

**Review: Brian Lightowler, *Corruption: Who Cares*, Caux Books and Grosvenor Books, Toorak, Victoria, 2003**

Pages: 115

**The Subtle Society-Killer**

Instead of popular political talk of increased aid to Third World countries, this book highlights the largely ignored issue of corruption.

The scale of the problem is huge: in 2005 the wealth of the global drug business was estimated at USD1.5T which no doubt has since grown exponentially, also, one quarter of all money in circulation is 'grey' or illicit.

The author highlights a number of truisms, such as corruption varies inversely proportional to civil liberties in a society. Left unaddressed it can turn catastrophic, as it did with the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis.

Apart from more transparency and policing, the real solution lies in changing a people's culture, that theft and coveting is wrong (the Eighth and Tenth Commandments). However, lasting cultural change can only come with a spreading of the incorruptible Gospel of Jesus Christ to change the hearts of corrupt men.

\*\*\*

**Introduction (pp. 7-10)**

Drug barons by 2005 could have USD1.5T in capital ('grey' money) which could create a criminal world culture.

Niccollo Machiavelli observed: "how easily are men corrupted and in nature transformed".

**D) 'Clear and Present Danger': Corruption - a hidden force on a global scale (pp. 11-24)**

“The strongest fortress will crumble if built upon sand.”

The Iraqi government ended up receiving funds of the UN oil-for-food programme.

There was mass insider trading before the September 11 attacks.

USD80B p.a. exchanges hands as bribes or ‘gifts’, predominately from industrialised to developing nations.

The most corrupt industries are construction and arms which have the desirable characteristics of urgency, large sums of money, and highly technical or mysterious aspects.

Money laundering drains currency reserves, increase inflation, reduces tax collections, and cripples health and education.

Corruption is cited as the cause of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which added 20-100% to government costs for goods and services in several countries.

Some argue corruption is a positive force which speeds up otherwise inert bureaucracies.

‘Looting’ is extreme corruption of a macro-economic nature, such as money-printing [central bank borrowing] to fund large-scale non-existent projects.

In Zimbabwe, the state-controlled Grain Marketing Board is weaponised to starve areas of maize which vote for opposition parties.

Chinese corruption is estimated at 3-5% of GDP.

To be successful corruption must be hidden and untraceable.

## **II) Graft Busting: Action by Governments, World Bank, and Police (pp. 25-38)**

Corruption varies inversely with civil liberties.

## **III) Actions for Integrity (pp. 39-76)**

‘Champerty’ is an illegal sharing of litigation proceeds by the promoting party.

Public works contracts average 40% late and 30% over budget.

In 1988 it was reported Norwegian authorities were giving tax deductions on bribes paid by Norwegian companies to developing countries.

## **IV) Combating the Culture of Corruption (pp. 77-110)**

Transparency International (TI) was launched in 1993.

Large companies bribe Ministers in African countries by offering places for their children at Harvard and Oxford universities.

TI publishes the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and Bribery Payers Index. The 2002 CPI ranked 102 countries of 200 by summarising fifteen surveys from nine independent institutions. These reflected the perceptions of business people, academics, and country analysts.

In Kenya ballot box theft during transportation was common.

## **V) ‘Turning Point’ in Combating Corruption (pp. 111-114)**

### **Executive Summary (pp. 115-119)**

One quarter of all money circulating is ‘grey’ or illicit.