

We're Staring Down the Barrel of Utopia

TORONTO, ON, CANADA, August 29, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Throughout history progress has occurred over decades or longer when awareness of a problem reached critical mass. Today, broad-based awareness occurs instantly due to electronic media. Progress will now occur at an unprecedented pace.



New York's Hudson River has gone from severely contaminated to humpback whales.

In my 50+ years in the music industry I have been involved in the relationship between awareness and progress. In 1988, I assisted Mel Shaw (Founding President of CARAS) in an awareness campaign to increase the royalty a songwriter receives from record sales, which had not changed since 1924. The '2 Cents Too Long' campaign included well known songwriters and custom made records delivered to Members of Parliament showing them as the writer of a gold record and the royalty they would receive. The Copyright Act was amended soon after.

For twenty-five years I used a wide variety of what today seem like archaic methods to create awareness of the artists I was representing. It was costly and slow, but only then would progress happen. Today's methods are mostly free and very fast.

For decades there was no awareness of how record companies calculate an artist's royalties. Almost no artists who had hit records ever received a royalty. They became aware of the problem after they had a hit. No one at that time was aware there was a problem. When I began teaching this information in the 1990's, everyone was shocked.

Today there is broad-based awareness that artists are not being equitably compensated from the largest ever revenues record companies are making due to streaming. Governments in the US, EU, Canada, UK and others are currently addressing the problem and progress is happening in real time.

In 1966 folk icon Pete Seeger created a national awareness campaign to clean up New York's severely contaminated Hudson River. This led to environmental awareness nationwide leading to the federal Clean Water Act in 1972 and the Toxic Substance Control Act in 1976. Today humpback whales are swimming in the Hudson River. In the 1980's, the hole in the planet's

ozone layer from CFC's became a global crisis. Worldwide awareness of the problem led to the 1987 Montreal Protocol, which became the only treaty to be universally signed by every country on earth ever. Problem solved.

Recent examples of the faster rate of progress due to broad-based awareness are the #MeToo movement (2017), which has changed male behavior forever; BLM/George Floyd (2020), which has increased sensitivity to racial issues; love him or hate him, Trump increased awareness of and participation in American politics, which was the biggest problem; global awareness of climate change has led all car and truck manufacturers to focus on electric vehicles, which is the biggest part of the solution; awareness of residential school graves (2021) led to a long sought apology by the Pope. When you hear a lot about a problem from multiple sources, you're looking at the beginning of progress.

We are currently bombarded with a tsunami of awareness about real problems. Never before in history have humans experienced so much bad news in so short a time. It is disturbing, disorientating and often depressing for many, but this awareness will lead to collective action and progress at a faster pace than ever before in history.

Awareness is education. As H. G. Wells wrote in *The Outline of History* (1920), "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe". Education is now winning. We may not have utopia in 20 to 30 years, but those who are 20 something today will be shocked by the progress we've made.

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