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LABOUR > Worker Rights Vs. Copyrights

Let me give you an example from the World Trade Organization. The World Trade Organization says it can do nothing about child labour. It can do nothing about forced prison labour. It can do nothing about labour conditions. That's too difficult, that's not the business its in. And yet let a country start knocking off CDs without paying a corporation copyright and all of a sudden the full power of the world community channeled through the World Trade Organization can come to bear on that country.

LABOUR > Holding Corporations Accountable

Can we ever be a democratic society when we have privately held wealth that is unaccountable? That is larger today than the gross domestic product of many countries? No country, no democracy can stand up to such tremendous concentrations of wealth. Therefore we need to break them up. We need to make them socially accountable.

And we need to think who can hold them accountable because if it's everybody's job to hold something accountable then nobody does it. Then it doesn't get done. And that's why I keep pointing back to the workers, the employees. They have a real interest in doing so.

LABOUR > State of the Unions

Well unions have gone through a lot of changes like other social movements. They've gone from being a social movement, you know workers community wide to, with the Cold War becoming what I jokingly called Contracts 'R Us. An institution that basically was concerned with wage benefits and the condition of work very narrowly.

And today I think what we're seeing is unions going back to much more of a social movement. Recognizing that the work place is far too important to narrow it to wages, benefits and conditions of work. That it's a site of decision making that's absolutely essential for a democracy, for workers to have greater power in there. And not just the power of being paid a decent wage. It's a place of decision making where we determine what will be produced. When, where and how?

It's a tremendous site of decision making. And as such unions need to be involved in not just the most narrow of decision making but the whole wealth of

decision making in the work place. And that decisions that are made in the work place impact on the entire community. And so what we're seeing is the labour movement recognizing that it is a wider social movement. That there is nothing that can be won at the bargaining table that cannot be taken away politically.

Well that means labour needs to be involved in the political system. And then they run into the power of the corporations and the private concentrations of wealth. So what we're seeing today is that the unions are recognizing that the sort of corporate big business agenda of privatization, deregulation and free trade is not only affecting them as workers. But it's affecting them in the communities where they live in all over.

And so they're starting to link with other social movements that look to advance democracy and justice, social justice. Because what are unions about? Unions are about economic and social justice in the work place.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY > Kinder, Gentler, Corporations

Part of what corporate, corporate responsibility is about is looking to create a competitive niche by being the kinder gentler corporation. And is that a bad thing? No it's a good thing. That's a mark of success by the social movements.

But do you then sit down and say we won? No. You do even more. Because what you've got with the corporate responsibility is some leading edge niche marketers. But what you don't have is the whole industry. What you don't have is, you've created a little action on the edge of the corporation. But you haven't fundamentally transformed corporations. And that's what I think we need to do.