(Morality of Profit continued from page 15)

We are all, then, either businessmen, or thugs. The action of a thug is to diminish the value of his victim, thereby making his victim less able to satisfy the requirements of the thug in the future. Since the thug creates no value himself, the process of destroying his source of value can only lead, eventually, to his own destruction. This makes the actions of the thug doubly destructive, destroying first his victim, then himself, contrary to the purpose of morality, which is to *preserve* and *fulfill* life. The history of man seems to consist of periods of relative freedom, where at least some of the people were left alone, followed by periods of slavery and oppression. During the brief periods of relative freedom that appeared sporadically throughout the past, value was created and traded through the process of voluntary business associations advancing the condition of life, only to be plundered by the thugs during the much longer periods of oppression which inevitably followed. Progress has always been an agonizing process of taking one step backward for every two steps forward. Many look at the world today and feel grateful. I look at the world today and feel cheated.

Consequently, as thuggery proves itself to be an immoral choice, we are left with the only moral choice, that of business. The process of business is a process of creating and trading value by engaging in voluntary associations for mutual benefit. If the trade results in a net loss, if we give more than we receive, the enterprise will fail. If we simply exchange one value for another of equal value, we may achieve a state of preservation, a partially moral state, but fail to recognize fulfillment. The only way we can achieve a completely moral state, the state of preservation *and* fulfillment, is to trade for a *profit.* Whether the trade involves tobacco or vitamins, horses or airplanes, if I value the love of a friend more than the time, effort, financial and emotional investment I must give in exchange, then I have profited and it is not for the government, a majority's vote, or a minority's need, to decide the case.

So to those who claim to hold the moral high ground and ask the question, "Is there nothing more important than profit?"—I answer a resounding "No! Not if you choose life as your supreme value." As to the issue of too much profit—in the absence of force—there could no more be such an idea, than there could be the idea of too much *health.* A condition of excessive profit is only possible when direct or indirect (*willful* deception) physical force is introduced. In a free market and in the absence of fraud, rational men who are parties to a transaction, will only give up value willingly in exchange for a higher value so that the profit to one party of the transaction is identical to the profit of the other. Until, in the judgement of both, there exists sufficient profit in the transaction for the exchange to take place, there will be no trade.

Profit, then, is not only essential to the preservation and fulfillment of life, but must be regarded, within the context of any activity, as the highest value pursued by a rational man, and there is simply no such thing as too much of it. The pursuit of happiness *is* the pursuit of profit!

Karl Marx, the Art of War, and the Swedish Economy

by Henrik Unné

Imagine that Karl Marx had thought up a theory about the art of war. It would probably have run like this:

> It is the soldiers who determine the outcome of all wars. It is they who do the physical fighting on the battlefields. The generals behind the lines are just parasites. They don't drive any tanks, they don't fire any cannons, they don't fly any fighter aircraft, etc. They only give orders to the soldiers who do the actual fighting. If the generals were abolished then the soldiers could become self-directing. Then the soldiers' full potential would be actualized. The first country that shot all its own generals would win all wars and achieve world supremacy.

The theory above is, of course, crazy. If any country tried to apply it that country would be destroyed in the first war it got into.

Generals are not parasites. On the contrary. The quality of a country's generals is at least as important for the country's fate in war's as is the quality of its

(Continued on next page)

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"ordinary" soldiers.

The generals perform the demanding intellectual work which is necessary to lead and coordinate the rest of the military forces during a war. A modern war is fought by many thousands of soldiers, tanks, artillery pieces, attack helicopters, fighter aircraft and so forth. To organize their activities—to see to it that the right forces appear at the right place, at the right time—is a difficult task. That is why it takes many years of intensive studies and work to become a good general.

Of course, Karl Marx did not formulate any theory on the art of war. But he had ideas on the subject of economics that were similar to the military theory above.

Marx held that production only consisted of the workers' physical movements in the factories. According to Marx, the intellect played no role. Consequently the capitalists were just unnecessary parasites. If only the means of production were transferred from the capitalists to the workers then the level of production and of the general welfare would go up like a rocket.

Most Swedes nowadays know that socialism leads to poverty, not to abundance. But many of them do not realize that the *cause* of socialism's failure is precisely the fact that the means of production were taken away from the capitalist—so that the latter no longer played a role in production. Therefore, many Swedes still want the state to take at least a large part of the capitalists' money away from them—by such means as progressive income and wealth taxes.

And that is socialism—in a diluted form. Taking diluted poison instead of concentrated poison just means that the process of destruction takes more time.

The reason that the Swedish economy has performed so poorly during the past 25 years is the postwar period's attempt to mix socialism with capitalism.

The Death of Princess Diana

Individuals across the world were shocked by the death of 36-year-old Princess Diana. A comment she made shortly before her death indicates a grave philosophical mistake made by many in the press—that of searching only for flaws, while ignoring the good. Here is what Diana said in an interview for *Le Monde:* "The press is ferocious. It pardons nothing. It only hunts for mistakes. Every motive is twisted, every gesture criticized."