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## A modest proposal for Earth Day

In 1729, Jonathan Swift –who devoted much of his writing to the struggle for Ireland against English rule- published his satire “A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to their Parents or Country, and for Making them Beneficial to the Public” (he suggested that they should be well fed and then eaten). Had he been alive today, he would have probably had something satirical to say about the US government and Earth Day (April 22).

According to the US government’s Earth Day web page (<http://www.earthday.gov>), “Earth Day is a time to celebrate gains we have made and create new visions to accelerate environmental progress.” The same page tells us that “The Bush Administration is focused on achieving meaningful results –cleaner air and water, and healthier lands and wildlife habitats.” Although lacking Swift’s literary genius, we would like to make a Swiftonian contribution to those amazing statements.

To start with, we would like to say that it is clear that we can celebrate all the gains achieved in the past decades under the wise leadership of the US corporate government. Many dark and threatening forests have been cleared to let the sun’s rays reach the soil. Numerous dangerous or simply useless animals have been driven to extinction. Water has been enriched –for free- with high doses of expensive chemicals. During the night, forest peoples are now illuminated by gas flaring by oil companies. Forest areas are strictly protected from the Indigenous Peoples and forest communities that threaten logging companies, mining companies, plantation companies, shrimp farming companies and other environmentally-friendly corporations.

Environmental progress has also been highly successful and what appeared to be impossible has become true. For instance, changing the Earth’s climate might have seemed to be utopian. However, the difficulties were overcome and now we can celebrate a much warmer future. Making the sea level rise was also perceived by pessimists as impossible but, as usual, the US corporate government has proven them wrong. In coming years, instead of living in vast continents, some lucky people will be able to live in small paradisiac tropical islands –formerly the tallest peaks of those continents now covered by water- under the shade of genetically engineered palm trees.

Implementation of “new visions” has also achieved success and in this respect oil is a paradigmatic example. To achieve climate change and raise the sea level it is necessary to burn much oil. Unfortunately, most oil lies outside the US borders. The old vision meant that corporations needed to control oil-rich country governments, which were not always willing to collaborate. The new vision makes things easier: the oil-rich country can be occupied to prevent it from using weapons of mass destruction.

Following Jonathan Swift’s approach, we would like to make a Modest Proposal for Preventing the Corporations behind the US Government from Being a Burden to their Country and Others, and for Making them Beneficial to the Public. The proposal is simple: that those –and other similar transnational corporations- are driven to complete extinction.

