

HORACIO FIDEL CARDÓ

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



ONE DOLLAR

of those involved in the highly profitable rackets. And the enhanced profitability of racketeering practices would attract many corporate owner/operator's bottom liners. In the old days the rackets weren't taxable but the corporations were. Of course now the latter has changed. So Buggsy shitcans the black shirt and silver tie, goes to the men's club and is not out of place. Life is good.

Let us construct for consideration a hypothetical case: An imaginary person with some engineering skills needs a machine. Let's say it's one of those cherry picker cranes that linemen, tree toppers, and the like use. *You know* — it's a bucket on a telescoping or folding boom. What is also called a 'man lift'. Anyway, say this person goes to buy one and everywhere he looks he finds that, in his opinion, the cost is too high. This person says, "I could build these and sell them at half the going price and make plenty." Having skills enough and the savings and credit required for the basic investment, the person designs, tools up, and begins to build the better cherry picker.

A year or so down the pike the first dozen roll off the assembly line. The ads went out months before and the response was nearly overwhelming. The only problem is an uneasy feeling lingering from an ominous message left on the new company's answering machine shortly after the first advertising blitz. It goes something like, "You're not going to sell any of your f#*@\$%g cherry pickers. Don't even try it if you know what's good for you."

What can the guy do? He's invested too much to quit and, damn it anyway, who do these people think they are? His first buyer on the other coast wants the whole dozen and more so he ships them out. Funny thing is, the train arrived without the shipment. Twelve machines vanished into the ethers. The empty flatcar is found somewhere on a back siding. The insurance company pays off and then cancels. He looks for other insurers but finds the new rates would carve out most of his profit margin. He gambles, hiring three trucks and trailers and attempts to move the second dozen. One wrecks under suspicious circumstances, one is stolen, and to drive the point home, the other is firebombed at a truck stop. He unceremoniously folds his tent and takes a McJob to feed his family.

Of course, as a modern example this would be pretty small time. But this is the predatory psychology, if not always the precise mode of the big time. Mob-like functioning need not always be so crude. Those nearer the top can afford a facade of respectability. Monopolies become increasingly easier to work as they begin to approach the size of governments.

THE PLAIN GREEN RAPPER A RAP MANDATE

All we want is the world in a plain green wrapper
and Mr. C., you could be our destiny's mapper
Now listen up Bill, you may not like what we're tellin'
but messin' up our nest is what the good ol' boys are sellin'
While you're eatin' McBurgers and runnin' your buns off
great forests are fallin' and their topsoil just runs off
keepin' jobs for the loggers, the miners and the ranchers
an' profits for the lawyers, owners and the bankers
That's 'cause eco-nomics is the science that is ruling
we've been treating the ecologists like they were only fooling
And who are the champs in these games of crap and clutter?
they're the makers and consumers of the guns and the butter
The top dog, biggest polluter on the scene
is the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines
That's right, the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines
And though they're the worst poison in the natural world's demise
agri-business beats them out by the factor of size
Now they want biotech gene manipulation
and atomic weapons' waste for food irradiation
They've ruined all the soil that they poisoned, plowed and plundered
out across the lands where the buffalo thundered
DuPont's CFCs took the ozone, here's a shocker
that's who's been sellin' you your ultra-violet blocker
Now NASA's gonna fix it up but *that's* a pack'a lies
'cause when the Space Shuttle flies, the ozone dies
when the Space Shuttle flies, the ozone dies
So we'll go to forest summits and we'll do negotiations
but the business as usual is public relations
They won't fix it in their boardrooms or out at their resorts
it makes for bad financial statements and quarterly reports
It doesn't matter at their summer home or out there on their yacht
they never thought to give a damn with all the crap they got
So listen to us Bill 'cause we're talkin' to you man
you swore up and down that we'd change what we can
Are you just one more of those empty promise givers?
don't try to hand to us what's in Arkansas' rivers
Repairing the environment, of course, will not be easy
with what we inherit from the greedy and the sleazy
They've got chemicals and armaments, oil, medicine and cash
they'll own our dying planet and we will own their trash
and we will own their trash
and we will own their trash
If we deny, while species die, we too will soon be goin'
we'd best be wise, don't compromise, earth, air and water flowin'
While Mother Earth's defenders put their bodies on the line
we drive to work, and pay our tax, and hope we're doin' fine
So, hear us Bill, the people's will, our votes are how you got there
but if one in four was for Al Gore, without him you'd be *not* there
Now we see your strategy, with Al you played your E-card
if it's all lies, and Nature dies, for Chelsea that could be hard
So, will you back the billionaires, or will you make 'e, pay?
will you stand up on your hind legs, will you seize the day?
Slow poisoned death all 'round the world, of course it isn't funny
how sad the day, we had to say, we did it all for money

~RLR

PART 3

*In World War II in Europe and Asia, the Fascists lost.
In America, they won.*

~AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Benito Mussolini defined Fascism for us, and let's face it, he had every right. He said that fascism was a "Corporate State." The 1931 *Funk & Wagnalls, New Standard Encyclopedia* states:

Fascism (It. *Fascismo*), a movement to extricate Italy from chaos and give her moral unity. The original purpose of the movement, headed by Benito Mussolini, was to suppress communism and exalt patriotism.

People who don't know what Fascism means often react with hostility to every accurate use of the word. Understand now that if you should exercise your constitutional rights (like life, liberty, and the pursuit of...) and your boss (one of that shrinking number of bosses under the paradigm we've been discussing) doesn't like it, you're out on your ass. It's as simple as that. In the corporate world you have few (and getting fewer) rights.

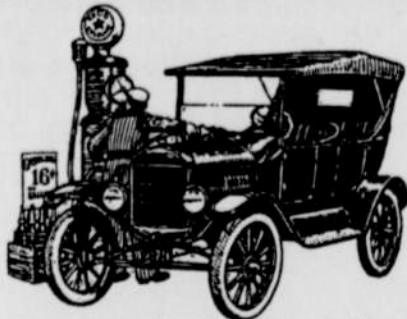
Besides understanding what a corporate charter originally was and what it meant, what we as Americans desperately need to know *now*, is just who owns and controls the stocks? Can we put faces and names on the rulers of this very undemocratic system of Corporation as State? Can the charters that protect rather than constrain these modern mobsters be revoked?

The Supreme Court ruled in 1886 that corporations have the same rights as human beings. *Well, screw us!* Do they have the same rights to privacy, exemption from self-incrimination, free speech and press? *Come on!* They hold these rights now, and with lawyers enough to back them up. Can we balance the scales of justice when in modern America, "you are innocent until proven broke?" Are we going to be too Microsoft in the head to see the brave new McVorld that is coming if we don't correct this injustice?

There was a time when government ostensibly regulated commercial interests, though Big Finance, Big Oil, Big Timber, Big Mining and Big Manufacturing have long been generally above their control. Along with the military industrial complex, its spies and spooks, and the modern additions of Big Agriculture, Big Merchandising and Big Media, we have come a sad half circle to where these interests have grown so powerful as to openly regulate government. These organizations are huge, many having state sized economies, but their control falls to a tiny sliver of the population graph. What little can be learned about those at the switches shows extensive cross-industry overlaps. (Yes, I could be accused here of trying to draw class distinctions.)

If the corporate owning class can convince us, the citizen/serfs, that *their* position is *our* position, it rides the wave of its self-created populism. If it cannot, it turns the screws on government through its campaign cash, funneled through its many overt and covert channels. It wields the power of ownership over the politicians it full well knows it elects.

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Corporations and their commercial and trade organization lobbyists are now writing bills and submitting them to (their) Congresspersons, who then act out on C-Span the showbiz of legislating. Corporate metastasis of the frequency spectrum has turned all but a handful of community broadcast stations into an unregulated private sector "Ministry of Propaganda." Bishops Rather, Koppel, and even a resurrected Cronkite (on the PBS TV program *Nova*) still insist that Lee Harvey Oswald performed the best rifery of his life in 1963.

"Government regulation" has, through the corporately owned media's manipulation of the language, become the replacement for "communism" as the great enemy of freedom. Pursuing their common interests, the controllers of the secret society of corporate ownership conduct their propaganda war. The media mouths can be anti-government but try to find one that's anti-corporation! Contending for bigger shares of the globally limited international market turf, their enemy is anyone and everyone they feel the can squeeze or finesse. A small corporation can't threaten if they can simply be taken over.

It might be hard on the national ego but our modern day mob has bigger fish to fry than the declining U.S. market. "Free trade" has become the rallying cry for the '90s. Both NAFTA and the GATT were pushed, passed and signed against popular opinion. Congress said yes to what Bush, Clinton, and not surprisingly, Rush Limbaugh too, all agreed was best for us. (*What's wrong with this picture?*)

Primary to the flow of power in the modern economy is sales. Primary to sales is production. And primary to any production are the resources and the means of production. Opposition to the acquisition of any of these is a barrier to trade (*for whom?*). The international mobster class won't care if a Russian Mafia rises up. They will use them while it's handy and then, one way or another, they'll "off 'em." When the post-communist pie is eventually all carved up there will be no new military industrial complex, though it may have incorporated what were previously its foreign competitors. No new oil, mining or timber barons will arise except possibly in junior partnership roles. To those few I won't have to say, "Watch your backs, baby."

NAFTA, the GATT, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have taken Mort Sahl's description of U.S. governance to a global scale. It is *Government of the people, by the corporations, for the rich.*

Riddle: What game is played with "phony money and real greed?" By the time it has become obvious who is going to be the single winner in the game of *Monopoly*, the other players will have long ceased to be having much fun. Dejected, they may have tossed the remainders of their play money and piles of mortgaged deeds to the honorary tycoon/fatcat. Ready for a change, they'll get up and wander off to watch TV.

If it so happens that we find ourselves to be the financial wizard of the game to the degree of our own temporary megalomania, we may be pissed off at these gutless quitters, leaving just when we were starting to have some real fun. After all, we built all those hotels by the sweat of our brows and the brilliance of our prowess (soon forgetting that the welfare state handed us a cool \$200 every time we passed Go, and this, regardless of all our acquired play-wealth).

Well, what if the imminent winner is sitting there with a loaded .357 Magnum (or the cops, courts, jails, the Pentagon, National Guard, the Wackenhut Corp., or the IRS, BATF, FBI, CIA, any and all of these armed acronymous organs of control) holding down his pile of money? He says, "Ain't nobody's gonna quit right yet, fellers. Sit yerself back down and roll them dice again. YES!" he screams gleefully, "*Take a ride on the Reading*, that'll be two hunnert more somolians, Yeee-hah!" Life is good.

This is our position today. In our finite world, as the supply of markets, resources and the numbers of competitive players dwindle, those with the guns and the tokens probably won't remember that economy is a game and all that money isn't real (of course they know quite well what *real* wealth means in terms of control). Their understanding will most likely be, if they are serious about winning the game, for god's sake don't give the suckers an even break. Like homes, education, health care or decent wages. They must make sure that we know without doubt (and ultimately, if push comes to shove, under penalty of death), that we must keep playing in the only game in town.

See you all down at new WAL-MART.

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HIDEOUS TRUTH

TO THE EDITOR

Dan Armstrong's review of Norman Mailer's book, *Oswald's Tale: An American Mystery*, got me to thinking. If, as Armstrong suggests, there is little logical basis for the reasons given by the JFK Act as grounds for public disclosure to be delayed, the only other reason is obvious. The truth, whatever it is, must be so hideous that those who know it have determined that the ensuing distrust and suspicion of the government would be far greater than the creeping, chronic distrust that failing to disclose the document engenders. In this respect, I think Mr. Armstrong cuts our leaders too much slack when he opines that the telling of the truth might serve to increase our trust in the government.

But then, knowing that this article would probably be a ticket to enshrinement on some dark data base in Washington, D.C., one can't be too critical of the courageous book reviewer for choosing his words carefully.

~JOHN CASSADY
PORTLAND

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NO ART
NO BOOKS
NO BULL



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