



END CORPORATE RULE. LEGALIZE DEMOCRACY.

MOVE TO AMEND



CORPORATE PERSONHOOD SKIT

Script by Paul Benson & Kimberly Langin
Democracy Unlimited

Cast of characters

Franklin Stein, Attorney at Law (suit and tie)
Chief Justice (black robe, gavel)
Tim/Tin Bossley, C.E.O. of GloboCorp (suit and tie)
GloboCorp (corporate person costume)
Citizen
Miscellaneous Citizens, as necessary
Narrator / I Miss Democracy (gown with "I Miss Democracy" sash and tiara)

Corporate Person cartoon by Matt Wuerker.

TO GATHER ATTENTION FROM CROWD:

Stein laughs loudly and maniacally, for a little too long. The crashing *sound of thunder* is also heard, as Stein rigs up his machine to the GloboCorp building.

STEIN:

This will be my greatest work! I am about to achieve levels of greatness befitting a God, with the very ability to create Life itself!

He approaches GloboCorp, strokes it on top of the "head" and speaks to it.

STEIN:

My precious child. Soon you will know what it is to think, and walk; how it feels to breathe, to love, and to bribe politicians. Oh, my son, your time is here!

More crazed laughter as Stein hugs GloboCorp, kisses it, etc, and Narrator begins...

NARRATOR:

Corporate lawyer Franklin Stein, chief counsel for GloboCorp, Inc is fed up. Over the previous year, his beloved corporation has been picketed by environmentalists, sued by public interest groups, investigated by Congress, fined by regulators, and has experienced a labor strike by its workers. And now, in his outrage, lawyer Stein has devised a plan most diabolical - a plan that will suck the life out of a human being, and infuse it into GloboCorp to create a new form of life - to be known as a 'corporate person.' <Bossley & Chief Justice enter> As Stein readies his experiment, he is joined by {Tim / Tina } Bossley, the CEO of GloboCorp, and the Chief Justice of the U.S Supreme Court.

BOSSLEY:

Evening, Franklin. I brought our honorable guest.

STEIN:

{Mr. / Ms.}Chief Justice! I'm so glad you could join us in this wonderful endeavor.

CHIEF JUSTICE:

Hello, Stein. You know, Supreme Court Justices don't ordinarily make housecalls...

STEIN:

Your honor, I know you'll be glad you made this one exception. You see, we are about to achieve our finest feat yet! After tonight, the troubles facing big business in America are over! From this night on, the American corporation will finally reign supreme over this land.

BOSSLEY:

As you know, your honor, those who keep meddling with the affairs of companies like GloboCorp, always do so in the pursuit of the so-called "public interest." <using airquotes>. The

“public,” or “the People,” if you will, are always poking their noses where they don’t belong, starting protests, forming unions, filing class actions, you name it... It’s this “We the People” who are the true enemies of the modern corporation.

<Chief Justice nods in agreement>

STEIN:

Quite right, {Tim / Tina }. So the question, your honor, is - Where do the People get all that legal power from? I mean, from what legal document is the power of the People established?

CHIEF JUSTICE:

Duh - the Constitution.

BOSSLEY: *<points at Chief Justice excitedly>*

The U.S Constitution! *<(s)he holds up a copy of the Constitution>* This one document has been used at every turn to keep us down!

<Chief Justice grumbles in agreement>

STEIN:

But tonight, {Mr. / Ms.}Chief Justice, we will TURN THE TABLES!

<Stein dramatically removes the veil & reveals the machine.>

BOSSLEY:

This machine is a little something I had the IT guys at Globocorp rig up earlier today. Think of it as a mobile version of the Supreme Court chambers, to allow high court decisions to be made in the field. This module here allows you to extract the DNA of a live human subject. Here, let’s test it. Franklin, if you will...

Stein nods to Bossley, then runs over to a “planted” audience member...

STEIN:

Pardon me, <ma’am/sir>. We’ll give you \$10 if you’ll participate in our study, which will enhance American freedom and democracy.

SUBJECT:

Well considering that my job has moved to Mexico, I need the money!

The citizen happily takes the money and is escorted by Stein to the subject chair.

BOSSLEY:

Here, hold this. *<hands citizen the Constitution facing out so that large words “We the People” and “Bill of Rights” are visible to the audience.>*

STEIN: <placing the colander on the citizen's head, & doing a few other technical-looking things>
Now, let's begin stage one of the procedure. As {Tim / Tina } was saying, this module will extract the subject's vital life essence

SUBJECT:
My what?!

STEIN:
Not to worry <ma'am/sir>. That's just a legal term. Here, have another \$5.

*Subject is distracted by the money and takes it. Before he/she can realize (s)he's been duped, Stein throws a switch or otherwise activates the module. **Mechanical sounds begin** and the Subject appears unconscious but under physiological distress*

STEIN:
The life essence from the human... <he stops briefly to snatch the \$15 back from the subject's hands> ...is then comingled with the Constitutional data, then reprocessed, reassembled and fused into a single hybrid bio-linguistic code which we will soon confer into GloboCorp.

BOSSLEY:
Once the process is complete, enough life essence will have been transferred into the corporation for us to legally define the company as a "Person."

CHIEF JUSTICE:
So, GloboCorp will be turned into a human?

STEIN:
Nearly. The corporation will have all the Constitutional protections of an actual human person. We'll call it "corporate personhood."

BOSSLEY:
As a legal person, the company will have all the legal protections the founding fathers intended to give only to America's *human* citizens. It will give us standing to fight back and put the company on the same level as a real person!

CHIEF JUSTICE:
Really, it's *better* than being on the same level, because a corporation can already do all sorts of things a human can't. It can live for centuries - theoretically forever. And unlike a human, it can exist in more than one place at a time! It can't even be sent to prison or given a death sentence.

BOSSLEY:
Yes! And since it can't be punished in all the ways a human can, and since its owners are shielded from liability, the corporation, as a "person" will have very little to discourage it from

committing crimes. Really, it'll hardly have to face any consequences at all! With all the strengths of a corporation, and the constitutional protections of a person, Globo here will be a sort of "super-citizen" with a combination of rights and powers that ordinary human citizens simply won't be able to control

CHIEF JUSTICE:

I'm in! Let me just call the other justices and get a quick vote! *(Steps aside)*

BOSSLEY:

Oh man, I wasn't sure that was going to be so easy to sell to {him / her}!

STEIN:

Ye of little faith, {Tim / Tina }. After all, I *am* Franklin Stein, the top legal mind of our time. I would never do Globocorp wrong!

BOSSLEY:

That's why I pay you the big bucks!

CHIEF JUSTICE:

(steps in) Okay, the other justices and I have cast our votes.

BOSSLEY:

Great! So then, uh... What say you?

CHIEF JUSTICE:

Well, there were, like, 3 or 4 NAYs. And the rest were all YEAs.

STEIN:

Excellent! Now we can complete the procedure... We'll call that **three Nay's** *<he pokes the NAY button 3 times>* and, uh, six Yea's *<pokes the YEA 6 times>*

<Loud machine noises are made. The human subject moans eerily. GloboCorp begins to vibrate, slightly at first, but building up to a wild shaking, and the actor inside can start making some silly vocal noises, crescendo-ing until the sound effects suddenly stop in a crashing sound, and all is still. Several moments pass as the 3 conspirators look at each other, unsure what's happened. Finally the Chief Justice cautiously walks up to GloboCorp and pokes a finger into it. Globo tips slightly from the finger's pressure, but the motion becomes erratic and the vocalizations from inside resume. With a few wild thrashing jerks, the building sprouts arms and legs, and clumsily stands up. A few more moments of silence, and then...>

GLOBOCORP:

grumbles

STEIN:

IT'S ALIVE!! <THUNDER is heard>
Legally speaking, that is.

NARRATOR:

GloboCorp then proceeds to run rampant throughout the United States and other nations, causing much chaos and many problems, never suffering the same liability that we face as individuals. It's a classic story of creation overpowers creator, much like Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Instead of trying to regulate Globocorp, lawyer Franklin Stein, CEO {Tim / Tina } Bossley, and the Chief Justice continue to grant Globocorp more and more "rights."

For example, a subsidiary of Globocorp spills massive amounts of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. <Globocorp blatantly dumps oil into mock body of water> Evidence indicates that the company has failed to properly assess, manage and communicate the risk. Yet, their report of the events - and also government investigations - blame multiple *other* companies.

PROTESTORS:

CLEAN OUR OCEAN! CLEAN YOUR SPILL! CLEAN OUR OCEAN! CLEAN YOUR SPILL!

STEIN:

You people can't possibly blame an entire corporation for one little thing going wrong. Don't you understand ?-- we're too big to be held accountable!

CHIEF JUSTICE:

Yes, Mr. Stein; you're right. <to protestors, banging gavel> OVERRULED! You want the oil spill cleaned up? Make the taxpayers pay the bill!

TEST SUBJECT: <still on chair with colander on head. Glazed-over look in eye, as if not fully human, not fully sentient>

Yes, we will pay the bill.

NARRATOR:

In a recent ruling in January of 2010 of a case called *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations are persons, entitled by the U.S. Constitution to buy elections and run our government.

CHIEF JUSTICE:

Since corporations are people, and since we've decided that money is free speech, corporations can do whatever they want with their money! Just like nature intended!

<Stein and Bossley celebrate in background>

BOSSLEY:

Hey, you! You, in the suit, c'mere! You have a politician look about you.

POLITICIAN:

I am a politician, yes.

BOSSLEY:

I like you. Will you keep my company's interests in mind if we stuff your pockets with some nice green paper to help finance your re-election?

Globocorp and Bossley stuff the politician's pockets with money

POLITICIAN:

Why, yes! Yes, of course! I most certainly will! Thank you for your gracious donations.

NARRATOR:

The corporate person continues to grow stronger with each day that passes. Help us stop the evolution of corporate personhood before it's irreversible. Move to Amend is a bold national grassroots movement to revoke the illegitimate rights of corporations and give power back to the *actual* people. Corporations are just legal fictions, and only human beings are people. You can go online to movetoamend.org to learn more, or stay after and ask us questions. We have multiple people walking around today that are more than eager to have you sign our petitions! Thank you for your time, folks!

Materials needed:

- Corporate Person costume – click here for instructions:
<http://movetoamend.org/sites/default/files/PersonhoodCostumeInstCrop.pdf>
- Black robe, gavel for judge
- Pool or fishbowl to signify the ocean
- Tissue paper or cloth to signify an oil slick
- Protestor signs
- Fake money
- Supreme Court “machine” – we used a foam board with a drawing of the Supreme Court building and attached a dial to indicate when the machine was “Off” and “On”
- Large scroll of the Constitution with large “We the People” and “Bill of Rights” lettering
- Two slinkies and metal colanders or bowls to “attach” the machine to the citizen and corporate person
- Sound amplification, sound effects (optional)