

Greed Is Good

written by Oliver Stone & Stanley Weiser

Gekko: Well, I appreciate the opportunity you're giving me, Mr. Cromwell, as the single largest shareholder in Teldar Paper, to speak. [laughs along with the chuckles he gets from the gathered shareholders] Well, ladies and gentlemen, we're not here to indulge in fantasy but in political and economic reality. America - America has become a second rate power. Its trade deficit and its fiscal deficit are at nightmare proportions. Now, in the days of the free market when our country was a top industrial power, there was accountability to the stockholder. The Carnegies, the Mellons, the men that built this great industrial empire, made sure of it because it was THEIR money at stake. Today, management has no stake in the company! All together, these men sitting up here [indicating the Teldar management and executives seated in front of the stockholders] own less than 3 percent of the company. And where does Mr. Cromwell put his million dollar special? Not in Teldar stock - he owns less than 1 percent! YOU own the company. That's right, you the stockholder, and you are all being royally screwed over by these, these BUREAUCRATS with their, their steak luncheons, their hunting and fishing trips, their, their corporate jets and golden parachutes! Cromwell: This is an outrage! You're out of line, Gekko!! Gekko: Teldar Paper, Mr. Cromwell, Teldar Paper has 33 different vice presidents, EACH earning over 200 thousand dollars a year. [low whistle from the audience] Now, I have spent the last two months analyzing what all these guys do and I still can't figure it out! [laughs along with more chuckles from the audience] One thing I do know is that our paper company lost 110 million dollars last year and I'll bet that half of that was spent in all the paperwork going back and forth between all these vice presidents!!! The new law of evolution in corporate America seems to be Survival of the Unfittest. Well, in my book, you either do it right or you get eliminated. In the last seven deals that I've been involved with, there were 2.5 million stockholders who have made a pretax profit of 12 billion dollars. [applause from the audience] Thank you. I am not a destroyer of companies! I am a LIBERATOR of them! The point is, ladies and gentleman, is that Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right. Greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms - greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge - has marked the upward surge of mankind. And Greed, you mark my words, will not only save Teldar Paper but that other malfunctioning corporation called the USA. Thank you very much. [standing ovation from the crowd]