

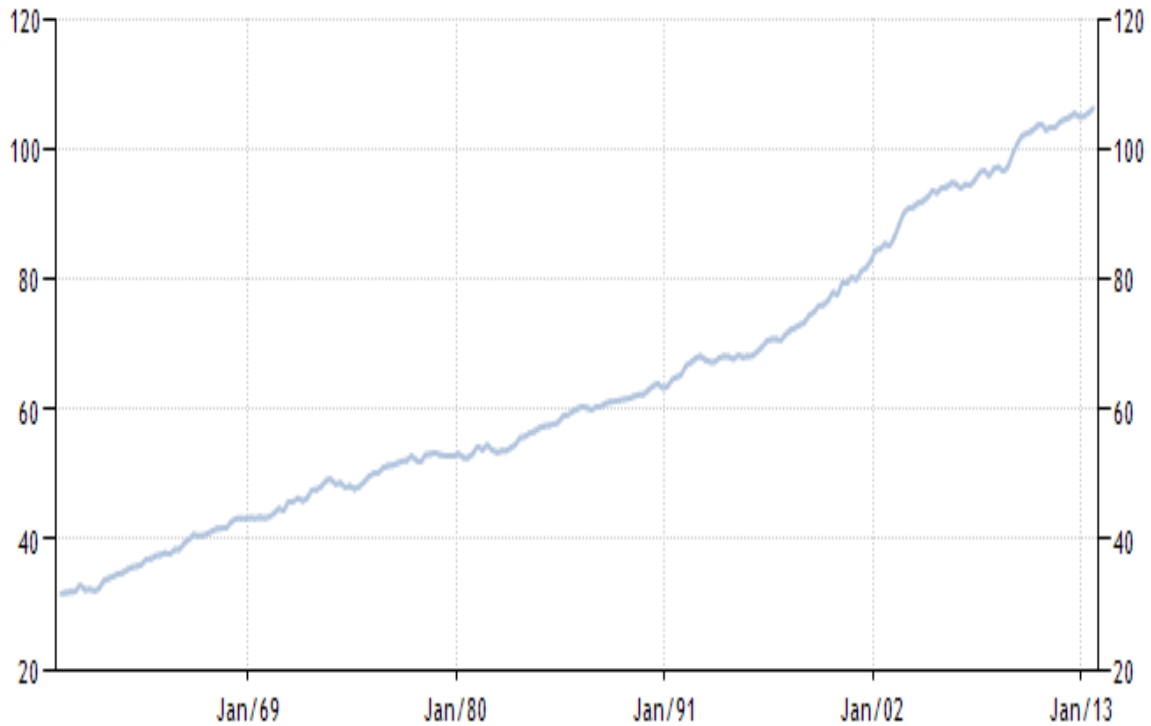
# Where'd All the Damn Money Go?

by John Spritzler, on the suggestion of Dave Stratman

January 30, 2014

Where'd all the damn money go? From 1959 to 2013 American economic productivity rose **three fold**, as shown in the plot below taken [from here](#). But who among us feels three times more economically secure and comfortable?

## UNITED STATES PRODUCTIVITY



SOURCE: [WWW.TRADINGECONOMICS.COM](http://WWW.TRADINGECONOMICS.COM) | U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

On the contrary, most of us in the United States are experiencing life as if productivity had **FALLEN** three fold. Real inflation-adjusted wages have fallen so that it takes both parents working to support a family now. Young people have to go into humongous debt, greater than anything their parents ever dreamed of, to get a college degree, and then live their lives as virtual debt slaves--many starting off by working as interns for **NOTHING!** They probably think their

parents are lying when they talk about how in the good old days companies actually paid new employees decently and provided benefits while training them for the skills they needed at the company's expense, often even paying their tuition to go back to school. Yes, it happened back when productivity was only one third what it is today.

Once upon a time in our three-times-less-productive past, there was enough money to build a highway system and build libraries and schools and homes for lots of people who never owned a home before. We even built huge public housing projects that may not have been very well designed but were expensive undertakings nonetheless. We paid GI's to go to school and didn't make them go into debt to study. These things weren't cheap! Yet there was money for it.

Back then we had public schools with music and art as part of the curriculum. Today for some reason we can't afford such "luxuries." We had mental hospitals or institutions where people who were unable to fend for themselves were fed

and clothed and provided shelter; maybe--like with public housing--it had serious faults but my point is it cost a lot of money and still was paid for. Now these mentally ill people are dumped onto the street. Not enough money, they say, to take care of them properly. How come? Where'd all the damn money go?

Remember "The Leisure Society" that *TIME* magazine in 1966 predicted we'd have by now because of automation?

As [Thom Hartman reminds](#) us:

*In a [1966 article - TIME magazine](#) looking ahead toward the future - and what the rise of automation would mean for average Americans, what the article was about. It concluded:*

*By 2000, the machines will be producing so much that everyone in the U.S. will, in effect, be independently wealthy. With Government benefits, even nonworking families will have, by one estimate, an annual income of \$30,000-\$40,000.*

*Now, that was in 1966 dollars, it would be like \$100,000, \$120,000 a year now.*

*How to use leisure meaningfully will be a major problem.*

*... wrote the article. The premise was simple - with better technology - companies would become more efficient - they'd be able to make more things in less time.*

*Profits would skyrocket - and Americans would bring home higher and higher paychecks - and all the while working less and less.*

*So by the year 2000 - back in 1966 looking forward - things would look like this: [clip from the [introduction to the Jetsons](#)]*

*We would enter what was referred to as "The Leisure Society".*

*And the only problems facing America would be - just how the heck everyone would use all that extra leisure time!*

*What kind of things would people get into when a nation has lots of money and lots of free time on their hands?*

*And as we know today - we WISH that was our biggest problem.*

*Turns out - predictions about the leisure society were dead wrong.*

Lord knows automation did indeed take off beyond people's wildest dreams. Robots build cars now, as in this [Tesla factory](#) in Fremont, California, pictured below, where robots weld, rivet, bond and install components.



Computers have replaced countless jobs (Who remembers when "secretaries" took dictation, or even what a "secretary" was? Who remembers when the only way to deposit or withdraw money from a bank was to talk with a human being called a "teller"?) Technology is vastly increasing productivity and wealth and at the same time replacing the need for people to work, as these [MIT professors explain](#).

But who among us regular folks is enjoying any of this promised leisure? Where'd all the money go?

Productivity Up. Bridges Down. How Come?

Back in the 50s and 60s we had money to build new infrastructure and magnificent new bridges, like the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge which, when it opened in 1964, was the [world's longest](#) suspension span bridge, pictured here.





Nowadays we don't even have enough money to maintain our old bridges properly and they're collapsing, as this one in Seattle, pictured below, [did last year](#).



In 2007 the Mississippi River Bridge in Minneapolis [collapsed](#), pictured below.



Some might say that the money has all gone to pay for expensive health care technology, such as MRI and CAT Scan machines. OK, we spend more on health care than in past decades, for sure. But a [huge part of this expense](#) goes to insurance companies who provide no health care at all; they just create enormous administrative costs (that account for 30% of all health care costs!) in every

doctor's office and hospital that has to hire lots of people to handle the paperwork caused by us not having a simple single-payer system like other countries do. And on top of that insurance companies siphon off more money for their big profits.

Our Money's Gone Missing

[9 Trillion Dollars Missing from Federal Reserve](#)

[\*\*Rumsfeld Buries Admission of Missing 2+ Trillion Dollars in 9/10/01 Press Conference\*\*](#)

Some people are clearly playing fast and lose with amounts of money that most of us cannot even really imagine. (It would take a million millionaires to have a trillion dollars.)

But the problem is not simply that all our money has gone missing. Yes, it's missing from us, but it's not as if it fell into a gutter somewhere. It's missing because it fell into the hands of people who shouldn't have it. And look what they're doing with our money.



## They're Blowing Our Money Up Into Smithereens...

They're using our money to make things that are designed to just blow up! I'm talking about bombs and missiles and bullets and all the rest that these things require. They keep us in a state of fear of one bogeyman after another so we'll let them make stuff to blow up. Here's some examples:

- [\\$ 3 trillion](#) for a war in Iraq that had no purpose anybody could defend with a straight face. The joke is that the true purpose is a national security secret. ([Here's the ugly](#) true purpose.)
- Another [\\$2 trillion](#) for the equally pointless war in Afghanistan.
- Military weapons: [\\$220 billion](#) per year's worth for foreign nations and [\\$664 billion](#) per year for the Pentagon's budget, which doesn't count large secret sums for covert operations

by groups like the CIA and NSA for example, most of which has nothing to do with actually defending us from actual enemies.

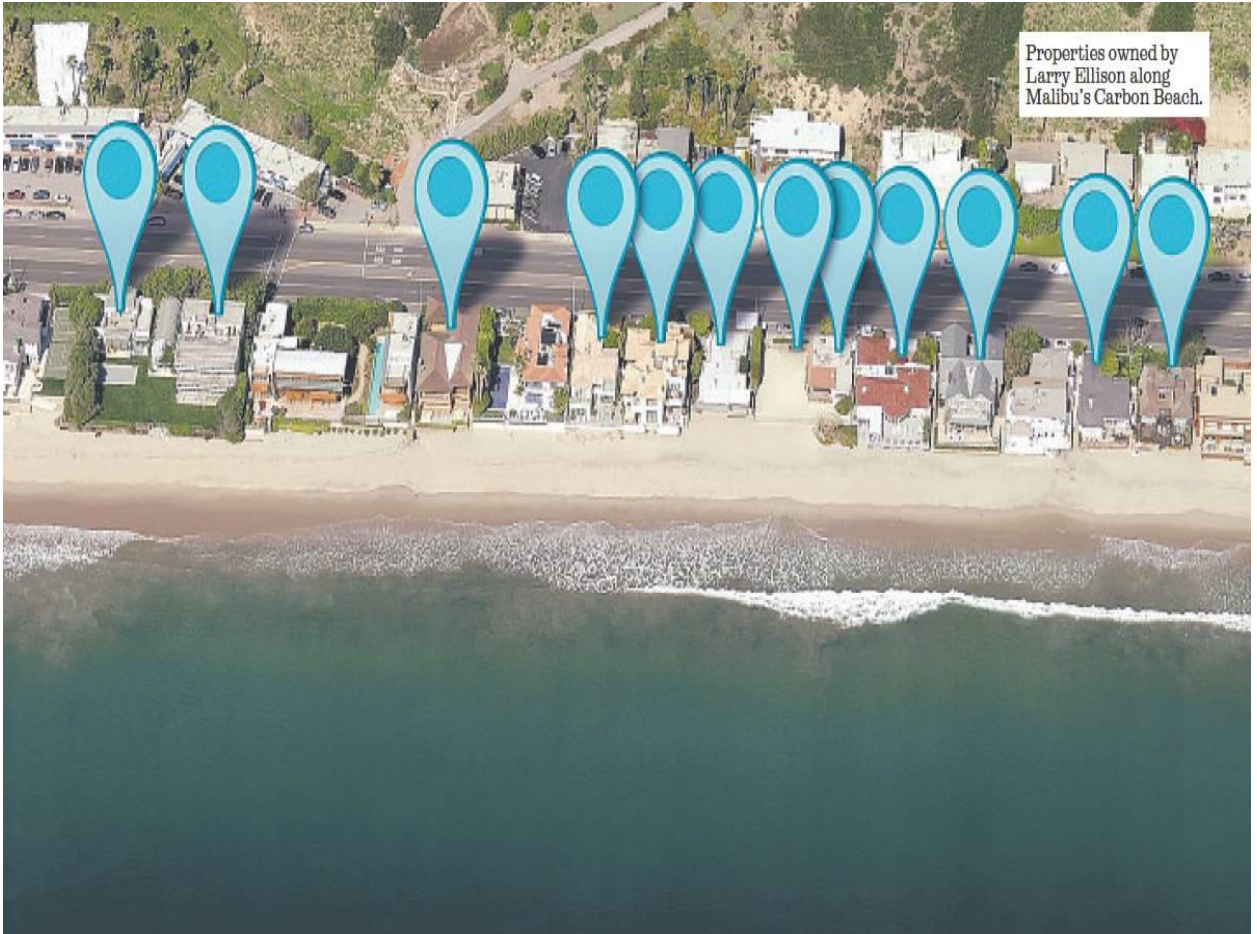
### ...Or Using Our Money to Create JUNK

And the money they don't blow up, they might as well blow up for all the use it will be to ordinary people like us. They're using our money for things like this:

- Privately owned yachts like The Rising Sun, costing [\\$200 million](#), owned by Oracle Corporation CEO, [Larry Ellison](#), pictured here:



- Multiple mansions that belong to a single person, like these:



Oracle Corp. CEO Larry Ellison owns mansions worth an estimated \$200 to \$250 million, while approximately 3.5 million Americans are homeless in a given year.

- Private jets like Donald Trump's:





It cost "only" [\\$100 million](#), but Mr. Trump "needed" it because: "Inside there is a master bedroom with a work desk and an integrated home theatre system, a television room featuring a 52in flatscreen TV with a control box giving access to over a thousand of Trump's favourite movies, not to mention a bathroom with a circular shower. The lavish interior features golden fittings all over the plane, including the gold plated seat belt buckles in the main and

guest cabins as well as a gold plated sink and faucets in the bathroom."

David Stockman, President Ronald Reagan's Director of the Office of Management and Budget, [wrote](#) on March 11, 2014 about the Department of Defense budget:

*"[T]he \$625 billion allocated to DOD this year amounts to a colossal destruction of economic resources for no benefit whatsoever to the safety and security of the American people."*

Why Are They Blowing Up Our Money and Making Junk With It?

Why? Because they don't want us to have the enormous amount of money (i.e. wealth) that our rising productivity is producing. They don't want us to have it because if we did we could use it to make our lives more enjoyable and secure. And if that happened, then it would be harder for the enormously wealthy and privileged ruling elite to

control us, to make us obey them and accept our place in a very unequal society.

TIME magazine in 1966 wondered "What kind of things would people get into when a nation has lots of money and lots of free time on their hands?" Well, the ruling class found out what kind of things as they watched in horror the subsequent years of the radical upheavals of the "1960s." The rulers learned that when people have greater economic security (it had reached a peak in the 1960s, with jobs easy to get and the difference between the top and lowest paid people in corporations lower than ever) they develop rising expectations about making the world more equal and democratic.

America's ruling elite determined to prevent Americans from ever enjoying a Leisure Society at all costs. Instead they imposed major policy reforms to lower our expectations in life and especially those of our children. These policies included [market-driven health care](#), [standardized testing](#) of public school children and abusive "ed

reform", two-tier wage systems to pay younger workers less than what older ones got for the same work, NAFTA and other devices to outsource higher paying jobs to cheap overseas labor, union busting and unprecedented kinds of strike-breaking launched by Ronald Reagan's firing of the striking air traffic controllers, and more.

It's not just that the very rich want a lot of wealth for themselves. They also need us to be easy to control and to cow into submission with the merest hint that our job may be taken away and with it our health insurance, or our wages garnished by the IRS if we don't pay back our student loan fast enough. They need us, in other words, to be economically insecure. They need us to equate "leisure" with desperate unemployment. They need us to require both parents to work to make ends meet. They need our children to fear they won't ever get a job and be able to pay back their student loan. They need us to fear that we won't have health care when we

need it the most. They need us to fear foreign bogeymen. They need us to live in a state of fear. That's why they prefer to literally blow up wealth than to let it improve our lives as it ought to do.

The problem for the ruling class is that we're producing too much wealth. They can only make so many fancy yachts and private jets and mansions for the rich and famous; the rest they just give to the pentagon generals to blow up. The last thing they will do is give us back the money!

## **What's Not In Your Wallet?**

All that's mentioned above is just the tip of the iceberg. Wherever you work or go to school or face budget cuts in your community, it's time to ask, **WHERE'D ALL THE DAMN MONEY GO?** Why is the budget being cut? Why are Ph.D. faculty practically starving as barely paid "adjunct" professors? Why is tuition going up? Why are they [raising public](#) transportation fares?

It's time to uncover the truth and demand answers and accountability in all these kinds of situations.

Why are we all feeling so poor! We shouldn't be. The total U.S. personal income in 2010 was [\\$12.31 trillion](#) and the U.S. population that year was [308.7 million](#). Doing the division yields a *per capita* (what every person--man, woman and child--would have if each had exactly the same) income of approximately \$40,000. This means that had there been an egalitarian distribution of income in 2010, a family of four would have had an income of \$160,000 that year. How many of our families are taking in \$40,000 per person in our family?

## **Ring the Bells of Revolution**

The problem we face is a big problem that requires a big solution. We need to remove the rich from power and create an egalitarian society (as [discussed here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#)). There is a very doable and practical and legal and fun way

to start building a movement with this very goal.  
Please visit [PDRBoston.org](http://PDRBoston.org) to read about it.