

Have Corporations Pushed America to the Brink of Civil Unrest?

ST. PAUL, Minn., Nov. 5, 2014 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Author and veteran corporate consultant Dick Lee started out writing “We Are Buyers. You Are Sellers. You’re Busted” (ISBN: 978-1-4834-1692-2; HVMPress) to track historically corporate abuse of customers and describe the resulting deterioration of buyer-seller relations. But when the narrative reaches the 2010s, Lee makes two surprise findings.

First, long-standing buyer-seller conflict is melding with more recently heightened employee anger at employers and public disgust with business buying votes with campaign cash. The combination is creating dangerously high levels of public anger directed at corporate America. Second, and directly related, America is on course for an internal eruption targeting big business of a magnitude not seen since the Vietnam War and civil rights protests of the 1960s and early 70s.

Others have cited concerns about civil unrest occurring. Diverse voices including Nobel Prize-winning economist Nouriel Roubini, economist Thomas Picketty, former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, Harvard professor Kenneth Rogoff, uber-financier and one-percenter Nick Hanauer worry out loud that left unaddressed, economic unfairness of the magnitude we’re now experiencing will provoke civil disturbances.

Hanauer writes in his recent Politico article “The Pitchforks are Coming...for the Plutocrats” – “...there is no example in human history where wealth accumulated like this and the pitchforks didn’t eventually come out. You show me a highly unequal society, and I will show you a police state. Or an uprising. There are no counterexamples. None. It’s not if, it’s when.”

Lee agrees. However, he doesn’t see these high-level statements motivating mitigating actions. So he drops down to street level to provide a detailed assessment and well-grounded predictions.

His findings do not encourage. He’s pessimistic over how few in business or government take the threat seriously, despite intensifying “mini-eruptions.” He’s concerned that even experienced observers solely attribute the conflict to today’s income and wealth inequality, which he agrees is important. But they don’t realize business deliberately set out to create these imbalances over 30 years ago. And they don’t recognize other sources of public-business conflict at work. Hard to come up with solutions, in Lee’s mind, without understanding the history of the problems.

Lee’s narrative reaches back to post-World War II times. Readers will see buyer-seller trust gradually eroding. They’ll see corporate America losing the trust and goodwill of citizens, not just as customers but in other roles. One incident after another, Lee depicts big business lying to customers, the general public and government; knowingly selling goods with potential to

maim, kill or poison buyers and innocent bystanders; polluting water everywhere; polluting the land; polluting the atmosphere, polluting politics; polluting our minds with non-stop advertising; refusing to pay a fair share of taxes; and taking zero responsibility for the country's present or future welfare.

Lee's accounts might leave many readers fist-shaking angry, if he wasn't having such a merry time using his pen as a mallet, sword and needle. Plus he narrates in the "first person customer," inviting readers to join him calling out corporate sins and foibles.

Writing in his iconic "stream of sarcasm" style, Lee travels through the years, goring the corporate ox at every opportunity with quips like, "Had we truth-in-advertising police back then, you would have run out of bail money." He doesn't spare politicians, either, commenting, "This Congress can't pass gas." But he never loses the serious thread underneath. He does drop some of the humor, however, when the narrative arrives at the Great Recession. He doesn't see anything funny in people losing their jobs or their homes. Reflecting on banksters whose greed helped precipitate the recession, Lee comments, "Why in hell were you still out on the lam while lots of us were out of our houses?"

"We Are Buyers..." may appear a tougher read for business management than the public, but Lee starts the book dispensing some sage advice. "Put on your customer hats" before reading. He reminds us we're all customers, and seeing our companies through customer eyes delivers extraordinary insight and knowledge. His test panel of business readers agrees.

This is Lee's fourth book, including his industry best seller, "The Customer Relationship Management Survival Guide." He has also coauthored numerous published research studies assessing customer perceptions and behaviors. He holds a BA from Reed College and an MBA from Suffolk University.

"We Are Buyers. You Are Sellers. You're Busted" comes in all common e-reader formats and in softcover. Learn more at: <http://www.hympress.com/>.

*PHOTO (book jacket):

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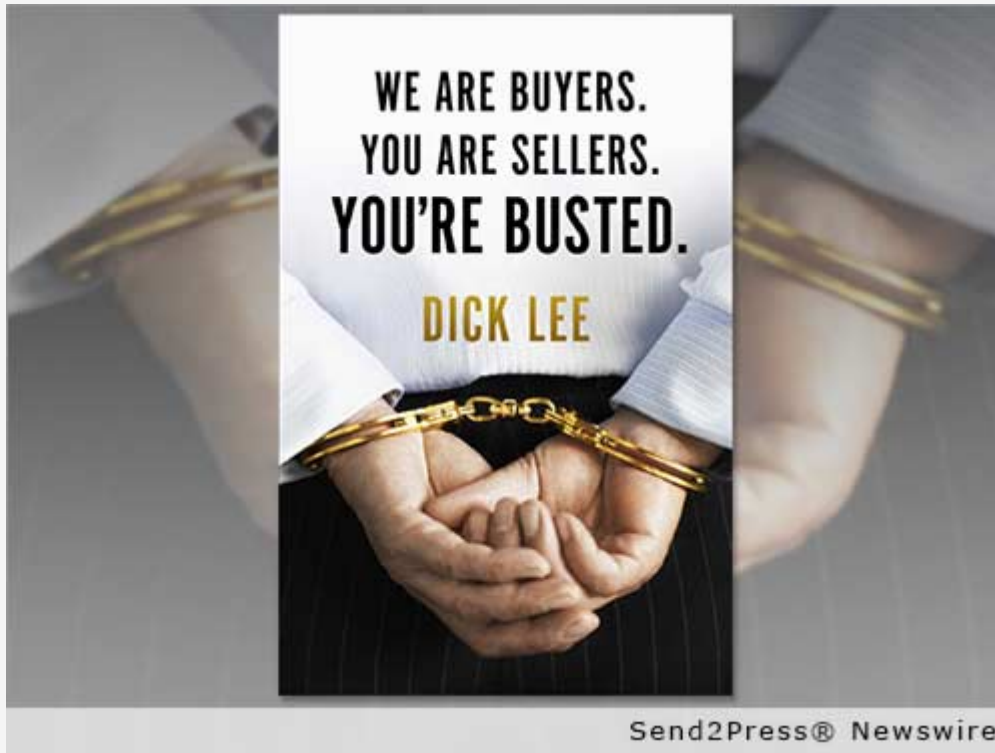
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