

PREFACE

LIFE IS GOOD IN THE U.S.A. The stock market is at record levels, inflation is reported to be low, and on a clear day, I can see retirement on the not-so-distant horizon. The house and cars are paid for, the kids are raised and doing fine, and the grandkids are happy and healthy. Maybe just the Mrs. and I will take a cruise this year to experience a little pre-retirement bliss. We can sample a taste of our soon-to-be fulltime lifestyle of reaping the rewards for all of those years of work and planning.

All of this, and yet there was that incessant gnawing in the pit of my stomach. Something continually whispered that all wasn't quite as well as being reported by our illustrious elected officials and the scorekeepers on Wall Street. But surely they weren't lying...

I had to find out what it was that wouldn't let me peacefully bask in the nearing golden promise of retirement. And, find out I did. Can you recall the emotions that you experience when you first learn of a terrible tragedy? A tragedy such as 9-11-01, hurricane Katrina, or the loss of a loved one? If you are like me, your first instinct is to call friends and family to both alarm them of the situation and to console one another in the terrible and unthinkable reality of the moment.

It was with this level of passion and urgency that I have written this book. But, this time, the intent is to avoid another disaster rather than to report one. I wish to help you avoid an economic disaster that the majority of middle-class America is well on its way to.

When I first began this writing, I was, to say the least, angry with the politicians for the years of telling and re-telling "The Biggest Lie Ever Believed." Americans deserve better from our esteemed business leaders, those politicians in Washington, those at your state capitol, and for that matter, at your local city hall.

THE BIGGEST LIE EVER BELIEVED

After completing and then re-reading the first four chapters, I realized that the anger and contempt that I felt (and still do) for our elected officials and big business leaders was being transferred to each page. So, figuring you didn't want to read the words of some fuming madman, I started over with a new conviction and a better attitude. I have tried my best to sweeten the proverbial bitter pill with humor, while at the same time providing you with verifiable information that could change your life in a very positive way.

You will note the purposeful absence of footnotes and references to scientific and economic studies. Logic, reason, common sense, fairness, and mathematics need little such borrowed acceptance.

As research was conducted and the dots were connected for writing a book of this nature, I was educated in unexpected areas. It is my sincere hope that you can take from this book all that I have personally learned while writing it.

"We the people" will prevail. After all, this is still America and we are in charge, it says so in the rules.

Mike Folkerth