

# Economic Prospect Weep for Alfie

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**Baby Alfie Left to Die: Social justice** comes in to much clearer focus with the abandonment of Alfie Evans by the National Health Service (NHS) in England in late April. If you have ever been in a NICU you know that even the idea of a government official coming in to end life-support for an infant is unthinkable.

But that is what the NHS actually did. The NHS decided it was not cost-effective or in the best interest of society to give Alfie the experimental treatment or even to allow his parents to take him to Italy where that treatment had been generously offered.

**In plain English that means that the rights of the parents are subject to the rights of society.** Social justice means justice for the society, the collective. That is one reason social justice advocates focus on equality. It is perceived to be good for society.

The opposite focus, on productivity, is perceived to be a focus on the individual and therefore harmful for society. Why? Because individuals are paid (and often very well paid) for their individual work or service; this does not advance equality (though it lifts the poor). This reasoning fails to recognize the benefit to society of the efforts of all those individuals. But political ideology can have life and death outcomes... especially when there is a vacuum of religious conviction or morals in the halls of power.

I've spent several years both discovering and trying to explain that when we as Christians talk about social justice we think about biblical justice in society. **That is not today's social justice** which is a kind of justice that arises out of society and is enforced by, and is good for, society. The arena for both biblical justice and social justice may be society but at the most important places, as with Alfie, the differences are stark.

The essential problems of mankind is not poverty; the essential cure is not relief; and the essential goal is not a life on earth with each having equal stuff. Man's essential problem is his relationship with his creator, with people (incl. self), and with the world. The essential cure relates to the life and resurrection of Jesus; and the essential goal of life on earth is to live under God's leadership and care. Today that's radical.

If you would rather feel this issue rather than think about it read John Kass of the *Chicago Tribune* whose editorial on Alfie appeared in the *Warsaw Times-Union* on May 3.

**Very Low Unemployment:** You know that I'm impressed that the U.S. labor force is finally over 160m (161.5m) with more women working actual jobs than men. Indiana has an unemployment rate of 3.3% and our five county area (EGR-2) has an astonishing low unemployment rate of 2.8%. According to the Department of Workforce Development Kosciusko Cty has 1,100 unemployed people and Warsaw has 191. The Elkhart job market is so hot that only 702 residents are jobless while 26,488 have jobs. That's the city. For the county Elkhart has 2,556 unemployed and 113,719 have jobs. Impressive. (Indiana DWD 5/6/2018)

**How Are American Women Doing?** A long term study reveals that at their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday 28% of women had earned at least a bachelor's degree compared to 21% of men. By age 31 women improved to 36% and men improved to 28%. (Bureau of Labor Statistics news release on long term unemployed).

Of those starting a job between ages 25-30 with less than a HS diploma (HSE), 45% lasted less than a year; only 27% lasted less than a year if they had a college degree. Women age 18-30 without an HSE worked 20 weeks of the year compared to 34 weeks for men.

Currently those turning 31 are married (45%) cohabitating (19%) or single (37%). People with more education were more likely to be married. Enough stats; now the point: education and marriage are good.

**What happens to Carson's?** Since Bon-Ton (HQ in Milwaukee with 250 stores) could not find a buyer, they bid out a liquidation. Great America/Tiger won with a \$794m bid. They will retain some of the 22,000 employees and conduct the going-out-of-business sales. Unsold merchandise as of August 31, may be bundled and sold by the pound. This is not good for workers or malls including here in Warsaw.