



THE CRISIS BECOMES ACUTE.

Akihiko Takeuchi Mark Mac.Guigan
Ernane Galvêas William E. Simon
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THE FREEDOM TO COMPETE

*Mario Garnero
Chairman, Brasilinvest Group*

THE FREEDOM TO COMPETE

I would like to ask your permission to say that Brazil refuses to participate in this kind of marathon of uncertainty and pessimism that dominates the present world economic scene. Worries exist — as they have always existed — but they are not so critical that they lead to the hysteria that has appeared in regard to the difficulties facing the present Brazilian economy. Those who follow Brazil's history, with clear-sighted attention, especially in these last years, must realize that today's problems are very little different, essentially, from the obstacles of the past. Perhaps the difference is in the fact that we have become more aware and have decided that problems exist to be overcome.

There are more than 650 prominent businessmen here today from about 35 countries. Experienced men who all know at what cost of sacrifices and perseverance in work, they have been able to build and consolidate their companies, helping to enrich their nations. Brazilian businessmen and, in general, Brazilian society, are going through the same experience, according to the country's own specific conditions and national characteristics. The complicating factor is contained in the complex structure of international relations.

Poor and rich countries are already far apart — and the distance keeps on growing — in such proportions that the desired and required balance has supplanted the objective or target to be achieved, to become something chimerical, almost a dream. The rich nations cannot be reproached for the stage they have reached and for the dominance they have over the level of world or bilateral relations, especially in the area of trade. It is also not possible to accept, passively, standards and rules imposed from positions of strength as if international society were reduced to confrontation. Much higher values are in play — and we all share these values — rich and poor countries, prosperous businessmen, those who

are anxious to prosper and make the society where they work, prosperous in a general climate of freedom.

The common denominator of this situation is in the positive reply to the fundamental question: Is the West prepared to review the structure of their relationships or will the West, with its free economy and democratic system, persist in applying a self-devouring policy of exclusive interests and therefore, excluding effective cooperation among its component parts.

WE ONLY WANT TO COMPETE

Coming back to the specific example of Brazil, analyzed from the viewpoint of the private business sector, I believe it is more necessary than ever that the international business community strives to understand Brazil's strenuous efforts to capture world markets. We do not want to take anything away from anyone. We just want to compete, under mutually acceptable conditions which will allow us normal and direct access to markets. The blockage or encirclement of these markets will mean that our difficulties are doubled, which can generate very serious consequences to the whole international financial system.

Let me remind you that Brazil's stand, in this respect, has been adequate. In 1974, after the first impact of the oil increase, Brazil had a balance of payments deficit of 6.5 billion dollars, equivalent to 81 percent of its total exports. In 1981, this deficit was reduced to 2.1 billion dollars, about 9 percent of exports. Conscious of its commitments, Brazil sought to increase its sales abroad and they rose from 8 billion dollars in 1974 to 23.3 billion dollars in 1981, and of this total, 55 percent was manufactured goods. To evaluate our efforts, I remember that in 1965, Brazil exported only 1.5 billion dollars, half of which was coffee. Today, coffee represents 7.5 percent of Brazil's export list. But Brazil's trade balance needs a bigger surplus. We had a credit balance of 1.2 billion dollars in 1981. This year, we estimate a balance of 1.5 billion dollars and in 1983, a surplus of 3

billion dollars, where we will reach a zero resource gap position. It is easy to see the result of such a union of factors, whether under the view of business interest or from the angle of greater convenience of nation to nation.

In spite of everything, as I have already said, we do not desire to enter into an uncertain course. We are still confident. When we look for loans in international financial circles, we present really substantial credentials. These credentials continue, and will continue to be valid, whether on the economic plane or in the sphere of political willingness.

The modernization of Brazilian society's destiny, incentivated by the intrinsic dynamism of its private enterprise, is still somewhat far from perfect. But for our defects and deficiencies, we have our own medicines. The understanding of the world community would help us greatly. Apart from understanding of our problems and the range of our role, it is necessary to implement real support of our aspirations, especially in the area of foreign trade. Aspirations that are turned towards the high purpose of integrating prosperous societies and societies in a legitimate battle for prosperity — which is humanity's common dream. The search for such a stage in international relations certainly has its imperfections — and Brazil will not perhaps be different from the rest. But, possible imperfections tower far above the useless and dangerous temptation of confrontation.

Mario Garnero

**EXCLUSIVISM OF THE
INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS
CONDEMNS THE POOR COUNTRIES
TO RECESSION**

Ernane Galvêas
Minister of Finance of Brazil

EXCLUSIVISM OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS CONDEMNNS THE POOR COUNTRIES TO RECESSION

It is with great satisfaction and pleasure that I participate once more in this important meeting, sponsored annually by Brasilinvest, and meet old friends for a brief exposition on the global aspects of the world economy and the situation of the Brazilian economy, as it faces the challenges of the present crisis.

As you all know, the Brazilian economy was severely caught between the two oil shocks, aggravated by the waves of high interest rates that came along during the years 1979/80 and 1981.

When the first oil shock came, Brazilian imports of oil increased from an average of \$ 500 million in 1972-3 to almost \$ 3 billion in 1974. Total imports more than doubled. From \$ 6.2 in 1973 they reached \$ 12.6 in 1974.

Inflation went up from 15 per cent in 1972/73 to 35 per cent in 1974. The surplus of the trade account turned into a deficit of \$ 4.7 billion and the total deficit of the balance of payments went up to \$ 7.1 billion.

The industrialized countries adopted a severe strategy to face the new situation. Canada, the United States, Europe, Japan — the richest countries with the highest per capita income — decided to adapt themselves to the new price structure through a higher level of unemployment and low grade of economic activity.

Most of the less developed countries could not choose the same path. Structural unemployment, low standard of living or an unstable social and political situation have

discouraged on the outset the same kind of shock treatment. On the contrary, they all tried to protect their economies from the widespread disease of recession.

Brazil decided to respond to the first impact of the crisis with new investments. New construction projects were promptly started to take advantage of the ample world liquidity and the reasonably low interest rates prevailing in the international Eurodollar market. Several projects were approved in the field of public enterprise and incentives were granted to many others in the private sector. From 1974 to 1980, we have invested more than \$ 60 billion in the non-ferrous metal and steel industries, in the production of fertilizers, petrochemicals and pulp/paper, as well as in the capital goods industry, production of electric power, alcohol, and oil. Some of the big projects, such as the hydroelectrics of Itaipu, Tucuruí, Sobradinho, Salto Osorio, Salto Santiago and others, the steel plants of Açominas and Tubarão, are still under construction. Most of the other projects, mainly in the private sector, have been completed. These projects had an important contribution in increasing Brazil's exports from \$ 4.5 billion in 1973 to \$ 23.3 billion in 1981. But they were also responsible for the increase of the gross external debt in the same period from \$ 12.6 billion to \$ 61.4 billion.

The great effort of the Brazilian economy can be expressed through the fast growth of its exports, which increased almost 4-1/2 times in 1981 as compared to the levels in 1971/73.

The energy policy of the country also achieved highly auspicious success. We intensified our efforts to imprint a more rational character on fuel utilization, while accelerating programs aimed at producing alternative fuels — alcohol and coal — and expanding domestic production of petroleum. The daily average output of oil rose from 187 thousand barrels in 1980 to 220 thousand barrels in 1981 — an increase of 18 per cent — while the necessary investment has been assured to reach the goal of 300 thousand barrels per day by the end of 1982, this time a steep increase of over 36 per

cent. At the same time, oil imports declined from an average of 900 thousand barrels per day in 1980, to 830 thousand in 1981, and are expected to close 1982 at a level of 750 thousand barrels per day.

DIFFICULT ADJUSTMENT

The 1982 ambitious goal for a substantial balance of trade surplus will not be achieved, mainly because of a sharp rise in the value of the dollar against the major European currencies, and because of the successive declines in the prices of our major exportable primary products. These negative factors, combined, have resulted in a loss of over \$ 2.5 billion during the first two quarters of this year, which total over \$ 5 billion for the whole year.

Nevertheless, we still expect to close the year with a trade surplus of about the same magnitude as in 1981.

Inflation has been fought as a first priority and, although we may repeat the same increase in price level as in 1981, a substantial control of the public budget will certainly help achieve a substantial improvement next year.

We have to say that adjustment of the Brazilian economy is being further endangered by the profound disorganization of the world's economic system.

The industrialized countries are blindly insisting on the maintenance of economic policies which have extraordinarily adverse, negative repercussions on the developing countries, notably oil-importing nations, such as Brazil.

It is not without reason that the world economy is going through an unparalleled crisis, of dimensions much greater than could be generated by a simple energy crisis.

Perplexed and defenseless, the third world has been relegated to the sidelines, as the industrialized nations adopt an exclusivist and recessionary framework of adjustment, based on generalized protectionism, import restrictions and the reduced flow of international trade, inexorably condemning the peripheral nations to swallow the bitter pill of recession, inflation and balance of payments disequilibrium.

Instead of seeking large-scale international mechanisms capable of recycling petrodollars, reducing their public deficits and embracing the cause of international cooperation, these countries have adopted recessionary policies with inevitable repercussions on the developing world, while attempting to combat inflation through the exclusive utilization of monetary policy.

The maintenance of high interest rates hampers investment, including investment channeled to technological development that could, to a great extent, attenuate the energy crisis. Even more serious is the fact that high interest rates represent an intolerable burden on the foreign debt of the less developed countries. It is estimated that this debt will rise from \$ 400 billion in 1981 to \$ 466 billion in 1982 and to a level of more than \$ 500 billion in 1983.

The application of the high rates of interest to the voluminous foreign debt of the oil-importing developing countries has resulted in unjustified burdens. One simply has to see that, for the majority of the developing countries dependent on oil imports, a rise of just one percentage point in foreign interest rates is now 5 to 6 times more important than a growth of one per cent in the price of oil.

MARKET RESTRICTIONS ARE SHORTSIGHTED

How the industrialized countries can persist in restricting access to their markets responding to pressures from inefficient industries bent on protecting themselves from foreign competition through market reserve based on tariff and non-tariff barriers — defies all understanding, for these actions are no more than an exercise in myopia, prejudicial to domestic consumers and the source of added burdens on the developing world.

The case of sugar is a fine example of this irrationality. Brazil, which produces its exportable sugar surpluses in the northeastern region — the poorest in the country — is now encountering tremendous difficulties in placing this product on the foreign market. The European Economic Community subsidized more than two thirds of production costs,

flooding the market and depressing prices. In its turn, the United States, while imposing quotas on imports, protects its producers at a level equivalent to two and a half times present sugar prices. This is just a different type of barrier to trade, but a very clear one.

We are all aware that, without courageous measures, the world will continue mired in the current depression. It is not a question of economic systems, for the socialist nations are facing problems of equal or higher magnitude.

Above all, it is a question of political and economic leadership, a commodity so scarce in the international community. We must have that unusual type of leadership which is capable of galvanizing society in its search for new solutions, which can prove itself capable of recovering the economy's flexibility in responding to crisis situations, which will clear the way for solutions to the structural problems we are debating here today. We must have a leadership that can create an environment favorable to the development of the different regions of the world, that will return the freedom of initiative to the free market forces.

Without this, our efforts will stand as a denial of the very essence of humanity, which is permanent growth, and we certainly will not achieve the superior goals of increasing production, enlarging employment opportunities and improving the world's standard of living.

**INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT
DEMANDS CLEAR DIRECTIVES
AND JUST TREATMENT**

*Mark MacGuigan
Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada*

INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT DEMANDS CLEAR DIRECTIVES AND JUST TREATMENT

It is a great pleasure for me to be here at this luncheon today, especially as it coincides with Brazil's National Day. It is equally pleasant to have the honour of sharing the podium with Mr. Galveas, the distinguished Minister of Finance of Brazil. As you know, Canada and Brazil have a long history of economic cooperation. It has been a relationship that has benefited the people of both our nations.

I would also like to say how pleased I am to be addressing such a prestigious group of bankers, financiers and investors. I would like to take this opportunity to exchange some ideas with you on international investment and multinational corporations and how these two elements can contribute to the North-South Dialogue. I would also like to suggest to you ways in which we might formulate a set of world-wide principles which would lead to a better international investment climate and a more rapid economic growth.

I do not have to tell you that Canada and Brazil have historically been the recipients of a great deal of direct foreign investment. This investment has benefited both countries significantly and allowed them to mature more quickly than they otherwise would.

Canada, after decades of being a net importer of direct foreign investment, has in recent years become a net exporter of direct foreign investment. As a result, Canada is in a position to fully appreciate the advantages and disadvantages

of direct foreign investment and to view investment from both sides.

Those of us who have responsibilities for the management of financial and economic environments — whether in public or private sector — know that striking a balance between dynamic growth and balanced economic development is essential but never easy. It is essential because economic environments play a major role in the success of any investment decision, regardless of its size or nature. These decisions affect not only the creation of wealth but often of jobs and the well-being of millions of people. It is not surprising, therefore, that countries have actively encouraged foreign investment.

ALL COUNTRIES HAVE CONTROLS

However, there are other considerations besides those of pure economics. Virtually every nation has adopted some form of foreign investment control designed to serve its investment needs and aspirations. In the United States, for example, there is an extensive network of foreign investment regulations and policies administered by some twenty agencies at the federal level. A foreign investor is not eligible to own a house in Indiana, a chicken farm in Connecticut or a mine in Alaska. In the U.K., the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has effectively blocked certain forms of foreign investment. In Germany, the State has reacted on an ad hoc basis to forbid foreign participation in many of its industries. Often, these restrictions on foreign investment have been subtle and most have been in existence for decades.

Canada established foreign investment guidelines, in an open comprehensive way, fairly recently with the Foreign Investment Review Act (FIRA). FIRA was designed to permit the federal government to review certain forms of foreign direct investment to determine whether they are of significant benefit to Canada. I would emphasize, however, since its inception FIRA has functioned more as a screen than as a barrier to foreign investment, and is non-

discriminatory as to the country of origin of foreign investment. This is illustrated by the fact that in excess of 90 per cent of foreign investment applications have been approved.

The need to control the investment climate in Canada, as in so many other countries, arose in large part from the growth of transnational corporations. I think it is important, in reviewing the growth and influence of these kinds of corporations to state that in my own view transnationals are neither the impediments to economic development nor underminers of national sovereignty that their detractors would have us believe. At the same time I do not believe that they are our best hope for overcoming world poverty and building a global society, as their most ardent proponents argue. They are, however, undoubtedly the largest, most efficient, technologically advanced and internationally adaptable enterprises available to us. As such, they have a potentially significant contribution to make in the North-South challenge.

Transnational corporations account for a large and growing proportion of world production, research and development, employment and trade, and their managers allocate capital and resources on a global scale. The annual operation budgets of many transnational corporations exceed those of most of the world's governments. Given these characteristics, it is not difficult to see that international cooperation is essential to ensure that the benefits of these operations are maximized for both the host country and the investor.

CONTROL LEVELS

Transnational corporations, as an important international phenomenon, emerged in the year following the war. American and British corporations were the first to go multinational and for a long period accounted for the majority of direct foreign investment. By the late sixties and early seventies, European and Japanese firms had arrived on the scene and grew quickly. To underline the growth and significance of transnationals, intracorporate trade, as a

percentage of total world trade, has expanded dramatically from 25 per cent in 1970 to an estimated 50 per cent today.

Multinational companies have grown significantly in the last two decades and have made their presence felt. In Canada, foreign-owned corporations own 40 per cent of our mining industry, 65 per cent of our oil and gas industry and 48 per cent of our manufacturing industry. Of the 50 largest companies in Canada, 18 are foreign controlled. Non-resident ownership and control on this scale is, of course, without parallel elsewhere in the industrialized world. By contrast, of the 50 largest firms in Japan, none are foreign controlled.

In Brazil, foreign control levels are considerably lower than in Canada — about 15 per cent in such important sectors as chemicals, automobiles, steel, food processing, communications and electrical equipment. Canadians have been active participants in the Brazilian economy. After the United States, Brazil is the second largest recipient of Canadian foreign investment. Large Canadian transnationals such as Brascan, Massey-Ferguson, Noranda and Alcan, to name only a few, have long worked with Brazilians to enrich economic and trading relationships between our two countries.

The proliferation and growth of the transnationals have not gone unquestioned. Throughout the late sixties until the mid-seventies there was a great deal of international questioning and embryonic attempts to develop an international discipline and management of direct foreign investment were started. Critics focussed on such concerns as the effects of transnationals on the balance of payments of host countries brought about through repatriation of profits and transfer pricing mechanisms. They looked closely at their impact on social development, investment and employment patterns, the degree of industrial competition, and on consumer tastes. At the same time, there were a few startling exposés of unwise or unlawful interference in the domestic political processes of host countries.

INVESTMENT AND AID

These difficulties pointed to an urgent need for clear guidelines for transnational corporations. The U.N. has established a Commission and Centre on Transnational Corporations which in 1977 began to elaborate a code of conduct for such firms. Likewise, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has been working on guidelines for transnational behaviour along with concepts for the appropriate behaviour for host governments towards foreign investors. Clearly these endeavors must now be given a higher priority.

The need for multilateral action originally arose from a recognition that prospects have never been brighter nor the need greater to develop a more constructive international understanding about direct investment. At the same time, trends in international development and investment are becoming more varied and complex.

Despite earlier fears, investment flows have now become more balanced among OECD countries, thus reducing fears that U.S. corporations were about to buy up the world. At the same time, the U.S. has itself become an important host country for foreign direct investment.

Likewise, there has been a general increase in the number of host and home countries outside the OECD area and in the number of transnational corporations based in developing countries. In particular, the newly industrialized countries have developed a larger stake in creating a positive climate for direct investment.

In some other countries, the situation is quite different. Multinationals are attracted to better-off developing nations, and direct investment flows to less-developed countries are insufficient to resolve their severe problems of under development. Only one-quarter of total foreign direct investment is directed to developing countries.

This outcome has relevance for programs of official development assistance, and emphasizes dramatically its importance in the development process. The truth is that although direct investment in developing countries during the

last decade has increased faster than the growth in official development assistance, it has actually declined as a proportion of the annual flow of resources from OECD countries to the Third World. It thus becomes abundantly evident that international direct investment cannot replace development assistance but can only supplement it.

THE ROLE OF THE STATE

Another complexity in the international foreign investment picture is the role played by states with a centrally planned economy. In such countries, foreign investment is generally restricted to minority shares, so that the level of foreign investment usually remains at a low level. But many state-controlled corporations in these countries have themselves become transnationals. They, too, then must be factored into the rules of the game of international direct investment.

In such a complex and changing investment environment, how can we usefully strengthen international cooperation? It seems to me that we have to link two elements. One is the responsibility of host governments to ensure that foreign investment contributes to national development. The other is the assurance that risk-taking transnational corporations are accorded fair treatment and the possibility of a reasonable return. That, in essence, is the basis of Canadian policy in this field.

We also think that governments should refrain from applying their laws to affiliates of transnational corporations which operate outside of that nation's jurisdiction. We believe that restrictions on licensing, limitations on freedom to export, procurement policies which favour overseas suppliers rather than competitive domestic sources, or the concentration of research and development in the transnational's home country are practices which should be avoided.

A case in point is the recent unfortunate U.S. decision to restrict the export to the U.S.S.R. of oil and gas equipment produced by foreign subsidiaries of U.S.

companies. Such unilateral, extra-territorial application of U.S. law is unconscionable and can only hurt international investment flows and development. The U.S. should reverse this decision as soon as possible. I feel sure that foreign companies operating in the U.S. are expected to abide by U.S. laws and policies. We, who are hosting U.S. companies, demand no less respect for our domestic laws and policies.

We recognize that greater understanding is essential to making progress in this field of foreign investment. And many aspects require considerable study. We need better international understanding of investment incentives, particularly at a time when there is much scrambling among nations to attract new investment. We have to try to reduce the costs of competitive investment incentives offered to transnationals, at the same time working for a more equitable division of the world's investment resources. Canada endorses the work of the World Bank and the OECD in this area.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I want to stress that, for Canada, the evolution of an effective international regime for direct investment is an essential part of economic development and the North-South challenge. We believe our primary goal must be to ensure that transnational corporations are given an opportunity to contribute to world development through their dynamic profit-making activity and to ensure that the benefits derived from their activities contribute to rational global development. To achieve this, we must work towards balanced international cooperation in order to achieve a more constructive investment climate.

I believe that if we can produce clear rules of understanding and conduct for host and home governments as well as transnational corporations, we will have made a significant contribution to a more rational and balanced world development

**ECONOMIC CYCLES
CANNOT BE ADJUSTED
TO POLITICAL CYCLES**

William E. Simon

ECONOMIC CYCLES CANNOT BE ADJUSTED TO POLITICAL CYCLES

A wise student of human nature once wrote that hope makes a fine breakfast but a poor supper. Well, we're now at midday in the Reagan Administration, the halfway point when the hope of 1980 is in the hot political kitchen of a mid-term election. Two years ago, hopes were high that the disastrous political and economic trends of recent decades were about to be reversed. The American people gave a loud, clear signal that they had enough of the diet served up by the apostles of ever-increasing federal bureaucracy and big spending. It seemed that we had finally learned the lesson that politicians who preach the gospel of tax-and-spend as a way to the promised land were false leaders, who only take us into the swamplands of bad government and worse economic misery. So it was that when the sun rose on January 21, 1981, the morning after the Reagan inaugural, we sat down to a breakfast of high expectations, based on the President's pledge of a bold new beginning.

It seems like only yesterday — and the truth is, in terms of sound government and economics, it was only yesterday. I say this because sound government and economic policy — truly sound government and economic policy — looks to long-term rather than short-term objectives. And let's face it: politics has always been a myopic profession that takes a short-sighted view of issues and problems. The working politician deals in terms of two and four year cycles. And in recent years, this tendency has been egged on by a news media that has the attention span of a newborn calf looking for a quick-fix.

THE BITTER POLITICAL PILL

But the problems that face our country today have been a long time in the making, and they don't yield to any simply quick-fix solutions. In foreign policy, we're faced in many parts of the world with problems whose roots go back hundreds, even thousands of years in time. In domestic affairs, if the turbulent decades of the sixties and seventies taught us anything, it's that you can't solve deep-rooted problems instantly with any magic elixir of political sloganeering and big government spending.

It was the liberal application of just such an elixir — and I use the word liberal advisedly — that led us into the deep economic crisis that faced the Reagan Administration when it took office — a crisis that still very much confronts us today. True, the extent of this crisis has changed in the past two years. Consider the political and economic condition of the country when the administration took office in January, 1981. We had:

- A foundering, rudderless foreign policy
- High, double-digit inflation
- Skyrocketing interest rates
- Chronic industrial unemployment, compounded by an inability to compete on equal terms in the international marketplace. Not to mention a domestic policy weighed down by a power-bloated bureaucracy of federal regulators who stifled the initiative that has made our economic system the envy of the world.

With low productivity in our antiquated industrial plants, massive illiquidity building up in our financial system — yes, I could go on and on with this litany. But most important of all, underlying these critical problems, there was a failure of confidence in our government's ability to discipline itself and take the bold steps to provide the leadership needed to put our affairs in order.

That was the political and economic picture when the Reagan Administration came to power two years ago. As I

say, it seems like only yesterday. Indeed, the programs and policies initiated by the new administration have hardly had time to be digested, much less take effect. But here we are, in the heat of another political campaign in which the American people are being asked to pass judgement on those programs and policies.

IMPATIENCE FOR RESULTS

It reminds me of the story of the innocent — I should say, ignorant — city-dweller who decided to raise tomatoes in his backyard. Every morning he'd tear up the plants by he roots to find out why they weren't growing faster. My point is that just as there are natural cycles that won't yield to unrealistic deadlines, there are economic cycles that can't be hurried to meet political deadlines — not if our objective is real, rather than illusory answers to our economic problems. And sad to say, tragic to say, there is a deep and widespread lack of public understanding about the nature of the economic cycles that govern our lives in a free society. Like that amateur tomato-grower, the American people are impatient for results. And the real question this election year is whether they are so impatient that they're ready to tear up the roots of corrective economic programs and policies because they're not developing fast enough.

As some members of this audience may know, I have long been an advocate of a constitutional amendment to provide for a single six-year presidential term, a limitation on the terms of Congress, and if anything, the political debate taking place this autumn of 1982 makes me more than ever convinced of the wisdom of such an amendment. Just listen to the clamor of the politicians this fall — the very politicians whose quick-fix, short-term, tax-and-spend policies led us into our current fiscal mess — and the only conclusion you can come to is that our two-and-four year political cycles conflict with the realities of the economic world. You'll also reach another conclusion: that far from seeking to resolve this conflict, vote-hungry politicians,

along with a sensation-seeking news media, seem only too happy to exploit it.

Odd, isn't it? In terms of getting news every hour on the hour, morning, noon and night, Americans should be the best-informed people in the world, particularly on issues which vitally affect the future of our country and our freedom. Check your television and radio schedules and you'll find that we're now blessed with news round-the-clock — late-night news, early-morning news, even news for insomniacs who stay up until four in the morning. Sure, the quantity is there, no doubt about it — but how are these news segments being filled?

It would be good to say that the nation's news media, both print and electronic, were providing the sort of in-depth information on economic affairs that can better prepare the electorate to make the hard choices needed for long-term solutions to our problems. Good to say, but not true. For the sad fact is that, with few exceptions, news media coverage of the country's ongoing economic crisis isn't just superficial — it's counterproductive in terms of creating a better informed electorate. Needless to say, this suits the purposes of the short-sighted, short-term politicians perfectly. Demagoguery feeds on lack of understanding, and nowhere is this more true than in any political discussion of economic issues.

Check your history books and you'll learn that it was the politics of economic demagoguery that brought on the collapse of great empires and republics of the past — the politics of bread-and-circuses, of ever-expanding promises, of ever increasing expenditures without regard for any long range consequences. Today we see the politics of economic demagoguery weakening the material social and, equally if not more important, the spiritual structure of the greatest bastion for human freedom the world has ever known.

For make no mistake: America's free institutions are firmly based and wholly dependent on our country's economic strength. As that economic strength dissipates, our freedoms erode. Now, this may not be the intention of

the short-sighted political demagogues who peddle their modern day version of bread-and-circus economics, but the past is filled with the wreckage of societies whose leaders failed to understand the consequence of their actions. Put another way, it may take a farmer from three to six months to build a solid barn, but it only takes a jackass a few days to kick it down. Unfortunately, the current political scene has its share of jackasses available for the demolition. In fact, you don't have to travel too far this election year to hear some candidate braying that this is a society of unlimited resources and the federal government can fulfill every material need for every citizen.

That, of course, is the fundamental difference that separates those who view our country's economic structure realistically and those who view it through rosetinted glasses. For too long we've operated on the premise that our economic plant is a golden goose with an unlimited number of golden eggs.

To be sure, ours is a land of plenty, blessed with tremendous material resources. But no nation — no matter how great its resources — can operate in the real world as if there weren't any limit to its capacity for spending. At least, not without disastrous consequences. Yet, this is the fallacy which, in the past four decades, has led us away from the idea that economic strength can best be measured by savings and investment, and toward the idea that deficit spending and debt, both public and private, is the way to a strong economy and permanent prosperity.

So it is, that even as the overheated American economy of the sixties and seventies begins to cool — as the rate of inflation recedes and interest rates, however tentatively, begin coming down — the jackass exponents of tax-and-spend can already be heard braying their plans to reheat the economy. They argue that what this country needs to restore its economic health is another spending binge not only in Washington but in the consumer marketplace. It's hardly a new argument, yet in an election year there are those voters with short memories who might be lured by its promise of painless affluence.

A NEW BEGINNING

For those members of the electorate who might fall into that trap of campaign rhetoric, I would point out that we've been down that road before. Time and again, we've gone through the economic cycle of boom-and-bust, with each inflationary spiral leading to a new plateau in the cost of living.

Now, economics may well be, as its critics claim, an inexact science. But there are economic laws as inexorable and unbending as any laws found in the physical sciences. A prime law of physics, as we know, tells us that what goes up must come down. In economics, however, the law is that what goes up will keep going up whenever the basic integrity of a monetary system is weakened — until finally what comes down is the structure of the society itself.

And when I speak of "the society" in our current crisis, I'm not referring simply to American society. I'm speaking of the entire Western world — the structure of every economic, social and political system in free Europe, Asia and Latin America, threatened by massive illiquidity brought on by decades of profligate spending. No one, who has lived through the first half of the twentieth century should have to be reminded of what the economic collapse of a nation means in terms of that country's political freedom.

The history of the Weimar Republic, with its repeated cycles of boom-and-bust, is a lesson worth restudying by free nations that would avoid the tyranny of either the totalitarian left or right. Which is why I believe it's important — vitally important — that at this halfway point in the Reagan administration the American people should not lose patience and heed the siren song of the tax-and-spend politicians. This is no time to turn back the clock to the era of expanded federal government and bigger and bigger federal spending.

I say this not as a political partisan but as one who throughout his life has been philosophically committed to the basic principles that have made our free economy the greatest engine for human liberty and dignity in the

history of mankind – the fundamental principles and ideals that give life and meaning, not only to our material existence but to our political institutions.

Let me be absolutely candid: I am not one hundred percent in favor of every economic or political decision made by this administration. In fact, I think we've only scratched the surface in reducing the size and scope of the Federal Bureaucratic Monster created by the taxers-and-spenders over the past half-century. But important significant steps have been made since January, 1981 to reduce both the size of the Federal Bureaucracy and its massive spending policies. What's more, our national leadership is no longer perceived as foundering and rudderless, either here at home or overseas.

Of course there may be those in foreign capitals who don't like what our leadership in Washington stands for – but at least they know where it stands.

So a new beginning has been made – a step in the direction away from an all-powerful, centralized federal government controlling all facets of our economy and daily lives. In my opinion, it would not simply be a mistake but a tragedy-in-waiting if, after only two years, those who are trying to correct the errors of the past, were set back by the very politicians whose short-sighted policies led to our current dilemma.

Having said that, let me now address myself to what I believe has to be done in the days, months and years ahead in order to provide a long-range solution to the crisis of our times. We need bold action by bold leaders – leaders not afraid to take an economic course which, however difficult in political terms, would furnish the foundation for true prosperity in future years. The key concept here – one which short-sighted politicians shun like the plague – is a policy of moderation.

We don't need another illusory round of false prosperity based on federal pump-priming and government generated spending in the private sector. We need – and yes, we must have, economic policies that encourage – the reinforcement

of the bedrock of a productive society, which is investment and savings that form the basis of solid economic growth.

Can a society led to believe that its resources are unlimited — a people encouraged over the years to spend rather than save — can such a society and people find the true resources that make for prosperity? I refer to the inner resources that earlier generations of Americans relied on to build the free society we enjoy today — the spiritual qualities of self discipline and patience.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the overriding question of our times, not for this election but for this generation, is whether we, as a people, have retained these inner resources, or whether we've become a pampered, overripe society incapable of meeting the hard reality of the world in which we live.

Americans through the centuries have proven themselves willing, able and courageous enough to make whatever was necessary to assure for future generations a life of freedom and prosperity. These were the inner resources, greater than any material resources, that sustained our pilgrim and pioneer forebears. So, today, let us hope and pray that these qualities that made our country great still reside, during these critical years of this third century of our nation's life, in the bosom of the land of the free and the home of the brave.

I thank you.

**FIGHTING INFLATION IS
EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY**

*Akihiko Takeuchi
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FIGHTING INFLATION IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

The typhoon of high interest rates in the United States is often cited as the chief cause of today's severe global recession. Experts are fiercely debating the reasons for the high rates, how long they will last, and what their impact on the world economy will be.

When considering the future of the global economy — high interest rates and all — it is important to ask ourselves if we do not now stand at a major turning point. In those respects that I will delineate in the following, our economies may have reached their limits under existing policies, and consequently, the high U.S. interest rates probably need to be discussed in this context.

The first of these limits is that of an economy based on borrowing. Until the end of the 1920s, borrowing was regarded as something shameful, and individuals and governments alike budgeted to avoid it whenever possible. During the Great Depression, however, emphasis shifted to increasing growth and stimulating the economy. Governments began to borrow actively and to increase their fiscal expenditures. America's New Deal policies were typical of this new trend.

The need to finance military spending during World War II further swelled government debts. After the war, expanded government finance and increased fiscal deficits became common around the world, partly because of the priority placed on welfare, out of fear of another depression. With the improvement of social security and the dawning

of the mass consumption age, individuals began to switch their orientation from economizing to consuming, and started accumulating all manner of debts.

Prior to the first oil crisis, the developing countries had been required to keep their fiscal and credit policies within bounds to qualify for loans from the IMF, the World Bank, and other international organs under the Bretton Woods system. After the oil crisis, however, they became able to readily borrow large sums of the oil money through the world's major commercial banks. Even the socialist countries of Eastern Europe became caught up in the borrowing wave.

Thus, individuals and whole nations, irrespective of ideology or level of development, awoke to find themselves in the depths of a massive debt economy. The size of the accumulated debts had not caused any concern when economies were progressing smoothly and incomes were on the rise. Yet once growth came to a halt and recession set in, people were forced to recognize the limits to how far the debt economy can be carried.

The second limit is that of inflationary policy, along with acceptance of the credit economy, the idea spread among the western industrial countries in the period following World War II, that a gentle increase in prices was permissible when implementing economic growth policies. In many countries, most notably in Latin America, it was even believed that the negative aspects of price increases could to a great extent be eliminated by indexation. However, when domestic inflation was joined by "imported" inflation caused by soaring oil prices, the result was disruption of politically unacceptable proportions. Even in South America, inflation control became the prime political task of governments.

The two oil crises also took their toll in the industrial countries. Domestic inflation increased, and rising prices began to threaten economic and social stability. Governments were compelled to change their inflationary line to one dedicated to bringing prices under control.

The third limit to present-day economic systems is that of energy resources. Soaring oil prices, triggered by the first oil crisis in 1973, shocked the world into an awareness of the limited nature of its oil resources. Now ten years later, it would appear the balance has at last been restored to oil markets — the result of energy conservation efforts by the advanced industrial countries, increased oil production by non-OPEC countries, and the development of alternative energy sources. There seems little likelihood, therefore, that oil prices will rise much above their present \$ 30 or so per barrel as long as global inflation remains at bay, as long as there is no let up in efforts to produce more non-oil fuels, and as long as no major conflict breaks out in the Middle East. All the same, one of the most important results of the oil crises was an awareness that the world has only limited energy and mineral resources and that high economic growth rates can no longer be maintained on a global scale.

CHANGE OF DIRECTION

The global recognition of these three limitations reflects an awareness of a major change in economic direction in the 50 years since the Great Depression, and, more particularly, in the decade since the first oil crisis. The process by which these three limitations have interacted to foster this changed awareness is itself of great interest.

The two oil crises made countries aware of the resource constraints on growth policies. By sending prices soaring worldwide, the crises also forced an end to the inflationary line in economic policy-making. In addition, the burden of debts brought down on individuals, firms, and countries alike by the oil crises made them realize the limitations of a credit economy.

President Reagan's economic policy since taking office has been implemented under the constraints imposed by these three limitations. The question is: what is the relationship between his policy and these limitations?

The President's economic policy has three main

features. (1) His monetary policy is to hold the money supply below the Federal Reserve Board target, in order to arrest inflation, and to leave up to the market the interest and exchange rate fluctuations resulting from the policy's enforcement. (2) On the fiscal side, large tax cuts are to lead to an improved business climate, higher savings rates, increased tax revenues, and ultimately fiscal balance. Yet, while endeavoring to activate the U.S. economy in this manner, the President is also authorizing a substantial increase in military spending in keeping with his hard-line Soviet policy. (3) Lastly, the policy seeks to abolish various restrictions on private sector economic activity. Mr. Reagan is boldly introducing market principles and competition into the private economic sector.

The main results of this policy so far have been a sharp drop in the inflation rate and a marked increase in the value of the dollar on exchange markets. However, not all has gone according to the administration's initial scenarios. The U.S. economy is now beset by a severe recession, massive unemployment, a substantial fiscal deficit, and, for the foreseeable future, high interest rates.

Despite the fact that inflation has fallen from 11.7 percent when the President took office to 5.6 percent more recently, prime lending rates still remain about 16 percent and show signs of rising even further. This has become the focus of debate, both because it is equally damaging to the U.S. economy and the whole global economy, and because it is without precedent in past recessions.

A number of reasons have been put forward to explain the persistence of these abnormally high rates: (1) the continued lending squeeze by the Reserve Board coupled with inept money supply management; (2) crowding out due to the growing fiscal deficit; (3) continued inflationary expectations; (4) fear of a government reflationary policy; (5) increased corporate demand for funds with which to repay debts; (6) risk premiums to cover interest rates fluctuations and the risk of bankruptcy.

Of all these factors, the most important is concern

about the growing fiscal deficit. It is commonly suggested that interest rates will fall if this fear can be resolved politically, but the argument is a dubious one. The amount of funds raised by the federal government on the market dropped from \$ 85.4 billion in 1975 to \$ 37.4 billion in 1979, but rose again to \$ 87.3 billion in 1981. In 1982 the figure is expected to climb to about \$ 100 billion. Even so, this does not represent a great increase since 1975 when compared either with nominal aggregate funds on the market or with GNP. The argument that the fiscal deficit is the principal cause of present high interest rates is weak.

THE EFFECTS OF HIGH INTEREST RATES

It is beyond question that a reduced fiscal deficit would encourage lower interest rates, since it would allay fears of future inflation. But the fiscal deficit alone is inadequate to explain the interest rates. Neither can theories citing inflationary expectations or fears of government reflationary policy account for the large gap between interest rates and the rate of inflation. Actually, any such expectations or fears should presumably evaporate gradually as the gap persists.

One U.S. magazine has analyzed the composition of the 16 percent interest level as follows: 7 percent to cover current inflation, a risk premium of 4 percent for interest fluctuations, a risk premium of 2 percent associated with long-term loans of over 10 years, and a normal profit of 3 percent.

This analysis may or may not be valid. That is not the question here. All that is needed is a quick review of freshman economics to see the cause of persisting high interest rates in a strong demand for funds that exceeds supply. Looking at things from the demand side, it is easy to envisage the immense personal, corporate and national borrowings, and the resultant marked deterioration in finances and lowered liquidity ratios.

The statistics do, in fact, confirm this picture. At

the end of 1981 the U.S. economy was encumbered with \$ 5,125 billion in outstanding debts (versus a GNP for the year of about \$ 3 trillion). The debts falling due within one year thence were estimated at no less than \$ 1,200 billion.

In a period of prosperity, it would be possible to absorb these huge sums. But it takes little imagination to see how in the worst recession since World War II — and with high interest rates to boot — governments, corporations and individuals alike are having difficulty raising funds to repay their obligations. Moreover, real estate, negotiable securities, gold and other items purchased in anticipation of profiting from inflation have dropped heavily in value. Many of the corporate takeovers of the past few years have backfired due to poor performance. This depreciation of assets will make it much more difficult to procure money through their disposal.

The financial position of U.S. corporations has undeniably deteriorated over the past two decades, whether measured in terms of their liquidity ratio (the ratio of cash and negotiable securities on hand to short-term debts) or their long-term liquidity (the ratio of liquid assets to total debts). A great number of companies, including many major corporations, now find themselves increasingly strapped for funds.

The Federal Reserve Board has focused on restricting the money supply, leaving interest rates to the mercy of the market. The ensuing interest rate swings have not only made it next to impossible for corporate financial managers to plan effectively; they have also hindered fund procurement by throwing the bond market, once the principal source of long-term funds, into chaos.

Companies are consequently noticeably more dependent on commercial paper and other instruments on the open market, a field that has expanded sharply in recent years in part because of eased restrictions. At the same time, banks remain an important source of short-term funds.

Overdependence on short-term market funds could threaten a company's very existence with any major

disruption of the market. The appearance of the much-talked-about new instruments coming on to the market in the recent "credit revolution" in the United States will only encourage such overdependence.

On the fund supply side, investors burned by high interest rates and falling bond prices on the bond market are becoming wary of long-term issues. Investors are also afraid that the market will become saturated with bond issues due to government borrowing. As a result the bond market is extremely slow.

The stock markets are equally in the doldrums. This is quite unprecedented.

What is more, the banks are suffering. There has been an exodus from fixed deposits as savers pursue more attractive interest rates, and banks have therefore become more dependent on market funds. The recession has increased the risk of corporate bankruptcies, while country risks have grown due to world economic stagnation and political uncertainty. And as competition with nonbank financial institutions intensifies, banks are losing ground as a stable source of funds.

There has thus been a major switch in the relationship between supply and demand for funds in the United States. The financial position of fund borrowers in particular has weakened substantially since the oil crises, and the policies taken by the Federal Reserve Board at a time when corporate finances were in the worst shape ever, have not only brought on the abnormally high interest rates, but have been keeping them high, longer than the predictions of most policy makers, financiers, and economists. This is the fundamental cause of the interest rate problem.

UNCERTAINTIES AND INSTABILITY

The continuing high interest rates have come under fire both within the United States and abroad. The Reagan Administration, however, has so far shown no inclination to change its policy until inflation is quenched, its

assumption being that rates will fall before long since inflation is settling. Nonetheless, even supposing that the government did give in to public pressure caused by increasing unemployment and business failures and decided to step in to reflate the economy, it is questionable whether it would have any viable options.

Increased fiscal expenditures and/or an increase in the money supply would immediately rekindle fears of inflation. The resulting jump in interest rates and falling bond prices could jeopardize the government's own fund procurement.

In the past two or three years, news that once would have had a favorable impact — tax cuts and falling oil prices, for example — has only fueled financial uncertainty. This is clear evidence of how unstable and uncertain America's financial structure has become. In view of the massive size of the credit economy, and inept implementation of financial policies, with the resultant shaken state of both borrowers and lenders, a radical solution to this instability cannot be expected overnight. It is important to realize once and for all that unlimited economic growth can no longer be achieved through cumulative borrowing and inflationary policies. Savings rates now need to be raised and the fiscal deficit reduced so as to rectify an economic structure surfeit with borrowing. This will need to be done over a period of time.

The Reagan Administration is aiming in this direction. The chaos arising from the rigid enforcement of its policy is an indication of the seriousness of the malady gripping the U.S. and world economies. The Washington administration's prescription is simply too bitter for a debilitated credit economy to take.

Both the U.S. economy and the world economy are quite different today from when the Great Depression broke out in 1929. Their foundations are, on the whole, much stronger. But as far as the credit economy goes, there is no guarantee that one wrong step will not set off global credit instability because of the accumulated borrowing of the past 50 years.

To protect our economies from this danger, it is

essential that governments maintain healthy finances and that credit systems be kept strong and stable.

President Roosevelt, as one of his great undertakings, separated banking and the securities business and established a deposit insurance system in order to create a stable financial system. It is now being suggested that the system be changed in the name of liberalization — in the name of the “credit revolution”. It would be dangerous indeed to advocate tampering with the system in a way that could threaten its stability, without taking into account the ailing health of the economy.

There is much that Japan can learn from the experience of the U.S. under the Reagan Administration, notwithstanding the many differences between the two in the fields of economy and finance.

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TORONTO

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