

Crisis Films

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Two interesting films have already appeared about the arrival in the USA of the financial and economic crisis which has been threatening since 2008 to undermine the whole Western way of life. Both films are well made. Both are persuasive. Yet one says the bankers are heroes while the other says they are villains. If Western society is to have any future, the contradiction deserves thought.

The documentary film *Inside Job* consists of a series of interviews with bankers, politicians, economists, businessmen, journalists, academics, financial consultants, etc. There emerges a frightening picture of greed and collusion in fraud at the top of American society in all these domains. Free enterprise was the justification for the financial deregulation of the 1980's and 1990's, which gave to the money-men steadily more power until they were able to bring under their control all politicians or journalists or academics of influence. Thus a process of merciless plundering of the middle and working classes is still going on. The anger of the victims is building towards an explosion, but at least for the moment the money-men cannot stop gorging at the trough they have so well designed for themselves. "Greed is good. It makes the world go round," say the banksters.

In the second film, *Too Big to Fail*, the dramatic events of autumn 2008 centring around the collapse of Lehman Brothers, a major New York investment bank, are re-constructed. Hank Paulson, then Secretary of the US Treasury, is shown making a classic free enterprise decision by refusing a government bail-out to let Lehman Brothers go bankrupt. But the result is such a shock to the global financial community, threatening a meltdown of worldwide finance and commerce, that Paulson with his comrades in government and with the help of all the leading bankers of New York has to persuade the US Congress to

approve a taxpayer bail-out of all the big banks which cannot be allowed to fail. He just succeeds. The system is saved. The government and bankers are the heroes of the day. Once again capitalism is proved to be the marvel we always knew it was – thanks to socialist intervention!

Then are the bankers heroes or villains? Answer, heroes at the very most in the short run, but certainly villains in the long run, because it needs very little common sense to realize that, all society requiring selflessness, no society can be built on greed, meaning selfishness. In any society there will always be the haves and the have-nots (cf. Jn.XII, 8). The managers of society who have the money and power absolutely must look after the masses who have neither, otherwise there will be revolution and chaos. Of course the globalists are planning on this chaos tomorrow to give them world power the day after, but while they may propose, it is God who disposes.

Meanwhile Catholics and anybody who cares about the future should go to see both films and then ask themselves some hard questions about capitalism and free enterprise. How on earth could capitalism be saved this time only by socialism? Is government then really all that bad? Is capitalism really all that good? How can a society possibly depend on greedy men to survive? How can it have got itself into such a dependency? And is there any sign right now that anybody is asking such questions? Or is everybody's worship of Mammon – let us call things by their name – proceeding unchecked?

Unless Jesus Christ absolves men of their sins through his priests, no post-Incarnation system of society can ultimately work. Capitalism only ever lived off the Catholicism from earlier centuries. It is today's exhaustion of Catholicism that spells the death of capitalism.

Kyrie eleison.