

Power Monopoly Behind Europe's Austerity Policies: "You Cannot Repair a Broken Vehicle by Changing the Driver"

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"You don't change the person driving a broken car and expect it to work, you must fix or change the car."

That sums up the situation in which many people in Europe (and the world for that matter) find themselves today.

We have found out recently through the severe pain of austerity that the current way of doing things is fatally flawed. We are supposed to live in democracies where the elected politicians are supposed to govern according to the wishes of the people. What we see instead is that no matter who we vote into government the policies remain the same. How is this possible?

We are controlled

The answer is very simple and every person still capable of independent thought (after decades of brainwashing by the mainstream media) is able to see it. We are living in a society where we are trapped.

The trap is that we have to work in an ever spinning hamster wheel to make a living, to pay the bills, to put food on the table, to care for and pay for the education of our children. This leaves no time for getting together with others, no time to think for ourselves, no time for questioning. We are made to believe that it is our possessions and lifestyle which define us.

Power monopoly

The result is that we have incrementally surrendered our power to govern ourselves and our communities to career politicians who promise to do it for us and in our interest. We used to make decisions on a local scale, in the tribe first then in the village.

We used to agree and implement. If somebody needed shelter everyone stepped up and a shelter was built with the material available in no time. If two communities thought it was a good idea to build a road to connect them people from both communities got to work and did it. It was a community thing. No more so. We cannot do it because of legislation, rules and international treaties made somewhere else.

Bit by bit the power was removed from us further and further away. From our local councils to the county councils, from the county councils to the national parliament, from there to

the EU, from the EU to the UN.

The further away the power was removed the easier it got for vested interests to influence and manipulate the career politicians and the huge bureaucracies that emerged with these centralized institutions.

What are these vested interests? They are the big corporations with the big banks at the forefront, which through providing finance to these corporations also rule them. You will not find a boardroom of a big company without a representative of a big bank.

For a long time we thought that big companies were able to drive what was called progress. That may have been true a long time ago but meanwhile these corporations have become detached from the needs of the people. They are manufacturing things we do not need, things that make us sick, things that ruin the environment in which we live and endanger our survival.

Their products are pushed on us through advertising and using the tools of peer pressure from an early age. Anyone questioning this paradigm is labelled a utopist, conspiracy theorist or some backward treehugger. The fact that the mainstream media are either controlled by the big corporations or the state does its bit to make us believe this is the only sane way to live. Many of us have become incapable of even imagining another world.

Corporations have no morals other than providing for their shareholders. The vast majority of people on this planet are not shareholders.

How do corporations and banks rule? They establish think tanks. They sponsor universities and research. There is not a major research going on today which is not dependent on corporations or government for funding.

That is how thinking in the interest of the corporations is fostered. It is then brought forward by so called experts and advisors to influence the bureaucracies and career politicians. Many ordinary people and even some in government believe these experts.

Corporations set up or sponsor (this is called co-opting) so-called Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) often under the cloak of charity or humanity, who then take on board the ideas of those experts and lobby the politicians as well. Corporate power and interest has become the sole major influence on all decisions made. Individuals in politics refusing to bow to corporate power or even questioning it are smeared or in the worst case assassinated. Nations insisting on their own way of doing things are destabilized or in the worst case militarily attacked and occupied. The result is the break-up of society.

We can see it all around us. In the US poverty is rising. In Europe unemployment reaches unprecedented heights. In other countries billions live on 2 \$ a day or less in slums and barrios without running water or a proper infrastructure. The interests of the corporations have resulted in inequality on an immense scale. The universe around us has been degraded to "natural resources". The human being has been degraded to a "human resource". Those being of no use to the corporations are left to die from hunger and disease.

The elite, those in high positions of power in the financial, corporate and political world, are not stupid. They know as well as we do that their system is broken. They frequently meet

openly (like the G8, the G 20, the UN) and behind closed doors (like the Bilderberg meetings) to discuss how they can continue their dominance into the future.

They obviously have come up with their solution. It is the regulation of all human activities on a global scale by international rules (google Codex Alimentarius, Trans Pacific Partnership, Agenda 21) which are then policed on a national level by governments and on a local level by councils. Much of this is packaged nicely as “save the environment”, save this, save that. They very cleverly use the real and honest concern of people who see the degradation around them to further their agenda. Many fall for this.

In the meantime they continue their destructive behaviour on a global scale. Corporations buy up patents for and suppress any form of free energy. They vilify any doctor coming up with natural (basically free) solutions on health. They continue the extraction of “natural resources” regardless of the results.

The disasters of late tell the story: Bophal, Chernobyl, Deep Water Horizon, Fukushima, Niger Delta, rain forests. They monopolize the production of food. Around the globe GMOs are being pushed into traditional and subsistence farming in an attempt to destroy the people’s ability to feed themselves . They force governments to privatise public water utilities so they can be bought up by them.

They tell us that privatisation is creating competition which is lowering the cost for the consumer. They don’t tell us that we lose power over our means of living. Their endgame is to make the population dependent on the state to do anything at all, be it growing vegetables in the garden, using rainwater to water the plants, going on a journey, having children. In short they want you to get a permission just to live your life within a framework you have no power over.

Fixing or changing the broken car

Human beings are not “human resources”. We are conscious beings. We can see what is going on around us. Many of us are becoming angry, this is a healthy thing as it may get us into action.

But we also must be aware that blind action can easily have the opposite effect of what we want to achieve. Each of us have their own history, experiences, feelings, insights and wisdom. How can we tap into this almost infinite potential and come up with ideas on how to fix the broken system?

Bringing people together and making space to do so seems the first obvious answer. But we also have to create a different mindset. In daily life we often interact on the basis of competition. We are competitors if we want to get a job. We are competitors even as children trying to get more attention from our parents than our brother or sister. We are competitors in school and university for the highest marks. We are competitors in a discussion if we think our view is more valid than another one. We are competitors in our professional environment to get noticed and advance our careers. So how do we create a different mind set?

Learning to walk. Step by step.

To learn to walk together in diversity the method of facilitation is a very effective tool. I came across it just a year ago in a meeting of concerned people in Ireland. The meeting

was facilitated, ensuring that all voices were heard, all opinions were listened to and taken into account and this resulted in an amazing outcome. In spite of all the differences the participants were able to find common ground and to develop a few steps to move forward together. This meeting created a different mindset for those who participated. They experienced first hand that co-operation is far superior to competition. The empowerment experienced was almost tangible. Organizing these kind of meetings is one of the steps that can be taken.

Another step can be to support parties that challenge the status quo. There are many new forces emerging in Europe (some of them do not even call themselves parties). The 5 star movement in Italy, The Movement in Iceland, UKIP in the UK, The People's Convention and Direct Democracy in Ireland just to name a few. They all have in common that they question the current political situation. Many of them are what I would call "nationalist". Nevertheless resisting the elite's drive towards world government by emphasizing the importance of national sovereignty can be one step towards a devolution of power back to the community. In my opinion "nationalism" is not the answer to our problems as for the first time in history the fate of us all is intertwined. Sovereign nation states ruled by empowered communities could be the basis of international co-operation to address our problems. Supporting these forces while keeping in mind that they still are operating within a broken system can be another step.

Media, corporatism and the current party system working hand in glove offer no alternatives. Political dogmas and established ideologies divide rather than unite. I have no answer of how to fix the broken vehicle or how to get a new one. By taking one step at a time trying our best to co-operate without ever forgetting that the power to create a better future is in our hands and in the hands of the people around us answers will emerge and ways forward will become visible. By learning from and working with others whilst respecting their views we can take steps towards the self governance of humankind, our individual emancipation and the healing of the planet.

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