WN Columns

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What do you think?

Geoffrey Cannon



Spirals and curves in Amazonia. The river winds. Decoration on a wreck. World Cup symbol acknowledging Brazil's tropical influence. Manaus opera house seating. A man-eating anaconda

Manaus, Tefe. All families take pictures of one another when on holiday, usually in festive mode. Having worked as a graphic designer, I also like to look for signs, doors and windows, locks, old advertisements, symbols of the sun, patterns – the types of images you often find on postcards. Since 2005 I have also been collecting spirals. So I am pleased to see (inasmuch as anything organised by FIFA can be pleasing) that the graphics for the World Cup in Brazil (centre) and so here in Manaus accept the organic shape of life that is everywhere in the tropics. The bends and coils of the river (left) and the anaconda (right), are imprinted in people's minds here. On the wreck of a boat on the Rio Negro (part of the Amazon) there was an exuberant pink spiral (second left). From any viewpoint the tiers of seats in the Opera House (second right) have a spiral form.

While loving football, Brazilians have been hating FIFA, and rightly so. Arriving to find that the airport has been turned into a promotion for Coca-Cola is depressing. More than that though, Coca-Cola and McDonald's have coca-colonised and burgered what should have been a glorious promotion of the fruits, dishes and meals of Amazonia. This is the theme of the first item in this column, in the context of celebrating my ninth hero, the photographer Silvestre Silva. Then I return to the theme of human height. The persistence of Thomas Samaras, who believes it is biologically better to be short, is paying off. My own main interest is in the social and environmental impact of human body mass. Then I engage in the debate about whether or not it is a good idea to press for a global 'framework convention' on food, following that on tobacco. This is the wrong direction starting from the wrong place, in my view. More needs to be said on this topic. What do you think?

Box 1

Wrong!



Chinese economic development. Then four standard symbols, for progress (on, up, up); success (conquest of space'); achievement (piercing the bullseye); and growth (of money)

Elsewhere in *World Nutrition* there is now regular coverage headed *Development*. This is partly in response to the decision of leading governments and thus the UN and its relevant agencies that 2015-2030 will be the period of 'sustainable development'. It is also because we all now, as professionals and citizens, need to think, decide and act so as to preserve the living and physical world and the biosphere. We are now in the era of the Anthropocene, the period in which human activity above all is shaping the fate of the planet.

But what is meant by 'development'? We must all be aware that there is something funny-peculiar about pledging preservation of the environment, and yet at the same time rejoicing that the gross national products of high-income countries seem to be rising again. Huh? For what rising GNP means, is more circulation of money, and that means (barring inflation) more use of fuel and water and more exploitation of natural resources. Thus if GNP is the gauge of development, 'sustainable development' is a contradiction in terms.

This confliction, technically known as 'cognitive dissonance', is explained by the images and symbols people in Western societies, and elsewhere influenced by Western concepts, have grown up with. The pictures above have been found simply by googling images associated with 'development', 'progress', 'success', 'achievement', and 'growth'. A common image is of the arrow, upwards, forwards, as being taught to a child, above. Success and achievement is often pictured in such ways, or by images such as those of 'the conquest of space', a phrase as pathetic and absurd as 'the conquest of nature'. The rocket in the picture is a model of one proposed by conflicted multi-billionaire Richard Branson, who says he is an environmentalist, for Virgin Galactic tourist trips to the Moon. The image on the right, found by looking at images of 'growth', show a hand holding earth, from which stems not a shoot of a plant, but a pile of coins.

Any form of development or progress or achievement or success or growth that is seen in such ways is obviously not sustainable. The images – in contrast with those on the previous page of spiral and cyclical forms – once shown and given attention, display a notion of what is most valuable that now is clearly futile. The linear, straight arrow idea of the good life isolates humans as supreme in ways that separate and isolate our species from all others, and from the physical world and the biosphere. It justifies exploitation of all other beings, including vulnerable humans, and of things. It is not tenable. It is also wrong in all senses.

This realisation helps to explain why natural philosophers throughout history, until the rise of modern science and technology in the West in the 19th century CE, have revered nature. We will learn and gain more from contemplating how, why and where a river winds, than from accumulating money for a trip to the Moon. As for the straight arrow linear idea that controls most thought and action in the most powerful and profligate parts of the world, we have to see it for what it is and slough it off, as a snake discards old skin.

Food and nutrition, health and well-being

What they believe: 9. Silvestre Silva
By our fruits you shall know us



Silvestre Silva (above, left), two of his books (below, left and right), and Piedade do Paraopeba, the historic town in Minas Gerais where he was born (below, centre). Then fruits of Brazil. Tamarinds, cupuaçu, caqui, catsanhas do Pará (above, from left) and biriba and jaboticaba (below, from left)

Manaus, Tefe. This is written during the World Cup, after the four matches held in Amazonas where I am now in the fabulous city of Manaus. Here I celebrate Silvestre Silva (upper row above, left) from Minas Gerais ('General Mines'), the State of Brazil where I live, whose gold and diamonds financed the pre-industrial European powers. Those vanished days are shown in the worn stone steps up to the simple Baroque church in Piedade do Paraopeba, (lower row, centre) where Silvestre Silva grew up.

For nearly 40 years now, he has dedicated his life to the photography of the fruits of Brazil. Two of his books, produced to the superb standards of the best Brazilian publishing, are shown above. When living and working in Brasília in 2000-2002, his *Frutas no Brasil* (*Fruits of Brazil*) was vital support to the Ministry of Health in our promotion of Brazilian tropical fruits and foods. He also makes films and television programmes to remind Brazilians of their astounding heritage.

Brazilian fruits

The strip of my own pictures above, inspired by Silvestre Silva, shows some examples. The first fruits in the upper row are *tamarindos*, the tart chewy fruit originally from Africa and then Asia, the name coming from the Arabic 'date of India', brought to Brazil by the Portuguese as from the 16th century CE. Those shown are from a great tree in the garden of a mansion built in Manaus during the rubber boom. Nobody picks the fruits now, to make them into purees and juices or to eat whole. We crunched them underfoot and filled a bag to take home. Next,

outside the city in the rainforest, hanging from a tree in the grounds of the *Pousada Jacaré* (crocodile guest-house) is a *cupuacú*, native to the Brazilian North, which makes sublime juice and ice-cream. Next is *caqui* or *kaki*, known in English as persimmon, originally native to China. As you see they look like tomatoes, but are intensely sweet with a flavour a little like dates or plums, and may have been the fruit in the Odyssey that lured the sailors to linger with the lotus-eaters.

Held up aloft is a case of *castanhas do Pará,* known in English as Brazil nut, native to the Amazon forest, also from a tree from the *Pousada Jacaré.* This is a small one. Cases the size of a small beach ball that would kill anybody on whose head they fell, are common. Gravity breaks open the case and scatters the nuts, themselves protected by hard shells that eventually crack open in the hot wet climate to germinate the seed. In his wonderful book *1491*, Charles C Mann proves that the Indians who built towns along the banks of the rivers Solimões and Negra that come together at Manaus, whose survivors fled into the interior of the forest after the Europeans came, cultivated *castanha do Para* and many other fruits. What are seen ad found now are the remains of orchards.

The first fruit in the row below is a *biriba* from the tree in the house in Manaus of my wife Raquel's relatives, where we have been staying. The fruit, known in English as graviola, also native to Amazonia, grows high up on the big tree. It is luscious, as you see, and makes a delicious viscous juice. Finally next to the *biriba* is the astounding *jaboticaba* berry, also native to Brazil, but to the *cerrado,* the semi-arid savannah of central Brazil. In season in Brasília in season when the berries are all dark purple, it is sold in shopping streets from wheelbarrows. While looking a bit like big cherries, they have a deeper flavour and more texture. *Jaboticaba* amazed me, for as you see it grows directly out of the trunk of its tree, and I was brought up in England to think that fruits were suspended on stalks from branches. Not always so – the *mamão* (papaya) also grows directly from the trunk of its tree.

Enjoying good health

Here I am celebrating Silvestre Silva, whose books with their gorgeous photographs and text by Helena Tassara can and will always inspire readers. They should be taught in schools, for their stories are not just about food, diet and nutrition. The whole history of Brazil from when the original people first came perhaps 15,000 years ago, to the arrival of the Europeans who knew what grew in India, and then slaves from Africa, and then people from other countries including the Arab world and Japan, can be told in terms of the fruits of Brazil.

Most of the fruits shown here, and many others, are sold locally or in other parts of Brazil, and many are pulped and frozen and sent all over the country to be made into juices in the *lanchonetes* (snack bars) on most shopping streets in moss cities. Very refreshing and delicious too, and of course customers can ask for mixtures of

different fruits, and (as I do) specify no added milk or sugar. Many are not known outside Brazil, and some are well-known only in parts of Brazil, one reason being that many are not 'commercial'. Some do not look 'nice', to consumers accustomed to uniform fruits from supermarkets. Some, like *biriba,* become discoloured. Most do not feature in international tables of the chemical composition of foods, and so are off the nutritionists' maps. Others are listed with incorrect information, because analysis in a temperate country of a tropical fruit that was picked unripe and shipped and ripened, can be very different indeed from that of a fruit picked ripe from a tree or a bush in its native tropical land. Obvious, you might think.

The World Cup crime



Above, from our sojourn in Manaus. Turtle eggs whole (left) and pureed with manioc grits (right) and the turtle cooked on the open fire in the back yard normally used to grill fish or meat (centre)

Now here is my indictment of FIFA and also of the Brazilian government, concerning the World Cup. Everywhere matches were played, and everywhere on television, Brazil was penetrated by transnationals. The whole event was projected as the junk food version of Disneyworld. This has been a crime. After some of the fruits of Brazil, super-briefly are some of the natural and gastronomic wonders of Amazonia. Above is a turtle and the food it makes. Below are fish from the Amazon and the meals they make. No, I am not one of the men in the picture at right.



Above, tambaqui from the Amazon, centerpiece of a feast in our honour in Manaus. Right, the great piraracú that can grow to 200 kilograms, captured centuries ago (centre) and recently (right)

It would have been so easy for the government of Brazil, even within the outrageous rules imposed by FIFA, to require let's say $US 2 billion, a fraction of the money being trousered by FIFA, to promote Brazilian food. Tourist football fans would have loved this and much of the money would be spent to protect producers. This is what had better happen with the International Olympic Committee and the Games to be held in Brazil in 2016. Watch *WN* for regular news.

Human size

It is best to be small



My son Gabriel age 8 with a country lady, Dona Maria Aparecida, in Piedade do Paraopeba, on the old gold 'royal' road; and at home age 10 with his friend of the same age Bernardo Cipriani

In thinking about the health and welfare of their children, parents are trained to think about size. Gabriel my son, who is now 10, is in the pictures above. On the left early last year aged 8 (nearly 9, he points out) he is on the *Estrada Real*, the road that brought gold and diamonds from the mines of Diamantina and Ouro Preto in Minas Gerais, the state where we live, to the ocean at Rio de Janeiro or Parati (also on the coast of Rio state) to fund capitalism and industrialisation in Europe. He is with Dona Maria Aparecida, a lady who runs an artisan crafts shop in Piedade do Paraopeba, a stopping place which dates back to the 17th century CE. It's a fair bet that she is descended from the country people of that time.

Before we said goodbye I asked her and Gabriel to pose together. 'You did that because I am taller than she is' he said afterwards, because he knows about my interests. Actually without his big hair they would be about the same height – about 1.44 metres or 4 foot 9.

The picture on the right was taken at home recently, soon after Gabriel's 10th birthday. He is with his good friend Bernardo Cipriani, who is a month older. They are playing the ancient game of 'stone, paper, scissors'. Gabriel is now around 1.50 metres (5 foot) and weighs 43 kilograms (roughly 9 and a half stone). Bernardo is around 1.42 metres (4 foot 7) and weighs 24 kilograms (roughly 5 and a quarter stone). Gabriel is a fit footballer. Bernardo runs faster than Gabriel, shoots goals harder, is sociable, and in case anybody wonders, is a good student.

Bernardo is also lucky, because if earlier in life he had been identified as 'stunted' by some conscientious paediatrician or other health professional, which according to the scales he was and is, he would have been fed energy-dense products to make him

grow, which he would have done not so much vertically as horizontally, and so now would still be short, but also fat, unfit, slow, probably miserable, and likely to become an obese adolescent and adult.

In Dona Maria Aparecida's time as a child in the countryside, there were no health professionals around who were keen to push growth. That all came later. These days in Brazil it is common for adult grandchildren to be up to 25 centimetres (almost a foot) taller than their grandparents. Childhood overweight and obesity is also common now in Brazil, whereas two or three generations ago it was rare.

Gabriel wants to know if I think he is too big. A delicate question! No, I say, but Bernardo Cipriani is not too small. His father is short too, says Gabriel. What's best for you, I say, is your swimming lessons and swimming in the ocean and football lessons and matches, and lots of meals freshly made at home. Gabriel enjoys making meals with me, while being aware that none of his friends do this. One of my tricks is to toss omelettes from a heavy cast iron pan. He calls in his friends to watch he do this. As I did as a boy, he likes setting a table for a meal.

Size and lifespan

Which brings me to Thomas Samaras, who publishes another letter in *WN Feedback* this month (1). For 40 years he has persevered in insisting that it is better to be relatively short (2). He set out his overall theory of human biology, based on his professional knowledge of structural engineering, in a big book edited and largely written by him, published in 2007 (3). This is how I learned about his work (4,5). He remains almost ignored in the conventional literature, because his findings go against the conventional wisdom of the dominant group of clinicians and epidemiologists, and because he is not formally qualified in the biological sciences.

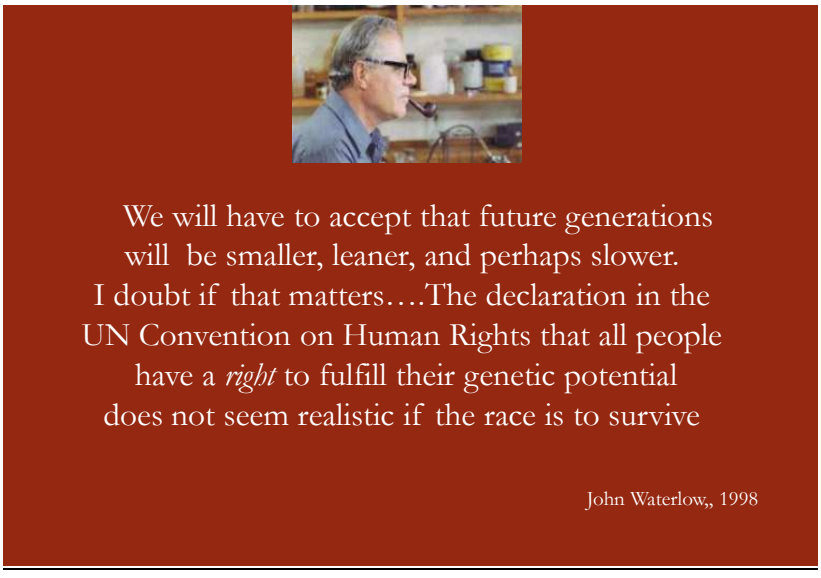
Tom and I have stayed in touch. Since early 2011 he has published a commentary and three letters in *WN* (6-8), and nine items have appeared in *Public Health Nutrition* or *WN* twice a year or so supporting his thesis, mostly in the form of items in my own column, as here (9-17). This time he reports on research supporting the view that short men live longer (18), which support his own work (19-21). He also suggests that women live longer than men because women are shorter than men.

In early life in impoverished settings, being comparatively very short is a reliable marker for infestation and infection. This needs treating, often as prevention as well as treatment. But it is obvious to me that there is otherwise nothing wrong with infants, children or adults being very short compared with the human humvees that have been bred in the US and elsewhere on formula, diets heavy in energy and protein, and an ideology that the bigger the better. What is wrong, is an environment in which for example Margaret Chan, Queen Elizabeth II and Aung San Suu Kyi are conspicuous, and an attitude that it would be better if they were taller.



Thomas Samaras's persistence is impressive. Slightly I think to his disgust, it still seems to me that on height, the biological story is equivocal, depending on what is taken as the gauge of health, and which diseases are selected. Also I think the biological issue is not very important. What does matter, very much indeed, is the environmental dimension of human size – not of the number of humans, but their size. Hence the slide above, which among others I project whenever I have a chance.

Hence also the slide below. Many readers will know that John Waterlow (1916-2010) was a physician and public health nutritionist of towering authority, best known for his world-leading work on human protein turnover and requirements, and for coining and defining the terms 'stunting' and 'wasting'. Less well known is his concern, late in his long life, about the environmental consequences of human mass. The quote in the slide below should guide all thinking on being the right size. I will explain this to Gabriel, but not now.



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Development

The new world food and nutrition order

Access May 2014 Consumers International-World Obesity document here
Access June 2014 Update on return to regulation for world health here

Usually I stay away from current issues in this column, and instead seek to share broad concepts, ideas and experiences. The item before this one, on the right size for humans, is an example.

But here now I share some first thoughts arising from the proposal, as reported in *WN* last month in *Update,* for a *Global Convention to Protect and Promote Healthy Diets* (1,2). This has been developed by Consumers International and the World Obesity Federation (CI-WOF). It is modelled on the WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC) (3).

The idea for such a plan has been discussed for several years. The document has been drafted from within consumer and health organisations. Its proposal for a Framework Convention for food and nutrition is supported by professionals based in the UK, Europe and elsewhere, who are dedicated to protect and improve public health. The CI-WOF document is meant to encourage discussion and development. All this deserves sympathy and respect. Its general approach and its proposals are, however, mistaken. Here I explain why, and indicate the right way.

The global food system has become corrupted: The catastrophe

Certainly something very big has to be done. The transnational manufacturers and caterers of ultra-processed products (4) are creating and accelerating a global public health disaster, most obviously evidenced by rocketing rates of obesity and diabetes, particularly in less resourced and impoverished countries and settings.

In all this, industry as a whole is a victim. Just as with bankers and speculators, the basic corrupting factor is not industry, not even the transnationals themselves, but the current dominant political and economic ideology, a horrible neo-Darwinist mistake, that valorises greed and penalises conscientious entrepreneurs. Epidemics are symptoms of sick societies. A pandemic is a symptom of a sick system of world governance. Tinkering will do no more good than a band-aid on gangrene.

Ultra-processed food and drink products (4) are above all manufactured, advertised and promoted by vast Big Food corporations some of whose turnovers match the

gross national products of middle-size countries (5). These colossal businesses with billions of dollars at the disposal of their chief executives and main boards, have the same general aims and strategies. They jostle for more sales and profit and higher share value, go for double-digit annual growth in and deeper penetration of countries in the global South, and elbow less capitalised companies out of their way. Their products are creating sick societies throughout the world (6).

The human and financial costs of diabetes, rates of which are now rocketing in many countries, including in settings where impoverished families have to pay commercial rates for drugs, are outrageous and insupportable. The greatest burdens of obesity, diabetes and metabolic syndrome, are borne by impoverished families, communities and populations who often also suffer food shortages and nutrition insecurity. The evidence against fatty, sugary or salty energy-dense snacks and sugared soft drinks, super-profitable as well as ultra-processed, consumed in the amounts now typical in the global North and much of the South, is conclusive.

Hundreds of papers and reports support these statements. They are not seriously disputed by any knowledgeable independent source. Eight references (4-11) will do here, with the references contained within them. The evidence is evident. As well as all this, fast food cultures are wasteful and exploitative. They are unsustainable and indefensible. They damage mental and emotional health, and family and social life. They erode long-established and traditional farming and food cultures and dietary patterns. They destroy people-intensive urban and rural businesses, abuse animals, and spoil the environment.

There is good reason to be angry. Indeed, there is good reason for hundreds of millions of producers, manufacturers, distributors, caterers, retailers and traders who make and sell fresh and wholesome food and food products to be outraged. Many are. What is happening to food systems throughout the world is also dangerous. It is a reason, and sometimes the trigger, for demonstrations, riots and insurrections.

The efficient cause of what now amounts to a catastrophe is the activities of unleashed and increasingly oligopolistic transnational corporations. These monsters must be leashed. The only effective action will be on a global scale, which must be radical in the exact sense of the term: it must go to the root of the matter.

Hence the concept of a framework convention on food, or diets, or junk foods, modelled on that for tobacco. Considerations like those summarised above motivate those who have prepared the CI-WOF proposal. But already its concept becomes fuzzy, because food, diets and junk food are different one from the other, and as is constantly and correctly said, food is not tobacco. With all due respect to conscientious and experienced colleagues, the CI-WOF document in anything like its present form is not a way forward.

Educating consumers about ultra-processed products:
The wrong way



Brushing up ultra-processed products by product reformulation liable to generate health claims, will only lead to greater penetration by transnational corporations of vulnerable countries in the South

A genial story tells of the tourist in the Irish countryside who, seeing a peasant, stops his limousine and asks the way to Sligo. The man of the soil doffs his cap and replies: 'Well sir, if I was going to Sligo, I wouldn't be going from here'. With this in mind, if the CI-WOF document is, in current jargon, a 'road-map', it is of the wrong territory. It is starting in the wrong place, and does not show the way. A new map is needed. Here are four of the reasons why.

1 Junk plus health claims

The recommendations of the CI-WOF document in its present form are mostly designed to enable consumers to make better choices of labelled and thus packaged food products. Most of these are ultra-processed and inherently unhealthy, and remain unhealthy when reformulated so as to contain less saturated fat or sugar or salt. Besides which, regulatory authorities allow the makers of many reformulated products to advertise them as if they are healthy, or even some sort of medicine (12). A policy that leads to retooled ultra-processed products being advertised with health claims will not inspire millions of people to become activists in the common interest.

2 Nutrient profiling won't work

Nutrient profiling is a guiding light for the CI-WOF document. It validates a strategy of adjusting the relative proportion of nutrients and other constituents of packaged products. This strategy was first attempted in a big way beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, with programmes backed by governments and accepted by industry to reduce fat, saturated fat and dietary cholesterol in products. This is believed to have reduced

rates of heart disease. But manufacturers poured more sugar into the products. The result we know: explosive rises in rates of obesity and diabetes. One disease was swapped for another. Now it is proposed that products should contain less fat and saturated fat, and also less sugar and salt, and little or no *trans* fats. This is a more concerted approach. But little thought is being given to what they will contain instead. Big Food corporations are not about to take salt, sugar, saturated fat and fat out of their products and put nothing else back in. They are dedicated to maximum mouth-feel, intense sensory impact, desire for more – even to the creation of products whose addictive qualities vitiate any nutrient-based approach (13,14).

Reformulation means more sophisticated use of substances and additives not now on any regulatory radar, with unforeseen results that no doubt would not be as great a disaster as *trans* fats or added sugars and syrups, but might run them close. A green light for reformulation of ultra-processed products is similar to a policy to improve public health that encourages Big Tobacco to manufacture low-tar cigarettes (12).

3 No mention of transnationals

In the CI-WOF document, there is no explicit reference to the transnational corporations whose policies and products are driving the obesity and diabetes pandemic, despite the fact that the WHO director-general herself persistently points this out (15,16). Why? Instead, a new term that seems to have been invented recently is used: 'non-state actors with commercial interests'. This can be used of greengrocers or shoe repairers. Why has this term been invented and why is it being used here? And why does the document seek to 'secure the commitment and engagement of the food and beverage industry'? (8,9). It is easy to think of reasons for this phrasing and this desire for happy ever after partnership, but hard to think of a good reason.

The transnationals and their front organisations, for it is they that are being referred to, have the duty to serve the money markets and maximise their sales and profits. This is what they do. They, and the political and economic license they exploit, are the problem, and not part of the solution. Until this is recognised, specified and stated, any attempt to compare the CI-WOF document with the framework convention on tobacco control collapses.

4 Food is not tobacco

In any case, a policy proposal modelled on the tobacco framework convention is making a mistake. Food is indeed not tobacco. The foremost priority of any serious global policy on food and health is to be positive. It must be to protect and promote what exists that is good. This includes the long-established and traditional food systems and supplies of all regions and countries not yet overwhelmed by the ultra-processed products of Big Food (and Big Soda, Big Sugar and Big Snack).

Protecting health established food systems:
The right way



Theodore Roosevelt (front, centre) a century ago busted the great corporate trusts of the type now rampant, and also ensured freedoms and joys for US citizens by protection of wildernesses and parks

So if the CI-WOF document is not the way forward, what is? Here is the answer. The model is not tobacco, or what is bad that needs to be stopped. The *Framework Convention for Tobacco Control* is not the place to start. The model is the environment, the whole living and physical world from which authentic food systems spring. The model is what is good that needs to be protected, including long established food cultures, gastronomic traditions, and dietary patterns based on freshly prepared meals enjoyed in company. These all need to be known, celebrated, studied, strengthened and developed. This is the right road and the right direction.

Indeed yes, global systematic serious statutory regulation needs to be imposed on transnational corporations, including those responsible for ultra-processed food and drink products – and all other transnational corporations, too. This implies a whole new attitude to industry as a whole. This will not be done by tweaking the formulations of intrinsically unhealthy ultra-processed products. What is required is a new world order within which transnational corporations themselves, not merely their products, are subjected to governance in the public interest, and are restricted, restrained, regulated. Can this be done? It must be done.

Return to Roosevelt

The whole overall task has to be undertaken and achieved positively, in the spirit that has created protected wildernesses and parks, strictly regulated for the pleasure, freedom and enjoyment of all people. Thus, the national parks of the USA, a kind of re-creation of the commons for recreation, did not come about by chance. The inspiration and the vision was that above all of Theodore Roosevelt, who as US

president busted the corporate trusts, and who in May 1908 summoned a meeting of state governors and many other notables, including the vastly wealthy industrialist Andrew Carnegie, to the White House for a Conservation Conference (17). Here they are, above (all men, as then customary).

The people of the US have been able to enjoy the wonders of the land where they live ever since, largely because of what was safeguarded then and later. This positive spirit can inspire a new world food system for the benefit of all. This includes industry as a whole, which needs regulation in its own interests just as surely as children need protection against exploitation.

The right way forward is to recognise, valorise and rally all public interest organisations and social movements who love food and where it comes from, and all it means. These include very many millions of parents, citizens and voters, and also very many elected and appointed officials who are ready to fight for a better world.

The right way is also to inspire and engage almost all sectors of the food industry in the fullest sense of the word. This includes representatives of the hundreds of millions of farmers, distributors, wholesalers, caterers, restaurateurs, retailers, traders and writers whose livelihoods and self-respect derive from supply and support of good healthy food, typically made into fresh meals enjoyed in company. Here are the industrious businesses, entities, families and their representatives that need to be nourished as partners, and on whose support any great endeavour to transform the world's food systems and supplies and thus dietary patterns depends. They are many. The transnational corporations are few.

In such ways a transformed food system can be one part of a transformed system of world political and economic governance, without which no great endeavour for the common good can succeed. So where is our Theodore Roosevelt? He or she may come from an unexpected place.

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