

A Platform for Change

The 1st American Public Benefit Corporation (PBC)

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"Give me a fulcrum," Archimedes said, "and a place to stand and I will move the world."
John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Presidential campaign speech proposing the United States Peace Corps, San Francisco, CA, November 2, 1960

Introduction

If you are an American who abhors where American elites are taking our nation, this platform is for you. If you've lost your job, taken a pay cut, are underemployed, have retirement savings in peril, oppose our military-industrial complex, and believe that the transnational corporations are too powerful and you are not, this platform is for you. If you are fighting to maintain and raise your standard of living, revitalize our American economy, lower the cost of healthcare, reduce U.S. dependence on Middle East oil, and build a better world, then this platform is for you.

Americans are in the middle of a fundamental social transformation. It is the transition from nation-state-based economies and political power to transnational corporate cartels. It is well underway, and it is accelerating. It is irreversible --- a downward spiral for hundreds of millions of Americans rendering the American middle class extinct and propelling us into neo-feudalism.

If you are seeking the best solution this platform is for you.

In this new global economy, most jobs can exist anywhere in the world, migrating to the lowest cost labor and production sites – and because of broadband communications, cheap transportation, mass media advertising, transnational organizational structures, and easy access to local markets, they will be the lowest cost producers for any local market. As a result, the global rich are getting richer. At the same time, the American middle class is disappearing as it sinks into the ranks of the growing poor.

Whenever these issues are raised, the voices of the great transnational corporations and the wealthy privileged classes cry foul, accusing challengers of inciting “class warfare.”

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Yet, American working families *must* face the reality that many (but by no means all) of these “fellow Americans” feel no more sympathy for their economic plight than they do for the plight of any Bangladeshi mother of five who works for five cents an hour to make the shirts they buy at Wal-Mart.

There is a folk story told in many corporate boardrooms about adapting to change. It’s the story of two frogs, a pot of water, and a stove. The first frog, Kermit, is placed in the pot of water, and over a long period, the stove heat is turned up. Eventually, Kermit, unable to move, boils to death. The second frog, Homer, is thrown into a hot pot of water. He immediately jumps out --- to safety. The moral of the story is this: if you don’t perceive gradual change as life-threatening, you might very well end up like Kermit. So, it’s vital to pay close attention to all the cues, be alert to danger, and act quickly.

This platform is a blueprint for national transformation.

The following platform is a blueprint of a plan. It presents a pragmatic alternative to the transnational corporate agenda. It details a compelling new American vision; one that ensures middle-class prosperity, embodies our core democratic values, and achieves the highest aspirations of American self-government.

The first plank of this platform is an analysis of where we stand today – a summary of the current state of American economic, cultural, political, and national security affairs. The second plank identifies a fulcrum – a vast untapped reservoir of at least \$35 trillion that we can aggregate to buy the top American transnational corporations and use them to act in our best interests. The third plank addresses a new kind of world – a new place for Americans to stand united– one that embodies America’s potential. It offers detailed plans for creating a powerful, inclusive self-government, basic income streams for us all, re-inventing, and making our democracy truly representative. Finally, we’ll identify and list the critical initial steps necessary to move us from where we are now to where we want to be.

Over the past few decades, strong forces have converged to bring about a significant shift in the American landscape. The nation is split roughly in half –the Blue vs. Red states and we are as polarized as in any other time in our history – most like when it was Revolutionary vs. Tory, Union vs. Confederate, Rancher vs. Farmer, and Industrialist vs. Labor. Half our nation is on either side of the digital divide and at war with one another.

The General Welfare

Eighty years is just long enough for a society to lose its collective, firsthand memory of how things used to be and why it did what it did. The Americans who lived through the Great Depression are dying by the thousands every day, and with them goes their learned experience and wisdom. The “New Deal” was far more than a set of domestic social programs: it was a populist movement at a time when the future of democracy was in great peril. While other nations responded to economic disaster with fascism and militarism, America gave itself the “New Deal,” an authentically democratic worldview with pragmatic applications.

The “New Deal” was a paradigm; and its successful succession of “big” government-based employment programs, public works projects, financial regulations, and social entitlement programs worked because 1) *all classes* of Americans identified themselves as a cohesive, interdependent *free* people and 2) economic markets were primarily local and national. These realities encouraged Americans to turn away from dictatorial, militaristic, expansionist aggression and embrace a collaborative, mutually supportive nationalism. But it was a close call, and without FDR’s leadership and “Brain Trust” it could have just as easily gone the other way.

The “New Deal” was a social contract – an agreement among all Americans that “we’re all in this together’ and “if we work hard” then “we’ll have the necessities,” and “not starve, freeze or be shot to death.” The contract is being renegotiated, diluted, reneged on, and made void. The reasons are simple: *all classes* of Americans *no longer* identify themselves as cohesive, interdependent *free* people and 2) economic markets are now primarily global.

For the first time in recorded history, millions of Americans are in daily, intimate contact with people halfway around the world. Most have more in common with Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, and Pinterest than we do with our next-door neighbors. Our preconceptions about what constitutes a community are changing. Our sense of our boundaries and our affiliations are changing as well. The transnational corporate executives born and living in America find themselves in greater rapport, and with more in common with millions of their network peers in Saudi Arabia, Russia, Great Britain, and Argentina than with the average Americans living outside their gated, guarded community estates.

Transnational corporations with well-educated global workforces, instant broadband communications, free-flowing capital, inexpensive transportation, media domination, and access to all the world’s local markets have *no national allegiance*. Transnational executives gain no economic or political advantage from investing domestically to bring jobs to the American middle class. Because corporations have only an economic, not social, primary purpose, it would be unthinkable to consciously raise labor costs when far cheaper labor could do the same job in *Bangladesh*.

Although the means of a big government “New Deal” populist movement is no longer possible to achieve “New Deal” ends, an egalitarian capitalist movement can. By transforming our thinking from a “tax to redistribute wealth” from one class to another to an “invest to share our wealth” paradigm, we free ourselves from the transnational corporate stranglehold on American political and economic power.

Americans can remain one nation, and one community, so long as we strengthen the shared core values that hold us together. To succeed, we’ll have to craft a “new skin” for the “new wine” of our jointly owned federal assets. This gives us tremendous leverage and will allow us to grow our wealth while fighting to implement fair labor standards and living wages, care for the poor and infirm, and conduct business in a socially responsible way.

Our Growing Inequality

The period from the end of World War II until the early 1970s was a time of balanced income growth in the United States. The American Middle Class did well, and the American dream was available to many.

Since then, however, the pattern of income growth has been dramatically different. The overall distribution of earnings among American families has evolved significantly over the decades starting in 1960. It's important to note that this is a complex and multifaceted topic influenced by various economic, social, and policy factors.

Here is a general overview of the changes in earnings and wealth distribution by decade:

1960s: The 1960s saw a relatively more equitable distribution of earnings among American families compared to later decades. The post-World War II economic boom led to a growing middle class, with a larger share of families enjoying rising incomes. Overall income inequality was lower during this period, with a smaller gap between the highest and lowest earners.

1970s: Income inequality started to increase in the 1970s. Factors such as globalization, changes in the labor market, and deindustrialization began to impact wage distribution. The growth in earnings was slower for low and middle-income families compared to the top earners. The expansion of dual-income households became more common as women entered the workforce in larger numbers.

1980s: Income inequality continued to rise during the 1980s. Policies like tax cuts and deregulation favored the wealthy. The income gap between the highest-earning families and the rest of the population widened significantly. The "Reaganomics" era emphasized trickle-down economics, which critics argue contributed to increasing inequality.

1990s: The 1990s saw a period of economic growth and a decline in income inequality. Technological advancements and the internet boom created new income opportunities. Policies such as welfare reform and increased access to education contributed to greater economic mobility for some.

2000s: Income inequality began to rise again in the 2000s, with a growing concentration of wealth among the top earners. Factors such as the housing bubble and the Great Recession of 2008 had significant effects on family incomes.

2010s: Income inequality remained a prominent issue during the 2010s. While the overall economy recovered from the recession, many families experienced stagnant wages and income disparities. Public awareness and discussions about income inequality increased during this decade.

2020s: The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on earnings and income inequality. While some high-income earners were less affected, many lower-income families faced job loss and economic hardship.

In 2003, a prescient report by *United for a Fair Economy*, in "*Shifting Fortunes: The Perils of the Growing American Wealth Gap*," warned of a stark future of growing economic inequities concentrating, particularly on the middle class. It declared those who are neither in the top 10 percent nor the bottom 10 percent in income have been the big losers during the last 60 years. To this day, their wealth, and earnings, as a share of the total wealth and earnings in the United States, continue to fall.

The revolution destroying the American middle class began in the late 1970s and has continued unabated. Fierce cost competition from emerging foreign producers, especially China, has driven

significant downsizing in the automobile, steel, manufacturing, and electronics industries as domestic companies struggled to survive, and then went out of business. Processes and manpower levels are constantly examined, and then tasks are eliminated or combined. Throughout American industry, wave after wave of middle-level managers have disappeared only to seek other, mostly lower-paying jobs.

Dramatic increases in computing power and software applications have brought the new streamlining technology “re-engineering” and artificial intelligence applications into the workplace. As never before, the middle in corporate America is much smaller. Global free trade agreements would open markets even further, accelerating the movement of capital from the U.S. to factories in China and call centers in India and elsewhere. Everywhere, consultants, efficiency experts, and computer technology have successfully achieved “dis-intermediation” – taking brokers, mid-level managers, and shop floor workers out of production, marketing, distribution, and customer service processes whenever possible.

As reported by Equilar, the median total compensation for America’s top 100 CEOs reached \$22.3 million in 2022, an increase of 7.7% among the same companies from 2021. Apple’s Tim Cook had a total compensation of \$200 million. Median stock awards for the top executives increased by 19.7% to \$13.8 million in 2022—the largest increase across all components. The average base compensation among US CEOs was \$510,000 in 2023, and the average cash bonus received in 2022 was \$390,000, for a total average cash compensation of \$908,000. The CEO Pay Ratio reached 288:1 across the Equilar 100 list in 2022. In comparison, last year’s list saw a ratio of 254:1. The growing CEO Pay Ratio continues to draw the ire of the average employee and is a force multiplier in annihilating the American middle class.

As for the top corporations, Apple led the way with a 2022 revenue of over \$394 billion, twice as high as the next largest revenue—Microsoft at \$198.3 billion. Amazon, the biggest beneficiary, has evolved into the apex predator of the American economy. But it is also the canary in our American mine. It signals dire economic, political, and social danger for the rest of us.

Wave after wave of mid-level employees is forced into lower-paying jobs.

It is a natural, predictable evolution. Nation-state-based corporations, headquartered here and abroad, continue to evolve, seeking lower costs overseas, massing capital for mergers and acquisitions while becoming bigger and bigger, consolidating immense power. These mega-powerful transnational organizations now shape all major national and state legislation. Meanwhile, media conglomerates mold public opinion to achieve a single overriding purpose – to make the maximum profit possible for their executives and stockholders.

Transnational corporations will *always* seek to maximize profits by lowering labor costs, reducing regulatory limits, and owning materials. A computer system engineer earning \$40,000 a year in *Bombay* is more competitive than a peer earning \$140,000 a year in *Silicon Valley*. As a result of globalization, the only secure domestic American jobs are the ones that can only be done locally – like auto repair, intensive in-home nursing, or waitressing. Current job growth projections are for 7 out of 10 newly created jobs to be service sector jobs --- paying at or near minimum wage --- with little or no benefits.

Those who argue that millions of new jobs (to replace those lost) are just around the corner haven't been able to tell anyone what or where that will be. Just because something has happened before doesn't necessarily mean it will happen again. Yes, it is true that in the early 1900s buggy whip manufacturers went out of business and were replaced with millions of automobile assembly jobs. This doesn't mean that the American economy will create millions of bio-medical technologist jobs to replace all the lost automobile assembly line workers. There are 200 times more potential employees in China alone than in all the United States.

A prior chief executive of Intel, Craig Barrett, summed up this reality, "I don't think this has been fully understood by the United States. If you look at India, China, and Russia, they all have strong education heritages. Even if you discount 90 percent of the people there as uneducated farmers, you still end up with about 300 million people who are educated. That's bigger than the U.S. workforce. Unless you are a plumber, or perhaps a newspaper reporter, or one of these jobs which is geographically situated, you can be anywhere in the world and do just about any job."

Although some will be able to move up from the middle class into affluence, the vast majority will continue to spiral downward to the bottom rung of the economy. This trend is manifest in the significant sales growth of high-end retailers like Saks and Nordstrom, but the minimal profit growth for low-end retailers like Walmart led to the demise of mid-range retailers such as J.C. Penny.

Over the past sixty years, tens of millions of American frogs have been boiled.

At the same time, a few bloated American frogs grew filthy rich.

"The Alpha Network"

The godfather of fascism, Benito Mussolini, said of it, "Fascism should more properly be called corporatism since it is the merger of state and corporate power." In America today, fascists favor a democratically elected, but all-powerful, chief executive, an eviscerated legislature, and a compliant judiciary. The only significant difference between 1920s fascists and those now is that today's fascists rule the only super-power in the world.

The *Alpha Network* has a purpose -- to expand its constituent wealth, power, influence, and social-cultural worldview. Wealthy, well-educated, and politically/socially conservative, they are 21st-century robber barons without a Teddy Roosevelt foe. The members are autocratic, militaristic, and often fundamentalist Christians. *Alpha Network* members fill and rotate between, senior state and federal governments, corporate executives, investment banking, political lobbying, and various supportive positions, e.g., as consultants, authors, and pundits in the media. This self-appointed aristocracy is centered on families of the American ultra-rich, who comprise an estimated 650,000 households, or about 0.5 percent of all American families. Roughly 700 billionaires and 18 million millionaires' control over one-third of all U.S. investment assets.

It is vital to understand that *Alpha Network* organizes and advances its business interests through transnational corporations. Although these businesses may be headquartered in the United States, they are not loyal institutions. Transnational corporations are amoral – valuing profit over all else, including

patriotism. It is important to note that many employee pension funds, as well as millions of self-directed retirement funds, own their stocks – but have no power to influence them.

Most Americans are oblivious to these realities because they are mesmerized by the *Alpha Network's* elaborate ongoing game of Three-card monte. That is the game where three cards are shuffled face down and the unwitting “mark” invariably loses his money because he can't figure out where his card ended up. The dealer is the *Alpha Network*, the dealer's voice is the mass media, the shuffled cards are distorted facts, Wall Street is the table, and the money lost is ours.

The *Alpha Network* currently controls all the significant levers of power. These levers of power are the leadership positions in the transnational corporations, the Wall Street brokerage houses and banks, the media, the Christian churches, and in the federal government. Just like the Internet's strength lies in the distribution of its routers and servers, the strength of the *Alpha Network* lies in the distribution of its power. Over the past sixty years, the tentacles of corporate organization and worldview have worked their way into every facet of American life: from Congress to the military, to the media, to education, to consumer rights – they are everywhere. Their worldview, with its goal of squeezing more out of less, operating free of any regulations, and diverting the maximum amount of public tax revenues and debt spending to corporate coffers is both pervasive - and irreversible.

Transnational corporations have morphed into what used to be domestic, national corporations into global fiefdoms. What is most important about that realization is to understand that hundreds of American-named and based transnational corporations are taking American worker investment capital and profits from U.S. domestic sales to finance moving manufacturing, operations, and jobs overseas. The Network's agents on Wall Street facilitate the export of capital, and those in Washington, D.C. support it with tax advantages, investment credits, and legal cover. The adage that “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely,” is only too true.

Our Founding Fathers built the mechanisms of checks and balances into our republic. What they failed to foresee was the emergence of transnational corporations. The transnational corporations are the principal vessels the *Alpha Network* employs to exercise its power. Transnational corporations exist outside and sit atop the federal government in such a way as to ensure the advancement of their special interests. They can do this because the judicial branch granted corporations the status of personhood 150 years ago. Corporations are not citizens; they are not patriots; but they do have interests: and those interests are accommodated with financial and legal advantages. These special interests are the interests most represented by our representatives in the three branches of our government. That is why American representative democracy isn't representative of the People's interests anymore.

The corporate model of a strong autocratic executive, with a handpicked Board of Directors, obedient executives/managers, and a compliant workforce is the vision the *Alpha Network* is using to drive the redesign of the U.S. government's Executive branch. It is noteworthy that the current Administration runs like a transnational corporation and that the only times President Bush has expressed respect for the legislative or judicial branches is when they do what he wants. Otherwise, they are “obstructionists” who are failing to carry out what he believes their constitutional responsibilities to be.

Wall Street is the nexus through which the wealth of the nation's citizens and the principal transnational corporations invariably move. Its investment bankers and financial brokers have control of trillions of dollars, and as the "Alpha Network's" moneychangers, they collect a fee for every financial transaction, and they control America's capital. *Alpha Network* principals move to and from Wall Street, the Treasury, Commerce, Congress, and transnational corporate executive positions to establish and implement national debt levels, interest rates, money supply, mergers and acquisitions, and the like. As long as our saving, investment, and retirement funds flow through Wall Street, the *Alpha Network* brokers and bankers will not only take a significant percentage off the top but they will also decide where and how the bulk of that money is invested.

The Media was originally entrusted with the responsibility of representing the public interest but now bombards the public with the messages the Network wishes it to see and hear. The concentration of programming power in the hands of half a dozen media moguls has, over the past decade, resulted in the intentional shaping of the public consciousness. The shaping relies on partial truths, superficial arguments, and distorted facts presented in tilted debates. The broadcast media, using the publicly owned airwaves, make billions from beer companies, tobacco companies, and other transnational corporations.

The Federal Government consists of Congress, the White House, and the Supreme Court which advance transnational corporate special interests in legislative action, executive dictates, and judicial rulings. Near equal polarization in the general population, congressional careerism, federal legislation, and edict in conjunction with aggressive redistricting do not bode well for political moderation or compromise. It is now obvious that the Alpha Network will increasingly advance its interests at the expense of women's reproductive choice, civil rights, affirmative action, the environment, minorities, energy conservation, and the separation of church and state. A new partisan Federalism, whose sole purpose is to enact conservative Federal laws to negate state laws with which it disagrees, will increasingly nullify democratic initiatives at the state level.

"The right of voting for representatives is the primary right by which all other rights are protected," wrote Thomas Paine over 250 years ago. "To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery."

The near-equal polarization in the general population is not reflected in Congress. *Alpha Network* members in Congress are aggressively rewriting procedures and jamming through legislation that advances the Network agenda. This is more than payback for perceived past injustices; it is something new. Even the right to vote is under attack.

Changing Presidents will not unseat the *Alpha Network*. Being the U.S. President is like being the captain of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. Everyone down the chain taking commands must implement them and it takes miles of travel before the direction of the ship even starts to change. The depth and breadth of the entrenched power of the *Alpha Network* makes it impossible to dislodge them through political elections. In short, economic justice or viable political representation will not come by way of the Presidency, Supreme Court, or Congress. Millions of followers adhere to the belief system and goals of the "Alpha Network," and they will continue to vote for them. Fortunately, there is another solution. We

have the means to save ourselves. But implementing the solution will require a dramatic shift in our thinking and a profound change in our collective investing behavior.

It is our fulcrum.

Our Fulcrum

“We no longer live in a world of nations and ideologies, Mr. Beale. The world is a collage of corporations, inexorably determined by the immutable by-laws of business. The world is a business, Mr. Beale!” Ned Beatty in “Network”

The Alpha Network’s rapid, and nearly complete, accumulation of incredible power and immense wealth seems impregnable. To combat it can seem daunting, if not futile. But there is a way.

Wealth Really Matters

To understand what is *really* going on we must look at the numbers and follow the money. The most important measure of one’s financial security is not her paycheck or salary level, corporate profit levels, national productivity improvements, standard of living, or marginal tax rate. It is wealth. The average American’s *current and future* wealth is being depleted at an alarming rate. It is being transferred to the ultra-rich, transnational corporations, and foreign workers and businesses.

If you’re a middle-class “Baby Boomer” the situation is even worse. Social Security and Medicare benefit levels cannot be sustained, and both entitlement programs are headed for meltdowns within the next decade. Anyone who thinks the next generation is going to pay for the “Bay Boomers” generation’s retirement and healthcare costs is deluding themselves. Millions of self-indulgent “Boomers” gradually cut education spending, lowered their taxes, spent, and borrowed as much as they could, divorced and remarried, moved around and left their “latchkey kids” alone at home. The next generation has no more loyalty to the Boomers than the Boomers have had for them.

These *heirs apparent* can read and they know that the generation currently in power spends its collective tax revenues on itself and has left them to pay the bills (with interest) when the deficit bill comes due. Later in this platform, I’ll offer a proposal for reversing this serious intergenerational and interracial estrangement with an initiative for building trust and prosperity. But for now, the American middle class is on its own, and it had better hurry up and figure out how to save itself.

The views of the new crop of college freshmen illustrate the tale. These kids are going to be way too busy fighting over the diminishing number of well-paying jobs, and dealing with the angst when they realize they’re not going to get them, to give a second thought to ignoring a generation of sick, hungry, and poor old folks.

Our Diluted Wealth

That’s some of the bad news. The good, and for our purposes, virtually ignored news, is that the American middle and lower classes have accumulated a massive amount of savings and wealth over the

past sixty years. The current net worth of the United States is at least **\$123.8 trillion**. (This figure is calculated by subtracting the debts of \$145.8 trillion from the assets of at least \$269.6 trillion.)

This new American “Investor Class” includes roughly 50% of all households and had over \$35 trillion alone in retirement assets in 2023. That’s a lot of leverage. The kind of leverage those who suffered through the Great Depression and WWII didn’t have.

There is a financial rule of thumb, “When investing, always try to use somebody else’s money, never your own.” It is U.S. middle-class capital financing the explosive growth in China’s industrial infrastructure. The capital comes from “American” transnational corporations, who get loans from Wall Street venture capitalists and investment bankers. The collateral they’re using is *our* retirement and investment assets. Said another way, middle-class employees who are contributing to textile industry union pension funds are having their money used to finance building the factories where lower-paid Chinese workers will get their jobs. Blue-and-white-collar Americans throughout the *Midwest* and South are funding their own demise.

Americans can aggregate our diluted wealth to create common prosperity.

The key to accumulating such wealth lies in two simple facts. First, nothing will aggregate wealth better or faster than maximizing the amount of money a small group can take from the greatest number of people. Second, “The Alpha Network” members decide what other network member’s compensation packages are.

We are contending with a new class of robber barons. They have learned from their predecessor’s mistakes. They are smart, organized, powerful, and “true believers.” They control the government, Wall Street, the media, the military, and most Christian congregations. They are ruthless and they play for keeps. They are proven winners. Taking our country back from them will not be easy.

We must also transform the way the *Alpha Network* uses transnational corporations to shape and direct American national policy and dramatically reduce the influence of special interest money in defense spending decisions, prosecution of wars, social policies, education, healthcare, international relations federal budget formulation, fund allocation, and the management of our *People’s* vital interests.

It can be done. We *can* beat them at their own game.

How?

We, the People, incorporate.

THE 1ST AMERICAN PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION (PBC)

The envisioned *1st American PBC* can be the first national, American citizen-owned, meta-transnational corporation with sufficient assets to purchase control of the top-performing transnational corporations in the key sectors of the U.S. economy. A recent legal corporate innovation, public benefit corporations,

also known as benefit corporations or B Corps, are a unique type of company that provide benefits to society *and* shareholders. Unlike traditional corporations, benefit corporations are required to achieve social gains in addition to turning a profit. Benefit corporations are required to consider how their actions affect all stakeholders, not just shareholders. This means that they consider the needs of employees, customers, suppliers, and the community. Benefit corporations are growing, available in many sizes, and include worldwide brands to small businesses. Some famous benefit corporations are:

- **Green Mountain Power:** Green Mountain Power is a Vermont-based energy company that uses sustainable practices to generate electricity.
- **Warby Parker:** Warby Parker is a for-profit company that sells eyeglasses at an affordable price and gives a pair of glasses to people in need for every purchase.
- **Kickstarter:** Kickstarter is a website that allows people to raise money for creative projects.
- **Stonyfield Farm:** Stonyfield Farm is a yogurt company that uses sustainable farming practices.
- **AltSchool:** AltSchool is a for-profit company that provides affordable, personalized education to children.
- **Cabot Creamery Co-op:** Cabot Creamery Co-op is a dairy company that supports local family farms.
- **Laureate Education:** Laureate Education is a for-profit company that provides educational opportunities in underserved communities.
- **The Tea Spot:** The Tea Spot is a for-profit company that provides employment opportunities to cancer survivors.
- **Plum Organics:** Plum Organics is a for-profit company that makes organic baby food and toddler snacks.
- **Patagonia:** Patagonia is a for-profit company that makes outdoor clothing and gear from sustainable material.

The purpose of the *1st American PBC* will be to balance the social interests of the nation with the goal of wealth creation and accumulation for the benefit of ALL its citizen-owners. It is the model for egalitarian capitalism. Why would we want to aggregate our collective wealth to do such a thing? To move the world, of course. Before addressing this possible new world, I'll expand on, and explain in more detail, the value, rationale, and functioning of a new concept --- an American PBC.

The precedent for the *1st American PBC* is ancient Athens, the first city in the world to introduce a democratic system of government. Athenian self-government allowed all adult males to choose their rulers and vote on important issues. All adult males were required to take an active part in the government, regardless of their social status, and participate in *demokratia*, or "rule by the people."

What is lesser known is the crucial role of democratic ownership of the silver mines at Laurium. The mines, worth roughly 100 million dollars in modern money, were public property. The mined silver was divided equally among its citizens. Mining was under the control of the Athenian city-state, and its silver brought prosperity to all Athenians. Themistocles persuaded its citizens to forgo their personal silver share to construct a large naval fleet of 200 triremes. This fleet waged a naval campaign against Persia which culminated in victory at the Battle of Salamis in 480 BCE. It is not an exaggeration to say direct democracy, civic responsibility, and common ownership of Laurion's silver, made the "Golden Age of Athens" possible.

Egalitarian capitalism *is not* socialism, nor is it Soviet central planning. It is rooted in Athenian direct democracy and is a workable modern synthesis of class capitalism and the “New Deal.” Some may believe that egalitarian capitalism is an oxymoron. But it is a successful ancient solution, consistent with what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. proposed in his last presidential address to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, *“What I’m saying to you this morning is that communism forgets that life is individual. Capitalism forgets that life is social, and the kingdom of brotherhood is found neither in the thesis of communism nor the antithesis of capitalism but in a higher synthesis. It is found in a higher synthesis that combines the truths of both.”*

Most investors have been convinced to diversify their investment assets. The principle of investment diversification has achieved the status of investment law. Diversification means spreading your money across many investments in hopes of reducing overall risk. But diversification also means *diluting power*. Diversifying assets ensures that small investors are perpetually barred from the corporate boardrooms and excluded from all the important decision-making.

The people who have convinced average investors to diversify are the same *Alpha Network* principals who are Wall Street financiers and America's corporate executives. Wall Street financiers have become multi-millionaires by skimming as large a percentage as they can off the top of the market through a variety of transaction fees. The latter become multi-millionaires by increasing the value of corporate stock by reducing production costs and maximizing profits. Not bad jobs if you can get them.

The vast majority of America's *Filthy Rich* do not diversify. An analysis of the richest Americans shows that these investors became mega-wealthy through the successes of their own companies. Apple's Tim Cook, Microsoft's Bill Gates, Oracle's Larry Ellison, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, and Walmart's five Walton family members are the most prominent examples of this massive family asset concentration.

There are two well-established government economic-political models we can synthesize to create our American meta-corporation. They are sovereign wealth funds and the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) entitlement for all Alaskans.

Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWF)

Sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) are state-owned investment funds or entities that are commonly established from balance of payments surpluses, official foreign currency operations, the proceeds of privatizations, governmental transfer payments, fiscal surpluses, and/or receipts resulting from resource exports. Some of these funds manage or have significant stakes in corporations, either domestically or internationally. Here are a few examples:

1. **Norway's Government Pension Fund Global (GPF):** Commonly known as the Norwegian Oil Fund, the GPF is one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds. While it primarily invests in stocks, bonds, and real estate worldwide, it does hold significant shares in numerous large corporations across the globe. The fund operates under ethical guidelines set by the Norwegian government and is known for its transparent investment practices.
2. **China Investment Corporation (CIC):** This is China's sovereign wealth fund, established to manage part of the People's Republic of China's foreign exchange reserves. CIC invests in a wide

range of assets globally, including large stakes in multinational corporations. Its investments are often strategic, focusing on sectors that align with China's economic and industrial policies.

3. **Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA):** ADIA is a sovereign wealth fund owned by the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (founded in 1976) and is one of the world's largest investment funds. ADIA manages a global investment portfolio that is diversified across more than two dozen asset classes and sub-categories. It has significant investments in various corporations around the world.
4. **Qatar Investment Authority (QIA):** This SWF is responsible for managing the reserve funds of the State of Qatar. It has major investments in companies across various sectors, including Barclays Bank, Volkswagen AG, and others. The QIA is known for its high-profile investments in European and American companies.
5. **Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF):** PIF is one of the largest sovereign wealth funds globally and is the main investment arm of Saudi Arabia. It holds significant stakes in both domestic and international corporations, playing a major role in diversifying Saudi Arabia's economy away from oil dependence. The PIF has been increasingly active in international markets, including significant investments in technology companies.
6. **Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA):** The KIA manages the assets of Kuwait and has significant holdings in various global corporations. It is known for being one of the first SWFs and is a major investor in European and U.S. markets.

These funds often invest in corporations for assorted reasons, including diversification of assets, generating returns for their respective countries, and sometimes pursuing strategic economic or political objectives. They typically operate with a high degree of professionalism and are increasingly important players in international financial markets.

The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD)

The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PDF) is a little-known, or discussed, unique program in the United States that distributes a portion of the state's oil revenue to its residents. This dividend is a direct result of Alaska's substantial oil reserves and the establishment of the Alaska Permanent Fund (APF), which was created to ensure that future generations of Alaskans would benefit from the oil revenues. The Alaska Permanent Fund was established in 1976 after the discovery of oil on Alaska's North Slope. The goal was to transform non-renewable oil assets into renewable financial assets. In 1982, the state began distributing a portion of the fund's earnings directly to Alaska residents in the form of an annual dividend. This move was largely motivated by the desire to give Alaskans a direct stake in the state's natural resources and to help offset the high cost of living in many parts of the state. How it works:

1. **Funding:** The APF receives a certain percentage of the state's oil revenues. This money is invested in various assets to generate returns.

2. **Calculation of Dividend:** The dividend amount varies each year, based on the fund's performance. It is calculated using a formula that averages the fund's income over several years to smooth out the annual fluctuations in market performance and oil revenue.
3. **Eligibility:** To be eligible for the PFD, one must be a resident of Alaska for a full calendar year and intend to remain in Alaska indefinitely. There are also other eligibility criteria related to criminal convictions and absences from the state.
4. **Fluctuations in Amount:** The amount of the PFD has been subject to political debates, especially in times of low oil prices or when the state government faces budget deficits. In recent years, there have been discussions and actions taken to cap the dividend amount or modify the formula used to calculate it.
5. **Economic Diversification:** As oil revenues have become less predictable, there's been more discussion about the need to diversify Alaska's economy and the sources of funding for the PFD.

The PFD has had significant economic impacts in Alaska. It can be a substantial part of individual and family income, especially in rural areas. The dividend has also had social and political implications. It is a point of state pride and political interest, and changes to the dividend formula or amounts often become key issues in state politics. The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend is often cited in discussions about universal basic income and resource wealth distribution. It's an example of a government directly distributing a portion of natural resource income to its citizens, an approach that has been debated and studied by economists and policymakers around the world.

A Place to Stand

“There’s a billionaire class, and there’s the rest of us. We’re all expected to sit back and take the scraps and live paycheck to paycheck and scrape to get by. We’re second-class citizens.”

Shawn Fain, President, UAW

If these trends are not constructively addressed, and quickly, America will break into three socio-economic classes: a very small uber-class of the very rich, a small highly trained technologist class, and a massive service (or servant) underclass. This is an inexorable economic fact of life – unless an alternative economic model is enacted. If not, the United States will soon be like feudal England or imperial Rome – home to a few ultra-rich, to some highly trained specialists and technologists, and to vast millions of peasant poor.

In the past, there have been three possible paths to reverse similar trends: 1) citizens complained, but nothing changed because the rich used the media, police, and military to suppress dissent, 2) populists organized and voted for legislative changes, or 3) violent revolutions erupted, overthrowing the ruling class. It is this transnational corporate consolidation of power, their control of the mass media, and their super-citizen political influence, that threatens the very future of the American dream.

According to data from *Statista*, the total market capitalization of the top 25 US corporations increased significantly over the past decade. In 2010, the combined market capitalization of these companies was approximately \$6.5 trillion. As of October 2021, the total market capitalization of the top 25 US

corporations was over \$14 trillion, more than double the value of a decade ago. This growth is due to several factors such as increased profitability, expansion into new markets, and successful mergers and acquisitions.

I propose taking the most useful aspects of existing PBCs, Sovereign Wealth Funds, the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PDF), the organizing principles and practices of transnational corporations, to dilute and marginalize the *Alpha Network's* power. We do so by optimizing the best practices of these models, and synthesize them to create a powerful, democratic, and patriotic meta-corporation of our own. Simply said, we Americans could pool our assets into our PBC, then invest \$7 trillion to purchase a controlling interest in the top 25 American corporations. We would need to invest no more than \$10.7 trillion to control the top 50 companies, and no more than \$21.8 trillion (63%) to control ALL the top 500 companies.

Initial Funding Sources and Operating Model(s)

Redirect Federal Natural Resource Income When companies extract natural resources on federal or Native American lands and waters, they pay royalties, rents, bonuses, and other fees, much like they would to any resource owner. The Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) collects and disburses these revenues. In the calendar year 2022, ONRR collected \$22.25 trillion from federal sources and \$1.66 billion from Native American sources for a total of [\\$23.91 trillion](#). All these natural resources belong to *We the People* collectively because the United States is a representative government. If it were ever liquidated, all its assets would belong to our citizens equally.

Offer PBC Fund Investment Option in Retirement Plans

According to the Federal Reserve, the total amount of retirement savings (Retirement accounts include 401(k) plans, individual retirement accounts (IRAs), Simplified Employee Pension (SEP) plans, and Keogh plans. Additionally, the aggregate does not include retirement pensions or Social Security benefits.) in the United States was approximately \$35 trillion as of the first quarter of 2022. The *1st American PBC* could be established as a tax-free retirement fund option for any type of retirement savings account. If Americans invested only 20% of their accounts, the *PBC* would be able to buy a controlling interest in the top 25 corporations with those funds alone.

Debt Financing

Our national debt is secured through the issuance of various types of securities, the most common of which are U.S. Treasury bonds, notes, and bills. These securities are sold by the U.S. Department of the Treasury to investors, both domestic and foreign, to raise funds to finance government operations and programs. This means that investors have confidence that our government will honor its debt obligations and make timely interest and principal payments. The U.S. national debt is considered completely secure because it is backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. That's us. We're the ones on the hook to pay all the interest and principal monies that are overwhelmingly funneled into the pockets of the *Alphas*.

As of September 2023, the United States had a national debt of over \$33 trillion. Borrowing up to an additional \$7 trillion to fund the *1st American PBC* would not only be possible but preferred. That is because we would start shifting the debt secured by us into our own hands to invest in ourselves.

Revenue Streams

**“The kind of America I want is one where everybody, and I mean everybody, gets a fair shake.”
Michael Moore, on Charlie Rose, January 15th, 2004.**

The funds raised through resource revenues, savings investments, or debt obligations would be more than sufficient to cover various 1st PBC start-up funding, equity purchases, operating expenses, and monthly dividend distributions to every American stockholder-citizen. The *1st American PBC* managed like a sovereign fund, an investment fund, and a blind trust, could do what the ultrawealthy do - own the lion's share of a phenomenally successful and growing transnational meta-corporation.

If there is an existing corporate model for our PBC, it is General Electric. GE has a sustained, proven success record as America's premiere diversified transnational corporation. The company's profitable diversified divisions include aerospace, power, renewable energy, healthcare, digital, additive manufacturing, venture capital, finance, and research. General Electric revenue annual revenue for 2022 was \$76.555B, and a market capitalization of \$121 billion in 2023.

The GE business strategy best exemplifies what I recommend as the PBC investment strategy – and is an application of the Pareto Principle. In 1906, Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto created a mathematical formula to describe the unequal distribution of wealth in his country, observing that twenty percent of the people owned eighty percent of the wealth. Quality Management pioneer, Dr. Joseph Juran, working in the US in the 1930s and 40s recognized it as a universal principle he called the “vital few and trivial many.” The principle, that 20 percent of something always is responsible for 80 percent of the results, became known as Pareto's Principle or the “80/20 Rule.” The 80/20 Rule means that it is often the few (20 percent) who are vital, and the many (80 percent) who are “trivial.”

Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety initially used to describe genetic pools and biological adaptability, states that the more choices or options an organism, person, or organization has available, the greater the likelihood it will be successful in achieving its purposes. As it relates to competitiveness, it is unequivocal that the side with the most resources and capabilities will be victorious. That is how wars are won, species adapt, societies change, and corporations evolve. As importantly, an egalitarian *1st American PBC* could capitalize on its mega-sized superior “requisite variety” to work for the American people as stakeholder-shareholder citizens, balancing our Commonwealth and our General Welfare.

Ashby's Law favors the transnational corporation over any existing nation-state because a transnational corporation has more “requisite variety” than a national government, i.e., it transcends national boundaries, political parties, and legislative authority. Another way to say this is that a transnational corporation has more flexibility and can outmaneuver a less “robust” institution.

When the *1st American PBC* controls the top 20% of the market will give it control of 80% of the economy and 80% of the market's wealth and its profits. The *1st American PBC* will ensure a fairer and more equal national asset ownership and distribution of the “commonwealth” among average Americans. The fact that the *Alpha Network* owns 60% of *America's* wealth, while our \$35 trillion is diluted, controlled, siphoned off, and controlled by them, is neutralized, and reversed once our PBC is legally established.

The ONLY entities that can have more requisite variety than transnational corporations are 1) a transnational government with police power, and 2) a mega-transnational corporation of equal or greater requisite variety. We propose creating a collectively owned PBC that is the evolutionary self-

governing successor to our American Constitution. It will be one where “have-not” citizens are rescued from fiefdom because it provides a sufficient Basic Income and successfully advances their interests.

If most American citizens banded together in a single meta-corporation, transferred our commonly owned assets into it, invested enough in the top corporations in America’s key economic sectors, and gained a controlling interest, then we could vote our shares to equitably distribute our wealth to each other in monthly dividends. We can apply the “80-20 Rule” to implement a workable Basic Guaranteed Income (BGI).

Organizing Principles

The *1st American PBC* has three principal design components: the organization and operation of the fund itself, the ownership and disbursement of assets, and the principles informing the operations of the transnational corporations it owns. The Fund envisioned is an Internet-based organization: with online individual account management, Fund financial information sharing, communications, and operations. Such operations are consistent with the currently accepted practices of most financial institutions and with evolving online voting procedures.

Purpose, By-laws, and Operations

A common set of Operating Principles and Practices could govern the key aspects of all the Fund’s organizations. Performance goals will focus on optimizing return on investment, free cash flow, and social responsibility. Fortunately, a few of the corporations on our list have expertise in applying Organizational Development (OD) tools and techniques to facilitate corporate cultural transformation. Over the past sixty years, the OD interventions of participative socio-technical work design, re-engineering, pay for knowledge, and high-performance teams have brought collaboration, profitability, and democratic processes into many parts of corporate America. One of these OD interventions deals with executive compensation. For all Fund companies, an *a priori* mandate will be that no executive’s compensation may ever exceed 10 times the compensation of the Fund’s lowest-paid job. In the *1st American PBC*, executive compensation will reflect the new market realities. The *Alpha Network* monopoly on setting executive pay will finally be replaced with a compensation system that values work and contribution. We contend that no one is more valuable than the President of the *United State*

Executive Compensation

For this reason, the President’s compensation could be the benchmark for the compensation package of the CEO of the *1st American PBC*. No *PBC* executive will earn more than the U.S. President. This principle applies to all executive positions. If it is a good business decision to export thousands of \$140,000 software engineering jobs from America to India where an engineer earns \$40,000, then it is as good a business decision to find senior executives who will work for \$500,000 a year instead of for \$2 billion-

plus stock options. There are thousands of exceptionally qualified and talented executives in the labor market eager to earn \$500,000 a year. The *PBC* could find and hire the best among them.

Moving the World

Ilya Prigogine, who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1977) for his groundbreaking discovery of *dissipative structures*, discovered that there are systems open to their environment that exchange energy and matter with it. These systems can self-organize and evolve and exhibit emergent behaviors that are not present in the individual components of the system.

In transformational social change, *dissipative structures* explain how societies transform. Social systems are dissipative structures, as they are open to their environment and constantly exchange energy and matter with it. As a society, like the United States, becomes more complex, it can reach a point where existing structures and organizations are no longer able to effectively maintain stability. In short, it then dissolves into chaos, or it evolves into a more effective social system better suited to handle the increased complexity.

Examples of social systems that have transformed through the emergence of new dissipative structures include the transition from feudalism to capitalism and the rise of the internet as a new mode of communication and organization. Realizing the United States is a dissipative system, self-organizing that maintains itself through the exchange of energy and matter with its environment, we gain insight into how we respond to increasing complexity in our society. The American *PBC* is the solution. It embodies the American ideals, beliefs, and social contract to be a self-governing People. It is a new skin for our new wine. It will enable a peaceful transition to a superior social structure best able to adapt to changing conditions.

We Americans are now, and always have been, free to organize ourselves any way we wish. In our time, as our Founders did in theirs, we can and must create a new community -- one bound together by the 1st American *PBC*'s equal and inclusive capitalism.

Taking the First Step

The ancient Chinese sage reminds us that, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." We Americans are often reluctant to embark on deep or fundamental change. We would prefer to work within the systems we have, tweaking them to make incremental improvements. So, our first step towards making the 1st American *PBC* a reality requires getting the ball rolling and working out the kinks. That requires finding a credible "champion" to lead and finance our startup. We estimate that the "seed money" required in the first year to hire the lawyers, financiers, marketers, and corporate executives required to form the 1st American *PBC* as a legal entity, get it up and running, and then market it to the American people to be between \$5-6 million.

Mobilizing Our Constituents

How we understand and define a problem determines if and how it is solved. Because the typical American values honesty and fairness, and plays by rules, they are at a distinct disadvantage when thrown into a no-holds-barred back-alley brawl with the "Alpha Network." Because the *Alphas* write the laws and police powers, it is free to engage in a "divide and conquer" strategy to keep the less advantaged American constituents fragmented and fighting among themselves.

The unfolding American crisis, tyrannical Trumpism versus moderate liberalism, transcends political party affiliations. Our common interests cry out for a populist solution. Throughout history, populist movements have arisen because of social, political, religious, or economic injustices. The “populism” of the far right is not popular. Many of our disaffected citizens seek meaningful change. They want to secure their life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness in our increasingly chaotic, disruptive, complex world.

This is what our Founders meant when they provided a means for people to seek redress of their grievances.

The *American PBC* will serve the enlightened self-interests of women, working-class white males, the Middle Class, union members, campaign finance reformers, conservatives, business entrepreneurs, state rights advocates, practicing Christians, minorities, environmentalists, the elderly, the military, Democrats, the Green Party, and moderate Republicans. By unifying and concentrating individual investment assets in the Fund, each constituency can advance its vital interests.

Women Most Americans are women and *America's* women own most of *America's* wealth. If American women were of like mind, spoke with one voice, acted in unison, voted together, and invested their collective assets in the 1st *American PBC* they could be the most powerful group in all of recorded human history. A woman's core worldview tends towards the collaboration called for in this platform and away from the “Alpha Network.” According to a recent USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll of 40,000 interviewees, women lean Democratic by 11% and the most educated women by 28%. The same poll revealed that women favor a safety net of government social programs and are more socially aware than men.

Whether it is because of biology, socialization, or personal experience, American women value equality and social fairness more than their male counterparts. Exploding from three million in 1960 to 22 million in 2000, college-educated American women are the most likely to register, vote, and contribute money to political campaigns. The most formidable social constituency, America's women can single-handedly overcome the *Alpha Network* and transform the world.

Unions In a union-management conference several years ago, Charlie Bryan, President of the IAM at Eastern Airlines, announced to a room full of fellow union officials and executives, including CEO Frank Borman, that “We could have purchased all the outstanding Eastern Airlines stock with the money we lost in our last ‘give back’ and own this company right now!” The fate of the 30,000 Eastern employees could have been quite different if the IAM, APLA, and Flight Attendant's unions had done just that.

Their principal problem was the way they thought. Born into an adversarial system and trapped inside the context of elitist capitalism, they really could not envision themselves as the owners of the airline. So, they did not act to make it so. They were the victims of the choice made by the American labor movement at its inception. That choice was to disavow employee ownership and control of the corporate enterprise fight for increased wages and improve working conditions. This choice, made by impoverished people, who had neither the means nor the opportunity to become stockholders, was the road not taken that led to the crisis we face today.

This worldview, held by most Americans, is the belief that regular citizens do not have an inherent right to insist on common ownership and management of all the assets of the United States. Class capitalism has ruled and enriched the rich, while the potential of egalitarian capitalism has languished because of

this American union paradigm. If the union movement embraced the *1st American PBC*, it would lead a transformational social movement to peacefully reverse our accelerating have/have-not national crisis.

Moderate Republicans Christie Whitman wrote “Party estrangement is, sadly, bipartisan, and it is destroying American politics... we have indeed done a better job than the Democrats of winning the votes of a larger number of the shrinking percentage of voters who go to the polls... We find ourselves in this situation in part because we too often follow the advice of political consultants to appeal not to a majority of the electorate but only to the most motivated voters — those with the most zealous, ideological beliefs. Both parties now concentrate largely on turning out greater numbers of their most fervent supporters. As a result, candidates tailor their appeals to those who already agree with them. The inevitable outcome is rhetoric that precludes a sensible discussion of issues. Those with the shrillest voices are increasingly dominating our political discourse.”

Campaign finance reformers have struggled valiantly against the “Alpha Network.” Unfortunately, the post-McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform world remains awash in corporate special interest money. The *1st American PBC* would dampen those shrill, yet disproportionately influential voices. Creating a new, moderate, inclusive “mega-corporation” designed to represent the interests of most Americans, will be attractive to Republicans, Democrats, and independents interested in exercising moderation and preserving “We the People.”

White working-class men The *Alpha Network* has a political backbone, and it is the millions of followers whose vote advances the Network’s agenda. These followers, once the stalwarts of the “New Deal” Democratic Party, have been maneuvered into “cutting off their noses to spite their faces.” A prime example is voting for *Alpha Network* candidates who harm them economically but represent them culturally. It’s an old, well-entrenched game. During the Reconstruction era in the South, poor white sharecroppers were pitted against black sharecroppers by wealthy landowners. This strategy kept the poor whites fearful of the poor blacks and focused both sets of sharecroppers on fighting each other while the plantation owners profited from low wages and internal lower-class strife. That same strategy is operating today, pitting a diminishing number of blue-collar American workers against minorities, immigrants, and foreign factory workers. The *1st American PBC* reverses this conflict and hostility by creating a vehicle for advancing their common interests and their collective financial well-being.

A broad constituency could join in the Center. Rather than continuing to be trapped in a political system controlled by the *Alpha Network* and representing the interests of the extreme Left and Right, the *1st American PBC* will move the national dialogue back to a focus on common interests and a truly representative political system.

Overcoming Alpha Network Resistance and Attacks

Once it assesses the *1st American PBC* as a threat, the *Alpha Network* will use all its resources to destroy it. Since 9/11 the *Alpha Network* has vigorously expanded its secret activities and police powers to tighten its grip on the levers of government. It is only prudent to expect that those powers would be employed against any threat that could be characterized as anti-American. In the political realm, this power has been employed to marginalize, stifle, and silence other forms of dissent. Having a variety of media authorities repeat the same bits of half-truths over and over again to convince the public to believe them is what the *Alpha Network* calls “staying on message.” Historians and political scientists call that “propaganda.”

A sociological pattern analysis of major talk show appearances, the sequencing and nuances of questioning, and outright propaganda make it clear that, from Chris Matthews to Bill O'Reilly, most media influence peddlers vote for and support their *Alpha Network* peers and principals. Even Democratic Washington insiders, like Senators Lieberman and Kerry, who may or may not be *Alpha Network* members, are certainly helping the Network's causes.

Our *Declaration of Independence* proclaimed, "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Given the current and emerging realities, growing the Middle Class will be impossible. That threatens the Safety and Happiness of millions of Americans. But rebellion, at least as we currently understand it, is no longer an option. The only peaceful way to "alter or abolish" a destructive, non-representative government is through the ballot box.

The right to vote, or our suffrage, is expressed in two forms: political and economic. Political suffrage includes the right to join political parties and vote for political candidates. The founders intended the House of Representatives to be the branch most responsive to the passions of the people. But with the rise of partisan gerrymandering, redistricting to favor the party in control of the process, and electronic voting without paper trails, competitive House elections are becoming virtually obsolete. Only four challengers defeated incumbents in the 2002 general elections, a record low, and in the nation's 435 Congressional districts, there may be no more than 30 this year where the outcome is truly in doubt.

After the 2000 census, Republicans who controlled the Pennsylvania legislature used powerful computers to draw bizarrely shaped districts — which were given names like "upside-down Chinese dragon" — that maximized Republican voting strength. They paired Democratic incumbents in a single district, so they would have to run against each other and fashioned new districts where Republicans would have a comfortable ride. As a result, a state with 500,000 more Democrats than Republicans has a Congressional delegation with 12 Republicans and just 7 Democrats.

Partisan gerrymandering has taken control of Congress away from the voters and put it in the hands of legislative partisans. It profoundly distorts the political direction of the country. In four states that are precisely evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats — Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan — Republican legislators drew district lines so that 51 of the 77 seats are Republican, a nearly two-to-one edge. Thomas Jefferson advised that "elective government" is "the best permanent corrective of the errors or abuses of those entrusted with power." His faith in democracy was well placed, but for elective government to play this critical role, the elections must be inclusive and fair, and they must use machinery that works.

Given the arguments we have already made regarding the ineffectiveness of political voting as a fair and trustworthy avenue for political action, we hold that it is now our *economic vote* that will make the difference. Our right to vote for or against products and/or corporate policies through boycott, purchase, and proxy is the optimal, legal, and peaceful way for citizen-stockholders to own the *1st American PBC* to exercise our Will.

Re-Visioning the Tax Paradigm

Nothing seems more central to our economic and political lives than taxes. We fiercely debate raising them, lowering them, how they are spent, and whether they are fair. Taxes, we are told, join only death as the two inevitabilities in life. Taxes, and the power to allocate and spend them, are at the root of political and police powers. Fortunately, that has not always been so. We can change the way special interests influence the government and reverse the hijacking of America by moving from a “tax” to an “expense” paradigm and morphing into an inclusive citizen-stockholder meta-corporate model.

“A Republic, if you can keep it.” Benjamin Franklin

Conclusion

Historians contend that the American Revolution was as much about money and wealth as it was about political freedom. The Founding Fathers were determined to avoid colonial representation in British Parliament where their vote would be inconsequential. The *Alpha Network* has likewise co-opted our government. Turning to Congress for redress of our grievances would be like our Founders accepting a few seats in the British Parliament to redress theirs. We cannot look to the political sphere for redress.

The Iroquois Confederacy

In 1753, Benjamin Franklin attended a council in Albany, New York with the chiefs of the Iroquois. He wished to deepen his understanding of the principles of the Great Law of the Confederacy, the foundation of its enduring success. Franklin’s interest was not an idle one. In 1743, he established the American Philosophical Society to forge a metaphysical basis for the emerging nation. He was very aware of the necessity for unifying the thirteen colonies into one union in which both the sovereignty of the colonies and the union of the nation would be cherished and protected. Franklin shared what he learned with his colleagues for their consideration.

The success of the Iroquois Confederacy came first from the vision of the Great Peacemaker, a mysterious stranger who, hundreds of years before, convinced their ancestors to cease warring against each other. Second, from the importance women had in co-governing. Third, because consensus was necessary for all decisions affecting the welfare of the people, justice and compassion prevailed. Finally, because key decisions had to benefit the seventh generation to come, the long-term well-being of the people was guaranteed. These principles were universal and extended to all through the clan structure of the Longhouse common to all the confederation’s member tribes.

The Circle of Life

No precedent existed in the annals of European history. When the Duke of York informed the King of England about the self-governing Iroquois, he reported the Iroquois had a government based on freedom, and that the colonists were being “infected” by it. The duke warned the Iroquois would prove to be a threat to the monarchies of the day. Twenty tree years after attending the Iroquois council, Franklin and his fellows concluded their Declaration of Independence with: “And for the support of this

Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.”

The heart of this platform is realizing the superiority of the transnational corporation above and beyond any national government and its regulations. If we are to protect our American economic, social, and political interests, we must do so by voting with our feet and our money. I believe that the *1st American PBC* is a workable blueprint to share American power and wealth legally, peacefully, and equitably. The *PBC* may also serve as the model for a Global General Interest Corporation.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, our Founders introduced a new kind of sovereignty. They replaced the “divine right of kings” with “popular sovereignty.” They shared a revolutionary belief in themselves, proclaiming “We the People.” Seven generations later, a cohort was born. They suffered in the Great Depression, rallied to a “New Deal,” became the “Arsenal of Democracy,” beat back fascism, and won the Cold War. Remembered as America’s “Greatest Generation.”

We, their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are being called on to rise to our greatest challenge. Will we unify and defend “We the People?” Will we choose fascism or freedom? Will “We the People” dissolve into a brutal dictatorship or become a more perfect Union?

What will “We the People” choose to be?

It is our turn to become Founders.

We owe it to the Seventh Generation to come.