

Email of 22 January 2009

Dear all, excuse me my silence. Overloaded with work. But I think this can interest you: a Manifest about Commons that will be proposed for discussion in one workshop of the World Social Forum, next week. Some organisations are considering to sign the last version. I will give you more news later. All the best, Chico Whitaker

PS. It will put the english version in this mail, as it seems that my outlook program will not forward the attached (with french, portuguese and spanish versions). CW.

Manifest for the recovery of common goods of humanity – Proposal for discussion

The enclosure movement in England during the 15th and 16th centuries limited the access to land and its benefits to its owners, thus making it inaccessible to the public as it had been traditionally. This initiated the process of the privatization of common human necessities. Subsequently, the world was ruled under the logic of the capitalistic system of production, in which everything can be transformed into money, and industrialization engendered mass production. The process of privatization, linked to an unrestrained mercantilization, aggravated greed and competition.

As a result, nowadays, the human civilization is in crisis ; one that could inevitably lead to the destruction of the human species on Earth. With the endurance of the most aggressive aspects of modern societies: the growth of social inequalities, consumeristic frenzy, destruction of nature, militarization of international affairs, the confiscation of public power by the market and productivism, the violent appropriation of the natural resources, and democracy retrogress

On one hand, in the schizophrenia of our times, the production of arms is an endless source of profits; destructing the environment is how economic growth is attained; the pharmaceutical industry obtains astronomical gains by only making their products available to those who can afford to pay their exorbitant prices; the control of the production and selling of seeds is death to small farms because of the debt they incur; The creation of money as an instrument to make exchanges easier is privatized by banks that, even when showed as the heart of a casino economy, speculative and unlinked to the real economy, are reinforced by governmental medicines to the running financial crises.

On the other hand, the knowledge that would allow parcels of the population the access to solutions for their problems is not made widely; the preservation of the forest, necessary to the continuity of life on the planet, is considered an obstacle to progress; scientific research has not served in the struggle against endemic diseases that decimate entire populations; discoveries and useful advancements to human development become inaccessible, protected by blindly defended patents and author's rights; large agricultural productions with unknown environment effects spread throughout the earth to supply enough fuel to keep the wealthy minority at their standard of living.

The World Social Forum of 2009, at Belem – Pará, Brazil, is happening at a very special moment in time. It is a time when neo-liberal globalization, boosted by financial movements, unfettered by public control and legitimized by the ideology of the free market fails spectacularly.

The moment is also very special because simultaneously, the whole world is emerging into a new consciousness built on the premise that there are resources that under no circumstances could be privatized and mercantilized, by the fact that they are common goods and should be available to all human beings and nature itself.

The undersigned of the present Manifest, released in the World Social Forum of 2009, call all

citizens of the world and their organizations to engage in the struggle for the deprivatization and demercantilization of these goods, as a flag raised by all of Humanity.

Everyone in their various locations and on their respective battle grounds, must assume the spirit of cooperation, which is essential to human life, and mobilize themselves in order to :

- amplify and nurture the new consciousness that is emerging;
- offer support towards the efforts of the organizations that launch themselves to the defense of rivers, land, seeds, knowledge, science, forests, seas, wind, communication and intercommunication, culture, music and other forms of art, public services such as education, health, sanitation, money, ancestral wisdom;
- fortify the endeavors of their own organizations, mutually reinforcing themselves, in the campaigns and initiatives proposed and developed towards these objectives.

The undersigned of this Manifest pledge to exhaustively act to recover, for the common use of their fellow human beings, in co-responsibility and under social control, all of the goods and services necessary for life.