

# THE COMMON ECONOMIC PROTOCOLS, VERSION 3

1. The purpose of The Common Economic Protocols (CEP) is to facilitate beneficial interaction and to minimize conflict. It rests on three primary principles: Individual Autonomy, Private Property, and Free Contract.
2. Progress must not be hindered.
3. Free, open, and functional markets must be preserved.
4. The CEP deals with individual parties only.
5. Agreements must be communicated openly and clearly.
6. Individuals/parties should keep their agreements.
7. Individuals/parties should not aggress against, encroach upon, or defraud others.
8. Private property is to be respected and protected.
9. Self-induced harms are the sole responsibility of the individual or party in question.
10. All the effects of an action must be taken into account.
11. Restitution is preferred above punishment.
12. Violence is a very costly means of solving disputes and is to be avoided.
12. Mistakes and emergencies are part of human life, but must be repaired.
13. The CEP does not require omniscience of anyone.
14. The purposes of judgments are to secure free and functional markets and to recompense injured parties.
15. The standard for the application of the CEP is the reasonable man.

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## Supplemental Material

The Common Economic Protocols were designed to facilitate justice in pseudonymous cyberspace. The first version was published in 2001, followed by a lightly updated version in 2005. This version (CEP3) has been stripped down to the essentials. Here are some points from the earlier versions that are still of note:

- Freedom of trade, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of action are but modifications of one great fundamental principle; all must be maintained, or all are at risk.
- Precedents are not valid as axioms. Legal precedents are valid only insofar as they uncover or express principles of law.
- Reason is the soul of law. Feelings and emotions are not esteemed above reason.

- No man's standing in the eyes of the law is superior to any others. The law is no respecter of persons.
- No man, or group of men, has a right to dispose of another man's life or property without consent.
- Plain language is preferred over esoteric language, provided that plain language is capable of clarity and accuracy.
- The default language of the Common Economic Protocols is English.
- Individuals should be accorded privacy in all areas of life, including their economic affairs. However, privacy may not be used as a tool to facilitate force, fraud or similar offenses.
- Every man (*man* being a default for *person*) is the sole owner of his own life, and should be left alone to pursue his own happiness, or dispose of it, in whatever manner he chooses, provided that he does not encroach upon other people or their property. Exceptions are made for infants, persons of diminished capacities, and similar cases.
- Markets are to be left alone to solve their own problems. There should be no coercive intervention in market processes. This is so because markets are the great interaction centers of mankind. Values are exchanged, merits discovered, and mutually beneficial, survival-improving relationships fostered.
- What is hateful to you, do not do to any man.
- There are no victimless crimes.
- Free and open markets are perhaps the most impartial institutions on earth.
- The free and unhindered transfer of goods and services between people is critical for the cooperation of humans in their mutual goals of survival, happiness, and growth.
- Market-based competition is more effective in compelling, testing and refining inventions and strategies for human advancement than any other mechanism known.
- Private and exclusive ownership is necessary for, and supportive of, individual human effort. Human energy and intelligence are the forces which create the means of survival and progress on earth. Raw materials exist without human energy, but are of little value without it. Long experience has shown that self-interest is as close to a biological imperative as anything that we know of; and that non-individual based methods of motivation (as in collectivism) simply do not work. (Fear may at times work, but it is not self-sustaining, is unreliable, and for many reasons it is properly considered immoral; that is, contrary to the broad interests of survival and progress.)
- Strong protection of private property is necessary as a hedge against envy, and the plunder that rises from it. Where envy holds sway, the accumulation of capital is dangerous and uncommon. Without capital, a great number of important activities cannot be undertaken. Historically, the inability to raise capital has made economic progress extremely difficult or impossible as a practical matter.
- Private and exclusive property ownership is necessary for the certainty of goods and supplies. This is especially critical as it concerns long-range business planning. (Long-

range planning being necessary for a huge number of beneficial commercial activities.) If there is no certainty of goods, lands, or other properties, long-range operations are most uncertain, and would seldom be undertaken, as is the case in primitive societies.

- Private property, certified by secure title, is of critical importance in the securing, application and use of credit.
- A "functional market" is a market with sufficient choice and liquidity to operate well.
- Also supplemental to the CEP is a set of legal maxims developed under the common law of England and lightly updated for the CEP. Those *Maxims of Law* exist as a separate document.

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