**“Glen’s Parallax Perspectives”** is a series of TV programs offering **fresh ways for people to see issues** such as foreign policy, social and economic justice, the environment, governmental functioning, and so forth. We provide **voices and viewpoints that are rarely heard in mainstream media**.

**Mainstream media, politicians, and culture see the world in conventional ways. Therefore, in order to solve problems, we need to see things in fresh ways.** Glen Anderson created this TV series to help people see things differently so we can solve problems at all levels from the local to the global.

This series title refers to “***parallax***,” which is the view you get by looking from a different perspective. For example, put one finger in front of your nose and another finger farther away. Close one eye. Then open that eye and close the other. Your fingers will seem to move. This is called a “parallax” view. **This TV series invites you to look at issues from fresh perspectives.**

Each program airs three times a week (currently every Monday at 1:30 pm, every Wednesday at 5:00 pm, and every Thursday at 9:00 pm) for the entire month on Thurston Community Television (TCTV), channel 22 for cable TV subscribers in Thurston County, Washington. TCTV is part of Thurston County Media. You can see their schedule at [**www.tcmedia.org**](http://www.tcmedia.org)

**You can also watch the program summarized below through your computer** at [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org). All episodes of “Glen’s Parallax Perspectives” are posted on this blog’s “TV Programs” part and also in one or more of the categories listed in the right side of the blog home page. Also, see information about various issues at the category headings at [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org).

Glen Anderson (360) 491-9093 **glen@parallaxperspectives.org**

**🡪 This document provides much more information than we could squeeze into the one-hour TV program. I encourage people to watch the interview and also to read this document for additional information and links to more sources of information.**

**🡪 I saved this document in Word format with live links.** If this document does not load or print properly for you, please e-mail me at **glen@parallaxperspectives.org** and I’ll promptly send you the links you request.

**🡪 Please invite other people to watch this video and/or read this thorough summary through these parts of my blog,** [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org)**, including the categories for “TV Programs” and “Economics” and “Criminal Justice”**

**“Prosecute Corporate Crime to Hold Big Businesses Accountable”**

Glen’s Parallax Perspectives TV Series

September 2023

Glen Anderson (360) 491-9093 **glen@parallaxperspectives.org**

**Glen welcomed viewers and introduced this month’s topic and guest:**

This month’s interview in the “Glen’s Parallax Perspectives” series helps us understand how some big businesses are allowed to break federal laws – and get away with it.

Big business corporations have enormous wealth – so they also have enormous power. The federal government should be making them obey the laws, but – instead – the government keeps refusing to hold them accountable.

This hurts all of us – and our health – and our environment – and our sense of having an honest government.

One expert guest helped us explore this topic.

**Rick Claypool** is a research director for Public Citizen ([**https://www.citizen.org**](https://www.citizen.org)). This is the non-profit organization Ralph Nader founded in 1971 to serve the broad public interest and protect people and democracy from abuses by governments and big businesses.

Rick Claypool’s job focuses on corporate crime and wrongdoing and the ways corporate power distorts democracy. He researches and reports on federal enforcement against corporations, deregulation, and conflicts of interest.

Glen welcomed Rick Claypool, and we proceeded with the interview.

**OVERVIEW: Big business power has been escalating:**

Glen said that in recent decades, big businesses have gotten much bigger. Some huge businesses have bought other big businesses, and some have merged. As a result, our nation’s biggest businesses have become very much bigger – and very much more rich – and very much more powerful. They have greatly increased their power over ordinary people and also their power over governments. Sometimes, as we explained during this TV interview, they break laws – and get away with it.

Before we got into the specifics, Glen invited Rick to provide an OVERVIEW of the escalating power of big businesses nowadays – and how they abuse their economic and political powers.

Rick said that over the past few decades, the political ideology of “neoliberalism” has prevailed. This doctrine has supported business growth in size, wealth and power – and has diminished countervailing forces.

He explained that the “neoliberalism” ideology or doctrine supports empowering the profit motive to override all other possible principles that could guide business decisions. It’s not just about wanting the build the best product or service. Rather, it’s about focusing the top priority on financializing the businesses in order to maximize profits and wealth in their presence on Wall Street.

He said this leads companies to continue expanding, buying up other companies, adding more lines of business, and increasing their power relative to government. As a result, especially starting in the early 1980s, the government has reduced its efforts to prevent businesses from causing harm – and simply has gotten out of the way, so businesses can do whatever they want. This negligence has resulted in lax enforcement – including failure to enforce anti-trust laws that should prohibit monopolistic behavior. This has allowed businesses to continue getting bigger and bigger – and then using their huge size to increase their power and prevent competition from smaller and newer businesses.

Glen said, “contrary to the rhetoric of ‘free market competition,’ they are trying to squelch that and just dominate for their own greed rather than have a fair economy with honest competition and a free market with many competing businesses.”

Glen added that this TV interview will provide information about the implications of what Rick summarized just now.

**OVERVIEW of corporate CRIME: What kinds? How much? How does it hurt us?**

Glen said this TV interview focuses on crimes committed by big businesses. Before we got into the specifics, Glen asked Rick to provide an OVERVIEW of WHAT KINDS of crimes they commit and HOW MUCH crime they commit.

Rick said anything that is illegal for a person to do is illegal for a corporation to do. Also, he said, some laws specifically prohibit certain kinds of crimes, such as pharmaceutical companies misbranding the drugs they sell, or fossil fuel companies dumping pollution illegally into our air and water, or manufacturing companies that illegally endanger their workers. Laws prohibit various kinds of frauds and behaviors that deceive and even kill people.

He said that a big difference is that – unlike when an individual breaks a law – big businesses break laws at huge scales that can cause truly catastrophic harm.

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

Glen is concerned about these:

* Corporations are machines that calculate cost-benefits for earning profits even if they break laws, because they know they won’t be held accountable. This is important to note now. We discussed this later in the interview.
* Big businesses make profits by hurting (and even killing) people: Glen posted to his blog this information about the need to challenge a dominant but destructive economic assumption: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/how-can-we-challenge-this-dominant-but-destructive-economic-assumption>
* U.S.’s democracy, social justice and corruption are worse than in many other nations: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/u-s-s-democracy-and-social-justice-are-worse-than-many-nations-u-s-s-corruption-is-very-high>
* The organization for which Rick works provided this information, which is relevant to our interview topic: <https://www.citizen.org/topic/making-government-work/corporate-influence-in-government/>

**OVERVIEW of regulation and law enforcement:**

To help the TV viewers understand the context for our interview, Glen said Congress passes laws to achieve broad goals. The laws empower agencies within the Executive Branch to work out the details and enforce the laws. But too often, the agencies that are responsible for regulating businesses seem to have been “captured” by those business, so they water down the requirements and fail to take actions that the American people want them to take. Also, the U.S. Department of Justice fails to enforce the laws.

He said he appreciates Rick’s solid knowledge and understanding about the failure of the federal government to enforce the laws that big businesses keep breaking. Glen also said he appreciates reading a number of Rick’s writings about these matters.

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

Glen wants the American people to appreciate the need to hold accountable the corporations that break laws. Our legal system allows that, but policy decisions – bi-partisan – have been far too lenient about big businesses, even while governments are very punitive to low-level offenders of “street crime,” while big businesses cause much more harm to society – and cost ordinary people much more than “street crime.” (We discussed this later in the interview.)

Glen wants to extend the American people’s support for democracy beyond politics and into the economic realm. We need **economic** democracy in addition to political democracy. This means we need to reduce corporate power.

Our economy is increasingly defined by deep and escalating inequality based on race, income, wealth and power.

Over the last few decades, corporations have lobbied to weaken laws and policies governing antitrust, environmental protections, worker rights and protections, and more – all to further consolidate their own power. As a result, corporate consolidation has grown to levels not seen since before the Great Depression.

Glen believes that fixing this imbalance requires more than policy changes. Power must shift away from corporations and back to ordinary people. The article linked in this paragraph outlines the consequences of corporate actors consolidating their power to act against the public good, and how ordinary people can come together to collectively advance and envision a just, inclusive economy: <https://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/Deconcentrating%20Corporate%20Power%20-%20Economic%20Democracy%20Explained.pdf>https://www.demos.org/policy-briefs/deconcentrating-corporate-power?utm\_source=Demos&utm\_campaign=70d3df4bb7-DEMOS\_EMAIL\_\_2024\_4\_10\_Corporate\_Power&utm\_medium=email&utm\_term=0\_e07d7f6936-70d3df4bb7-66872317

**Justice Department offers leniency agreements (deferred prosecution and non-prosecution) instead of prosecuting big businesses for the crimes they commit:**

Glen thanked Rick for reporting on the U.S. Justice Department’s failure to prosecute big businesses that commit crimes. The Justice Department uses gimmicks called “deferred prosecution” and “non-prosecution” in order to allow big businesses to commit crimes – sometimes over and over again – without ever being prosecuted. Glen invited Rick to share with us some information and insights he has gained from his research – and which he has written about for the public.

Rick said prosecutors make deals with companies that have committed crimes. The deals allow crime-committing companies to avoid prosecution. He said that these kinds of deals were created originally to help low-level first-time offenders avoid the severe, life-altering consequences of going to jail. But some people at the U.S. Department of Justice took these arrangements that were intended for people at the bottom of the economic level and applied them to giant business corporations at the top.

He said when a big business corporation is caught breaking a law, they negotiate with federal prosecutors before the prosecutors bring charges. They create “leniency agreements.” Then – instead of being prosecuted to the full extent of the law – they make a deal in which the prosecutor asks the company to mend its ways, pay a fine, and promise not to break that law again for a modest period of time (typically two or three years). With this deal, the prosecutor waives the charges, and the result will be as if the crime had never occurred, and the record is “squeaky clean.”

He added that – although the deals specify that if the company commits another crime, the criminal charges will be revived, and the company will be prosecuted for both the new crime and the original crime – the reality is that very often the company does commit another crime. Sometimes the company commits many further crimes. But they are still not prosecuted. He said that especially for the biggest companies, the Justice Department keeps letting the companies off the hook by arranging for successive leniency agreements. This exposes the Justice Department’s threats of prosecution look empty.

Glen said he could imagine someone robbing a bank and getting caught. But instead of going to court, suppose the defendant simply promised not to rob any banks during the next three years, and the prosecutor agrees with that promise and drops the charges. Then a year and a half later the bank robber robs another bank, but – instead of being prosecuted for either crime – the robber makes the same deal with the prosecutor, and the prosecutor drops those charges too. A year later he robs another bank, and the deals keep letting the bank robber avoid any prosecution while continuing to rob banks. Glen said prosecutors would not do this for individuals, but the U.S. Department of Justice does this over and over again for big businesses who steal many, many millions of dollars – repeatedly.

**Glen showed on the screen a graph Rick prepared. This graph shows actual federal prosecutions from 1996 to 2021. For two decades, the trend has been downward.**



Rick said these are the numbers of actual prosecutions.

Glen said the government is choosing NOT to prosecute big businesses. Actual prosecutions nowadays are only about 1/3 of what they were a little over 20 years ago.

Rick added that before 2003, the government would very, very rarely make these leniency agreements – perhaps only 1% or 2% of the time because of extraordinary circumstances in exceptional cases. But, he said, after 2003 leniency agreements became the default way to deal with crimes committed by big business corporations.

Glen said the research and articles Rick has produced have shown that **these lenient agreements do NOT deter them from breaking laws again – because big businesses know they can get away with it!**

Rick said corporations are different from individuals in their motivations for breaking laws. While individuals might break a law based on an impulse, Rick said, “there are no corporate crimes of passion.” He said corporations are machines that calculate cost-benefits – the likelihoods of rewards and punishments – so they know they can earn profits even if they break laws, because they know they won’t be held accountable. He said without a likelihood of serious punishment for breaking laws, they will break federal laws in order to win big profits.

Glen reinforced the distinction between business corporations that calculate benefits/risks before breaking laws versus crimes of passion, such as a man shooting another man in a fit of jealousy about dating his girlfriend, or someone who impulsively shoplifts an item from a store. In the spur of the moment, a shoplifter does not calculate the probability of being caught, prosecuted and convicted. In contrast, businesses really do calculate the odds that they can get away with a crime that will make them a lot of money. He said that – increasingly – the odds are very great that a business can get away with committing highly profitable crimes.

Glen said he will next ask Rick about several different sectors in our economy.

**Banks:**

Glen said that for a number of years, our nation’s biggest banks have been committing very serious crimes – and breaking laws over and over again. He asked Rick to summarize the kinds of crimes that Wells Fargo committed.

Rick said Wells Fargo is a very egregious example of a big bank committing many serious crimes. For a decade they committed crimes in what has been called the “cross-sell scandal.” Executive managers imposed impossible sales goals for the workers to achieve. In order to meet those sales goals, managers pressured workers to commit several kinds of misconduct, including fake accounts and outright fraud. This hurt millions of Well Fargo’s consumers, who suffered from fake accounts and other fraudulent crimes committed against their accounts. The company was trying to fool its investors that the company was doing better than it really was. These massive crimes caused the U.S. Justice Department to bring a case against Wells Fargo, but they used a leniency deal to let Wells Fargo escape accountability for its many, many serious crimes.

While the company was let off the hook, some individual executives were prosecuted. This pattern has occurred in other cases, where a few individuals are prosecuted but the companies themselves are allowed to avoid real accountability for their serious crimes. Rick emphasized that this is not enough when the criminal culture is systemic and structural within the company. He said the federal government must also prosecute the company itself in order to stop the problems that occur systemwide within the company.

Glen said some other huge banks – including JP Morgan Chase and HSBC – committed crimes. Rick said these two banks are well known for “being serial recipients of these kinds of leniency agreements.”

Rick said JP Morgan Chase was committing crimes of contract manipulations, failing to provide necessary oversight that led to the Bernie Madoff scandal, and violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act by hiring friends and relatives of the Chinese government in exchange for preferential treatment.

Rick said HSBC was “particularly egregious in their violations.” For a number of years HSBC illegally laundered money from Mexican drug cartels. These money laundering crimes were so extensive that special deposit boxes were designed to specifically fit into HSBC’s deposit windows. Also, HSBC violated U.S. sanctions that were intended to prevent dealings with certain nations that the U.S. specifically opposed (such as Iran, Cuba, Libya) as important parts of U.S. foreign policy and opposition to terrorism.

Glen said that although the U.S. government keeps saying it opposes drug crimes, it keeps allowing big banks to launder money from illegal drug activities. He said the U.S. government vigorously prosecutes small dealers but allows big banks to commit huge crimes related to drug dealing. They allow big banks to get away with it and focus on retail guys on street corners. This persistent pattern is actually a policy decision by the federal government.

Next, Glen said that beyond these actual crimes, banks did stupid, risky actions after they were de-regulated. The banking lobby and political conservatives stripped away some regulations from the 1930s that had protected the American economy – and American people – from bad banking behaviors. Those regulations from the 1930s really were protecting us well, but the banking lobby and political conservatives wiped out those protections and resulted in many banks crashing – both leading up to the 2008 economic crash – and resulting in very recent crashes of several big banks that were making stupid, reckless deals.

Then, he said, when big banks crashed our economy in 2008, the government bailed out the banks, but millions of Americans who lost their homes got practically nothing. The American people need to recognize the totally different treatment for the “haves” versus the “have-nots.”

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

Glen recommends these information sources:

* An article titled **“Amid New Banking Crisis, It’s Time to Change the Rules of the Game”** explains that banks have shown time and again that “self-regulation” does not work. We must seriously consider the alternatives. The U.S. government protects “socialism for the rich.” We need bold alternatives, including publicly owned banks. Read the article here: <https://truthout.org/articles/amid-new-banking-crisis-its-time-to-change-the-rules-of-the-game/?mc_cid=56efefd3e3&mc_eid=adcfa6c84c>
* Another article was titled,**“Silicon Valley Bank Collapse, Echoes of Enron.”** It explains that the problems are SYSTEMIC, not just “a few bad apples.” Governments PERSISTENTLY ALLOW such corruption and recklessness. Big business controls the government in ways that allow such abuses to continue.
* Another article from March 2023 was titled **“Silicon Valley Bank Collapses in Largest Failure Since 2008 Crisis.”** Read it here: <https://truthout.org/articles/silicon-valley-bank-collapses-in-largest-failure-since-2008-crisis/>
* An article titled **“SVBs Bailout Signals a Financial System Still Rotten to the Core”** reported that the spectacular collapse of Silicon Valley Bank was caused by corruption, financial recklessness and poor decision-making. How much longer will we put up with this? Read it at this link: <https://inthesetimes.com/article/silicon-valley-bank-svb-collapse-bailout-tech-crypto-wall-street-failure?link_id=4&can_id=1d662460c0abb8939c5044c82927552b&source=email-the-future-of-chicago-is-up-for-grabs-sanctions-dont-work-5&email_referrer=email_1850131&email_subject=svbs-bailout-signals-a-financial-system-still-rotten-to-the-core-challenger-shawn-fain-set-to-win-uaw-presidency>
* A systemic problem is the “revolving door” of corporate executives rotating into powerful positions in government and then rotating back and forth into the private sector. This corrupts the government by allowing businesses to install their policy agendas into federal laws and regulations – and weaken enforcement. See this article: <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/2023/03/collapsed-silicon-valley-bank-enlisted-revolving-door-lobbyists-to-push-its-policy-agenda-in-washington/?emci=ef2f8ab7-00c4-ed11-a8e0-00224832e811&emdi=f3b50b4e-3cc4-ed11-a8e0-00224832e811&ceid=8396435>
* The CEO of the Silicon Valley Bank lobbied Congress to change the bank laws that were passed after the 2008 meltdown. Congress passed them, and Trump signed the deregulation for these so-called smaller banks. Then they failed.
* The FDIC decided to fully reimburse the reckless depositors in Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank after they collapsed, even though their deposits exceeded the amount the FDIC guaranteed. This is another example of extremely rich, reckless people benefiting from special treatment: <https://www.democracynow.org/2023/3/13/headlines/fdic_to_fully_reimburse_depositors_after_silicon_valley_bank_and_signature_bank_collapse>
* In America today, if you're a wealthy vulture capitalist with over $250,000 in uninsured deposits at a loosely-regulated bank, the federal government will guarantee that your money is safe in a weekend. But if you’re a struggling working person with no health insurance and get cancer, you're on your own. That’s what Martin Luther King Jr. would call **"socialism for the rich and rugged individualism for the poor."**
* It outrages me to watch wealthy bankers and their lobbyists repeatedly endanger the American economy, fight common-sense efforts to regulate them, and then expect the government to bail them out when they create a crisis. See these articles: [Regulators greenlit SVB’s risky investments](https://click.convertkit-mail.com/mvummlzw8mb5hgokz56hm/dpheh0h0zk4g3ehm/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubGV2ZXJuZXdzLmNvbS9yZWd1bGF0b3JzLWdyZWVubGl0LXN2YnMtcmlza3ktaW52ZXN0bWVudHMv) and <https://popularresistance.org/what-will-it-take-to-end-the-billionaire-bailout-society/>
* De-regulated banks crash!!! Here are some insights into recent crashes of big banks: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/de-regulated-banks-crash-here-are-some-insights-into-recent-crashes-of-big-banks> and <https://truthout.org/articles/the-svb-and-signature-bank-crashes-show-why-we-need-public-banking/>
* Trump-era deregulation paved the way for massive Silicon Valley Bank collapse. In 2018, ignoring the vocal warnings of experts and advocacy groups alike, then-President Trump signed into law a repeal of “too-big-to-fail” safeguards for banks with $50 billion to $250 billion in assets. The repealed regulations would have prevented SVB’s collapse – the second-largest bank failure in US history and the biggest since the 2008 crisis. Big government looking pretty good right now, eh, libertarian billionaire tech bros? [Trump-era deregulation paved the way for massive Silicon Valley Bank collapse](https://click.convertkit-mail.com/68u66l2586a8hk24354fo/wnh2hghw99p4qri7/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuY29tbW9uZHJlYW1zLm9yZy9uZXdzL3RydW1wLWVyYS1kZXJlZ3VsYXRpb24tZGVlbWVkLWEta2V5LWN1bHByaXQtaW4tZmFpbHVyZS1vZi1zaWxpY29uLXZhbGxleS1iYW5r)
* A smart remedy for some of this would be to create PUBLICLY OWNED BANKS (like the state of North Dakoka created in 1919) and use them to finance a GREEN NEW DEAL: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/create-publicly-owned-banks-and-use-them-to-finance-a-green-new-deal>
* Some people are working to “Create a Publicly Owned Washington State Bank”: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/tv-create-a-publicly-owned-washington-state-bank>

**We did not have time during the TV interview to discuss the many business crimes – and other bad behaviors – related to the environment, climate, fossil fuels, or other energy issues, but I’m sharing information with you now:**

* Enron was one of the biggest energy corporations in the U.S., but they committed many huge crimes, and some of its top people did get sentenced to prison.
* **In 2010, BP’s gigantic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico included some crimes. See the next three links.**
* BP Exploration and Production Inc. Agrees to Plead Guilty to Felony Manslaughter, Environmental Crimes and Obstruction of Congress Surrounding Deepwater Horizon Incident: <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/bp-exploration-and-production-inc-agrees-plead-guilty-felony-manslaughter-environmental>
* BP paid a steep price for the Gulf oil spill but for the US a decade later, it’s business as usual: <https://theconversation.com/bp-paid-a-steep-price-for-the-gulf-oil-spill-but-for-the-us-a-decade-later-its-business-as-usual-136905>
* The worst part about BP’s oil-spill cover-up: It worked: Here's what BP doesn't want you to know about the use of Corexit after the 2010 Gulf of Mexico spill. <https://grist.org/business-technology/what-bp-doesnt-want-you-to-know-about-the-2010-gulf-of-mexico-spill/>
* Volkswagen committed fraud against the U.S. government and consumers by falsifying data about emissions.
* Capitalist-owned electric utilities bribed Ohio’s powerful politicians on behalf of nuclear power plants: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/capitalist-owned-electric-utilities-bribed-ohios-powerful-politicians-on-behalf-of-nuclear-power-plants>
* The United Nations is warning the world about persistently hurting the environment. Some of the damage is caused by big businesses. Even when not committing crimes, they are doing bad things that we must stop. See this: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/category/economics-labor-capitalism-trade-poverty-also-see-taxes/page/3>
* The next global climate summit (COP28) will be chaired by the CEO of a national oil company: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/the-next-global-climate-summit-cop28-will-be-chaired-by-the-ceo-of-a-national-oil-company>
* “The Climate Crisis Means the Wrong People Are Running the World.” See this article: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/the-climate-crisis-means-the-wrong-people-are-running-the-world>
* Big banks are profiting from their cruel financing of climate disruptions. For nearly a decade, organizers have been naming and shaming the banks that prop up the oil, gas and coal industries: <https://truthout.org/articles/how-big-banks-are-financing-and-profiting-from-climate-destruction/?mc_cid=75553d1810&mc_eid=d635d5c1bf>
* NIRS alerted us about renewing Price Anderson Act that keeps us taxpayers on the hook for the full cost of nuclear power disasters: <https://nirs.salsalabs.org/S1111ADVANCEACTSenateAlertMay2023/index.html>
* Oil companies abandon old wells and leave them for taxpayers to pay for cleaning up.Nationwide, oil companies have abandoned more than a million oil and gas wells—and the cost of cleaning them up: <https://inthesetimes.com/article/oil-gas-companies-abanonded-wells-methane-pollution-cleanup?link_id=7&can_id=1d662460c0abb8939c5044c82927552b&source=email-oil-companies-owe-reparations-to-louisiana-communities-queering-the-family-farm-rural-maternity-care-deserts&email_referrer=email_1866967&email_subject=poisoning-east-palestine-gentrifying-the-west-orphaned-oil-wells-plan-b-for-coal-country>
* In June 2022 the Supreme Court decided a case against the EPA and the climate. It is recklessly dangerous: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/why-the-supreme-courts-decision-against-the-epa-and-the-climate-is-so-recklessly-dangerous>
* The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a respected international body. The IPCC keeps issuing alarming warnings about escalating climate disruptions and demanding sharp reductions in fossil fuels. After a recent warning from the IPCC, President Biden – who had campaigned with promises to protect the climate – actually urged OPEC to **INCREASE DRILLING FOR OIL**!!! Also, instead of taking honest, effective actions to sharply reduce climate chaos, fossil fuel companies are promoting high-tech gimmicks that are not really effective but will fool the public and governments – and keep enriching their own profits – while delaying real climate action. Biden took Big Oil’s advice and made the climate worse. See <https://parallaxperspectives.org/after-ipccs-alarming-report-demanding-sharp-reductions-biden-urged-opec-to-increase-drilling-for-oil>
* Fossil fuel companies and right-wing media fool many, many Americans into denying climate crisis and falling for phony “greenwashing” remedies: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/fossil-fuel-companies-and-right-wing-media-fool-many-many-americans-into-denying-climate-crisis-and-falling-for-phony-greenwashing-remedies>
* Fossil fuel companies have been deceiving us and denying their climate crisis: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/fossil-fuel-companies-have-been-deceiving-us-and-denying-their-climate-crisis>
* Watch and/or read about one of my recent TV programs: “Debunk the Fossil Fuel Industry’s Phony Climate Remedies” here: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/watch-and-or-read-tv-debunk-the-fossil-fuel-industrys-phony-climate-remedies>
* Oil companies advertise propaganda and lobby governments but fail to take meaningful climate actions: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/oil-companies-advertise-propaganda-and-lobby-governments-but-fail-to-take-meaningful-climate-actions>

**Several smart remedies do exist. Let’s move ahead with these ways to solve the problems:**

* For more than a century, the U.S. Supreme Court has allowed business corporations to be given the rights of legal “persons,” so they can protect their economic interests in courts. But Mother Nature is NOT recognized as having legal “standing,” so Mother Nature CANNOT protect her rights in court. Let’s promote Legal Rights for Nature: See these videos and articles -- <https://parallaxperspectives.org/legal-rights-for-nature-see-these-videos-and-articles>
* **Divest from fossil fuels. Here are dozens of links to info sources:** <https://parallaxperspectives.org/divest-from-fossil-fuels-here-are-dozens-of-links-to-info-sources> More experts and organizations are urging pension funds and other entities to DIVEST from fossil fuels. -- <https://parallaxperspectives.org/more-experts-and-organizations-are-urging-pension-funds-and-other-entities-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels> Momentum is growing to push pension funds, etc., to DIVEST from fossil fuels -- <https://parallaxperspectives.org/momentum-is-growing-to-push-pension-funds-etc-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels>
* Congress should pass the Green New Deal to fix a number of problems in our environment and climate and economy. Here are two collections of good articles, etc.: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/green-new-deal-here-are-several-good-articles-etc> and <https://parallaxperspectives.org/green-new-deal-excellent-information-and-resources> and this powerfully inspiring video (only 7 1/2 minutes) about the Green New Deal by U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/powerfully-inspiring-video-only-7-1-2-minutes-about-the-green-new-deal-by-alexandria-ocasio-cortez>
* Another remedy is to create PUBLICLY OWNED BANKS that will be managed for public benefit instead of private profit. We could use them to finance a Green New Deal: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/create-publicly-owned-banks-and-use-them-to-finance-a-green-new-deal>

**Health – Pharmaceuticals – Anti-Trust**

Glen said big businesses in various parts of our health care system have committed serious crimes. The worst “drug dealers” are actually big business corporations, including pharmaceutical companies and some big retail chains. He invited Rick to tell us about some examples of crimes committed by big businesses related to health.

Rick said one of the most egregious examples in recent years has been big businesses promoting the opioid epidemic and committing fraud. He said Purdue Pharma was allowing enormous amounts of its opioid pills (Oxycontin) to be sold recklessly without monitoring abusive prescriptions. Rather, the company paid attention to which doctors were prescribing excessive amounts of those pills and – instead of reining them in – the company reached out to them and **urged them to prescribe even more** of them.

He added that a decade ago or longer, the company was subject to federal enforcement action for its serious crimes, but the company got a leniency agreement. But instead of deterring more crimes, the company continued to commit the same crimes over and over again.

The company’s fraudulent marketing allowed the opioid crisis to escalate horribly. Many years too late, the company was finally prosecuted, but the company’s owners, the Sackler family, has continued to evade accountability for the horrible crimes and deaths they caused, except for some civil settlements that are not steep enough to take them out of the billionaire bracket.

Glen said that beyond what we’ve said thus far, he has read many articles about giant companies that own nursing homes and rip off the residents and whoever pays the bills by skimping on nutrition, health care, staffing, and so forth. He said even when those companies are not committing crimes, they are seriously abusing their customers’ health and ripping people off.

He said many other abuses within our health care system exist, some of which reaching the scale of criminality.

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

Glen recommends these sources of information:

* When Medicare Advantage Insurers ripped people off, Biden allowed these criminal businesses to avoid meaningful accountability. One healthcare stock analyst called the Biden administration's weakened reforms a “sigh of relief” for the insurance industry. See this: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/wall-street-biden-medicare-advantage>
* The U.S.’s health care system focuses on making profits rather than on helping people’s health. Public Citizen’s article explains how this system made the pandemic worse: <https://www.citizen.org/news/analysis-how-for-profit-health-care-worsened-the-pandemic/>
* Ralph Nader’s article titled, “25 Ways the Canadian Health Care System is Better than Obamacare for the 2020 Elections” is at this link: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/ralph-naders-article-25-ways-the-canadian-health-care-system-is-better-than-obamacare-for-the-2020-elections>
* The real remedy would be Universal Single-Payer Health Care with the government (not insurance companies) paying the bills. See these articles: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/universal-single-payer-health-care-we-need-it-now-more-than-ever> and “Universal Single-Payer Health Care Now! Don’t Let this Good Crisis Go to Waste” at this link: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/universal-single-payer-health-care-now-dont-let-this-good-crisis-go-to-waste> and this solid case for REAL “Medicare for All” — UNIVERSAL SINGLE-PAYER! at this link: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/here-is-a-solid-case-for-real-medicare-for-all-universal-single-payer> and this too: <https://www.citizen.org/topic/health-care/medicare-for-all/>

**Congress:**

Glen mentioned several important problems. He said that for a very long time, people have been concerned about pervasive corruption in Congress.

He said Congress keeps failing to take actions that the American people really need, because big businesses do NOT want Congress to interfere with big business profits. Big businesses donate to politicians’ election campaigns and use other ways to pressure Congress to REFUSE to pass necessary laws. Even in the laws that Congress does pass, it watered down the wording because of pressure from big businesses. Also, often the Senate refuses to confirm good nominees for important positions.

These patterns have persisted for a long time.

Glen said most members of Congress are millionaires. Some have serious conflicts of interest. For example, Congress members own stocks in companies that are directly profiting from decisions Congress makes (*e.g*., deciding what the government should buy, when Congress members owns stock in the companies selling those things), but Congress keeps refusing to prevent such corruption.

We did not have time during the TV interview to mention the following articles about this: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/most-members-of-congress-are-millionaires-some-have-serious-conflicts-of-interest> and <https://parallaxperspectives.org/prevent-congress-members-from-trading-stocks-they-have-conflicts-of-interests-this-is-corrupt> and <https://parallaxperspectives.org/corruption-in-congress-they-own-stocks-in-companies-that-profit-from-the-wars-they-support>

Also, we did not have time to discuss how big money in election campaigns corrupts our government: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/big-money-in-elections-corrupts-our-government>

**Regulatory agencies:**

Glen followed up on what he had mentioned earlier about regulatory agencies. Congress passes laws to achieve broad goals. The laws empower Executive Branch agencies to work out the details and enforce the laws. Unfortunately, he said, big businesses use several ways to interfere with federal agencies that are supposed to be protecting us from abuses by businesses. But big businesses lobby them and fill the agencies’ upper ranks with people who have worked for the very businesses the agencies that are responsible for regulating. In these and other ways, businesses “capture” those agencies and interfere with their abilities to take actions that would help the American people and our environment and climate.

Rick said his research has studied and exposed these problems. They are an ongoing concern.

Rick said the Federal Trade Commission is supposed to be a major consumer protection agency – and shares responsibility with the Justice Department in protecting us from monopolistic behaviors – but in 2019 he found that 2/3 of the appointees at the FTC’s top level had “revolving door” conflicts of interest with “big tech” companies, and ¾ of the top-level appointees had “revolving door” conflicts of interest with various business that the FTC was supposed to be overseeing.

Rick explained that the “revolving door” is a pattern in which individuals rotate back and forth between businesses and governmental regulatory agencies. They bring business interests and sympathies into the government, so the government is less free to actually protect the public from those businesses. This results in lax oversight.

**Corporate crime costs more than “street crime”**

Glen said politicians keep trying to frighten the public about “crime in the streets.” But politicians do NOT tell us that “white-collar crime” (including crime committed by businesses) costs the American people much, much more than “crime in the streets.” He said he read an article that Rick wrote, in which Rick reported that big business’s white-collar crime costs Americans between $300 billion and $800 billion every year. “Street crime” costs about $16 billion a year, so big business’s “white-collar crime” costs the public 20, 30 or 40 times as much as “street crime.” Glen encouraged people to read Rick’s article here: <https://www.citizen.org/article/enforcement-abyss/>

He invited Rick to tell us about the ways in which “white-collar crime” – including crimes by big businesses – costs the American people and hurts us in other ways.

Rick said a prime example is “wage theft.” He said a study by the Economic Policy Institute ([www.epi.org](http://www.epi.org)) showed that “wage theft” is costing American workers about $50 billion a year. Here is an EPI report on “wage theft”: <https://www.epi.org/publication/wage-theft-2021/>

Glen said “wage theft” occurs when a company refuses to pay its workers for their labor or pays them less than what was required. This is a theft by the company.

Rick agreed what that explanation. He said this is likeliest to occur when very large businesses steal from low-wage workers. He said Walmart is guilty of this. Walmart has a huge low-paid workforce, and it has committed “wage theft” against some if its workers.

This is very pervasive partly because the government is so lax in failing to enforce relevant laws. This ends up being yet another way that money is transferred from our nation’s poorest people to the richest.

Glen said that in light of what Rick has reported, he remembers that Woody Guthrie wrote a song that includes this insight: “Some will rob you with a six-gun, and some with a fountain pen.”

**“Welfare”:**

Glen said another distortion from many politicians is their mania for blaming poor people for receiving “welfare.” Actually, most “welfare” payments and subsidies go to big businesses. While this is not a crime – because Congress has passed laws giving huge amounts of “welfare” and subsidies to big businesses – it is often corrupt because of how Congress works. Big businesses give huge amounts of money to political candidates, and they spend huge amounts of money lobbying. Poor people can’t afford to donate or to lobby. So when poor people collect small amounts of “welfare,” they get blamed for it, but when big businesses collect huge amounts of “welfare” and subsidies, that is ignored as simply “business as usual.”

Glen invited Rick to share his insights about this disparity. Rick said this is an excellent example of a massive redistribution of wealth from the broad public to the richest people and corporations.

He said the scale of it is mind-boggling. He said there is not a strict definition or a separate budget item for “corporate welfare.” He urged us to look at several policies that transfer wealth upward to big businesses, such as corporate tax cuts and prohibiting Medicare from negotiating with Big Pharma to reduce drug prices and the partial privatization of Medicare and Pentagon pork. He said these kinds of “corporate welfare” have totaled about $1.75 TRILLION in the past ten years.

Glen said he is glad Rick mentioned Pentagon pork. Glen said he lives in Washington State, where our U.S. House and Senate members have been bringing that money here for a very long time. He said that several decades ago we had U.S. Senator Henry Jackson, who was widely known as “the Senator from Boeing.” He worked hard to bring many billions of dollars into Boeing. Many other members of Congress have been doing this too.

Glen added that there is a weapon that the Navy does NOT want, but Congress is funding it anyway, over the Navy’s objection, to further enrich some big business that makes military weapons.

The amount of corruption is truly massive, including the horrendously expensive F-35 fighter plane, which never performs adequately, but Congress keeps throwing billions of dollars at its manufacturer anyway.

**Chamber of Commerce and other special interests are powerful:**

Glen said that in additions to what big business corporations do individually, they also gather together through industry-wide organizations, such as energy companies colluding or high-tech companies, as Rick had said a few minutes ago. These industry-wide organizations pressure the government to allow them to benefit unfairly and even to get away with committing crimes.

Also, across multiple industries, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce wants weak regulations and little enforcement. Glen invited Rick to explain how the U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports big businesses to commit crimes.

Rick said the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a very big entity that promotes the interests of the nation’s biggest businesses by lobbying and litigating. The Chamber does not disclose who its members are, but some members do self-disclose that they belong (*e.g*., by mentioning this to shareholders).

Rick said his research has discovered that a great many of the Chamber’s members have been the subjects of federal civil and criminal enforcement actions.

He also said the Chamber has very aggressively lobbied against federal agencies that – in the Biden Administration – have been trying to do what’s right and strengthen enforcement, even though resources are limited. He said the Federal Trade Commission and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau have been trying to ramp up their efforts to rein in corporate wrongdoing, so the Chamber has targeted those two agencies specifically with unjustified accusations (*e.g.*, “abuse of power”) whenever they try to enforce laws against Chamber members that are accused of breaking laws.

We did not have time to mention is article that Rick wrote about the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s abuses: <https://www.citizen.org/article/us-chamber-penalties-violations-ftc-report/>

**Mainstream news media are biased in favor of big business:**

Glen said mainstream news media are big, powerful forces – and almost all of them are owned by giant business corporations. Mainstream news media spread information – and misinformation – about what is happening.

By reporting some things and NOT reporting other things, the mainstream news media (largely corporate-owned) strongly influence what people know – and what people do NOT know. News media shape people’s understandings of political and economic issues.

News coverage of big business crimes is wildly skewed in favor of corporations and investors. News media usually fail to report on the actual harm big businesses have caused to people and our environment. Also, they fail to hold the corporations accountable for their actual crimes.

**Glen said mainstream newspapers and broadcasters – are owned by just a few giant corporations:**

* They are run – not in order to produce honest journalism – but simply to generate profits for their owners.
* To increase profits, they have laid off a great many journalists, so we get less actual reporting. Instead, they publicize fluff.
* Fewer newspapers exist nowadays.
* Reporting is biased in favor of big business. A newspaper has a “business page” that promotes the interests of businesses, but they do not have a “labor page” that promotes the interests of workers.
* There is less reporting of local issues too, so the forces that dominate local governments (such as real estate companies) are free to do what they want without newspapers holding them accountable.

**Here are some resources about these concerns:**

* Giant business corporations buy and destroy newspapers: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/giant-business-corporations-buy-and-destroy-newspapers>
* Mainstream media get their expert info from companies that profit by making military weapons: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/mainstream-media-get-their-expert-info-from-companies-that-profit-by-making-military-weapons>
* Trump Rules Remain At FCC As Democrats Cave To Big Cable: <https://popularresistance.org/action-alert-trump-rules-remain-at-fcc-as-democrats-cave-to-big-cable/>
* One of my recent TV programs helps us recognize and counter bias in mainstream media: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/recognize-and-counter-mainstream-media-bias>

**International aspects:**

Glen said thus far we have talked about the realities within the United States. There are international aspects too. For example, he said:

* Many big businesses extend across a number of nations, and they operate their businesses for the profits of the owners, at the expense of people and environments in the various nations.
* Big businesses powerfully influence U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. conducts wars for oil and for other economic interests.
* Corporate abuses of the environment and climate cause damage in other countries besides the U.S.
* Some businesses exploit and abuse workers who are immigrants.

He invited Rick to tell us about the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, dealing with business crimes in other countries.

Rick said the biggest companies operate transnationally and have to take seriously the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Some companies violate that law and receive leniency agreements instead of being held seriously accountable.

The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act is a law prohibiting bribery in international business operations, such as in their supply chains.

Walmart has notoriously violated the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Rick said a New York ***Times*** exposé led to a big investigation by the Justice Department. This led to the conclusion that Walmart had been violating that law on several continents. The investigation dragged on for a long time, and Walmart succeeded in settling for a non-prosecution agreement. Rick said Walmart is one of the world’s biggest businesses, and it benefited enormously from illegally expanding its business worldwide. He said by the time the federal regulators finally recognized those crimes, Walmart’s illegal global victories had already been established, and it had already raked in a lot of illegal profits that it did not have to return.

Glen agreed that the pattern Rick explained occurs often. The crimes have been committed, and the businesses have profited from their crimes. If and when the government finally recognizes this, the system makes it too late to undo the damage, roll back the profits, and help the victims.

We did not have time for Glen to say that the U.S.’s democracy and social justice are worse than those of many nations. See this information about the huge corruption in the U.S.: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/u-s-s-democracy-and-social-justice-are-worse-than-many-nations-u-s-s-corruption-is-very-high>

**Labor – Workers:**

Glen said we’ll talk briefly now about labor issues, and he will post more information to his blog. (See the links listed a few paragraphs below, including something Rick wrote about safeguards for workers and more information from Public Citizen.)

Glen said that in order to produce goods and services, businesses employ workers, but some businesses mistreat workers in various ways, including some illegal ways.

Glen said the U.S. Dept. of Labor’s Wage and Hours Division “identified 835 separate cases of child labor law violations affecting a total of 8,876 children under the age of 16 years old.”

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

*We did not have time for Glen to say these additional facts from the article cited at the end of this paragraph – or the other information listed below:* Some of these crimes cited by the U.S. Dept. of Labor were crimes of wage theft. Some were crimes about “assigning work hours that are too early in the morning, too late at night, too long in duration, or in conflict with school hours.” Also “there were 216 separate cases affecting a total of 688 children in which young people were found working in hazardous occupations that children should never work for any amount of time, at any time of day, or at any wage.” (***Dollars & Sense*** May-June 2023, p. 8) The U.S. Dept. of Labor is severely understaffed, but even so, they reported that from FY 2015 to 2022 the number of child labor violations more than tripled. (***Dollars & Sense*** May-June 2023, p. 5)

* While some people blame workers for recent inflation, research proved that CORPORATE GREED was actually a major cause: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/inflation-instead-of-blaming-workers-or-other-excuses-recognize-corporate-greed-as-a-major-cause>
* [Corporate windfall profits surge to $1 trillion a year as working people suffer](https://click.actionnetwork.org/ss/c/atcYNHk4Eh2YdGnwBh-YDMIPdX8Puw-31cfDAIdWQgGdw1YZAtRsLZzVpLx3qbjkk5EjV9_c_l8GlRpu3qg5_L14_a06oGNjZGgdGwY1ll25XSUwHlqoJqo8o8gsXi0XRQ2U7-RY1QSDQhxh505gZYlja0qfX1ACtzP574hYuaf6btWQavf9_XdZFlzPa-kDuUZmifrpzplBNFEmIS7gGxyPsy-XYN8mn1PsOoK3I5z3Ix6_0VvQBCD5_zXGA5P_HZxBS5K15PLZ2akQqJxsjY-yQFvGCu4IJiUOm7mR8gj3nSQ4sFJ7odCM7UGWbz0lMu5d15F7W9boYLyTyN2TmEC0KT77KBkafIxptUnHqLsE3yhtQ8YbSO9pHnY1kZJH/3xq/NnUOCC5KTreNYwV5bFbRXA/h14/med9_VkUc4jJJGjx781uOGkRRQZoeqI1C10RJBt1q6s)
* Also, while the minimum wage is trapped too low, CEOs have vastly increased their own salaries, so the CEO/worker pay gap has increased widely: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/minimum-wage-is-trapped-too-low-ceo-worker-pay-gap-increases-widely>
* A newly released analysis by humanitarian groups Oxfam and ActionAid shows that 722 of the world's top corporations made combined windfall profits of $1 TRILLION per year in 2021 and 2022 as people across the planet struggled to meet basic needs due to the price hikes that businesses have used to pad their bottom lines. An evergreen reminder: the real cause of inflation is good old-fashioned corporate greed, folks: [Corporate windfall profits surge to $1 trillion a year as working people suffer](https://click.actionnetwork.org/ss/c/atcYNHk4Eh2YdGnwBh-YDMIPdX8Puw-31cfDAIdWQgGdw1YZAtRsLZzVpLx3qbjkk5EjV9_c_l8GlRpu3qg5_L14_a06oGNjZGgdGwY1ll25XSUwHlqoJqo8o8gsXi0XRQ2U7-RY1QSDQhxh505gZYlja0qfX1ACtzP574hYuaf6btWQavf9_XdZFlzPa-kDuUZmifrpzplBNFEmIS7gGxyPsy-XYN8mn1PsOoK3I5z3Ix6_0VvQBCD5_zXGA5P_HZxBS5K15PLZ2akQqJxsjY-yQFvGCu4IJiUOm7mR8gj3nSQ4sFJ7odCM7UGWbz0lMu5d15F7W9boYLyTyN2TmEC0KT77KBkafIxptUnHqLsE3yhtQ8YbSO9pHnY1kZJH/3xq/NnUOCC5KTreNYwV5bFbRXA/h14/med9_VkUc4jJJGjx781uOGkRRQZoeqI1C10RJBt1q6s)
* The U.S. is the ONLY country in the United Nations that has not ratified the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. (***Dollars & Sense*** May-June 2023, p. 10)
* The U.S. government punishes immigrant workers but allows nasty employers break labor laws: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/u-s-govt-punishes-immigrant-workers-but-lets-nasty-employers-break-labor-laws>
* **Rick Claypool wrote this article:** [**https://www.citizen.org/topic/consumer-worker-safeguards/**](https://www.citizen.org/topic/consumer-worker-safeguards/)
* **Here is more information from Public Citizen:** [**https://www.citizen.org/topic/consumer-worker-safeguards/antitrust-competition-laws/**](https://www.citizen.org/topic/consumer-worker-safeguards/antitrust-competition-laws/)

**Guns:**

Glen mentioned about another business sector’s support for crime, even though it is rarely charged with crimes.

Our interview already mentioned pharmaceutical companies’ crimes, and we know the American people are alarmed that organized drug cartels are producing and selling illegal **drugs** that hurt people.

Why aren’t the American people equally alarmed that big business corporations produce and sell **guns** that those business know will be used to hurt and kill people?

Assault weapons were designed for the military to shoot many, many bullets very quickly in war – not for ordinary people to use for hunting deer or for self-defense. Companies make and sell them to individuals, **knowing they will be used for committing mass murders** in the U.S. Making and selling guns are legal, but they are extremely bad public policy that promote murders and other serious crimes.

Glen said governments clamp down on illegal drugs, but Republicans prevent governments from taking sensible actions to protect us from gun violence. Many very sensible laws are proposed, but Republicans keep preventing them from passing.

He urged new laws to hold accountable the businesses that manufacture and sell guns that are used for individual murders and mass murders. Even if those businesses do not pull the triggers, they are certainly accomplices in those crimes. They should be held legally accountable.

See this article’s powerful information and fresh insights: [https://www.nationofchange.org/2022/05/26/when-it-comes-to-guns-the-us-is-a-third-world-country-run-by-corporate-lobbyists-for-a-profit%ef%bf%bc/](https://www.nationofchange.org/2022/05/26/when-it-comes-to-guns-the-us-is-a-third-world-country-run-by-corporate-lobbyists-for-a-profit%EF%BF%BC/)

This article’s six charts show a key role firearms makers play in America’s gun culture: <https://www.nationofchange.org/2022/05/30/6-charts-shows-key-role-firearms-makers-play-in-americas-gun-culture/>  The overall picture suggests that a marketing change fueled an increased demand for more lethal weapons, which in turn has fostered a change in gun culture.

Gun manufacturers promote violence in U.S. and worldwide! Americans must push our governments to stop them: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/gun-manufacturers-promote-violence-in-u-s-and-worldwide-stop-them>

Let’s pass a law to allow victims and families to hold gun manufacturers legally accountable for the mass murders and other violence they cause: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/pass-a-law-to-allow-victims-and-families-to-hold-gun-manufacturers-accountable-for-the-violence-they-cause>

**A few other aspects of this big topic include bad public policy besides crimes:**

Glen asked Rick to comment on another horrible example of big business crimes. In 2018 and 2019, two Boeing 737 Max jets crashed and killed 346 people. A federal grand jury indicted a former high-ranking Boeing executive for fraud because he allegedly deceived the Federal Aviation Administration while it was certifying the 737 Max jet. Glen asked Rick to tell us about this.

Rick said this was an egregious example of a leniency agreement that spared the company from legal accountability. Boeing committed horrible fraud that killed hundreds of people. He said the family members of the victims tried to hold Boeing and the Justice Department accountable. The victims’ families had a right to be kept informed of the case’s progress because of a federal law designed to help crime victims. Instead, the Justice Department helped Boeing make the case that the families of the people who died in the crashes were not victims. The families did achieve a limited goal, though.

Glen said he is posting below some links to articles explaining that corporate greed is a root cause of many railroad disasters in several parts of the world in addition to the recent tragedy in East Palestine, Ohio. Some of these railroad disasters might be crimes as well as examples of extremely greedy decisions by management, such as not having enough employees on the trains to keep them safe. The U.S.’s railroad companies convinced the U.S. government to seriously reduce (de-regulate) the rules for safety. Greece’s worst rail disaster ever is the result of the same corporate cost-cutting and deregulation that led to East Palestine and Lac-Mégantic (Canada) disasters. See these articles: <https://www.desmog.com/2023/03/21/corporate-greed-is-a-root-cause-of-rail-disasters-around-the-world/> and <https://progressive.international/wire/2023-03-08-the-ohio-derailment-catastrophe-is-a-case-study-in-disaster-capitalism/en>

Glen said recently people have been angry about inflation. Solid evidence proves that businesses have simply been gouging the consumers and covering up their greed by unjustly claiming that workers’ wages are too high. Even if not actual crimes, the businesses have been deliberately deceiving people about their responsibility for inflation. See this: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/inflation-instead-of-blaming-workers-or-other-excuses-recognize-corporate-greed-as-a-major-cause>

More bad policy decisions have hurt our economy and our people. Glen added to what Rick had said about tax cuts for big businesses. Glen said that during several Republican administrations (Reagan, George W. Bush, Trump), Congress cut taxes for big businesses and extremely rich people. While these horrible tax cuts might not have been actual crimes, they did seriously hurt our nation by strangling the revenue stream and giving Republican an excuse to cut spending for things the American people really need. Some of the dynamics we’ve been discussing during this interview (*e.g*., big business’s powerful influences and negligence by Congress and federal agencies) came into play here as horribly bad policy decisions, even if not actual crimes. See this: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/in-december-2017-trump-and-republicans-in-congress-ripped-us-off-by-letting-extremely-rich-people-and-corporations-avoid-paying-their-fair-share-of-taxes-they-shifted-tax-responsibility-onto-us>

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

Glen recommends these sources of information:

The courts have ruled that business corporations are legal “persons,” so they can be sued. But in many ways “corporate personhood” has caused serious problems. See this information about promoting real democracy instead of “corporate personhood”: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/tv-real-democracy-not-corporate-personhood> and also my May 2023 TV program and article about constitutional amendment: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/we-the-people-vs-corporate-rule-its-up-to-us-may-2023-tv-program-and-article-about-constitutional-amendment>

Another remedy is for local governments to pass pro-democracy “Community Rights Ordinances” (CROs). See my TV program about that: “Strengthen Democracy with a Community Rights Ordinance (CRO)” at <https://parallaxperspectives.org/tv-strengthen-democracy-with-a-community-rights-ordinance-cro> Also see what happened when a local community passed a pro-democracy ordinance and was sued by business corporations for “lost profits”: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/a-local-community-passed-a-pro-democracy-ordinance-and-is-sued-by-business-corporations-for-lost-profits>

For a strong critique of economic inequality and other economic problems – and a bold set of remedies, watch my TV program video and read a thorough summary with more information: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/economic-justice-a-bold-new-agenda-watch-video-and-read-summary-more-info>

**Remedies with EXISTING laws and regulations and possible ADDITIONAL ones:**

Glen said we have been talking about PROBLEMS. Now he invited Rick to propose some smart SOLUTIONS.

Glen said that in some of his previous TV programs – and on his blog – he has criticized the notion of “corporate personhood,” the Supreme Court’s decisions granting business corporations the human rights that the Constitution intended only for human beings. But – because business corporations are treated as legal “persons,” they can be prosecuted just like humans can. He invited Rick to say what potential he sees for this.

Rick said prosecutions of corporations as “persons” are shown on the graph he prepared and we showed earlier in this TV interview and on page 4 of the document you are reading now. Glen shows Rick’s graph again here:



Rick said the numbers of corporate prosecutions are declining and their numbers are insufficient compared to the huge amount of corporate misconduct. He said he saw a recent study reporting that criminal misconduct is occurring at major firms twice a week.

*Glen said he checked our time just now and found that time for this interview is tight, so he wants to move ahead and highlight the good work performed by Public Citizen, the advocacy organization for which Rick works. (See the next section, which starts at the top of the next page.)*

We did not have time now for Rick to say some things he had told Glen when we were preparing for our interview:

* We should make it easier to prosecute businesses for their crimes. We must protect the public.
* Penalties could include a variety of serious penalties and cutting off financial benefits that criminal companies enjoy.
* We should prosecute the companies as legal “persons” and also prosecute the responsible executives. Currently nobody goes to jail, even if the company itself is fined, but perhaps jail time would be a deterrent for others.
* Rick likes the “Hide No Harm Act” introduced by Senator Bob Casey.

**Public Citizen has done truly excellent work on these and other issues to protect people and promote honest government for half a century!**

Glen said he is delighted to interview an expert from Public Citizen. He joined this excellent organization as soon as Ralph Nader founded it in 1971. Public Citizen has half a million members and supporters throughout the country.

Public Citizen is a nonprofit consumer advocacy organization that vigorously champions the public interest in the face of powerful governmental and economic entities. The organization defends democracy, opposes abuses by big businesses, and fights to make government work for the people – not for big corporations.

They do everything they can to research and publicize issues, mobilize people-power, watch what the government does and sue it when necessary. For a long time Rick has worked as a research director for Public Citizen. He has been researching, writing and advocating for important issues such as the ones we discussed during this hour.

Public Citizen does not participate in partisan political activities or endorse any candidates for elected office. They do not take any money from governments or businesses.

Glen said that since 1971 he has enjoyed reading Public Citizen’s printed materials. He also has enjoyed donating financial support for more than half a century. He encourages people to visit your website, [www.citizen.org](http://www.citizen.org) to learn more – and also to donate financial support to help Public Citizen continue their unique, high quality work.

**Let’s organize for what we really want to replace the status quo:**

Glen said many millions of Americans are disgusted with the status quo, which serves powerful interests instead of the broad public interest. People do protest against the many problems, but we can do more.

He said that – besides protesting against the problems – we need to invest even more time and effort and strategy organizing grassroots movements for the solutions we want to replace the status quo.

Glen has written articles about many important issues and gathered information resources too. He has posted many to his blog, [www.parallaxperspectives.org](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org), which includes an alphabetical listing of dozens of relevant topics. Some of the blog posts propose solutions to problems.

**More information beyond what we said on TV:**

People can learn more about problems and solutions from a variety of sources, including Glen’s blog and the following resources. Let’s take strategically smart actions!

* “Besides Protesting What We Oppose, Let’s Organize Even More Vigorously to Accomplish Positive Goals”: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/besides-protesting-what-we-oppose-lets-organize-even-more-vigorously-to-accomplish-positive-goals>
* Powerful forces are bullying us. Let’s reject despair and empower strategically smart grassroots movements! <https://parallaxperspectives.org/powerful-forces-are-bullying-us-lets-reject-despair-and-empower-strategically-smart-grassroots-movements>
* Glen’s blog includes this article about big businesses profiting by hurting (and even killing) people. How can we challenge this dominant but destructive economic assumption? <https://parallaxperspectives.org/how-can-we-challenge-this-dominant-but-destructive-economic-assumption>
* YES! We really CAN organize grassroots movements to solve big, hard, scary problems! <https://parallaxperspectives.org/yes-we-really-can-organize-grassroots-movements-to-solve-big-hard-scary-problems>
* To solve political-social-economic problems, we must organize PEOPLE-POWER grassroots movements: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/to-solve-political-social-economic-problems-we-must-organize-people-power-grassroots-movements>
* “Now We Empower Ourselves to Achieve Bold Goals”: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/now-we-empower-ourselves-to-achieve-bold-goals>
* Let’s build savvy grassroots movements to expand the range of what is “politically feasible.” <https://parallaxperspectives.org/lets-build-savvy-grassroots-movements-to-expand-the-range-of-what-is-politically-feasible>
* “Let’s Boldly Create the Future We Really Want.” <https://parallaxperspectives.org/lets-boldly-create-the-future-we-really-want-4>
* Neoliberalism dominates our economics and politics. Let’s lift up better moral values and vision to counter neoliberalism! <https://parallaxperspectives.org/neoliberalism-dominates-our-economics-and-politics-lets-lift-up-better-moral-values-and-vision-to-counter-neoliberalism>
* **Public Citizen posts smart, useful materials, such as this:** [**https://www.citizen.org/topic/making-government-work/corporate-influence-in-government/**](https://www.citizen.org/topic/making-government-work/corporate-influence-in-government/)
* Grassroots organizers created a “Thin Green Line” that stopped oil and coal export from our Pacific ports: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/grassroots-organizers-created-a-thin-green-line-that-stopped-oil-and-coal-export-from-our-pacific-ports>
* Momentum is growing to push pension funds and other financial entities to divest from fossil fuels: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/momentum-is-growing-to-push-pension-funds-etc-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels>
* More experts and organizations are urging pension funds and other entities to divest from fossil fuels: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/more-experts-and-organizations-are-urging-pension-funds-and-other-entities-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels>

**Sources of information:**

**Here are links to some articles that Rick Claypool wrote about research he has conducted:**

* [**https://www.citizen.org/article/enforcement-abyss/**](https://www.citizen.org/article/enforcement-abyss/)
* [**https://www.citizen.org/article/us-chamber-penalties-violations-ftc-report/**](https://www.citizen.org/article/us-chamber-penalties-violations-ftc-report/)
* [**https://www.citizen.org/article/soft-on-corporate-crime-deferred-and-non-prosecution-repeat-offender-report/**](https://www.citizen.org/article/soft-on-corporate-crime-deferred-and-non-prosecution-repeat-offender-report/)
* [**https://prospect.org/economy/just-prosecute-law-breaking-executives.-prosecute-companies-too./**](https://prospect.org/economy/just-prosecute-law-breaking-executives.-prosecute-companies-too./)

**These excellent organizations work provide information about the issues we have been discussing here:**

* **Public Citizen** [**www.citizen.org**](http://www.citizen.org)
* **Corporate Accountability International** [**www.stopcorporateabuse.org**](http://www.stopcorporateabuse.org)
* **Food and Water Watch** [**www.foodandwaterwatch.org**](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org)
* **Institute for Policy Studies** [**www.ips-dc.org**](http://www.ips-dc.org)
* **A smart magazine on economics is *Dollars & Sense*** [**www.dollarsandsense.org**](http://www.dollarsandsense.org)

Glen’s May 2023 TV program is relevant to these kinds of issues. He titled that episode, “We the People vs. Corporate Rule: It’s up to Us.” It addresses “corporate personhood” and proposes a constitutional amendment to solve that problem and get big money out of election campaigns. You can watch that TV video and/or read a thorough summary of what Glen’s guests said at this link: <https://parallaxperspectives.org/we-the-people-vs-corporate-rule-its-up-to-us-may-2023-tv-program-and-article-about-constitutional-amendment>

**Glen’s closing encouragement:**

Glen thanked Rick Claypool for sharing his information and insights, and he also thanked the people who have been watching this TV program.

We all want to live in a society that respects our rights, our health, our humanity, and our environment. We need to prevent big businesses from committing crimes that hurt us.

Instead of allowing ourselves to be trapped as victims, let’s join together with other people – and with organizations such as Public Citizen – and take smart actions to protect the broad public interest from being abused by big, powerful, greedy businesses.

Go on to the final page.

You can get information about a wide variety of issues related to peace, social justice and nonviolence through my blog, [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org)or by phoning me at
(360) 491-9093 or e-mailing me at **glen@parallaxperspectives.org**

I end each TV program with this invitation to help make progress:

**We're all one human family, and we all share one planet.**

**We can create a better world, but we all have to work at it.**

**The world needs whatever you can do to help!**