

Patriots Reinventing Money in 'Green Revolution'

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There is an old saying, "Don't take any, wooden nickels." But what if that wooden] (yr paper) nickel could be used as a legitimate medium of exchange? In the following report, AFP examines the rising number of currencies which provide alternatives to U.S. dollars circulated by the Federal Reserve at a significant cost to Americans.

Most patriots agree that our money needs to be reinvented. But the question is, how? For those who do not have much faith in the modern "U.S. dollar," better known as Federal Reserve paper, a number of alternative currencies—about 60 of them—are currently in use in the United States.

Thomas Greco, author of *Money: Understanding and Creating Alternatives to Legal Tender*, believes alternative money systems are key to the health of communities.

"Locally owned businesses are more likely to use local suppliers, reducing the environmental costs of transport and stimulating local production. They are more likely to employ local people, and they contribute to the culture and uniqueness of a community," said Greco.

Most of them have very limited circulation, such as the Disney Dollar (not much honored outside of Disneyland, Walt Disney World and Disney stores) and the Ithaca hour, which is used to good effect in Ithaca, N.Y.

A similar currency is the Dancing Rabbit Dollar, or "bunny money." This is a paper currency that would be no trouble at all for anyone to counterfeit. But why bother, since you can hardly spend it outside of the "Lettuce Patch," the official bank of the Dancing Rabbit, a small commune in eastern Missouri.

Other private currencies such as the paper version of the Liberty Dollar contain anti-counterfeiting devices that are quite impressive. There is also an attractive silver \$10 American Liberty Currency medallion, which contains about \$5 worth of the white metal.

In the past, wampum and tobacco, Spanish doubloons, pieces of eight and many other things have served as money in the history of America. But tobacco is out

of fashion, as well as too unwieldy and perishable, and wampum might prove rather impractical.

As it happens, there is no law that says you cannot use euros or other foreign currencies if you and the person you are dealing with agree to do so. But that could be a problem. In fact, this is a problem with any currency that is not firmly based on the U.S. dollar or the much-reviled Federal Reserve note.

As much as patriots all hate the Fed, the fact remains that the Fed note is legal tender. That means merchants, at least in America, must accept it as payment.

Then there is e-gold, a monetary (payments) system that enables the use of gold (also silver, platinum and palladium) as money. Then there are other electronic payments systems, such as PayPal.

Some say that electronic money is the wave of the future. Possibly so, but some of us old fogies have not yet gotten the hang of it, and remain a little distrustful of anything that is entirely dependent on the Internet.

The patriot community contains many Green-backers, who feel that gold and other precious metals are a throwback to man's primitive past and are too easily manipulated by the plutocrats.

However, there are also many who feel that paper or fiat money is not to be trusted.

Physical gold is a great way to store wealth. But it has some drawbacks as a medium of exchange. It is just not practical, for example, to pay someone 0.0013 ounce of gold for a candy bar. That is where e-gold has an advantage. E-gold is almost infinitesimally divisible.

E-gold might sound like a computer nerd's fantasy, but it is real. It was created in 1996 and is still operated by Gold & Silver Reserve, Inc., a Delaware corporation. The genius behind it is Dr. Douglas Jackson, a radiation oncologist. E-gold is said to have 120,000 accounts, versus 3.3 million for PayPal. But the average PayPal customer has a balance of only \$12.12, while e-gold customers maintain 10 times that amount.

The Ithaca Hours system has been active since the early 1990s, with a money supply of nearly 70,000 hours in circulation. The system is creating significant value for Ithaca, N.Y. Participants earn hours by working for one another on such tasks as lawn mowing, teeth cleaning, bread baking etc. The accumulated hours then pay for other such services. Additionally, 10 percent of the funds are devoted to interest-free grants for local community organizations such as senior citizens groups.

For those who like to have something solid they can hold in their hands, there is the Liberty Dollar and other denominations of American Liberty Currency, put out by National Organization for the Repeal of the Federal Reserve Act and the Internal Revenue Code (NORFED).

In 1998 economist and retired mint master of the Royal Hawaiian Mint, Bernard von NotHaus, launched NORFED and started providing a meaningful alternative to Federal Reserve notes.

Says von NotHaus, who recently visited the offices of American Free Press: "We have a moral obligation to tell people about the history and consequences of past fiat currencies and to draw an analogy of what is going on today in this country."

Many patriots agree with NORFED that America needs to get rid of the Federal Reserve Act, System and Bank. The Fed was first introduced in 1913, along with its equally evil twin, the modern federal income tax. It was originally touted as a plan to stabilize the currency, but in practice turned out to do just the opposite.

According to Chuck Morse, a conservative writer based in Boston: "The stock market crash of 1929 was the result of a dramatic manipulation of the nation's money supply by the Federal Reserve. First a runaway inflation was created, when the Federal Reserve issued a quantity of money vastly greater than the gross national product. This, was followed by an equally dramatic, and sudden, contraction of the money supply." Individuals suddenly discovered that there was not enough money to pay their debts. The banks foreclosed on properties.

Contrary to popular opinion, the Fed Bank is not part of the government, but, rather, a private cartel owned by member banks and investors. The Fed is responsible, through its manipulation of the money supply, for the ongoing and excessive boom and bust cycles. It bases its actions, as any private corporation does, upon what it perceives to be in the interests of its shareholders. This is why it should not be entrusted with the management of the nation's money.

For the real story behind the control of money in America, order Sheldon Emry's timeless eight- page booklet, titled "Billions for the Bankers, Debts for the People" and/or "Eight Reasons Why the Budget is a Fraud" (one copy is \$2, six copies are \$4 and 40 or more are 40 cents each) from American Free Press. To order, send check or money order to 1433 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003. To order by Visa or MasterCard, call 888 699-NEWS (6397).

(PHOTO CAPTION: The Dancing Rabbit Hour is a currency used by the environmentally oriented community of Dancing Rabbit in northeastern Missouri. Available are the five-hour, one-hour and quarter-hour denominations. They can also be deposited in the community bank, known as the Lettuce Patch.)

(PHOTO CAPTION: The paper version of American Liberty Currency (ALC), available from the National Organization for the Repeal of the Federal Reserve Act and Internal Revenue Code, comes in one-dollar, five-, 10- and 500-dollar denominations, with excellent anti-counterfeiting technology. They can be redeemed for silver and gold medallions resembling coins. There is now also a digitized version of ALC that can be utilized on the Internet.)