

OUR FINANCIAL SYSTEM: AN ALLEGORY

There is an Eastern tale that speaks about a very rich magician who had a great many sheep. But at the same time this magician was very mean. He didn't want to hire shepherds, nor did he want to erect a fence around the pasture where the sheep were grazing. The sheep consequently often wandered into the forest, fell into ravines and so on, and above all, they ran away, for they knew that the magician wanted their flesh and their skins, and this they did not like. At last the magician found a remedy. He hypnotized his sheep and suggested to them, first of all, that they were immortal and that no harm was being done to them when they were skinned; that on the contrary, it would be very good for them and even pleasant.

Secondly he suggested that the magician was a *good master* who loved his flock so much that he was ready to do anything in the world for them. And, in the third place, he suggested to them that if anything at all were going to happen to them, it was not going to happen just then, at any rate not that day, and therefore they had no need to think about it. Further, the magician suggested to his sheep that they were not sheep at all; to some of them he suggested that they were lions, to some that they were eagles, and to some that they were men, to others that they were magicians.

After this, all his cares and worries about the sheep came to an end. They never ran away again, but quietly awaited the time when the magician would require their flesh and their skins.

- Georg Gurdjieff