

Chapter 8

On addressing economic DISPARITY between the rich and rest of us

Since humans evolved from primitive tribes there have always been hierarchies of influence and power among any group of human beings. The strong dominated the weak, taking the majority of the spoils created by their tribe for themselves. As tribes grew into agricultural empires, then into industrial nations and currently into our global network of economic interests, these dominator hierarchies always took the majority of wealth created in these societies. This resulted in endless civil warfare as the oppressed attempted to overthrow the power of the favored few.

America in spite of its democratic principles, still has “classes” of citizens that vary from the mega rich to the poor. While it is true that America provides the opportunity for anyone to join the wealthy class, the disparity between the rich, the middle class and the poor has grown in the United States to less than 1% of the population controlling the majority of the wealth America creates.

It has not always been so. There have been times in American history where the wealth was more widely distributed to more citizens. However, since 1980 we have been in another cycle of dominance by the rich and powerful. Historically, this never turns out well for anybody.

IF America does not level the economic playing field so the vast wealth created in this country is more justly distributed to its citizens, our democracy may erupt again into more civil

disturbance that will justify those in power abandoning democratic norms.