The Occupations, The Commons, Fear and T**ū**rangawaewae

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Police attacks on the Occupations are the current manifestation of the violent suppression of the peoples rights to the planet’s land and natural resources. This harshly exploitative power relationship stems directly from the amalgam of church/state that was the Holy Roman Empire. The fundamentals have never shifted towards justice. The basic person/planet ethic of HRE is "dominium" - legalization of land acquired by conquest and plunder. As long as the few rather than the many “own” the planet, there will be brutality and unending war.

I perceive that a not yet fully conscious reason why the Occupations are so fundamentally powerful is that this action takes and holds land as a commons. Pitching a tent and sleeping on land is a direct threat to the powers that be, because in our system the only ways to acquire land are through inheritance, purchase (with mortgage debt) or rent (to a landlord who has inherited land or purchased land via mortgage debt.)  In our system there is NO INHERENT RIGHT to land as a birthright.

By the simple act of direct land occupation, the Occupation movement is first and foremost a land rights movement. The painful awareness of the abnegation of our fundamental rights to land is deep in the subconscious mind of the many. For millennia, reigning powers have unleashed violence and death upon myriads of assertions of land rights by the landless. These psychic scars in the collective mindfield are laden with fear and trepidation.

The Occupations broke the fear barrier. But if people are “permitted” to stake claim to little city parks here and there, their next step might be to stake claim and hold more and more urban and rural land. The call of the Russian Revolution was Land and Liberty and the French Revolution was triggered by the revolt of the landless serfs. Yet the land problem has not been solved but rather festers and erupts, an unhealed world wound, the source of our weltschmerz, the pain of the world we-the-many are feeling right now.

If the powers that be were to “permit” people to stake direct land rights claims, for free and indefinitely, and the land rights movements expanded, soon people would be building their own "free" villages and communities. They would discover that they do not need "jobs" to survive. This is the greatest threat to the powers that be. For without sufficient numbers in a “labor pool" competing with each other to drive down wages, the “job creators” would have to pay the highest wages possible or else people would choose to self-employ on land, cutting deeply into the unearned profits of the 1%.

The very first environmental political party, precursor to the German Greens, was the New Zealand Values Party. Their platform contained a key policy based on the Maori land ethic of “tūrangawaewae.” Tūrangawaewae is one of the most powerful Māori concepts. Literally tūranga (standing place), waewae (feet), it is often translated as ‘a place to stand’. Tūrangawaewae are places where we feel especially connected and empowered. “They are our foundation, our place in the world, our home.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Occupations are standing on tūrangawaewae. And as you read this, the Occupiers are once again being thrown off the Commons.

1. ###  See: Tūrangawaewae as foundation <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land/5>

 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)