

Huge amounts of money have been pouring into election campaigns not only as a result of the Citizens United decision, but because of decisions made by the Supreme Court in the past. The flood gates have been opened, the money flows, much of it “dark money” from undisclosed sources. In other countries, when elections are bought, and policy decisions are made by elected officials who have received bribes, we call it corruption and condemn it. But the Supreme Court of the United States has simply legalized it by saying that campaign contributions constitute free speech protected by the 1st amendment. Legalized corruption does not serve the interest of the American people.

Corporations have used this constitutional protection as “persons”, not only to pen the floodgates for corporate spending in elections, but for other purposes as well: For defending their right to lie in advertising (*Kasky v Nike*); for blocking inspections by regulatory

agencies in order to conceal criminal activity using the 4th amendment protection; and, for preventing communities from favoring local small businesses by means of differential tax rates and zoning restrictions (Liggett v. Lee).

Corporations have become more powerful than the government itself. Policy now serves corporate interests, not public interest. Our republican form of democracy has be usurped by a corporate oligarchy . Only by restraining corporate power, can the dream of our founders for a new kind of country, free of control by monarchs and the wealthy, which typified governments in Europe in the 18th century, be realized.