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CIVILIZING SOCIETY:
THE UNFOLDING CULTURAL STRUGGLE

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Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better. . . and the catastrophe toward which this world is headed, whether it be ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization, will be unavoidable.
-- B Václav Havel

On November 30, 1999 some 70,000 union members, people of faith, environmentalists, youth, indigenous peoples, peace and human rights activists, feminists, and others took to the streets in Seattle Washington to express their opposition to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Some called it The Battle of Seattle or The Protest of the Century. Some simply called it Seattle '99. Courageously standing their ground in the face of the rubber bullets, tear gas, and pepper spray of violent police battalions run amok, the protesters played a major role in bringing the WTO negotiations to a stand still. They also focused world attention on two powerful divergent social forces contesting humanity's future course.

One is the force of corporate globalization being advanced by an alliance between the world's largest mega-corporations and most powerful governments. The defining project of this alliance is to integrate the world's national economies into a single borderless global economy that frees the world's largest corporations to move goods and money as they will without governmental intervention. In the eyes of the corporate libertarians, whose primary focus is on financial indicators, this integration is creating the financial resources necessary to end poverty and save the environment, while at the same time increasing human freedom by eliminating repressive governments and spreading democracy throughout the world.

The second force is the global democracy movement advanced by a planetary citizen alliance known as global civil society. Before Seattle '99 this force found expression in the national democracy movements that played a critical role in the breakup of the Soviet empire, the fall of apartheid in South Africa and other great progressive social movements of our time, including the civil rights, environmental, peace, and women's movements. The citizen alliance depends largely on voluntary energy and is radically self-organizing. It works through networks without identifiable organizational or institutional form, and is driven by a deep value commitment to democracy, community, equity, and the web of planetary life. It is, in substantial measure, a reaction against corporate globalization, which in the eyes of the movement's participants is enriching the few at the expense of the many, replacing democracy with rule by corporations and financial elites, destroying the planetary life-support system, and eroding the relationships of trust and caring that are the essential foundation of a civilized society in short, destroying life to make more money for the already wealthy.
Seattle and the Global Democracy Movement

When the corporate media presented Seattle '99 as a demonstration against trade, they totally missed the real story. The seventy thousand people who mobilized in the streets of Seattle were not anti-trade, they were pro-democracy-a part of the growing global democracy movement. They were calling for an end to corporate rule-of which the WTO is a powerful symbol. Union workers, environmentalists, members of the faith community, feminists, gays, human rights and peace activists and many others joined in common cause out of a realization that unless they come together to build a truly democratic world that works for all, we will have a world that works for none of them. It marked an early step toward a grand convergence of progressive forces in America beyond identity and single issue politics toward a politics of the whole.

The convergence reveals some of the deeper changes taking within the individual social formations. For example, the call of the churches for Jubilee 2000—debt forgiveness for low income countries—expressed an awakening to the social justice message of Christ's teaching. The call of labor unions for international solidarity revealed a new awareness among working people that in a global economy all workers must be guaranteed basic rights and living wages or none will have them. The alliance of environmentalists and union members marked the realization by both groups that there will be no jobs without a healthy environment, nor will we have a healthy environment unless people have secure jobs and labor rights.

Then there were the youth, the real heroes of Seattle, who put their bodies on the line in the face of brutal police violence to bring the WTO meeting to a standstill. Tired of being manipulated and lied to by a system that is stealing their future-and a wakening to the reality that if they are to have a future they must take the lead in creating a social transformation—they spent months training one another in the principles and methods of nonviolent direct action and decentralized consensus based self-organization that model the values of the radically democratic societies they seek to build.

While the Seattle protests captured the global spotlight, similar demonstrations against corporate globalization, many far larger in scale, have become commonplace around the world—with notable examples in Geneva, the U.K. France, Brazil, India, Thailand, and many others. All are manifestations of the global democracy movement, the grand alliance of a globalizing civil society.

These two opposing forces define an epic struggle with profound social and environmental implications between popular democracy and global corporate rule between a civil society of the whole and a capitalist society that sacrifices working people to the interests of property owners. At a deeper level it is a struggle between life and money between spirituality and materialism for the soul of humanity.

Although the public face of the struggle is political, its roots are cultural and its resolution will depend ultimately on the outcome of a deep global shift in cultural values of which the global democracy movement is one manifestation.

Viewed through the lens of twentieth century leftist analysis the global democracy movement is a classic conflict between the working classes and the capitalist classes to be resolved through political struggle grounded in class consciousness. Yet the global democracy movement is more readily defined by culture values and world view than by class. This has important implications for the movement's strategies, because it suggests that the foundation of political success is predominantly cultural.

CULTURE SHIFT

Values researcher Paul Ray and feminist author Sherry Anderson, in their new book The Cultural Creatives, draw from surveys of adult Americans to provide a framework for understanding the nature and significance of a deep culture shift that a substantial body of survey data suggests is emerging throughout the world. (Figure 1) They divide the U.S. adult population into three major cultural groupings.
- **The Modernists.** At 93 million (48 percent of adult Americans) Modernists are the largest cultural group in America. They prize materialism and the drive to acquire money and property. They tend to spend beyond their means, take a cynical view of idealism and caring relations, and value winners. They are the leaders of America's most powerful corporate and political institutions and are the leading champions of capitalism. Modernists see themselves as defenders of rationality, technological advance, prosperity, and human freedom as a bulwark against regressive critics whom they believe would have humanity return to a primitive state of life. They tend to accept the inevitability of the current course of affairs. Their numbers are relatively stable.

- **The Traditionals** react to the materialistic values of modernism with a call to return to traditional ways of life and traditional gender roles. They tend toward religious conservatism, racism, and fundamentalism. They also believe in helping others, volunteering, creating and maintaining caring relationships, and working to create a society based on traditional values. They number 48 million (25 percent of the adult population). Their numbers are in rapid decline.

- **The Cultural Creatives.** Less than 5 percent of adult Americans as recently as the early 1960s, they are now 50 million strong (26 percent of the adult population). They share with Modernists a receptivity to change while rejecting modernism's embrace of a dehumanizing materialistic hedonism, the cynicism of the corporate media, and the consumer/corporate culture. They share with Traditionals a concern for human relationships, volunteerism, and making a contribution to society, while rejecting their tendencies toward a survivor orientation, exclusion, intolerance, and belief in man's right to dominate nature. Two thirds of Cultural Creatives are women. Generally optimistic about human possibilities, they look beyond both modernism and traditionalism to the possibility of creating inclusive, life-affirming societies that work for all. They are at the forefront of most social and environmental activism. Indeed, it is common for an individual Cultural Creative to be involved in as many as four to six different groups working for social and environmental change. They provided the leadership for most progressive movements and initiatives and formed the core of the Seattle protest.

A variety of international surveys reveal that the patterns identified in America by Ray and Anderson are part of a generalized global trend. The pattern includes a loss of confidence in hierarchical institutions including those of government, business, and religion and a growing trust in their inner sense of the appropriate. Interest in economic gain is decreasing, while desire for meaningful work and interest in discovering personal meaning and purpose in life is increasing.

Leadership among the Cultural Creatives generally comes from among those who combine their outward commitment to family, community, the environment, and internationalism with a rich spiritual life. They align most fully with the values of an integral culture meaning they honor life in all its dimensions, both inner and outer. These *core* Cultural Creatives, as Ray and Anderson characterize them, are about 12 percent of the adult American population. The social consciousness of the core Cultural Creatives grows out of an inner spiritual consciousness of life's fundamental unity as a major source of their optimism about human possibilities.

Core Cultural Creatives are interested in alternative health-care practices, personal growth and spiritual development, and they are careful, thoughtful consumers. They are pioneering psychological development techniques, restoring the centrality of spiritual practice to daily living, and elevating the importance of the feminine while seeking to recreate political and economic life to align with their values. To this end they are also at the forefront of crafting a new ecological and spiritual world view, a new literature of social concerns and a new problem agenda for humanity.

The cultural groupings described by Ray and Anderson bring into focus the cultural foundation of the struggle between the forces of corporate globalization and the forces of global civil society. Support for both forces is defined more by cultural orientation than by class even though corporate globalization is creating enormous class disparities.

The focus of Modernists on materialism and the pursuit of individual advantage makes them a natural constituency for corporate globalization. Indeed, the modernist culture provides corporate globalization with its major underpinning of legitimacy. Even capitalism's losers so long as they embrace the values and world view of modernism remain
mesmerized by the glitter of consumerism and live the dream that one day lady luck may smile on them and they will win the lottery.

Traditionals also contribute to capitalism's legitimacy through their belief that commercial success is a sign of the individual's righteousness and state of grace in the sight of God. For many Traditionals those who take exception to the established dist ribution of wealth challenge God's will. Cultural Creatives, by contrast, have no reluctance to challenge the status quo on any dimension. They are less interested in inserting themselves into positions of power within the existing establishment than with achieving fundamental changes in the str uctures by which power is allocated. While they are especially inclined to oppose institutions that acknowledge only financial values and destroy life to make money, they are likely as well to be skeptical of any institution that amasses power without ac countability.

Cultural values play a major role in determining which institutions we honor. Institutions that lack cultural support have a limited life expectancy, no matter how large their bank accounts or the police and military forces at their command. When values c hange, the pressures for institutional change grow accordingly. To the extent that the values and world view of the Cultural Creatives come to define the dominant culture of society, the money serving institutions of corporate globalization will face an e rosion of their moral legitimacy and thereby their hold on human loyalty eventually giving away to more life friendly institutional forms.

STORIES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Most important cultural orientations are grounded in a defining story, often a creation story, that provides the culture with its sense of identity, meaning, and purpose. One key to changing a cultural orientation is to change its underlying story.

Many of modernism's dysfunctions can be traced to the story of Newtonian physics that has deeply shaped the cultural foundation of Western societies, and increasingly societies the world over. According to this tale:

The universe resembles a giant clockworks set in motion by a master clock maker at the beginning of creation and left to run down with time as its spring unwinds. In short, we live in a dead and wasting universe abandoned long ago by its creator. Matter i s the only reality and the whole is no more nor less than the aggregation of its parts. By understanding the parts we gain dominion over the whole and the power to bend nature to our ends. Consciousness is an illusion, and life only an accidental outcome of material complexity. We humans evolved through a combination of chance genetic mutations and a competitive struggle in which those more fit survived and flourished as the weaker and less unworthy perished. Neither consciousness nor life have meaning or purpose. People are just extremely complicated machines, whose behavior is dictated by knowable natural laws. Competition for territory and survival is the basic law of nature. We cannot expect humans to be or become more than brutish beasts driven by basic instincts to survive, reproduce, and seek distraction from existential loneliness through the pursuit of m aterial gratification. A primary function of the institutions of civilized societies is to use the institutional control structures of hierarchy and markets to channel our dark human instincts toward economically productive ends.

This story has had numerous positive consequences. It liberated Western societies from the stultifying intellectual tyranny of the Church and gave legitimacy to learning through empirical observation. It brilliantly focused attention on mastering the mate rial world and gave rise to extraordinary advances in scientific knowledge and technology that brought previously unimaginable affluence to some 20 percent of the world's population and propelled our species into the new levels of planetary awareness and communication.

At the same time, through its denigration of life and denial of meaning, it has led to the embrace of money as the defining value of contemporary societies and given birth to a hedonistic ethic of material self-gratification, the hierarchical, control-ori ented mega-institutions of the state and the corporation, and an economic system that rewards greed and destroys life. It gives us no reason to live beyond using our technology to create ever more perfect distractions. It tells us we have nothing higher t o which to aspire than to indulge ourselves in material luxury, while
absolving us of moral responsibility for the consequences of our actions thus setting the stage both logically and emotionally for our embrace of capitalism and global corporate rule. It also conflicts with much of the reality of human experience and the findings of contemporary science.

Catholic theologian Thomas Berry makes an eloquent case in The Dream of the Earth that our survival as a species may depend as much as anything on discovering a new story of the cosmic creation that restores spiritual meaning to our lives. Berry and others of the great story tellers of our time such as Brian Swimme, Elisabet Sahtouris, Joanna Macy, Mae-Wan Ho, Lynn Margulies, and Matthew Fox, are drawing from diverse sources ranging from the leading edge of contemporary scientific inquiry to ancient spiritual wisdom to narrate a more uplifting story.

The journey began 15 billion years ago when all the energy and mass of our known universe burst forth from a point smaller than the head of a pin and spread as dispersed energy particles, the stuff of creation, across the vastness of space.

With the passing of time these particles, self-organized into atoms that swirled into great clouds that eventually formed into galaxies, and coalesced into stars that grew, died, and were reborn as new stars, star systems, and planets. The cataclysmic energies unleashed by the births and deaths of billions of suns converted simple atoms into ever more complex atoms and molecules at each step opening new possibilities for the growth and evolution of the whole.

More than 11 billion years later, at least one among the countless planets of the cosmos gave birth to tiny but enterprising living organisms that launched the planet’s first great age of invention. They discovered the processes of fermentation, photosynthesis, and respiration that provided the building blocks for what was to follow. They learned to share their discoveries with one another through the exchange of genetic material creating the planet’s first global communication system.

With time these single celled organisms discovered how to join together in cooperative unions to create complex multi-celled organisms with capacities far beyond those of the individuals of which they were composed. Our own bodies, composed of some 30 to 70 trillion individual living cells plus an even larger number of assorted beneficial bacteria and fungi, are an extraordinary example of the complex consequences of this experimentation.

Continuously experimenting, creating, building, life transformed the planet’s very substance into a web of living beings of astonishing variety, beauty, awareness, and capacity for intelligent choice. The universe is best understood as a living, self-organizing system engaged in the discovery and realization of its possibilities through a continuing process of transcendence toward ever higher levels of order and self-definition.

Consistent with ancient Hindu teachings, matter exists only as a continuing dance of flowing energies yet is somehow able to maintain the integrity of its boundaries and internal structures in the midst of apparent disorder. Similarly, the cells of a living organism, which are in a constant state of energy flux, maintain their individual integrity while functioning coherently as parts of larger wholes. This implies some form of self-knowledge in both inert matter and living organisms at each level of organization. Intelligence and consciousness may take many forms and may in some way be pervasive even in matter.

How different this unfolding epic is from the old story of the Newtonian scientific tradition. While the old story embraced death as the defining reality the new story fills us with a sense of awe and wonder at the grandeur and the sacred mysteries of a living cosmos engaged in an epic journey of self-discovery and calls us to re-examine the philosophical foundations of modern science and theology. Its cosmic metaphor is not the machine, but the organism. Its irreducible building block is not a particle, but a thought.

Rather than banishing the spiritual intelligence and energy we know as God to some distant place beyond our experience, it recognizes spiritual intelligence and energy as integral to all being. It reveals the wonder of life’s extraordinary capacity for creative self-organization, infuses our lives with meaning and possibility, and evokes a love and reverence for the whole of life, the miracle of our living planet, and the creative potentials of each person. It
reveals the underlying unity of all life independent of all creation and calls us to accept responsibility for our presence on a living planet acting both as mindful stewards of God's creation and as participants in creation's continued unfolding.

The new story opens the way to healing the centuries-old breach between science and religion that has left us with an artificial and often schizophrenic separation of our intellectual and spiritual lives torn between a theology that denies the evidence of logic and observation and a science that denies our experience of consciousness and spirit. It allows us to recognize sin as that which is destructive of life and the actualization of life's potential. Equally it allows us to recognize our own capacity for goodness, compassion, and creative engagement in the unfolding drama of creation. In revealing life's ability to self-organize with a mindfulness of both self and whole it affirms our potential to create truly democratic, self-organizing human societies that acknowledge and nurture our individual capacity to balance freedom with responsibility in the service of life.

Given its firm foundation in both modern science and ancient religious wisdom the new story carries a powerful message in support of the beliefs and values of an integral culture and may prove a powerful tool in support of cultural recruitment and consolidation.

FROM CAPITALIST TO CIVIL SOCIETY

The term civil society came into current use with the emergence of the pro-democracy movements in Eastern Europe and is now closely identified with the global democracy movement. The term is appropriately used in two ways. The first is to refer to a radically democratic, life-centered civil society of free and equal citizens who act with a mindful civic consciousness the kind of society the global democracy movement seeks to create. The second is to identify the civil society organizations and movements that are creating authentic cultural, economic, and political spaces toward the creation of a planetary civilization comprised of strong and vital civil societies.

Historically the term civil society traces back to ancient Greece and Aristotle's concept of a politike koinonia or political community, later translated into Latin as societas civilis, or a civil society. Aristotle described the civil society as an ethic al-political community of free and equal citizens of good and responsible character who by mutual consent agree to live under a system of law that expresses the norms and values they share. As the law is a codification of the shared cultural values by which the members of society have chosen to live, it becomes largely self-enforcing maximizing the freedom of the individual and minimizing the need for coercive state intervention. It is an ideal consistent both with our current understanding of the organizing principles of healthy living systems and with freeing the creative potentials of humanity.

Underlying Aristotle's conception is a question that has long engaged political philosophers: What is the nature of a civil-ized society in contrast to what until recently was presumed to be the chaos of the wild state of nature and how is the civil-ized society best ordered. Aristotle took the side of democratic self-governance grounded in a culturally embedded civic ethic. Thomas Hobbes, who followed Aristotle by nearly 2000 years, was among those who had a less hopeful view of human nature and argued that if humans are to have an ordered society they must submit to the rule of absolute monarchs who hold the power to hold our aggressive, self-aggrandizing instincts in check.

The issue of monarchy was long ago settled. The choice between authoritarian hierarchy and self-organization, however, is not. The corporation is now the institution of choice among those who seek to impose order on an unruly society through the top-down power of an authoritarian hierarchy. Of course the proponents of corporate globalization style themselves as defenders of democracy and self-organizing markets. They neglect the fact that under the current system of corporate globalization corporations are among the most authoritarian and unaccountable institutions ever created by humans and the largest among them command internal economies larger than those of most states. Their internal structures honor neither the principles of democracy or those of self-organizing markets. Figures 2 and 3 (not shown) are inspired by and adapted from discussions with Nicanor Perlas based on his book Shaping Globalization: Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding. Figure 2 outlines three primary spheres of collective life: culture, polity, and economy. Figure 3 uses these categories to present in schematic form some of the key characteristics that distinguish the ideal of a civil society from the reality of contemporary corporate capitalism. The reader will note that the terms corporate globalization and corporate capitalism are used here interchangeably.
This idealized conception of a civil society assumes that there is inherent in humanity a capacity for radical self-organization grounded in a shared sense of the underlying spiritual unity of the whole of life. An authentic culture that flows from the authentic experience of its members is the defining sphere of collective life. Authentic cultural values are carried forward into economic and political life through the mindful participation of every person in shaping the institutions and processes by which the society sets its rules (polity), allocates resources to productive activity (economy), and defines the beliefs and values that are its source of meaning and identity (culture).

In a civil society the institutions of polity and economy are mindful creations of its citizens and naturally reflect and nurture the life-affirming values, symbols, and beliefs of an authentic culture of their own creation. This culture, in turn, informs their public participation in the political and economic affairs of the society. Constant citizen engagement assures that the institutions of polity and economy remain responsive to citizen defined public interests and evolve in response to the values and aspirations of an evolving culture. In this model of the civil society the power and values that define the society flow from life's animating spirit to people to institutions.

Grounded in the beliefs and values of the old story as expressed through the modernist culture, capitalist society denies spirit and denigrates life and the human capacity for cooperation and compassion. Money is its measure of value. Life is valued only for its liquidation price; the tree for the sum its wood chips will fetch. Individual purpose is defined in terms of the pursuit of material gratification.

Economy is the dominant sphere of collective life. The institutions of economy systematically co-opt the life energies of the individual to the collective purpose of replicating money. The capitalist economy’s favored institution—the public traded, limited liability corporation—concentrates power over productive resources, markets, media, and technology to the service of financial markets that measure performance solely in financial terms. This power is used by the corporate institutions of economy to dominate the institutions of polity and culture to their own ends. The rule making powers of polity and the normative power of culture become instruments of control and manipulation. The message endlessly repeated through the corporate media that the path to meaning, love and fulfillment is through the purchase and consumption of advertised products strengthen the individual's alienation from authentic sources of meaning and identity. The power and values that define the society flow from money to institutions to people.

Control over the systems by which money is created and allocated is the primary source of the power of the institutions of corporate globalization. Their dependence on an inauthentic culture based on illusion and misdirection to maintain their legitimacy in the eyes of society is their Achilles heel. Cultural authenticity is the arena of civil society’s strength. For civil society, culture is therefore the arena of choice in which to engage its primary struggle against the political and economic forces of corporate globalization.

CULTURAL FOUNDATION OF CHANGE

Parker Palmer has articulated a simple model of social change that illuminates how the seemingly soft path of a cultural transformation can translate into a hard path of political and institutional transformation. [See Figure 4] The process begins when an individual awakens to the contradictions of the dominant culture. Once the cultural trance is broken they experience an increasingly painful disconnect between what they value and the realities of family, work, and community life grounded in the values of the old culture.

Figure 4: A Movement Model of Social Change
PARKER PALMER

1. **Divided-No-More** - Isolated individuals reach a point where the gap between their inner and outer lives becomes so painful that they resolve to live “divided-no-more.” These people may leave or remain within institutions—but they abandon the logic of institutions and find an alternative center for their lives. The logic of punishment is transformed: no punishment can be greater than conspiring in one’s own diminishment.

2. **Communities of Congruence** - Isolated individuals discover each other and form groups. These groups sustain people’s sense of sanity in a world where the divided life is regarded as safe and sane. Through
these groups, people gain an experience of leadership and efficacy. A fragile private language develops that begins to grow strong enough to enter the public realm.

3. **Going Public** - The words, images, and symbols originating in the communities become more visible, and converts are gained. Critics are also gained—the movement is scrutinized and must be clarified and refined. Leaders within the movement become public leaders.

4. **Alternative Rewards** - The energies that began by abandoning the logic of institutions come full circle to alter the logic of institutions. Movements develop alternative reward systems. Some are external (jobs, income, status, visibility, colleague) and some are internal. The logic of rewards is transformed: no reward can be greater than living "divided no more."


Eventually the individual decides, in Parker's words, to live divided no more. Attempts to live by authentic values in an inauthentic culture result in a sense of isolation that can be broken only by joining with like-minded persons to form communities of congruence. Initially small and isolated unto themselves, these communities eventually meld into larger alliances. Step by step authentic cultural spaces are created and expanded reflecting the authentic values and experience of those who have awakened from the trance of an artificially fabricated culture. As alliances grow they gradually achieve the power to transform the logic and reward systems of society’s political and economic institutions.

The process is interactive in that while the culture shift is expanding and deepening the base of the social movements, the social movements are in turn advancing the awakening to authentic values that drives the culture shift. Paul Ray observes that the civil rights movement played a major role in building awareness of the contradictions that drive the larger culture shift now underway and is the foundation on which the success of subsequent social movements has been built. Ray also believes it appropriate that the various social movements assess their success by their contributions to building a new social consciousness an arena in which their accomplishments are generally more evident than in the legislative arena. The new consciousness provides a foundation on which deep structural change will subsequently be built. Corporations still rule, but a 1999 Pew poll finding that some 77 percent of Americans believe that too much power is concentrated in the hands of a few large corporations the beginning of the end for corporate tyranny.

We must be aware, however, that individual consciousness does not become a serious force for institutional change until it evolves into a shared public consciousness. The Cultural Creatives are a case in point.

Ignored by the media and the political system, Ray and Anderson report that most Cultural Creatives feel culturally isolated, out of step with the mainstream, and politically disempowered. This explains why the political power of Cultural Creatives is far less than we would expect from their numbers and activism.

The cultural struggle of a declining population of Traditionals against modernism around issues such as abortion and school prayer is well known. The potentially more decisive struggle against modernism of a now larger and rapidly growing population of Cultural Creatives remains unacknowledged. Perhaps the most important consequence of the Seattle WTO protests was the message it sent to the world’s Cultural Creatives that they are not alone in their discomfort with the cultural, economic and political forces of modernism and corporate globalization. Many Cultural Creatives found it to be a powerfully energizing moment. This underscores a key fact: The political power of the global democracy movement depends on the organization, public visibility, and size of its cultural base. Facilitating the expansion of authentic cultural spaces that nurture the exploration of creative possibilities may be its most appropriate and promising political strategy.

There are many realistic possibilities. Participants in the global democracy movement can help Cultural Creatives break free of these sense of isolation and powerlessness by making them aware that 50 million people share their values and are emerging as a powerful force for deep social and institutional change. They can facilitate the processes by which Cultural Creatives find others with whom they can create communities from which to reach out to form ever growing alliances.
By spreading the news of the culture shift they can increase public awareness that there are attractive and viable cultural alternatives to the exclusionary values of traditionalism and the materialistic values of modernism. They can discredit the gloomy mantra that "There is no alternative to global capitalism" by demonstrating that significant change is underway. Through protest they can expose the contradictions of corporate capitalism particularly its claim to being the champion of democracy, choice and economic justice. Through their political campaigns they can hone political skills, define issues, and advance public education on critical the policy choices. One of their most powerful options may simply be to spread the new story through their writing and conferences.

**TRUTH TELLING**

Simple truth telling is an especially powerful culture shift strategy. The legitimacy of global corporate rule rests on a foundation of demonstrably false beliefs imbedded in the corporate reinforced modernist culture. Truth telling becomes a potent counter especially when the truths told challenge the system's foundation myths. The following are examples of such truths.

- **The interdependent web of planetary life is the foundation of our existence and the source of all real wealth.** Corporate globalization is supported by the cultural fiction that to create money is to create wealth, thus legitimating the depletio n of the living capital of nature and society through economic growth to make money. Thus entranced we become enthusiastic participants in our collective self-destruction. In truth, money is just a number and many forms of economic growth actually result in our collective impoverishment. The health and productivity of natural, human, social, and institutional capital is the true measure of our collective prosperity.

- **Life is a predominantly cooperative enterprise.** Corporate globalization is supported by the cultural fiction that life is predominantly competitive and that progress depends on a Darwinian form of competition in which the strong vanquish and displace the weak, thus legitimating the ruthless competition and extreme inequality of global capitalism and diminishing our sense of what it means to be human. Thus entranced we celebrate greed and allow public funds to subsidize the corporate assault against the poor. In truth, life does have its competitive dimension, yet it is a predominantly cooperative enterprise in which progress depends on a richly diverse variety of living beings learning to join together to form innovative cooperative unions and to sustain themselves in new ways that at once serve the whole. To be human is to have a capacity for cooperation and compassion essential foundations of human civilization.

- **It is ours to chose our future.** Corporate globalization is supported by the cultural fiction that it is the inevitable outcome of immutable historical forces. There being no alternative, resistance is futile. Thus entranced we accept the status quo with its dehumanizing focus on financial values at the expense of life, concentrate on adapting ourselves to the inevitable, and ridicule as unrealistic those who seek alternatives. In truth, corporate globalization is an outcome of human choices based on false assumptions and the short-sighted pursuit of a narrowly defined self-interest. It is within our means to create life-serving civil societies through different choices based on valid assumptions and a larger vision of the human interest and purpose.

- **All the children are our children; all the people are our people.** Corporate globalization is supported by the cultural fiction that individual interests take priority over community interests, thus legitimating the pursuit of individual gain at the expense of community interests. Thus entranced we disregard the harm corporate globalization imposes on others, especially if the other is of a locality, gender, race, class, language, or religion different than our own. In truth, when the rights and well-being of one are neglected, the well-being of all is at risk. The health of any society is best judged by the condition of its most vulnerable. Every person has the right of access to a means of living.

- **One person, one voice, one vote.** Corporate globalization is supported by the cultural and legal fiction that money is speech, the right to political and economic participation is properly proportionate to one's property, and corporations have sovereign rights beyond those of both individual and state including the right to move goods and money without public interference where ever in the world they find it profitable to do so. Thus entraced we allow the sale of democracy to the highest bidder, stand passive as corporations to use both courts and elected representatives to rewrite the law to place property rights ahead of human rights, and acquiesce to international agreements that allow corporations to bid down health, safety, labor, and env
ironmental standards everywhere in the world. In truth, democracy is grounded in the principle that human rights reside equally and exclusively in the living person. Of special relevance to the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and IMF protests the right of each people to economic and political self-determination. This includes the right to determine domestic priorities and whether and with whom they will trade and the terms under which they will invite others, if at all, to participate in the ownership of domestic assets. Corporations are public bodies created by governments to serve the public interest as democratically determined by real persons.

Consider the possibilities if the values embodied in these five ideas become a part of society's defining culture. Maintaining and enhancing the living capital of planet and society will surely replace economic growth as the priority of economic policy. Public policies and institutions will stop preaching the merits of global competition and undertake to facilitate cooperative exchange among people, communities, and nations. Aware that their future depends on their current choices, people will turn their creative energies to the task of creating a world that works for all. Priority in the allocation of productive resources will be given to assuring every person, including generations to come, access to the means of creating an adequate and fulfilling livelihood. Corporations and private money would be barred from the public political process and the liberal ideal of democratic self-governance may finally be realized.

We find ourselves at a moment of choice and creative challenge without precedent in human history. Within the next twenty to thirty years we must transform a society dedicated to the love of money to a society dedicated to a love of life or risk our own extinction. Sustained political struggle will be essential to the outcome. We must recognize that because political victories will likely be few and inconsequential until a critical mass of supporting cultural power is achieved political struggle alone could easily exhaust us to no end. Political struggle designed as one element of a larger cultural strategy is quite another matter.

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