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STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE > Evade Government

The most powerful political transformation of our time is the creation of an international civil society movement.

I call it the new democracy movement. That is literally taking on these institutions, bypassing the government saying you're either useless or you're worse, you're part of the problem. And we know you've bought into this and we know that you may say one thing to your citizens but you're doing something else. So we're stopping voting.

You know in country after country records lows in terms of people turning out to belong to political parties to vote. Young people are not voting. It does not mean they're not political. What it means is they're bypassing a process that they no longer consider to be democratic or in any way representative of their interests.

And they're going directly to the institutions either the global institutions like the World Bank or the World Trade Organization. Or directly to the corporation itself. And speaking their truth to its power. And it's a whole new politics. It's, it's, it's creating a counterforce to this corporate power over here that I think is the most important political development of our time.

CORPORATIONS AND GOVERNMENT > Corporations' Rules

In both the United States and Canada we have attempted to pass laws against gasoline additives. One in Canada was called MMT. And in California they're trying to ban MTBE.

In both cases the corporation, because the corporation making it was in the other country they were given NAFTA rights to sue. The Etho Corporation was the one making MMT and not only did they force Canada to reverse its ban on this, what our prime minister called a dangerous neurotoxin.

But they got them, us to pay them twenty million dollars in compensation for their trouble. And the worse is that we gave them a letter of apology for ever having said anything bad about their product which this company is now taking around the world saying look we've the Canadian government's good housekeeping seal of approval.

The other company Methenex from Canada which was really a New Zealand company that, I think, came to Canada so it could use NAFTA to sue the government of the United States is now telling California that it can't ban MTBE. And MTBE, a drop of MTBE in an aquifer destroys the aquifer. I mean this is an

absolute poison to the water systems of well wherever this gasoline additive is found.

It's just one of dozens of cases like this. There's a California company suing the Canadian government because British Columbia banned the export of bulk water. Bechtel, a great big global engineering company was basically kicked out of Bolivia by the people because they came in privatized their water system and doubled the price of water.

When they realized that they were going to have leave they set up their water company in Holland. Because Holland has a bilateral agreement with Bolivia. Now they're suing one of the biggest corporations in the world is suing one of the poorest countries in the world because the people said we can't afford the prices that you've charged for our private water.

So this is what we call corporate rule. This is where corporations design these trade agreements and then turn around and use them to tell countries that they can no longer implement any kind of, or upgrade any kind of legislation.

You think about a company going into any developing world, any developing country in the third world and establishing themselves. And in a few years under this kind of rule that country is saying we want to improve our labour laws. Or we want to bring in minimum wage laws or we don't want children working in, in mines anymore or whatever.

These corporations will actually have the right to sue for billions of dollars of compensation because those were not the conditions under which they established their business practice in the first place. So when they say well globalization is going to bring everybody up and all boats will rise with the tide that's not true. That is not true under these trade agreements.

It's not their intention. In fact these trade agreements lock the current status in a, where ever it's lowest that's where they go, that's where it gets locked. And that becomes the standard of competition around the world which is why you then get other countries saying no, no please come here. We'll treat our people even worse.

PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT > Think Tanks

These corporations set up business lobby groups that only were there to, to change that culture. Weren't just there for an industry sector as they had been in the past. Then they put themselves on the boards of editorial boards of newspapers. And then they bought the newspapers, right. They got themselves on the boards of governors of universities.

And one of the most important things they did was that they set up their own think tanks that would appear to be neutral. That would be funded almost exclusively by the corporations themselves. But these think tanks would then put

out vast amounts of material. Get busy working on campuses which the Fraser Institute does to promote this change of culture.

Which basically is there is no alternative. The Washington Consensus is the only alternative for the world, privatization, free trade, deregulation, tax cuts, deficit fighting. Individualization of social security. This is the way it has to be. And that the, these think tanks play an enormously important role because they're, they're often cited as being neutral.

As government cutbacks mean that we're not doing as much research, independent research by government agencies any more. More and more the media will turn to a think tank like the Fraser Institute take their material and put it out as fact. When in fact it is pure dogma.

You know in a trade agreement negotiation, you will find groups like the Fraser Institute, the Business Council of National Issues of Canada that Business Roundtable in the United States. The Kaidon Run in Japan they literally sit with governments and they negotiate. And then these think tanks take that information to the public as if it's somehow neutral information.

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE > Redefine Our Relationship To Nature

Right now the, we, we exist to serve the global economy. And that is, that is just so wrong. It's wrong in every conceivable way. We need to have a redefinition of economics whereby the economy serves communities and people. We need a total redefinition and reconfiguration of our relationship to the world around us because the thing I know in my soul is that we are killing this planet. We are killing this planet.

We're taking down other species at an enormous rate. The world cannot survive what we're doing to it. Economical globalization in the end will destroy itself because there will be nowhere left to go to get the fish. When you've taken the fish off the east coast of Newfoundland and you say, well what the hell the cod are gone but there are Chilean sea bass, you know.

And then they're gone well we'll go a level deeper. We will run out. It is finite. Water is finite, air is finite, energy is finite. We will run out. The question is will we know it in time to stop it. And until we redefine our relationship to nature, the power that we have given to these transnational corporations, the international institutions that serve them and the non-democratic governments that we have we will not be able to stop this destruction.

And so I think we have, I'm actually quite hopeful. I want to say that. I feel that the movement that has taken foot around the world is based on a truly and deeply revolutionary or radical notion of, of radical in the sense of root. What needs to be changed at the root? And I think the young people who are part of this movement will teach us. I think they'll lead the way.

I think those who haven't had a voice, the first nations, indigenous peoples, the poor, young people I think these are the voices that are going to come to the fore now. And they are going to tell us how it has to be. They won't compromise. They're not going to work with reforms.

They have a fundamentally different vision of the world. And we will listen to them because we will have no alternative. And the corporation will fall. The corporation in its current powerful state will fall, it must.