

The People's Fighter: Rocco Galati on Globalization, Sovereignty and Civil Liberties

Global Research News Hour Episode 53

By [Rocco Galati](#) and [Michael Welch](#)

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"For people to admit to the truth means that the world and life as they've known it, personally and politically, gets dismantled to the ground and they have to move forward from there... For most individuals unless you're a devout anarchist, that is a daunting...reality that most people are not willing to face."

-Canadian Constitutional Lawyer Rocco Galati

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Length (59:39)

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Free Trade agreements being adopted by Canada are undermining the ability of governments to protect the public good.

That is the conclusion of the civil society farm, labour, indigenous, student, cultural, environmental and other organizations that have come together under the banner of the [Trade Justice Network](#).

With January marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the TJN recently organized the "Intercontinental Day of Action Against the TPP and Corporate Globalization," a call to resist the TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership) and similar trade deals.

These progressive organizations believe that the free trade agenda, embodied by NAFTA and its offspring, represent a "corporate power grab" that threaten "working families, small farmers, indigenous peoples, small business and the environment in all three countries and beyond."

Traditional strategies for resisting these legislative instruments have famously included mass mobilizations, such as were seen in Seattle (1999) and the Quebec Summit of the Americas (2001), not to mention standard protests, petitions, and other efforts at lobbying politicians to change their minds.

Less seasoned activists may resort to throwing their weight behind the campaign of an

opposition politician who pays lip service to resisting corporate trade deals, but offers little in the way of concrete action once in a position of power and influence.

Another less talked about approach however, is utilizing those legal instruments already available to the people, in the form of constitutional court challenges.

Enter Rocco Galati.

Galati has over the course of his legal career criticised actions by the State at the Summit of the Americas and the G20 in Toronto. He has represented terrorism-related and other cases that many other lawyers won't touch.

He is currently engaged in a number of interesting battles challenging the government, including a challenge against [the Finance Minister and the Bank of Canada](#), and a challenge to [Health Canada's restrictions on the sale of natural health products](#).

Galati argues that the afore-mentioned trade agreements, insofar as they are being implemented without the approval of the Canadian Parliament are unconstitutional. Galati had in fact attempted to challenge the Multi-lateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) on the grounds that it conferred on to trans-national corporations powers that over-ride constitutionally protected jurisdiction. Galati explains this view in the first half hour.

In the remainder of the program, Galati provides an update of the case he is championing against the Bank of Canada. Galati also resurrects some older cases he took on.

He talks about his defence of one of the Toronto 18 terrorism plotters, [Ahmad Mustafa Ghany](#). He talks about his former client, [Delmart Vreeland](#), the jailed Naval Intelligence officer who attempted to warn Canadian and American law enforcement authorities of the attacks of September 11, 2001. He talks about a death threat he received years ago that caused him to back off of the case of [Abdurahman Khadr](#).

He talks about what he calls the '500 mile Liberal Syndrome.'

He also talks about fundamental flaws in the system that, as he sees it, prevent ordinary men and women elected to high office from acting in the interests of the public.

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