

# **"DO CORPORATIONS RULE THE WORLD? – what happened to democracy?"**

**A feast of the practical alternatives being  
developed, by people and by governments  
around the world, to put people before profit  
with seasoned top campaigner**

## **NICK DEARDEN**

*new director of World Development Movement*

### **Thursday, 19th June**

**Quaker Meeting House  
St. James Street, Sheffield, S1 2EW**

**Prompt 7.15pm. start. Tea/coffee from 6.45pm.  
All welcome. No charge (donations to costs requested).**

### **World Development Movement in Sheffield**

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How does 'democracy' *actually* work these days? It is sometimes said by the pessimists that "No matter who you vote for, you always get the government". But do we nowadays even get the policies of 'the government', or in effect the policies of corporate business?

When was the last time that a 'Western' government – even Obama's – acted in full on an election pledge of some serious action to make life better and fairer for people, but which would mean slightly less no-holds-barred profit-seeking by the major corporations? And when did *small* businesses last get the fair deal they are always promised as 'the *real* wealth creators'?

Who do almost all political parties now rely upon for their campaign funds? And what sorts of career do very many retired senior politicians move into when they leave office – middle-ranking public service jobs, or lucrative directorships? Where do their interests lie?

We are constantly being urged to believe that "There is no alternative" to the profit-only ways of providing for all our needs – from privatised and therefore profit-driven public services at home, to expensive, privately-patented seeds and agricultural inputs as the only possible way to "feed the world".

But, says our guest speaker Nick Dearden, *"A picture is building which is finding alternatives to the market even when we're told such solutions are unthinkable"*.

*"'There is no alternative' is an incredibly powerful concept. But the models being experimented with in some parts of Latin America go beyond anything we've seen in decades. It is THE challenge to corporate power even if it's somewhat patchy and it's not a straight line to a better world"*.

As director of Jubilee Debt Campaign, Nick built strong relationships with campaigners in the global south, and he helped win a new law to stop Vulture Funds from using UK courts to squeeze huge debt payments out of poor countries.

We are hoping that members of a wide range of social justice campaigns will be able to attend and contribute to the discussion.