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Progressive Ponderings
"Deregulation" - Part II

The "free" in "free trade" is a disguised deregulation by market ideologists. Current free trade agreements are designed to supplant national laws - many democratically agreed upon - with a new set of regulations engineered in secret by "free trade" proponents. These privately written and internationally imposed agreements infringe on national sovereignty. Every free trade agreement in modern times has favored multinational corporations over the rights of individuals and the authority of national constitutions and governments. In fact, the last sentence could serve as a definition of globalization.

Multinational corporations want to exchange national laws (regulations) with trade agreements that undermine sovereignty. Although all corporations are chartered with a nation, they have no loyalty to any one nation and often interfere in elections. Witness the "off-shoring" to avoid taxes, the layoffs in one country to exploit labor in another. Playing one nation against another effectively lowers the common denominator of all nations regarding sovereignty. It is bewildering that the United States with only two dominant political parties has one party completely dedicated to policies that favor corporate practices over citizen needs and the second party leading strongly in that direction. The power of money overshadows all loyalties, commitments, and ideologies.

There is another method used by free market profiteers to "deregulate" on an international basis. Organizations ostensibly set up to alleviate world poverty use debt to inflict harsh economic and environmental measures on Third World countries. "Structural Adjustment" (deregulation) programs mandated by these international organizations impose sovereignty-crushing, multinational-corporate enhancing laws. Wealth wins; the poor, the environment, communities, and nations lose.

CEOs of multinational corporations sometimes slip and inadvertently speak truth. One statement uttered in various forms states their goals: "National governments are now irrelevant."

Deregulation, globalization, privatization, free trade, democracy promotion, free markets, ownership society, liberty, market economy, economic liberalism, tax cuts, reform, growth are all terms used glowingly by corporate government proponents and brandished by corporate media to disguise corporate takeover. All are inter-related. None of them state their objectives. None by itself suggests corporate dominance. None by itself sounds anti-democratic. Collectively they form a deceptive agenda of corporate dominance. Catch-words and slogans used repeatedly to propagandize have robbed citizens of their ability to choose and govern themselves wisely.

How did this happen? How did the corporate agenda overcome the democracy agenda? How did the corporate agenda become the American agenda? How did corporate balance sheets and economies become richer than many nations? How did the ideology of the rich become an ideology for those who are ruined, hurt, impoverished and imprisoned by it?

Among the many possible answers, "deregulation" of the media would have to be considered a major cause. Through deregulation of giant corporations, the corporate mind decides what to air and print, whose opinions to promulgate, who and what is important, and what is "fair and balanced." Madison Avenue advertising sells soap, cars, beer and politicians with an equal amount of cunning and deceit. A nation ruled through propaganda has been the victim for so long that it brags

of its superiority and pretends to promote democracy which it doesn't understand. It is time to uncover the facts and make corporate stealth so clear that action is deliberate and decisive.
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