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WEALTH AND POVERTY

At last a book has been written which interprets for everyone why American capitalism creates the wealth which alone can produce more jobs and a higher standard of living for all. That's because it was written by a man who understands not only economics but also the social, psychological and political dynamics of the environment.

At last we have a book which proves that American capitalism is based on faith not on selfishness, on the golden rule rather than on predatory acquisitiveness and exploitation, on giving now but receiving later. At last we have a book which demonstrates that American capitalism is a highly moral economic system.

At last we have a book which proves that American capitalism is a system in which the golden rule is economically sound, that is, it provides a way of producing wealth in which one's own good fortune also produces good fortune for others. One does not gain at the expense of others, but only when others gain, too.

Socialism has failed to build a productive economy anywhere, but has succeeded well in the psychological art of making American capitalists apologize for building a successful economy that has conquered the wilderness, created abundance, and built factories, hospitals and universities. The socialists have falsely labelled their system as idealistic and the capitalist system as materialistic.

At last a book has been written which exposes the crass materialism of socialism: its dogma that resources and capital are essentially things that can be used up, and which one can acquire only by taking from others. Socialism teaches that the wealth of some is squeezed out of the necessities of others; that wealth, therefore, causes poverty and is bad, embarrassing, and something to conceal (like illicit sex). Socialism, by its very dogma, creates envy in the heart and poverty in the pocketbook.

At last a book has been written which explains the fundamental morality and idealism of capitalism. Its dogma rests on a belief that resources and capital are products of human will and imagination which are inexhaustible in a free society. Under capitalism,

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the pie grows bigger and all get a larger slice because everybody gains from the mutuality of the system.

History proves that the capitalist system works. The countries endowed with free minds and private property rights (rather than rich natural resources) have been the fastest-growing (Hong Kong) and the most prosperous (Switzerland).

At last a book has been written to show that only the creation of new wealth can ever win the war on poverty. This is a book which shows how capitalism converts the eternal search for security (manifested in savings) into a willingness to risk those savings (manifested in enterprise) to create new wealth.

Economists base their analyses and predictions on statistics and graphs. At last a book shows how psychological and social forces -- motivation and incentives, ambition and determination -- can shape an economy's growth and progress.

At last a book has been written to show that the secret of capitalism is not selfishness or cynicism but faith. This book shows how capitalism converts fear of the future (savings for a rainy day) into faith in the future (investment), turns caution into creativity, timidity into entrepreneurship, and the desire to conserve into the drive to build and innovate.

At last we have a book which shows how the family structure is essential to the creation of wealth because it motivates husbands and fathers to work to provide for their families. To remove the male provider from a culture (as is effectively done in the ADC welfare system) simply perpetuates poverty.

At last a book has been written which shows the immorality of giving welfare and unemployment compensation benefits which provide returns higher than the wages of common labor. Such a system is inherently unjust, not only to the taxpayer and the benefit receiver (who is morally tempted by incentives to cheat), but because it perpetuates poverty by preventing the creation of wealth.

At last such a wonderful book has been written. It has been sorely needed for decades. If you don't read another book this year, you should read Wealth and Poverty by George Gilder (Basic Books, $16.95). You will never again feel defensive or apologetic about the American capitalist system.

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