IAED Webinar Offers Strategies for Building an Integral Economy

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IAED, United States – In the United States, voices from all sides of the political and economic spectrum are raising concerns with the direction of the economy and its effect on social cohesion. From the concentration of economic wealth and power of global corporations, the unaccountability of large bureaucratic institutions to the feelings of many that the system is rigged against them, there is a need to find clarity on central issues and consensus on an upward path toward a better world of mutual prosperity and peace.

On August 1, 2025, the International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED) held a webinar on “Headwing Economics: The Role of Personal Ethics and Institutional Frameworks in Building an Integral Economy." The program featured two speakers and one commentator, and was moderated by **Mr. Alan Jessen,** North American coordinator for IAED. About 70 people participated online in the United States and Europe.

Dr. Gordon Anderson, president of Paragon House Publishers and author of the soon-to-be-published book, "Integral Economy," described how the Headwing framework integrates left and right social elements. From the right, it posits that responsible and free individuals are the foundation of economic productivity and service to society. From the left, it explains that rational and impersonal institutions can provide an ethical framework that enables all individuals to participate fully in the economy as owners of both their labor and capital, and an economic framework that broadly distributes rather than concentrates capital ownership.

Mr. Michael Greaney, secretary and director of research at the Center for Economic Justice, spoke on the topic, "Building an Integral Economy: The Just Third Way." Individually, the meaning and purpose of life is to become virtuous, he said. Socially, it is to be a good citizen. However, he pointed out two problems. One is that, traditionally, the institutional environment did not support individual virtue, and people were considered powerless to change society. Thus "the common good" could not be directly accessed. Secondly, lacking access to capital, most people did not have the economic power to become good citizens.

Two breakthroughs offered potential solutions to these problems, he said. One was Pope Pius XI's 1931 definition of the act of social justice as effecting changes in public institutions to orient them toward the common good. The second was economist Louis Kelso's 1958 formulation of the principles of economic justice and their application in a program of expanded capital ownership. In combination, he said, the principles of economic and social justice have the potential to restructure the social order in a "just third way of economic personalism," to make an individually and socially virtuous life possible for all.

Mr. Patrick Hickey, a former member of the Nevada state legislature and current vice chair of the Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, provided insightful commentary on both presentations from his practical experience in developing laws and policies.

A recording of the webinar may be found here.