



Imagine the Future:

A Historical Perspective from 2325 A.D.

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Imagine a time, 300 - 400 years in the future. It's 2325 and government is more authoritarian and repressive; a time when people struggle under a burden of excessive taxation and regulation. The golden age has long since passed when personal freedoms were taken for granted and people were able to advance themselves through initiative, hard work and ideas. It has become the age of the bureaucrat and the technocrat.

A new world order, a world government has emerged. Mostly complete in its structure and reach, it came to end the countless disputes and wars of tribes, nation states and religious zealots. A world order paradox caused by man's need to control others. The economic collapse and the sharp clashes of 2012 – 2022 and 2045 had sickened and frightened the world population as the world came close to nuclear conflict. It made sense at the time and was resoundingly welcomed by most voting peoples. Through the weakened democracies that formed the nation states of the mid 2050's the unintended consequences however were severe. An old order was passing away and a new one was emerging.

There had been some good things along the way where there have been many advances in genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, energy management, nanotechnology and virtual reality lifting the material quality of life for all humans. The early pioneers of the late 21st century were already living in space colonies on the Moon, Mercury and Mars and in space stations orbiting planets and moons around the near-Earth part of our solar system. Now, the solar system's human population had levelled off at close to 11.75 billion people. Humans lived from Mercury to Jupiter within the near-Earth orbit. Pioneers were pushing to establish space stations around Saturn similar to the homesteading days of 18th and 19th century America. Indeed, accommodation on space stations with views overlooking the rings of Saturn, were much sort after.

Resource utilisation of space territory such as the Jupiter-family comets, moons and near-Earth asteroids to economically provide water, base and rare earth metals and fuels - the ingenious process of in-situ resource utilization driven by free markets in space. Using materials native to space for propellant, storage, construction, radiation shielding, and other high-mass components of space infrastructure had led to radical reductions in the cost of space travel and settlement. Controlled-environment agriculture, that fledgling science in the early twenty-first century with little interest from investors had revolutionised food production offering humans in space and on earth efficient, cheap, high yield foodstuffs that had removed forever the fear of starvation and shortage. The hardest part seemed to be getting out of Earth's grip – gravity and regulation wise! Booms in economic activity and space development were making fortunes for people and corporations in short periods of time.

The advances of science and technology had also provided for the increased population once again disproving old Malthus. Space travel had become a profitable commercial enterprise along with space mining, refining and energy production and transport. Out of these core industries a whole host of inventors and entrepreneurs were creating huge opportunities. In the future, space stations and space colonies, relatively small now with populations of 50 – 100,000 people will become capable of housing and feeding populations of several hundred thousand to several million in the future. Already space station developers were planning the first 250-500,000 person space stations. Space had become the boom frontier for anyone with creativity, will and intellect.

In the 21st century however, the bureaucrats had turned the 'Crash of 2012-2018' to their advantage – pressing for one government, one economy, one currency, one legal system! The nation states of the previous 300 years were now regional government centres. Each planet had its own governor and unelected council to administer a zone. Democracy had become a muted shadow of its former self even though elections of sorts continued. Space had similarly been carved into regional governmental zones. The climate of totalitarianism had grown stronger with any dissent of the world bureaucratic order strongly repressed. People in fact were known to 'disappear' in centres previously called countries. These same countries had also been renowned for their liberty and civil rights. Indeed, nobody wanted to hear the ideas of Jefferson, Mill, Locke and Rand anymore for their knowledge had been buried quietly in the confused rhetoric of political and free market ideology gone wrong.

For you however, living in 2325, faced with living in overcrowded cities, rife with crime, unemployment and lack of opportunity, you read of long forgotten days where philosopher-economists and thinkers such as Murray Rothbard, Ludwig von Mises, Henry Hazlitt, Adam Smith, William Hutt, Frederic Bastiat and many other libertarian, free-marketeers celebrated freedom, the individual and free markets. Something stirs inside you, a longing to live a life of freedom and so begins a change with dramatic consequences. You, and many like you, choose to go and live in space stations or in a space colony enduring the kind of hardships and privations that were experienced by the early space settlers. In the early days of living in space in the late 21st century, life expectancy actually fell for those in space whilst those on Earth had continued to rise and was then at the magic 100 mark. Living in space had improved over the decades but it was still tough.

Despite the many risks living in space and environments totally lacking the nurturing comfort Mother Earth provides, many people hope to seek their fortune and return to the comfort of Earth. Many never returned. Solutions to space sickness were still being developed even as space development had matured well past its initial stages. Just as the early settlers left old Europe to settle in the America's faced the same challenges and privations, so you will do the same.

You face all of this willingly because in the community that forms your space station you meet like-minded people who are there for the opportunity that presents itself when liberty is taken. You are free! There you will make your own rules and govern yourselves according to those rules. Property rights, contract law, sound money, the harm principle and freedom are the guiding principles of your community. And with that freedom to work and produce and trade, unfettered by government regulation, you flourish. Some space zones and groups of space stations had organised themselves into trade and defence confederations and sought autonomy from Earth. The general feeling in those communities was that one day Earth government would claim their tribute just as the history of big government has always done.

Indeed, just as many people will escape to space in search of liberty, many others will also seek to escape the confines of an overcrowded, overregulated, overtaxed planet to be able to express and practice their spiritual and religious beliefs.

Just as political, economic and religious repression led to a darkened phase of social mood resulting in European civil wars and revolutions along with the American revolution of the late 18th century. Out of the chaos of those times came the westward migration that built a continent based on ideals of



freedom. So the repressions of the 21st century also created the social mood that would become the driving, innovative force that led the exploration of the new frontiers of space.

Human progress and regress in cyclic waves of spirit and endeavour. History repeats, socially, politically and economically. Economic history proving again that free trade and liberty offer the greatest opportunity of advancement for humanity - the nature of humanity, the human spirit, waxing and waning, forever evolving.

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