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Cold Case Democracy

Part One - Breaking and Entering

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> "The past is never dead. It is not even past." – William Faulkner

A cold case is usually an unsolved, violent, major felony. But the case may be re-opened as information comes to light from new witness testimony, re-examined case files or retained forensic evidence. Originally ruled accident or suicide, some cases are re-designated as murder on the basis of this evidence. Others are re-opened when the remains of the victim are discovered well after the fact. In this case, the body's been lying exposed, in plain sight, for over 200 years, while the suspect, or suspects, run at large.

The retained forensic evidence in this case consists of two intertwined strands of "DNA" running throughout history: "democracy disperses power" and "corporations concentrate power." And property as power accumulated in the hands of a few, inevitably becomes power over the majority, power over their thoughts, their livelihoods, their communities, their government and their environment, both physical and cultural. Natural persons, human beings, are fast becoming faceless commodities, mere human resources to be consumed by shareholders hiding behind the powerful shield of property, the faceless, artificial persons also known as corporations.

But there is no statute of limitations on murder. And this is a particularly grisly case, the dismembering of democracy. There is also no such thing as "corporate personhood." Congress has never passed a law that gives corporations the same rights as citizens. There has never been a court – state, federal or supreme – that decided corporations are "persons" rather than "artificial persons."

And those courts were wise not to have done so, because while such a decision would have secured their place in history, it would also have forced them to explain why a business agreement – with the ability to "live" in perpetuity, that cannot be jailed for breaking the law and does not need to eat, drink or breathe – should be entitled to the same rights as United States citizens. But over the 200 years since our founding, the shareholders of American corporations have succeeded in changing our legal system, turning the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution upside down.

The voice of money, in the form of corporations, allows their shareholders to manipulate the levers of economics and politics from behind the legal fiction that their property, the corporation, is a "person," entitled to the same rights and protections as living human beings. Groups of large, incorporated businesses own and distribute the means of our existence through their domination of every sector of the marketplace.

We cannot purchase a home, a car or use a credit card without the enabling hand of the finance corporations. We are not safe from the ravages of a sudden accident or a major illness without monthly payments to the insurance corporations, which allow us to pay pharmaceutical corporations and hospital corporations for our care. We ride to work, for a large corporation, in cars bought from the auto corporations and fueled by the energy corporations, which also light, heat and power our homes, purchased from real estate corporations. We communicate with each other primarily via the telecommunications corporations and receive our information, and much of our entertainment, from media corporations. We cannot even feed ourselves without going to supermarkets and fast food franchises to purchase the products of agricultural corporations.

The most powerful corporation that ever existed, the British East India Company, was chartered by Elizabeth I in 1600. Its shareholders were protected from the consequences of corporate behavior by limited liability. This deliberate severing of cause from effect let investors profit immensely, while absolving them of personal liability for debt, and for unethical, often blatantly illegal actions taken by their business enterprise in their name. Shareholders had no obligations whatsoever to people/workers, communities, countries or the Earth itself, since a corporation's only purpose is shareholder profit, and that, as economist Milton Freidman pointed out, is corporations' only responsibility – as long as they stay within the law. And for that, corporate shareholders realized that they had to be able to make the law.

After the United States declared independence, those who framed its Constitution were determined that no king or church would ever control America. And if such a threat were to present itself in the guise of our government, citizens had not only the right, but the "duty, to throw off such Government…" Thomas Jefferson and James Madison were also well aware that corporations could become powerful enough to seize control over our new government, and over the American people.

Madison went so far as to call them "evil." He wanted their power to indefinitely accumulate property and hold it in perpetuity to be limited. Jefferson wanted the rights of American citizens stated clearly, without sophism, in a bill of rights, and in addition to the first ten amendments, he proposed the "restriction of monopolies." Writing of the Bill of Rights in 1788, Jefferson spoke of them as "…fetters against doing evil, which no honest Government should decline."

After the Constitution was ratified, Jefferson and Madison began a campaign for a bill of rights that clearly placed human beings, the inventors of government, above the government they had created. On the issue of banning monopolies however, Jefferson was blocked by resistance from Federalists like Alexander Hamilton. In addition, a ban on corporate monopolies was deemed unnecessary, since state laws banning them already existed.

Because of widespread resistance to corporations, from 1776 through 1789 states wrote controls into the charters they granted. American citizens, leery of corporate power, acted through their individual state legislatures to create charters only for the purpose of serving the general welfare. The corporations they chartered had limited privileges and no inherent

rights.

Each charter was for a specific purpose, like constructing a highway or a canal, and for a specific amount of time. Corporations could conduct only one kind of business and there was a strict limit on the amount of property they could own as well as the amount of money they could accumulate. And unless a state legislature renewed its charter, a corporation was dissolved, its assets divided among its shareholders.

Interlocking directorates were illegal, and shareholders had to be residents of the state granting the charter, into which was written specific benefits owed the community. It was illegal for corporations to lie about their products, and by law, corporate books and processes had to be open to the government. In addition, the federal government could legally inspect corporations and investigate them when they caused pollution, injured workers or created hazardous conditions.

Neither could one corporation own another, especially in media. "Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost." – Thomas Jefferson Many states made it illegal for businesses to lobby, influence elections or even try to sway public opinion.

State legislatures could withdraw the charter they had created if a corporation deviated from its stated purpose or acted irresponsibly – to say nothing of illegally. Such laws, made originally by the states, were also part of later federal anti-trust laws. Misuse of a corporate charter resulted not in a fine, a plea bargain or a deferred prosecution agreement, but a corporate death penalty.

These constraints on corporations, Jefferson's "fetters…no honest Government should decline," illustrate not only the founders' awareness of the ease with which shareholders could use corporations to create a financial aristocracy nearly identical to the one we had just defeated, but also how dangerous the corporate form of doing business is, in and of itself, to democracy. Jefferson's fetters were designed to serve as a short leash in the hands of American citizens for the beast that becomes plutocracy, or rule by the rich.

After the Revolution there were few corporations left, except for non-profits like Dartmouth College, which had been established by royal charter in 1769. But from the late 1790s through the early 1800s, states began to charter more corporations, though not without opposition. "I hope that we shall crush in its birth the aristocracy of our moneyed corporations, which dare already to challenge our government in a trial of strength, and bid defiance to the laws of our country." – Thomas Jefferson

In 1819 the Supreme Court struck the first blow toward stripping states of their right to create and regulate corporations by overruling a New Hampshire court's decision to revoke Dartmouth College's charter. Since the charter, granted by King George III, had no revocation clause, the Supreme Court claimed it couldn't be withdrawn.

The question the Court decided on was "Is there a contract?" In asking and deciding on this particular question, the Court seemed to assume that business is more important than government, and that the state had less responsibility to the people to maintain a functioning democracy than it had to protect a private business contract.

The majority agreed that there was a contract, that it had been violated, and that that

violated the contracts clause of the Constitution. Justice Joseph Storey issued his own opinion, maintaining that the relationship between a state and a corporation is a private, contractual one, that once created, cannot be changed unless both parties agree to it. (Ask auto workers about the sanctity of contracts made with corporations.) But Storey also maintained that if a state law had previously reserved the state's right to alter or abolish a charter at any time for any reason, it could do so.

This opinion is the basis of two underlying principles of corporate law. The relationship of a state and the corporation it charters is a private contract, so the state is no longer sovereign over its creation, merely a party to a private contract. However, as a party to this contract, the state may reserve the right to change the contract/charter unilaterally. But Storey's opinion opened the door to privatizing our entire culture, as future court decisions granted corporations the same rights as citizens.

The foundation of corporate "constitutional protection" is the contracts clause, under which the government and a corporation are merely two parties to a binding, private agreement. This undercuts a state's sovereignty over its own creation. Once the Court granted this protection, it had a legal basis to begin constructing "corporate personhood."

The decision in Dartmouth College v. Woodward had outraged citizens to the point that beginning in 1844, 19 states amended their constitutions to make corporate charters subject to alteration or revocation by their legislatures. This pushed the Supreme Court, in Dodge v. Woolsey, 1855, to reaffirm states' power over "artificial bodies."

Before Dartmouth, every corporation was created by a law enacted by a state legislature specifically for that corporation. It gave a group of individual shareholders the legal authority to act as one, or incorporate, to undertake one specific function to promote the public good, like building a bridge or operating a bank or manufacturing company. But once Storey's opinion was accepted, the emphasis in creating corporate charters shifted from public good to private gain, and as a result of a series of Supreme Court decisions from 1820-1886, the ongoing process of corporate empowerment allowed corporate shareholders to legally do an end run around the laws of the United States.

Corporations acquired limited liability for shareholders through the gradual revision of state laws; perpetual existence as states allowed specific charters to be replaced by general incorporation; protection from lawsuits as common law was revised with immunities for specific industries and; virtual location and "shape shifting" via the New Jersey incorporation law. (Goldman Sachs received "instant permission" from the Federal Reserve to change itself from an investment bank to a bank holding company in order to qualify for $10 billion in taxpayer-provided TARP funds.)

Little by little corporate shareholders severed the fetters designed to protect the rest of us from the establishment of another tyranny. Within 100 years they had attained for their property, the corporations, civil rights without civil responsibilities. As corporations increased in size and wealth, the proliferation of manufacturing turned farmers into factory workers fearful of losing their wages, which strengthened corporate control over labor. Any attempt by workers to organize in their own interest was met with private armies hired to put it down, often with violence, while corporate shareholders continued to combine in their own interests, forming trusts. They bought their own newspapers, thus their own news, to depict them as self-made American icons in an attempt to shape public opinion even as they

continued to appropriate a disproportionate amount of the wealth labor was creating for them.

The Civil War made immense fortunes for corporate shareholders, who paid lobbyists, then called "borers," to tunnel their way into Congress and state legislatures in order to eat away at democracy. It was during this time that the courts advanced legal doctrines that made protection of corporations and "their" property, the property of property, the center of constitutional law.

Bribing Congress became standard operating procedure, and since most Supreme Court Justices were former corporate lawyers belonging to the same wealthy class as corporate shareholders, they were often sympathetic to their "plight," and allowed themselves to be used as a tool to control labor, the economy and government. Railroad barons worked their way into Grant's administration to such an extent that his own party wouldn't nominate him for a third term, and the investigations into this corruption took on a life of their own, collectively known as the "railroad bribery scandals." But even caught with their ethical pants around their ankles, the exposure of overwhelming corruption in the Grant Administration and Congress by corporate interests caused no more consequences than did a United Health lobbyist sending out invitations to a fund raiser ($5,000 PAC, $2,400 individual) for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi only hours after she announced she might be backing off her support for a public option for healthcare.

Corporate shareholders kept contesting state sovereignty, as well as strengthening their control of labor, resources and local communities. Today Big Box stores and corporate franchises "push a button" at the end of the day and effectively suck the money out of local communities, sending it off to corporate headquarters in another state – or country. As shareholders bought up or "killed off" their competition, they used the nation's public resources to accumulate private fortunes, and in the process, developed autocratic factory systems and private company towns that would have fit right into the Middle Ages. And the more wealth and power they accumulated, the more they chafed at Jefferson's fetters, believing that like King George III, they should be subject to no restraints at all.

In 1857 in Dred Scott v. Sanford, the Supreme Court had ruled that Congress had no right to deprive citizens of their property. Dred Scott was a slave and thus property. Slaves were "not citizens of any state" and had "no rights a court must respect." Slaves were property, and thus had no rights. In other words, the Supreme Court said that property has no rights.

In July of 1868, three-quarters of the states ratified the Fourteenth Amendment. Its intent was to provide emancipated slaves with full constitutional rights and protections and the due process of law. People were no longer property. Article One of the Fourteenth Amendment states: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the states wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Until the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, human-created corporations had remained subordinate, however tenuously, to the humans who had created them, since virtually every

state had laws that regulated corporations. Corporations, which are nothing more than a legal structure designed to change products and/or services into money for their shareholders, still had not acquired the rights of natural persons, and so the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment must have seemed like a gift to corporate shareholders, or at the very least, a tool they could use to claim that their property, the corporation, was a "person" for legal purposes, and further, to use the amendment to secure the full protections of citizens under the Bill of Rights for that property.

Acting as corporations, railroad shareholders filed suit after suit after suit against states, counties and towns that passed laws to regulate corporations. They claimed differences in local rates of taxation was discrimination under the Fourteenth Amendment, that their property, "artificial persons," AKA corporations, enjoyed the benefits of the Fourteenth Amendment just as if they were living, breathing, natural persons. And they did this for almost 20 years.

In 1868, Paul v. Virginia, corporate lawyers argued that under the privileges and immunities clause, corporations are citizens. The Supreme Court rejected this, ruling that under Article IV, Section 2 that corporations were not citizens.

And in the Slaughterhouse Case of 1873, the Court said "...the main purpose of the last three Amendments (13, 14 and 15) was the freedom of the African race, the security and perpetuation of that freedom and their protection from the oppression of the white man who had formerly held them in slavery." In other words, corporations are not included in these protections.

In Minor v. Happersett, 1874, women argued that under the Fourteenth Amendment equal protection clause, the U.S. Constitution established that their right to vote as persons could not be denied by the state. The Supreme Court rejected this, stating that women were not "persons" for the purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment, which was only intended to apply to Black males.

In 1877 the railroads brought four different cases before the Supreme Court, in each one arguing that government could not regulate railroad fees or their actions or tax them in "differing ways" "because governments cannot interfere to that extent in the lives of 'persons' and because the difference in laws and taxes in different states and counties was illegal discrimination against railroad 'persons' under the Fourteenth Amendment." They lost all four cases, and in Munn v. Illinois, the Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment cannot be used to protect corporations from state law, since it wasn't meant to prevent states from regulating interstate commerce and was not applicable. And in none of these cases did the Court offer a majority opinion on whether or not corporations were persons under the Constitution.

During the 1882 Railroad Tax Cases, corporate lawyers argued in San Mateo County v. Southern Pacific Railroad that corporations are persons and that the committee drafting the Fourteenth Amendment had intended the word person to mean artificial persons, corporations, as well as natural persons. The Court didn't rule on corporate personhood, but this was the case in which they heard the argument.

The Slaughterhouse Case and Minor v. Happersett had established that the Fourteenth Amendment was intended only to secure "the freedom of the African race" and that it applied only to Black males, and the Dred Scott Decision had demonstrated that property

has no rights. But while the Fourteenth Amendment abolished the legal fiction of slavery, that a person is property, railroad barons were determined to establish the equally repellent legal fiction of "corporate personhood," that property is a person due the rights and protections of the Fourteenth Amendment.

When they added their desire to loose Jefferson's "fetters against doing evil, which no honest Government should decline" to the use of the word "person" as applied to corporations in legal parlance, they came up with the argument that corporations, plainly their property, the property of natural persons, was itself a person and that the adjective "artificial" was a minor distinction.

And while Dred Scott had plainly demonstrated that property has no rights – even when it is a person- and Minor v. Happersett that even human women were not persons for the purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment, if corporate shareholders could get the Supreme Court to agree, the Court would grant their property personhood under the Constitution with rights equal, even superior, to those of living, breathing human beings, and increase their leverage in throwing off legal restraints.

For ten years the railroads lost every Supreme Court case in which they sought Fourteenth Amendment protection/rights for their property. In case after case the Court told railroads that they were not persons, but the railroads kept pressing their case anywhere laws were passed to regulate their activity.

But by the late 1880s railroads were the most powerful interests in the United States. Farmers and manufacturers alike were dependent on them to transport their produce and products. They moved the raw material that fueled industry and allowed America to expand economically as well as geographically. As their power and reach expanded, they continued to accumulate wealth and property, holding it in perpetuity just as Madison warned. And since that was their sole purpose, giving up any of it was in direct opposition to their reason for being.

With the 1886 Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad case, though the Court did not make a ruling, nor did they hear the argument on the question of corporate personhood, the case was subsequently cited as precedent to hold that a private corporation, property, is the equivalent of a natural person. Based on this illegitimate precedent, Supreme Court Justices went on to strike down hundreds of local, state and federal laws enacted to protect people from corporations.

The Supreme Court did not rule, in Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad, on the issue of "corporate personhood." The claim in Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad was that because a railroad is a "person" under the constitution (though corporations are never mentioned in it) local governments couldn't "discriminate" against the railroad by having different laws and taxes in different places.

The case of Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad concerned the way the land and rights-of-way of the Southern Pacific Railroad had been taxed. The state had included the value of the fences running along the right-of-way in its assessment. The railroad claimed the tax was improper and had refused to pay it for six years. So on a property worth $30 million, the Southern Pacific Railroad withheld $30,000 in taxes, as if it were a $30,000 mortgage taxed at $30.

But the case becomes even more petty. The railroad still owed the Santa Clara County tax. They didn't even bother to deny that. But they had refused to pay any of the tax they owed because the wrong assessor had assessed the fences. And they fought it all the way to the Supreme Court, which agreed with the railroad. The Court rejected Santa Clara County's case on that point and ruled on the issue of the state's assessing the property improperly. The railroad didn't have to pay the tax, but though it was a simple tax case, railroad lawyers spent much of their argument asserting that the railroad, a corporation, was a "person," and thus entitled to the rights provided human beings under the Fourteenth Amendment.

But redress for improper taxation wasn't what the case had been brought all the way to the Supreme Court to accomplish. And somehow the Fourteenth Amendment defense found its way into the written record even though the Court specifically did not rule on it. Even though the case was decided on the fence assessment issue, leaving the railroad no reason to use any other of its six defenses, none of which were decided on by the Court.

But railroad barons claimed that the Supreme Court had endowed their property with "corporate personhood," the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment and the rights of natural persons, while they retained limited liability, in other words, rights without responsibility for an entity whose only mandate is to increase profit. This is the very definition of moral hazard, the tendency to behave badly when consequences are removed. And since the Fourteenth Amendment addresses equality between natural persons, white and Black males specifically, and perhaps, by some stretch of the imagination, between artificial persons, to speak of equality between natural persons and what they have created is the definition of sophism itself.

This fallacious precedent was based on obiter dictum, which is Latin for a statement "said by the way." It's a remark or an observation made by a judge that, even if included in the body of the court's opinion (and this one was not) is not a necessary part of the court's decision. Obiter dicta (plural) aren't the subject of the judicial decision even if they are correct statements of law. And this one was not. Under the doctrine of stare decisis, statements constituting obiter dicta are not binding. ("Stare decisis" comes from a Latin phrase meaning "to stand by and adhere to decisions and not disturb what is settled." "…under the doctrine of stare decisis a case is important only for what it decides." – U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals)

Before the decision in Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad was read, Chief Justice Morrison Remick Waite said "The court does not wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a state to deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are of the opinion that it does." But that was not what the Court decided.

Following Chief Justice Waite's obiter dictum, Justice John Harlan delivered the court's actual decision. The Court did not decide that artificial persons – corporations, property – are the equivalent of natural persons – human beings, citizens. The Court did not even issue an opinion about it, so there were no dissenting opinions on what would have been a monumental constitutional issue. The issue was not debated or discussed by the Justices in open court and corporate personhood wasn't the issue on which the Supreme Court decided. But the first sentence of J.C. Bancroft Davis' court reporter's headnotes read: "The defendant corporations are persons with the intent of the clause in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which forbids a state to

deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Headnotes are case summaries or personal commentary written by a court reporter who has no power to make, determine or decide law. They are not written by justices or judges. They are not law. They are as meaningless, legally, as obiter dicta. These headnotes were printed preceding the court reporter's transcript of the case to "add value" to Volume 118 of "United States Reports," a record of Supreme Court proceedings, by J. C. Bancroft Davis (for which he received royalties). His opening statement was simply Chief Justice Waite's obiter dictum made before the actual decision was read, to the effect, "That's just what we think," having no basis in legal argument. In fact, Bancroft Davis' headnotes state exactly the opposite of the Court's decision. They are not the decision. They are not even part of the decision.

The Supreme Court usually settles cases on the simplest grounds possible, without rendering complicated new decisions. And this was a simple tax case. The questions regarding the Fourteenth Amendment belonged to "a class which this court should not decide" unless they were essential to the disposition of the case. They were not. It was a simple tax case. The case did not require a decision of those questions because the question of who should assess the fences along the rights-of-way of the Southern Pacific Railroad did not require the Court to rule on corporate personhood. It was a simple tax case. The fence issue, being defensible, left the Court nothing else to decide on, so there was no need to consider "grave questions of constitutional law" and make a "federal case out of it." It was a simple tax case.

Within Bancroft Davis' headnotes themselves he wrote: "The main – and almost only – questions discussed by counsel in the elaborate arguments related to the constitutionality of the taxes. This court, in its opinion, passed by these questions and decided the case(s) on the questions whether under the constitution and laws of California the fences on the line of the railroads should have been valued and assessed, if at all, by the local officers, or by the State Board of Equalization…"

Also within his headnotes, Bancroft Davis admits they are based on obiter dictum. "One of the points made and discussed at length in the brief of counsel for defendants in error was that corporations are persons within the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Before argument Mr. Chief Justice Waite said: 'The court does not wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a State to deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are (all) of the opinion that it does.'"

Following this, Bancroft Davis' commentary ends and his transcription begins with Justice Harlan reading the actual decision of the Supreme Court which says, explicitly that the Court is not, in this case, ruling on the constitutional question of corporate personhood under the Fourteenth, or any other, Amendment, that "the technical issues are sufficient" for the disposition of the case.

An "oh, by the way" obiter dictum by Chief Justice Waite before the reading of the Supreme Court's decision in Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad is the tool corporate shareholders have used to make their property the most powerful force in American politics, though Dred Scott demonstrated that property has no rights. And through their property, corporate shareholders have been hard at work dismembering the democratic republic the

Founders set out to establish, and for which we fought – and won – a revolution.

The word "corporation" does not appear in the Constitution, and the Constitution has never been amended to include it. The Founders wanted corporations kept on a tight leash, bound by "fetters against doing evil, which no honest Government should decline," and regulated by the people of the states which grant their charters precisely so that no property, like the East India Company, could grow powerful enough to threaten not only the American republic, but the rest of the world via transnational corporations and the "sanctity" of their international contracts.

But since 1886, people have said that the Supreme Court of the United States decided in Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad that corporations were persons under the Fourteenth Amendment, even though this assumption as written in J.C. Bancroft Davis' headnotes is nothing but obiter dictum, a legally meaningless remark made by the Chief Justice, without explanation or legal argument, before the Court's ruling, and not found anywhere within it, and in spite of the fact that the opinion itself explicitly states exactly the opposite, that the Court didn't rule on the constitutional question of "corporate personhood."

Even so, Supreme Court decisions during the Progressive Era cited "corporate personhood" to strike down minimum wage, workman's comp and child labor laws, as well as the regulation of utilities – anything in which the interests of artificial persons, the curtain from behind which the "opulent minority" rules America, came into conflict with the interests and rights of natural persons. Of the 307 Fourteenth Amendment cases brought between 1890 and 1910, only 19 dealt with African-Americans. Two hundred eighty-eight of them — 288 — dealt with corporations.

While not one word of the Fourteenth Amendment indicated that by its passage, it would deprive the states of their sovereignty in regulating corporations, and though the obiter dictum in the headnotes in Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad is wrongly cited as the decision itself, the fact that over the years it has been cited as precedent makes it part of the "law of the land." American citizens are expected to accept that there was a mistake, that, oh, by the way, corporations are persons after all. And they have all of the same rights that you do. And more. And though corporate shareholders continue to build on this "mistake," using it as a basis to set the political agenda for the United States through "our" representatives, "our" courts, and "our" presidents with the powerful voice of their money, succeeding Supreme Courts have refused even to discuss it.

Even though it's a "mistake." Even though it's wrong. Even though it's a lie. But repeating a lie over and over again doesn't make it true.

> "Some things you must always be unable to bear. Some things you must never stop refusing to bear. Injustice and outrage and dishonor and shame. Just refuse to bear them." – William Faulkner

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