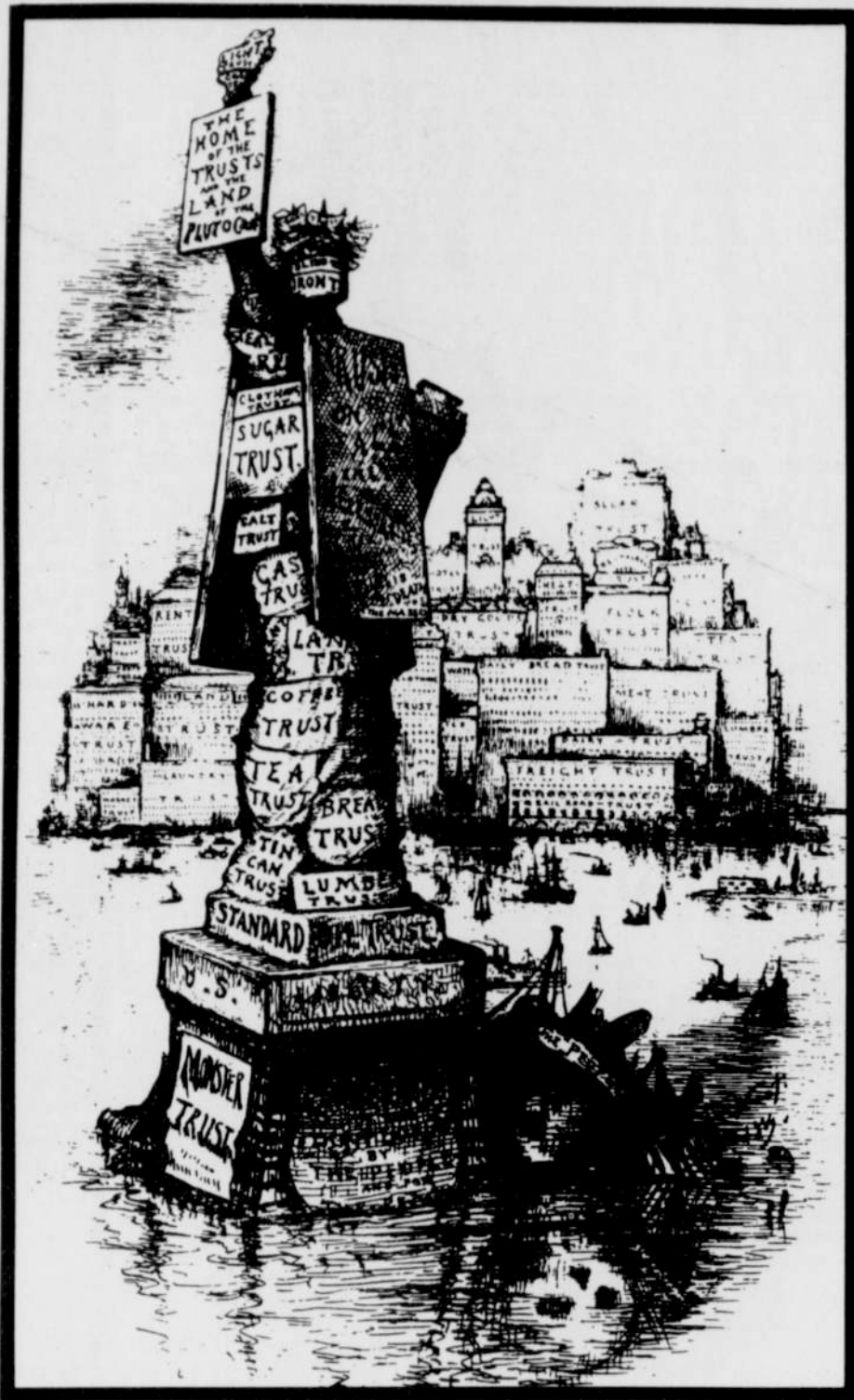


DECLARATION OF ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE



THOMAS NAST

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the economic bonds which have tied them to another, a decent respect for the opinions of humankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty & the pursuit of Happiness — that to secure these rights, economic institutions are instituted among the people, deriving their just power from the consent of the citizens; that whenever any economic system becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new economic system, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that economic systems long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience has shown that people are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such economic institutions and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient suffering of the American People; and such is now the necessity which compels us to alter our former economic system. The history of the present giant corporations is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations; all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let the facts be submitted to a candid World.

America's Giant Corporations have seized control over the great land and resources of our country.

They have systematically destroyed thousands of small businesses and forced millions of Americans to become wage serfs for the wealthy owners.

They have formed shared monopolies in virtually every major retail & wholesale industry, forcing millions of consumers to pay higher and higher prices for goods & services they cannot do without — these monopoly practices being the primary cause of runaway inflation.

They have forced millions of Americans into unemployment by systematically closing down their American plants and moving their business operations abroad so they can hire cheaper labor and reap still greater profits for their owners.

In the name of profit, they have expropriated billions of dollars of wealth produced by the working men and women of this country.

The Giant Corporations have —

Pursued a policy of industrial negligence which kills 14,000 workers and permanently disables 900,000 more every year.

They have manufactured unsafe products that kill 30,000 and permanently disable 110,000 Americans each year.

They have used the energy crisis in order to double the price of fuel and make record gains in profit.

They have turned our Nation into a weapons factory, wasting valuable labor and resources that could be utilized for basic human needs.

They have fostered tensions & conflicts between races, sexes and ethnic groups in their arbitrary and discriminatory employment practices.

They have pillaged the resources, exploited the peoples, and systematically intervened in the domestic affairs of other nations in order to profit their corporate treasures.

The Giant Corporations have subverted the Constitution of the United States and the principle of Government of, by & for the People —

By illegally financing their own candidates for Local, State & National office.

By placing their own supporters in key Government commissions and regulatory agencies.

By using massive lobbying operations to virtually dictate the legislative direction of the State & Federal Governments, including the decisions on how our tax money is to be allocated.

It is these same Corporate Giants —

That profess the strongest attachments to self-reliance, while pocketing billions of dollars of our tax money in the form of Government subsidies and special favors.

That profess their commitment to preserving their country's future while systematically destroying our natural environment.

That herald the virtues of personal responsibility and accountability while engaging in wholesale crime under the protection of their corporate charters.

America's Giant Corporations have issued a death sentence against the Individual Human Spirit —

By forcing millions of Americans to perform mindless functions 8 hours per day inside the corporate machine.

By rewarding obedience, conformity & dependency — and penalizing creative thinking, criticism & independent judgment.

The Corporate Giants have violated our sacred rights to Life, Liberty & the Pursuit of Happiness —

By denying us adequate access to the means to sustain Life.

By severely limiting our opportunities to choose the kind of Work Life we would like to lead.

By denying Americans a range of work choices that are potentially self-fulfilling & rewarding.

The Corporations have created and perpetuated a small hereditary aristocracy, with wealth and power unrivaled in the annals of recorded history.

The Corporate System has proved itself to be grossly inefficient and wasteful, while the Corporate owners and managers have proven themselves to be incompetent to make prudent decisions that affect the economic well-being of the American People.

In their obsession with profits, their lust for the absolute dominion over the life of this Nation, and their total disregard for the American People, Corporate owners and managers have plunged our country into a state of economic chaos, destroyed the lives of millions of families, and threatened the very survival of the Republic.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. An economic system whose character is thus marked by every act which may define an absolute tyranny, is unfit to claim the loyalty and allegiance of a Free & Democratic people.

We, therefore, the Citizens of the United States of America, hereby call for the abolition of these giant institutions of tyranny and the establishment of new economic enterprises with new laws and safeguards to provide for the Equal & Demo-cratic participation of all American Citizens in the economic decisions that affect the well-being of our Families, our Communities, and our Nation. In furtherance of our joint hopes and aspirations, and mindful of the lesson of History, we steadfastly adhere to the general principle that a democratic Republic can only exist to the extent that economic decision making power is broadly exercised by the People and not delegated to a few. Such is the necessity which compels us to act in support of decentralized economic enterprises, with ownership and control shared jointly by the Workers and by the local Communities in which they operate — with similar patterns of shared representative control being exercised on a regional and National level to insure the smooth and efficient coordination of all economic operations. For the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge our Lives, our Fortunes & our sacred Honor.

~THE PEOPLE'S BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION (1976)



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THE ECOLOGICAL DECLARATION OF INTERDEPENDENCE

When in the course of Evolution it becomes necessary for one Species to denounce the notion of independence from all the rest, and to assume among the powers of the Earth, the Interdependent station to which the Natural Laws of the Cosmos have placed them, a decent respect for the opinions of Humankind, requires that they declare the conditions which impel them to assert their Interdependence.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Species have evolved with equal & unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty & the pursuit of Happiness — That to insure these rights, Nature has instituted certain principles for the sustenance of all Species, deriving these principles from the capabilities of the Planet's life support system — That whenever any behavior by members of one Species becomes destructive of these principles, it is the function of other members of that Species to alter or abolish such behavior and to reestablish the theme of Interdependence with all life in such a form and in accordance with these natural principles, that will affect their Safety & Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that cultural values long established should not be altered for light or transient causes, that Humankind is more disposed to suffer from asserting a vain notion of Interdependence than to right themselves by abolishing that culture to which they are now accustomed — But when a long train of abuses and usurpations of these principles of Interdependence, evinces a subtle design to reduce them, through absolute despoliation of the Planet's fertility to the state of ill will, bad health and great anxiety, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such notions of independence from other Species and from the life support system, and to provide new guards for the reestablishment of the security & maintenance of these principles. Such has been the quiet and patient suffering of all Species, and such is now the necessity which constrains the Species *Homo Sapiens* to reassert the principles of Interdependence — The History of the present notion of independence is a History of repeated injuries and usurpations all having in direct effect the establishment of an absolute tyranny over Life — To provide this, let facts be submitted to a candid World. — 1. People have refused to

recognize the roles of other Species and the importance of Natural principles for growth of the food they require. — 2. People have refused to recognize that they are interacting with other Species in an evolutionary process. — 3. People have fouled the waters that all Life partakes of. — 4. People have transformed the face of the Earth to enhance their notion of independence from it and in so doing have interrupted many natural processes that they are dependent upon. — 5. People have contaminated the common household with substances that are foreign to the life processes which are causing many organisms great difficulties. — 6. People have massacred and made extinct fellow Species for their feathers & furs, for their skins & tusks. — 7. People have persecuted most persistently those known as Coyote, Lion, Wolf & Fox because of their dramatic roles in the expression of Interdependence. — 8. People are proliferating in such an irresponsible manner as to threaten the survival of all Species. — 9. People have warred upon one another which has brought great sorrow to themselves and vast destruction to the homes and food supplies of many living things. — 10. People have denied others the right to live to completion of their Interdependencies to the full extent of their capabilities.

We, therefore, among the moral representatives of the eternal process of Life & Evolutionary Principles, in mutual humbleness, explicitly stated, appealing to the Ecological Consciousness of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, do solemnly publish & declare that all Species are Interdependent; that they are all Free to realize these relationships to the full extent of their capabilities; that each Species is subservient to the requirements of the Natural processes that sustain all Life. — And for the support of this Declaration with a firm reliance on all other members of our Species who understand their Consciousness as a capability, to assist all of us and our brothers to interact in order to realize a Life Process that manifests its maximum potential of Diversity, Vitality & Planetary Fertility to insure the continuity of Life on Earth.

~ECOLOGY ACTION