

David C. Korten, *The Post Corporate World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers,1999),

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In the 1980s capitalism triumphed over communism. In the 1990s it triumphed over democracy and the market economy. Under capitalism, democracy is for sale to the highest bidder and the market is centrally planned by global megacorporations larger than most states.

Korten suggests to build a post-corporate-post capitalist civilization which can demonstrate alternatives far more attractive; societies that function in service to life and treat money as a facilitator, not the purpose, of our economic lives. ¹

To create such society, the determined pioneers are creating new political parties and movements, strengthening their communities, deepening their spiritual practice, discovering the joyous liberation of voluntary simplicity, building networks of locally rooted businesses, certifying socially and environmentally responsible products, restoring forests and watersheds, promoting public transportation and defining urban growth boundaries, serving as peacemakers between hostile groups, advancing organic agriculture, practicing holistic health, directing their investments to socially responsible businesses, organizing recycling campaigns, and demanding that trade agreements protect the rights of people and the environment.² David C. Korten, *The Post Corporate World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers,1999),

Korten's diagnosis of our economic world that came home to create poverty and homelessness in our neighborhood in the U.S. goes like:

Our relentless pursuit of economic growth is accelerating the break down of the planet's life support systems, intensifying resource competition, widening the gap between rich and poor, and undermining the values and relationship of family and community. The growing concentration of power in global corporations and financial institutions is stripping governments of their ability to set economic, social, and environmental priorities in the larger common interest. Driven by a single-minded dedication to generating ever greater profits for the benefit of their investors, global corporations and financial institutions have turned their economic power into political power. They now dominate the decision process of governments and are rewriting the rules of world commerce through international trade and investment agreements to allow the selves to expand their profits without regard to the social and environmental consequences borne by the larger society. Continuing with business as usual will almost certainly lead to economic, social, and environmental collapse. To a considerable extent the problem originates with the United States. ³

Korten suggests that our best hope for the future lies with locally owned and managed economies that rely predominantly on local resources to meet the livelihood needs of their members in ways that maintain a balance with the earth. Such a shift in institutional structure and priorities may open the way to eliminating deprivation and extreme inequality from the human experience,

¹ David C. Korten, *The Post Corporate World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers,1999), 2-3.

² Korten, *The Post Corporate*, 3.

³ David C. Korten, *The Post Corporate World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers,1999), 6.

instituting true citizen democracy, and releasing presently unrealized potential for individual and collective growth and creativity.⁴

Korten describes the sickness of our society:

Capitalism, which is to a healthy market economy what cancer is to a healthy body. Cancer occurs when genetic damage causes a cell to forget that it is part of a larger body, the healthy function of which is essential to its own survival. The cell begins to seek its own growth without regard to the consequence for the whole, and ultimately destroys the body that feeds it.⁵

The reference to capitalism as a cancer is less a metaphor than a clinical diagnosis of a pathology to which market economies are prone in the absence of adequate citizen and governmental oversight. Our hope for the future is to restore the health of our democracies and market economies by purging them of the pathology.⁶

Curing the capitalist cancer to restore democracy, the market, and our human rights and freedoms will require virtually eliminating the institution of the limited-liability for-profit public corporations as we know it to create a post-corporate world through actions such as the following:

- End the legal fiction that corporations are entitled to the rights of persons and exclude corporations from political participation;
- Implement serious political campaign reforms to reduce the influence of money on politics;
- Eliminate corporate welfare by eliminating direct subsidies and recovering other externalized costs through fees and taxes;
- Implement mechanisms to regulate international corporations and finance; and
- Use fiscal and regulatory policy to make financial speculation unprofitable and to give an economic advantage to human-scale, stakeholder-owned enterprises.⁷

Korten suggest us to wake up which is itself a revolutionary act. Political and spiritual awareness is our best immunological defense against invasion by the capitalist cancer.⁸

⁴ Korten, *The Post Corporate*, 7.

⁵ Korten, *The Post Corporate*, 15.

⁶ Korten, *The Post Corporate*, 15.

⁷ Korten, *The Post Corporate*, 15.

⁸ Korten, *The Post Corporate*, 16.