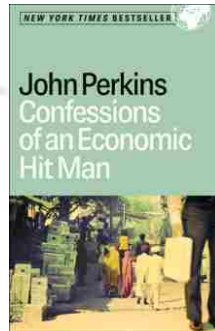




## Confessions of an Economic Hit Man



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### ■ About the Author



John Perkins

**John Perkins** has lived four lives: as an economic hit man (EHM); as the CEO of a successful alternative energy company, who was rewarded for not disclosing his EHM past; as an expert on indigenous cultures and shamanism, a teacher and writer who used this expertise to promote ecology and sustainability while continuing to honor his vow of silence about his life as an EHM; and as a writer who, in telling the real-life story about his extraordinary dealings as an EHM, has exposed the world of international intrigue and corruption that is turning the American republic into a global empire despised by increasing numbers of people around the planet.

When September 11, 2001 happened, John dropped the veil of secrecy around his life as an EHM, to ignoring the threats and bribes, and to wrote ***Confessions of an Economic Hit Man***. He believed he had a responsibility to share his insider knowledge about the role the U.S. government, multinational "aid" organizations, and corporations have played in bringing the world to a place where such an event could occur.

Previous books by John Perkins include ***Shapeshifting, The World Is As You Dream It, Psychonavigation, The Stress-Free Habit***, and ***Spirit of the Shuar***.

### ■ The Big Idea

In this book, Perkins paints a clear picture of how the US carved a path to become one of the most powerful countries in the world through padded economic forecasts for the less developed countries, and the manipulation of their corrupt leaders. Hired as an economist for one of these engineering companies aligned with this plan, his role was to create forecasts designed to convince developing third-world countries to take out billion-dollar loans from the World Bank to build infrastructures that would bury these countries in debt for years to come. Unable to pay back these loans within a given period of time, these countries would be left in debt not just in monetary terms. In misplaced gratitude, they will be forced to return these "favors" with other favors that would benefit the US: military bases, UN votes, or access to oil and other resources. *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* exposes the life of these modern day conquistadors and how they blaze their way into expanding the US "empire" through exploitation of third world countries.

## 1963 - 1971

### An Economic Hit Man is Born

John Perkins was not always accustomed to the life of the rich and powerful. He was from simple stock, son of a language professor and a high school Latin teacher in Hanover, Hampshire. Little did his parents know that he was born to achieve great things in life.

Perkins' parents were cash starved but they never really saw themselves as poor. They were determined to have their son have a good education at any cost, and so Perkins went to Tilton, an exclusive prep school where his father taught. His classmates did not come from the same background as he did - they were the sons of well-off families who owned mansions and dated debutantes. Unfortunately, Perkins had a hard time fitting in.

Instead of rebelling against his parents for sending him to a school where he couldn't keep up with his friends socially, the young Perkins chose to excel in academics and other curricular activities. This won him scholarships to two prestigious universities - Brown and Middlebury. He chose the latter, where he would meet the two people who would become greatly influential in his life.

One of these people was Farhad, the son of an Iranian general who was then a personal adviser to the Shah. He taught Perkins the social skills that the latter would then apply later on to his career as an Economic Hit Man: drinking, partying, socializing, and ignoring authority. This carefree and wayward lifestyle cost Perkins his scholarship, and Farhad was soon expelled from Middlebury. Both of them moved out of the university and decided to live in an apartment in Boston, where Perkins took a job for a local paper, the Sunday Advertiser.

The other significant person that Perkins managed to meet before leaving the school was his wife, Ann, who was John's childhood sweetheart. After they were married, Ann's Uncle Frank, who worked for the National Security Agency (NSA), helped John escape military enlistment by convincing him to apply for the NSA. Upon passing the exam, John and Ann impulsively signed up for the Peace Corps. Shortly after, they were both assigned to Ecuador.

With Uncle Frank's blessing, the couple set out for the South American country. Frank encouraged Perkins to learn the local Spanish language and become proficient in it, stating that he may need it later on. He also implied that the ability to speak the language would be helpful should John decide to join the leagues of the NSA. It was also in Ecuador where Perkins would meet the man who would usher him to become an Economic Hit Man, or, as they called themselves, EHMs.

Einar Greve, then Vice President of Ehas T. Main Inc. (MAIN), landed in Ecuador in 1970. Einar met with Perkins, as he knew that the young man had passed the NSA exams, and encouraged him to apply at MAIN. MAIN's primary business was engineering, and one of biggest clients, the World Bank, was in need of economists. More specifically, they needed economists who could produce critical forecasts to determine the feasibility and magnitude of engineering projects which MAIN will be contracting. At 26 and without his university degree, this was a plum

offer, something that would have seemed to anyone like a plum offer. Seduced by the opportunity, Perkins accepted the job without a clear idea of what he was getting into.

In order to prepare himself for his job, Perkins took a crash course in Economics and spent hours at the Boston Public Library reading up on the countries that he would be visiting and evaluating. On top of this, he underwent a special kind of training with Claudine, whom he only knew of as a consultant to MAIN. This special training was a clandestine one, where all meetings were kept in confidence, not even divulged by Perkins to his wife.

Claudine groomed Perkins to become one of the first breed of EHMs in the country. She threw some light on his job objectives as an economic hit man: he was to justify huge international loans that would fund money back to MAIN and other U.S. companies of similar expertise. He was to work to bankrupt these countries by offering them loans that they would never be able to realistically repay so that they will forever be indebted to their creditors. These indebted countries then become easy targets for favors, which include military bases, UN votes, and access to oil and other resources. An economic hit man, Claudine explained, is one who is paid well to cheat other countries and aid America in leading the global empire.

Perkins was then sent to Indonesia as part of an eleven-man team to carry out such a task described by Claudine. There, Perkins was exposed to the reality of his job: to make padded forecasts that were credible enough to convince Indonesia to invest in infrastructures that will further their oil and energy industry. It was a pill that was hard to swallow, and Perkins needed more answers to his questions.

John turned to his colleagues, who gave him separate views on their job objectives. Clearly, the motivation for becoming part of this so-called conspiracy was a personal and greedy one, thus Perkins felt in his conscience that he was not doing anything to help these poor countries.

But he also felt that he had no choice but to comply with his bosses' wishes and carry out his task. After all, he had already committed himself to this business. It was claimed that "once you get in, you're in for life" was the company's credo. His forecast was successful, and Indonesia agreed to take out a loan to build infrastructures that would further mire the country in debt for the years to come.

Because of his outstanding work, he was promoted in 1972 to chief economist. His bosses felt that he was putting extra effort into his job, but in reality, Perkins poured himself into his work to forget the ugly nature of his job description. This was his way of coping with things he did not like, just like his excelling in a school where he didn't really fit in.

## 1971 - 1975

### The Inquisitor

John's new position as chief economist enabled him to meet important leaders such as the president of the World Bank, Robert McNamara. He rubbed elbows with the

popular politicians and got closer towards the inner circles of his industry. He was later assigned to Panama to take on one of the biggest projects of MAIN at that time: to convince the country to let the US take control over the Panama Canal.

Perkins befriended then Panamanian president and charismatic leader, Omar Torrijos. Torrijos was popular in his country for supporting nationalistic causes. He was also carrying out a vision of Panama as an independent flourishing country. Torrijos enlightened Perkins' on the imperialism of the US government. He also knew what people like Perkins were up to, and he proposed a plan that would benefit not just the US, but also Panama. This appealed to Perkins, because he knew that it would be the right thing to do.

Panama would agree to build such infrastructures with MAIN as its contractors, but under the condition that MAIN and the US government would not force them to give up their rights to their own canal. For years, Perkins made sure that this plan was carried out as agreed, and this strengthened his relationship with Torrijos.

In 1973, Perkins was again promoted. He continued building this “empire” with MAIN, traveling to all corners of the earth while conducting studies in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

A year later, he was assigned in Saudi Arabia, where he played a critical role in convincing the House of Saud to invest billions of dollars in oil income in United States securities to allow the US Department of Treasury to use the interest from those investments to hire US Companies to implement construction projects in Saudi. Projects such as power and water systems, highways, garbage disposal systems, ports, and the like were to be built in this desert county and according to John's doctored estimates, would be to the benefit of all. In return, the US government promised that they would guarantee that the royal family would continue to rule Saudi Arabia, a guarantee that the US has kept till now. The success of the EHM operation in this country served as a model for future EHM projects.

## 1975 - 1981

Because of his continuous success for MAIN, Perkins was made partner in 1975 - the youngest partner ever named in the company's history. He was also given the title Manager of Economics and Regional Planning. His newfound title opened doors for him, and soon he was giving various lectures at prestigious universities including Harvard. His new appointment also enabled him to publish influential papers that validated his knowledge in economics.

But as he continued to climb up the corporate ladder, Perkins began learning more about the ugly truth behind the business that made him rich and powerful. While carrying out his work in Iran, he chanced upon an old adviser of the Shah who was banished from civilization. He learned that there are always two sides of the story and that no matter how smart the plans of the US were, the harsh reality would catch up and destroy all of this. In Colombia, he discovered through trusted friends who lived in the country for years that the locals, mostly farmers, who were branded as terrorists and drug traffickers were actually just peasants trying to protect their

families and homes from people like him who brought destruction to the land.

One of his trips, Perkins also had another chance meeting - this time, with an old school friend. Farhad was in Iran and had heard a great deal about Perkins as a successful economist. However, he encouraged his friend to get out of the Iran quickly, as the country was about to come to chaos. Farhad and Perkins flew to Rome the following day, where Perkins would meet Farhad's father, the Iranian general who previously served as a personal adviser to the Shah. Farhad's father predicted that the Shah will not last and he would be ousted soon. The old general also blamed the one-sided US policies, corrupt leaders, and despotic governments for inciting hatred among countries in the Middle East. He predicted that if the US government continued to move towards its selfish goals, the situation would worsen. True enough, the Iranian Shah fled his country in 1979 and Iranians attacked the US Embassy, taking with them 52 hostages.

All of these events haunted Perkins. His knowledge about the US being a nation continuously laboring to deny the truth about the role it plays in building its own global empire through imperialistic ways had been confirmed. He becomes torn, depressed, and tired from the vicious cycle that he is part of where he continues to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. In 1980, after much deliberation, he makes the ultimate decision: he quits MAIN.

In leaving the company, he was careful not to make waves or ruffle feathers, leaving as quietly and subtly as he could. He didn't want the people behind the organization to think anything worse of him, and he was afraid that if they sensed that he had lost his taste for the mercenary work they might come after him and his family. After years of economic manipulation and sabotage, John feared the very people that had once given him wealth, power, and privilege, and all he wanted was a peaceful life away from it all.

He was sworn into secrecy as to his knowledge of the operations of MAIN as well as to all details about the particulars of his employment at MAIN. For a while, Perkins kept his vow of silence. At this time, the world he left behind had already caused enough earth-shattering events that only that strengthened his resolve to terminate his connections with the business.

Less than a year later, he was given a counter offer by MAIN to become an expert witness. He was asked to name his price. He accepted, and was then assigned to US electric utility companies seeking the public utilities commissions' approval for the construction of new power plants. Even though he had no direct ties to South America, John kept track of the events there, as he had strong emotional ties that bound him to this country.

In 1981, Ecuadorian president Jaime Roldós, who was campaigning for an anti-oil platform against the US, died in a plane crash. It was a highly unexpected event that caused quite a stir in his home country, and the damage to his campaign was possibly irreparable. Shortly thereafter, Panamanian president Omar Torrijos - the man who had successfully negotiated new Panama Canal with the US President Jimmy Carter, returning the Canal Zone fully into Panamanian control - suffered the same terrible fate. A mysterious accidental plane crash took his life on July 31, 1981.

It was John Perkins' speculation that both deaths were results of CIA operations. Later on, he would air his belief that there was foul play in the deaths of these two great men in his book about his life. He also dedicated the book to them.

By this time, Perkins had realized that he no longer wanted a piece of this chaos. He married his second wife, Winifred, who was then an environmentalist planner at MAIN and whose father was a chief architect at Bechtel. Winifred's father was also the man in charge of designing and building cities in Saudi Arabia as a result of the 1974 MAIN deal.

## 1981 - Present

In 1982, Perkins put up his own company, Independent Power Systems Inc. (IPS). The company was dedicated to producing environment-friendly electricity. Perkins found funding for his brainchild by tapping into connections that he had made in his earlier years at school as well as the connections he made in his years as a political figure. These same connections helped him to secure tax breaks and sidestep government policies to ease his company's entrance into the financial market. On this same year, his first daughter, Jessica, was born.

IPS was not destined to be a long-running endeavor. John Perkins sold the company in 1989 at the onset of the energy crisis in the US. Around that time, he also began writing a detailed account of his job at MAIN, about his becoming an Economic Hit Man, and about the effects of his financial sabotage on third world and developing countries. He had put off writing his memoirs for years, afraid of the threat to himself and his family. He was also bribed to keep his silence. Through the years, Perkins stayed in touch with current events that he believed to have resulted from his work from the previous decade: the US invasion of Panama, the imprisonment of Torrijos' successor, Noriega, and a failed mission by the EHMs in Iraq, a botched attempt that resulted in the first Gulf War.

Perkins also channeled his energy into supporting nonprofit organizations, eventually establishing one of his own. He believed that it was not too late to counter damages done in the previous decade, and that maybe this can help alleviate the guilt from his conscience. He began revisiting South America, writing books about its indigenous people, and teaching New Age forums. He wanted to assuage results of his work as an economic hit man in order to help create a better world for his daughter.

Finally, Perkins received a wakeup call of the worst kind. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center which caused the collapse of both its towers on September 11, 2001 acted as a catalyst for John. Realizing that this onslaught of terrorism was directly connected to the economic manipulations of the previous decade, Perkins decided that it was indeed time to really follow through with his decision to quit his past job, cutting ties with everything that had anything to do with his past life as an economic hit man. With his resolve set in stone and determined to do what was right, he began to start anew. This is the reason why, after three failed attempts, he finally decided to let the world know about the real situation, culminating in the publication

of the tell-all book, Confessions of an Economic Hit Man. It was his means of coming clean to the world and in a way, a step in atoning for his mistakes of the past, although forgiveness from the citizens of the countries that the US has injured in this way is quite conceivably a long way off. While no criminal court would be likely to convict him, John Perkins was instrumental in causing havoc in several developing countries, ensuring the poverty and suffering of millions of human beings, a weapon of mass destruction like no other.