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Is debt an evil?

Libby Purves (3 June 2003) really goes over the top when she says 'debt is basically an evil'. What nonsense! The credit system, which is based on debt of various kinds, is the lifeblood of our economy.

Libby Purves ignores the fact that people, even youngsters, must be treated as individually responsible for what they choose to do in life. That used to be embodied in concepts such as thrift and self-control, now unfortunately regarded as outdated.

Libby Purves says the authorities remain 'strangely flaccid' when dealing with personal debt. As the draftsman of the Consumer Credit Act, which bristles with measures designed to control loan sharks and other such predators, I dispute this.

She says artful rip-off companies delude the poor and disguise the fact 'that their APR is 60 percent'. The Act makes such conduct illegal, and contains various measures to combat it. Over the past 30 years it has proved very effective.¹

¹ *The Times Register* (Debate), 6 June 2003.

