

Title:

American Corporatism At Its Best

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Summary:

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Article Body:

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Back in 1975 my fiancée prodded me to see two movies. Little did I know back then these two cinema releases were very foretelling about our nation's future.

In Three Days Of The Condor, Robert Redford, played a maverick CIA technician on the death list of the agency he serves. Cliff Robertson played the agent-in-charge of the CIA hit. The two argue next to the New York Time Building about whether an American army would ever invade the Middle East over oil.

In the immediate post Watergate and Vietnam era it seemed unlikely this scenario would ever emerge in our lifetime. It was easy to dismiss the likelihood of that occurrence to Tinsel Town fantasy.

And then we have the movie Rollerball starring James Caan.

Other than its futuristic depiction of some national sports frenzy that was a cross between the NFL, NHL, and WWF, the only thing significant about the B-rated movie was its description of how America was governed in this future setting.

In the movie America, and the world economy for that matter, is dominated and controlled by a few large global corporations. Corporate interests were the name of the game and all other societal needs and wants were subjugated.

Three decades later, we find our nation in the Middle East with 135,000 troops and I don't think anyone would debate the fact that large corporations are dominating our lives like never before.

This is not to suggest that Hollywood producers are soothsayers or swamis. If that were the case, don't watch the movie Soylent Green and two cheers for the American farmer.

But at times Hollywood has a way of taking the pulse of the nation, peering into the future, and then trying to predict and project it through media.

In reference to Rollerball, that takes us to the whole concept of "Corporatism".

Corporatism, as defined by Webster's is "the organization of a society into industrial and professional corporations serving as organs of political representation and exercising control over persons and activities within their jurisdiction".

More recent and pungent examples of Corporatism would be the use of public housing authorities to "condemn" private property for commercial use. The U.S. Supreme Court recently upheld the notion that private developers, in concert with local and state government, can seize private homes to build commercial facilities.

Large credit-card companies lobbied Congress hard to approve the new federal bankruptcy law which does nothing but shift the burden of individual misfortune from the financial giants to the citizenry.

This was never meant to be. Bankruptcy laws were historically designed to give people and families a second chance. Now, one can lose their home because of credit card bills.

These recent changes in the bankruptcy laws, a conspicuous lack of anti-takeover activity within the Justice Department, the unprecedented rise of the financial services industry, the political inaction in reference to Chinese product dumping in the U.S., the benign response to illegal immigration, and allowing massive job outsourcing, are all clear examples of the how corporate domination, sanctioned by our government, is stealing American jobs and ruining the lives of

millions who fall in the middle class.

The rise in the price of oil and gasoline has far exceeded the increase that one would expect under normal demand and supply conditions.

This gouging has lined the pockets of the large oil companies at the expense of the average citizen.

And one must ask, "why the decrease in gas prices just before the congressional elections"?

Corporatism has now given way to "neo-corporatism".

Famed economists Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehbruch described modern neo-corporatism as the extracting of economic benefits from the citizens at large and then dividing these spoils among those social and private institutions sanctioned by the government to engage in such activity.

The American public is now feeling that its own government has given way to the economic interest of the large corporations at their expense as corporate power continues to concentrate in fewer hands.

Even traditional allies within our own hemisphere are now rejecting modern American corporatism as an economic model and a way of life where citizen welfare is subordinated to the corporate state.

Castro and company have found "new life" in this resounding theme as far left communist leaning Latin leaders such as Hugo Chavez and Tabaré Vázquez, among others, are winning elections based on this new anti-Washington platform.

They are carrying their message to American's own backyard as demonstrated in New York City six months ago.

Hollywood needs to do a few more movies to see what the next 30 years will bring.

Maybe they should be dubbed in Chinese just to play it safe.