and punched and shot at each other for a few days. Eventually, they gave up (laughing), unable to get an advantage over the other. The two started traveling together, arguing over Master and BOS doctrine. Eventually the two, along with the trail of ghouls, humans, and super mutants, founded the community of Broken Hills. Some super mutants also settled in other*

*more tolerant human communities, like the New California Republic. A conversation with a non-player character in Fallout 2 also indicates that some super mutants and members of the Children of the Cathedral traveled North. However, many of the super mutants remain hostile to humans, and traveled the wastelands in small groups with floaters and centaurs, like during the Master's reign. These were known as the remnants of the mutant army. Conversations in Fallout 2 indicate that some of the super mutants have started going senile and seem to be suffering other effects from old age."<sup>106</sup>*

It should be noted that the definition of a nation is different here in the Marxist conception than it is in its everyday use. Because of this we will quickly review how Stalin defined the nation. I should warn the reader now, this is only a brief summary, and it is recommended that you read the work by Stalin to get the full context and definition:

1. A nation is primarily a community, a definite community of people.
2. A nation is NOT a racial or tribal, but a historically constituted community of people.
3. A nation is NOT a casual or ephemeral conglomeration, but a stable community of people.
4. A common language.
5. A common territory.
6. A common economic life, economic cohesion.
7. A common psychological make-up, which manifests itself in a common culture.
8. A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture. [...] It must be emphasized that none of the above characteristics taken separately is sufficient to define a



nation. More than that, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation. [...] *It is only when all these characteristics are present together that we have a nation*"<sup>107</sup>

From these criteria I conclude that Super Mutants are not a nation. While they live in several communities, they are not a definite community of people. (Actually it's questionable if they even are people.) There are several quasi-tribes, some separate communities, but no cohesive stable community. Super Mutants do share a common language; they all (usually poorly) speak English, those of them who are capable of speech. There is no common territory as they don't have any territory at all. Many of them simply wander around not having any particular place to call home. They don't really share an economic life for the most part, what little groups there are they live communally. I would consider this to be an economic cohesion for the most part. Their psychological make-up can vary from group to group. D.C. Wasteland Super Mutants are very different from the Super Mutants in New Vegas. The Night Kin Super Mutants have a psychology that is plagued with schizophrenia.

Despite this I would still suggest that there be Super Mutant communities separate from human communities. Due to the existing hostility between humans and Super Mutants I would suggest a limited trade between communities increasing over time as the two sides become more comfortable with each other. Because these two groups don't exist in a Marxist society I think this is the best way of going about it.



## END NOTES

### Section 1: Pre-War Civilization

<sup>1</sup> List of countries by oil production, Wikipedia  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_oil\\_production](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_oil_production)

<sup>2</sup> "I would now like to try to define the individual, the actor in this strange and moving drama of the building of socialism, in a dual existence as a unique being and as a member of society.

"I think the place to start is to recognize the individual's quality of incompleteness, of being an unfinished product. The vestiges of the past are brought into the present in one's consciousness, and a continual labor is necessary to eradicate them.[39] The process is two-sided. On the one hand, society acts through direct and indirect education; on the other, the individual submits to a conscious process of self-education. The new society in formation has to compete fiercely with the past. This past makes itself felt not only in one's consciousness — in which the residue of an education systematically oriented toward isolating the individual still weighs heavily — but also through the very character of this transition period in which commodity relations still persist. The commodity is the economic cell of capitalist society. So long as it exists its effects will make themselves felt in the organization of production and, consequently, in consciousness." - Che Guevara , *Socialism and Man in Cuba*

<sup>3</sup> C.I.A. Library, Afghanistan  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/additional-publications/devotion-to-duty/afghanistan.html>

<sup>4</sup> Hayter, Teresa. *The Creation of World Poverty. Third World First.* Great Britain: 1990. p. 67

<sup>5</sup> "Sino-Soviet Split" Wikipidia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sino-Soviet\\_split](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sino-Soviet_split)

<sup>6</sup> Early GPRC, the Rise of New Power and Ideology Part 1  
<http://llco.org/early-gprc-the-rise-of-new-power-and-ideology-part-1/>

<sup>7</sup> "[...] an extended period of economic crisis that began in 1989 primarily due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and, by extension, the Comecon. The economic depression of the Special Period was at its most severe in the early to mid-1990s before slightly declining in severity towards the end of the decade. It was defined primarily by the severe shortages of hydrocarbon energy resources in the form of gasoline, diesel, and other petroleum derivatives that occurred upon the implosion of economic agreements between the petroleum-rich Soviet Union and Cuba. The period radically transformed Cuban society and the economy, as it necessitated the

successful introduction of sustainable agriculture, decreased use of automobiles, and overhauled industry, health, and diet countrywide. People were forced to live without many goods they had become used to." - Wikipedia

<sup>8</sup> Critique of Crisis Theory, Crisis Theories: Falling Rate of Profit  
<https://critiqueofcrisistheory.wordpress.com/crisis-theories-falling-rate-of-profit/>

<sup>9</sup> The use of carbon-rich fossil fuels is, of course, the major driving force behind global warming. Industrial—and other—capitalists are concerned only about profits, not the environment, unless the disruption of the environment is so severe that it brings into question the possibility of making profits. This could indeed well occur if global warming continues unchecked. If the capitalist state is forced to intervene and limit the use of fossil fuels in order to safeguard the very possibility of profit making, the capitalists fear that the cost of energy—a crucial component of circulating constant capital—will rise. If that occurs, the organic composition of capital will rise, and all else remaining equal, the rate of profit will fall. This is one of the reasons why business circles have been so resistant to the notion of global warming caused by the burning of fossil fuels. (The same end note that appears in the original blog post.)

<sup>10</sup> King, Byron, "Investing in Oil: A History," The Daily Reckoning, June 2005

<sup>11</sup> "Snapshot of Global PV 1992-2013". 2nd Edition, International Energy Agency - Photovoltaic Power Systems Programme. 2014.

<sup>12</sup> China Leads In Renewable Investment -- Again!, Forbes  
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jackperkowski/2014/06/17/china-leads-in-renewable-investment-again/>

<sup>13</sup> The Atomic Automobile, damninteresting.com  
<http://www.damninteresting.com/the-atomic-automobile/>

<sup>14</sup> Mutolo, Paul. "*Nuclear automobiles, while possible, aren't really a good idea.*" Ask a Scientist. Cornell Center for Materials Research. Jan. 10, 2007.  
<http://www.ccmr.cornell.edu/education/ask/index.html?quid=1011>

<sup>15</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Nuclear Energy Agency, How long does it take to build a nuclear power plant?

"As nuclear power plants are complex construction projects, their construction periods are longer than other large power plants. It is typically expected to take 5 to 7 years to build a large nuclear unit (not including the time required for planning and licensing). Currently in countries such as South Korea and China, typical construction times range from 4 to 6 years, and in European countries construction may take between 6 and 8 years. In comparison, large coal plants can be built in about 4 years, while the construction time for natural gas fired plants is around 3 years."  
<https://www.oecd-neo.org/press/press-kits/economics-FAQ.html>

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that Marx was not the only economist to notice that profit tended to decline. Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and John Maynard Keynes did as well.

<sup>17</sup> Speech in Wheeling, West Virginia (9 February 1950), as quoted at Civics Online <http://www.civics-online.org/library/formatted/texts/mccarthy.html>

<sup>18</sup> "My Political Testament", Berlin, 29 April, 1945

<sup>19</sup> Taliban Jack: How the NDP lost its way on the Afghan war  
<http://www.canada.com/vancouver/news/editorial/story.html?id=7f644573-dd8c-4e31-99fe-2ea0489031fc>

<sup>20</sup> MSNBC's Chris Hayes 'Uncomfortable' With the Word *Hero*, Conservative Bloggers Uncomfortable With Him  
<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2012/05/chris-hayes-uncomfortable-with-word-hero.html?imw=Y>

<sup>21</sup> The "Other" (or "constitutive Other") is a key concept in Continental philosophy and in the social sciences; as such, the Other opposes the Same. The terms the Other and Otherness refer to who is and what is alien and divergent from the norm, from identity, and from the self. The Constitutive Other usually denotes a different, incomprehensible Self that is external to the one's own Self; thus, the word Other usually is capitalized, because, conceptually, the Other is a mystification reduced to a fetish, by a hegemonic subject. - Wikipedia

<sup>22</sup> Alberta Energy Website, Facts and Statistics section  
<http://www.energy.alberta.ca/oilsands/791.asp>  
Section2: Bottle Cap Economics

### Section 2: Bottle Cap Economics

<sup>23</sup> Karl Marx, Capital Volume One

<sup>24</sup> Duncan K. Foley, Introduction to Marx on Money by Suzanne de Brunhoff

<sup>25</sup> Karl Marx, Capital Volume One

<sup>26</sup> A New Gold Standard?

<http://critiqueofcrisistheory.wordpress.com/responses-to-readers-austrian-economics-versus-marxism/a-new-gold-standard/>

<sup>27</sup> Frederic Engels, Outline of the Critique of Political Economy

<sup>28</sup> Ernest Mandel, An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory, 2009, 3rd edition

<sup>29</sup> <http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Currency>

### Section 3: Fallout 3

<sup>30</sup> Ernest Mandel, An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory, 2009, 3rd edition

<sup>31</sup> [http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Tenpenny\\_Tower](http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Tenpenny_Tower)

<sup>32</sup> [http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/The\\_Pitt\\_%28add-on%29](http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/The_Pitt_%28add-on%29)

<sup>33</sup> Ernest Mandel, *An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory*, 2009, 3rd edition

<sup>34</sup> Karl Marx, Preface to: *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*

<sup>35</sup> [http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Pitt\\_broadcast](http://fallout.wikia.com/wiki/Pitt_broadcast)

#### Section 4: New California Republic

<sup>36</sup> Fallout Wiki, New California Republic

<sup>37</sup> Fallout Wiki, New California Republic

<sup>38</sup> The Great Soviet Encyclopedia (1979)

<sup>39</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Soch*, 2nd ed., vol. 25, part 2, p. 365

<sup>40</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III

<sup>41</sup> Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, Part I: Feuerbach. Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlook

<sup>42</sup> V.I. Lenin, *The Proletariat and the Peasantry*, *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 11, November 12, 1905

<sup>43</sup> J. Werner, *Beat Back the Dogmato-Revisionist Attack on Mao Tsetung Thought*

<sup>44</sup> Mao Tsetung, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1 (Peking 1975), p. 24.

<sup>45</sup> Fallout Wiki

<sup>46</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>47</sup> Karl Marx. *Capital*, vol. 1, "Chapter XXXI, Genesis of the Industrial Capitalist,"

<sup>48</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital* Vol. 1, "Chapter XXXIII, The Modern Theory of Colonisation"

<sup>49</sup> Vladimir Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, VII. IMPERIALISM AS A SPECIAL STAGE OF CAPITALISM

<sup>50</sup> FalloutWiki

<sup>51</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society*, March 1926

<sup>52</sup> Vladimir Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, XI. Critique of Imperialism, June 1916

#### Section 5: Caesar's Legion

<sup>53</sup> Fallout Wiki, The Legion

<sup>54</sup> Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, May 1875

<sup>55</sup> Frederic Engles, *Anti-Dühring*, Sept. 1876

<sup>56</sup> Marxist Internet Archive

<sup>57</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar

<sup>58</sup> Wikipedia (dubious source)

<sup>59</sup> Fallout Wiki

<sup>60</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion

<sup>61</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *Dialectical Materialism*, June 1938

<sup>62</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion

<sup>63</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>64</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, *The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof*

<sup>65</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion, Technology

<sup>66</sup> Ludo Mertins, *Another View of Stalin*, 1994

<sup>67</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar

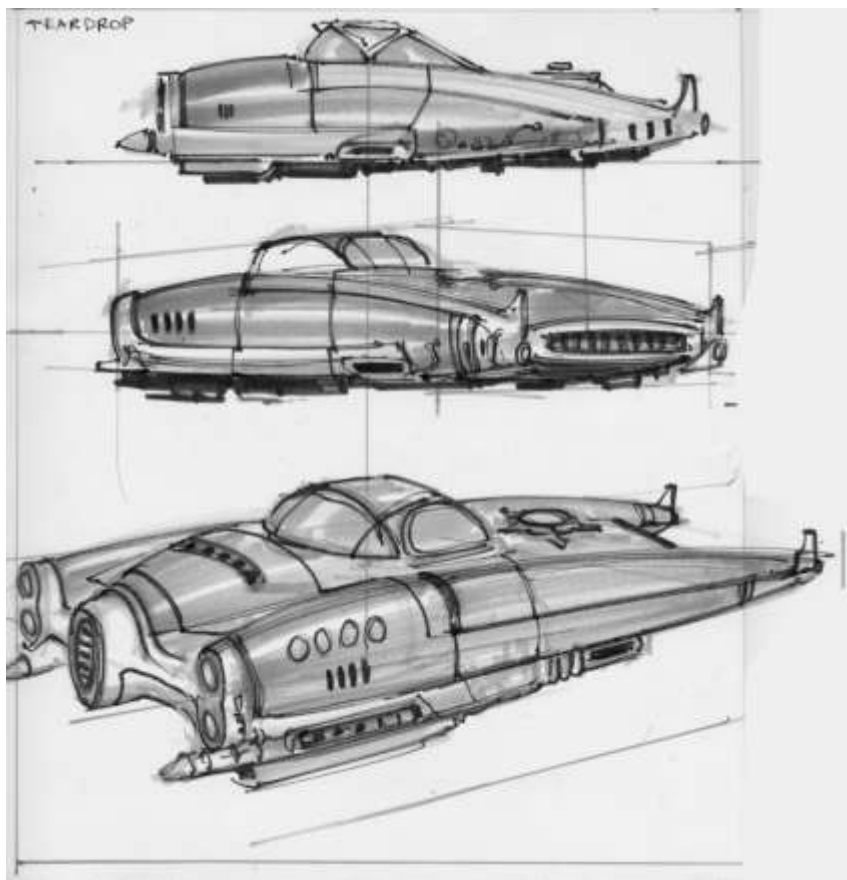
- <sup>68</sup> Wikipedia, Dialectic
- <sup>69</sup> Hegel, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich*, The Logic, 1874
- <sup>70</sup> Hegel, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich*, The Logic, 1874
- <sup>71</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion
- <sup>72</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion
- <sup>73</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion, Background
- <sup>74</sup> Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*,1 Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlook
- <sup>75</sup> Fallout Wiki, Caesar's Legion, Structure
- <sup>76</sup> Van Buren tech demo
- <sup>77</sup> Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, 1847
- <sup>78</sup> Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy*, officially published 1939
- <sup>79</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. 1*, 1867
- <sup>80</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, 1877
- <sup>81</sup> <http://www.civilwar.org/education/civil-war-casualties.html>, Casualties of War
- <sup>82</sup> Fallout Wiki, The Legion - Currency

#### Section 6: Other New Vegas Factions

- <sup>83</sup> This entry from Wikipedia had to corrected by myself here given the horribly politically motivated editing of the article.
- <sup>84</sup> Wikipedia, Hong Kong
- <sup>85</sup> Wikipedia, Howard Hughes
- <sup>86</sup> Fallout Wiki, Mr. House
- <sup>87</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *The Chinese Revolution and the Communist Party of China*, 1939
- <sup>88</sup> Fallout Wiki, Kings
- <sup>89</sup> Fallout Wiki, Kings
- <sup>90</sup> Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, 1843
- <sup>91</sup> Karl Marx, *Comments on James Mill*, 1844
- <sup>92</sup> Karl Marx, *Comments on James Mill*, 1844
- <sup>93</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital vol.1*, 1867
- <sup>94</sup> Marxist.org
- <sup>95</sup> Leading Light Communist Organization,, Vanilla vs. Kink?
- <sup>96</sup> Slavoj Žižek, *First as Tragedy, then as Farce*, 2009
- <sup>97</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital vol.1*, 1867
- <sup>98</sup> Fallout Wiki, John Henry Eden
- <sup>99</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Chapter 1, 1848
- <sup>100</sup> Fallout Wikia, Brotherhood of Steel, The Super Mutants
- <sup>101</sup> Karl Marx, *Kapital vol.1*, 1867
- <sup>102</sup> Karl Marx, *The German Ideology Part 1*, 1845
- <sup>103</sup> Fallout Wikia, Ultra-Luxe
- <sup>104</sup> Fallout Wikia, White Glove Society
- <sup>105</sup> Fallout Wikia, Super Mutant
- <sup>106</sup> Fallout Wikia, Mariposa Super Mutant
- <sup>107</sup> Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National Question*, 1913

## Appendix A

*Fallout 3 Corvega concept art by Adam Adamowicz*



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## Appendix B

(This is a portion of my book *A Marxist Critique of Songun* in which I criticize the military first policy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I think its inclusion is necessary to clarify what I meant when I said "*The level of glorification of the military in the U.S. is surpassed only by Songun policy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*", in the Pre-War Society chapter of this book. My point is that this military cult is not unique to capital and does exist in all states.)

### **The Army Before the Working Class**

One of the most horrible aspects of the Songun Idea is the belief that the military should be placed before the working class. This is a deviation from the Marxist-Leninist line. Juche adhered to the principal of class struggle, yet Songun abandons it. Some argue that this is the opposite of Marxism where the whole idea of class struggle is to place the proletariat first. However I argue that this is not what was being done. The military is not the bourgeoisie nor is it the landlords or compradors. Supporting the capitalist class would be the opposite. A deviation yes, clearly, but by no means can it be said to be the antithesis of class struggle.

Having said that, Kim Jong-Il outright says, "It is important to solve everything in the revolution and construction by subordinating everything to military affairs." This line is absolutely wrong as class struggle must be the basis for everything. In doing this it is made subordinate to the military and is the first step in what will become the abandonment of class struggle. The whole point of Marxist revolution is to proceed upon the path to the communist society where all classes have been abolished and all divides among the people have been eliminated. By placing the military before the proletariat the path to communism has been deviated from.

I am not saying that we should ignore the role of national liberation in the revolution. Of course this would be a

tremendous error. Many of the greatest revolutions were born out of national liberation struggles. China, Vietnam, and Cuba are prime examples where class struggle has been at the core of resistance to imperialism.

When Castro and Che sought to bring about the revolution against the puppet dictator of Fulgencio Batista, they sought land reform and unionization as measures of resistance. The big landlords and the compradors were highly connected to the imperialists and in the case of the compradors had their identity tied to them. This is not unlike the “House Negro” that Malcolm X spoke of. These are people of the oppressed Cuban nation who ally with their oppressor in order to have a status above those who conducted the daily toil. They were immune from involvement in manual labour and received much more in income than workers did. This is very similar to what Malcolm X described as the field Negro being seen as less than the house Negro who got to enjoy more luxuries like living inside the Master’s house. It was imperative that the hold of the comprador and the big landlords be broken, not just as a part of national liberation, but also as class struggle. The breaking up of these two groups also undermined the economic power of the imperialists.

Of course we understand that Cuba 1950s and the DPRK today are not in the same phase of the revolution. The DPRK has already pushed the imperialists out of their nation so to speak. The US military clearly still occupies the Korean peninsula. What we must acknowledge is that as long as the imperialists remain the class struggle must remain in such a state as to prevent their reformation. This reformation has taken place to some degree as we see today with the minimal private investment by local businessmen and some foreign capital. It is difficult for me to believe that these reformations having occurred under the Songun policy is no coincidence. The focus has been taken away

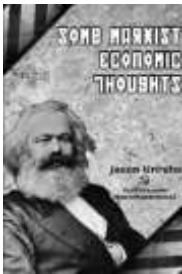
from class struggle and placed on military efforts. An immediate reorientation would obviously be recommended.

## Other Books by Jason Unruhe



### Trevor Loudon's Challenge Defeated

The author of several books, Trevor Loudon has laid "A Challenge to All Liberals, Progressives, and RINOs, Who STILL Believe Obama is NOT a Communist". Loudon compiled a stack of evidence that is supposed to prove that Barack Obama is in fact a communist. His challenge is to anyone to disprove what he gives.



### Some Marxist Economic Thoughts

A collection of several works discussing Marxist economics from the Maoist Rebel News blog. A variety of subjects are covered here, including a Marxist perspective of the 2008 global collapse of capitalism and a Marxist look at income inequality increases since 1774. It also handles the prevailing Libertarian ideas surrounding the 3D printing phenomenon.



### Memoir of a Minimum Wage Security Guard

In 2006 I served as a security guard in various positions which gave me unbelievable life experience. Here I lay out my experiences as they happened and how they affected me. During this time I got a good view of the variety of human nature. I hope this serves as a window into a world you may not know anything about, nor understand.



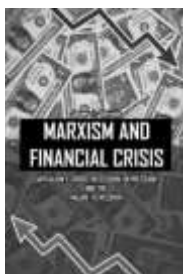
### Understanding Maoist Dialectics

A little while ago a viewer asked me to explain Maoist dialectics to him. After doing so he then suggested that I write something to help people understand it. So I set out and did some explaining on a few important works by Mao that contain dialectics. The result was this book which I hope helps beginners understand the subject.



### Exposing Larken Rose's Nonsense

This book "The Most Dangerous Superstition" by Larken Rose was given to me by a friend as we stood in the lobby of the Provincial Offenses court of Ontario. I had only a moment to glance at it but it seemed very libertarian-ish to me. The interesting part was when my friend told me Rose calls himself an Anarchist while supporting capitalism.



### Marxism and Financial Crisis

After the Dot Com Bubble just after the new millennium and the recent Great Recession of 2008 it's becoming obvious that future crises will likely be financial in nature. In this work I hope to make understanding financial crisis in capitalism from a Marxist perspective easier to understand.



### A Marxist Critique of Songun

After the theoretical development of Juche which became the basis of North Korean society by Kim Il Sung, came Songun. It is the "Military First" policy put forward by Kim Jong Il in reaction to the loss of the socialist block which comprised 70% of its trade. As the DPRK entered the Arduous March the threat of military invasion increased.

## E Books by Jason Unruhe



### Income Inequality Greater Than In 1774: A Marxist Perspective

Jason Unruhe



### Income Inequality Greater Than In 1774: A Marxist Perspective

Income inequality is the greatest issue debated in economics. It is the topic that present the most political challenge and has caused uproar among the working class that has led to numerous radical reorganizations of societies. A recent study by Peter Lindert of the University of California – Davis and Jeffrey Williamson of Harvard shows that inequality is greater today than it was in 1776.

### Dealing with Libertarian Assumptions on 3D Printing



### Dealing With Libertarian Assumptions on 3D Printing

In libertarian circles is the notion that the increased prevalence of 3D printers in the home can challenge modern capitalism. This small scale production will cut into the profits of major firms leading to a lack of revenue for the state from corporate taxes. In this book I discuss the feasibility of such a claim. What real effects are 3D printers going to have?



### 10 Reasons the Gold Standard Doesn't Work

In our current time there are unceasing numbers of people who advocate a return to the gold standard. This view is entirely incorrect and does not reflect an economic understanding of it. The truth is that such a transformation of the economy would be devastating. Here I will lay out 10 solid reasons why the gold standard and gold currency would not function.