

August 9, 2010

Dear Mr Gates,

I wrote to you in 1999, nothing appears to have come of that letter although it was published and read fairly widely. The world is now a very different place for many reasons but specifically because of September 11, the War on Terror, and now this disastrous Gulf Oil Spill.

You have also gone one step further; now you are intent not only on giving away your own money but on persuading others to do the same. Let me begin where I finished, much as your efforts are to be commended, there are other, far more productive things you can do besides give away your wealth, because the wealth of one multi-billionaire, thirty multi-billionaires or even a couple of hundred of them counts for little or nothing in the grand scheme of things.

Here are two of my favourite snippets of information: in February, 1927, the English music publisher and composer Lawrence Wright was in New York where he spoke to the band leader Jack Hylton who was in Wright's London office. This telephone call which lasted about half an hour cost around £150, a staggering sum in those days. And a report in the "New Scientist", April 18, 1992 revealed that in the 1950s, an electronic circuit that could store a single 'bit' of information cost more than a pound "Today, a penny will buy 5000 of them."

In view of your background, you will no doubt be able to quote even more impressive statistics. That being said, with such exponential increases in productivity, why is it that today, in 2010, we still have widespread poverty, and governments are everywhere and all the time telling us we must tighten our belts and cut costs?

The short answer to that question is debt. And from whence has all this debt come? It is created – ie manufactured out of nothing - and sold against the real of nations at interest in perpetuity.

If you and all the billionaires in the world were to pledge your entire wealth to charity within the next two or three years, what good would it do? It would certainly make a lot of people happy: charity professionals, lawyers, accountants, PR people...but within a few years the debt problem would be back with a vengeance, and there would be no billionaires left to bail us out.

Rather than give your money away, you must work for the reform of the financial system; that means a banking system that operates without interest. If that sounds novel or even bizarre, I would suggest you consult "Banking Without Interest" by the Islamic academic Muhammad Nejatullah Siddiqi.

I will keep this missive short, but the bottom line is that under the current system, all the nations of the world will continue to go progressively into debt to the banking system.

The link below is to a short dissertation I produced which poses the question do we really need banks at all? The simple answer is not if you own a computer, while if you own a computer company, you can with a minimum of application give cheap, interest free banking to the masses:

http://www.archive.org/details/WhyWeDontNeedBanks_790