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“The Western Approach to the War on Poverty is a Failure”

The **War on Poverty** is the unofficial name for legislation first introduced by the United States President Lyndon B. Johnson during his State of the Union address, on January 8, 1964 (Wikipedia) and then exploited by the rest of the Western world until now and for the future.

Generally speaking, the idea of fighting poverty is a very good one. Less poor people around means increasing the purchasing power of a large portion of the population which, almost automatically, generates a growing economy and a constant reduction of the crime rate, not because the poor are criminals, though. They only are in need. And they have to find out how to survive for themselves and for their families one way or another and sooner or later breaking the law will be strictly connected to their survival M.O. (Modus Operandi).

But, after more than 50 years of fighting against poverty, where are we ??? In the United States there are about 54 million people under the so called “poverty line” (the poverty line is an estimation related to the minimum income needed to secure the necessities of everyday life). In Italy, in the last few years poverty has increased dramatically and there are now more than 12 million people to be considered poor. The other nations in Europe are no exceptions: even Germany is affected.

And please, stop blaming the financial crisis as a major cause for the increase of poverty. This phenomenon continued over more than 50 years, including periods of huge economic expansions.

This trend is frightening and there is no distinction in results between actions determined by the governments or initiatives taken by private enterprises.

They are all failing miserably.

There were some encouraging positive effects at the very beginning of this war, from the middle of the '60s until the end of the '70s.

At that time, the entire society of every nation involved was paying the price of having too many poor people walking around the streets. So, it was in the best interest of each and every citizen to support the war on poverty and the poorest country in the world (particularly in Africa) were so behind that they couldn't interact properly with the industrialized world.

That is why many Western nations started policies to send aids and assistance to African populations – not just to support their people for humanitarian purposes – but also (and most importantly) to make those African countries ready and organized for trading and for business, in a way compatible with their richer new “partners”.

Later on, specifically during the '80s until the end of the '90s, the war on poverty became a business. The investments of many governmental institutions around the world were massive. Billions of American dollars were flowing from the richest towards the poorest communities.

Private Foundations, Private Corporations, Multi-national Companies and even Non Profit Organizations were (and still are) sending food, medicines, doctors to poor nations. Schools, hospitals, residential houses were built there, but not just for humanitarian purposes, not just for the desire of helping them out of poverty.

For every dollar invested in the war on poverty there were at least 5 dollars (some people say 25 US\$) coming back to the sources in different forms: low costs products, trading, men power, raw materials, diamonds, minerals, use of local resources and so forth.

Slowly, a lot of people in the Western societies started profiting from poverty !!! And they also noticed that trying hard to reduce poverty would have lowered their income or would have the potentiality to destroy their businesses all together.

And that is when they started seriously pretending to fighting poverty, while doing their best to keep the Status Quo as it ever was.

Today, the overall situation is much worse than before.

Today, the concentration of power and financial resources in the hands of very few operators in the global market makes poverty a necessity, an indispensable part of the global business.

With billions of people in total poverty the wealth of those few richer guys is increasingly higher and higher. For those outrageously rich billionaires having two or three billion people be engulfed in deep poverty means to have slaves for free, to get human trafficking for granted and in extreme cases to buy human organs for few bucks – occasionally even vital human organs like: liver o heart. Not to mention the access to the youngest portion of those poorest folks to re-direct them towards prostitution and slavery.

Today charity is the most profitable business on earth. Why ??? Because there is not much benevolent or charitable or philanthropic spirit in it, in fact, charity has become pure and simple business.

The evidence of it ??? There are billionaires around the world able to donate more than 50% of their entire patrimony and money and yet they manage, two or three years later, to get back and to remain among those few of the richest people on earth, at the top of the highest-ranking positions.

One of the richest religious organizations in the world is the Roman Catholic Church and they are basing their entire proselytism and all their activities on charity and on helping the poor.

They have been doing this for more than 2000 years and the results are pretty clear: those poor populations are still poor while the Church has never been richer than it is at the moment.

I don't believe that charity is a proper way to conduct the war on poverty.

Nobody must profit from poverty. Poverty should remain a lose-lose condition inside any society and outside of it. If nobody will be making money out of the war on poverty ... then there are chances of winning the war. But, until some people will continue to extract their income from poverty ... that war will continue to remain a lost cause.