

Indiana and Pennsylvania Officials Put 'For Sale' Signs on State Roads

Foreign conglomerates clamoring for right to own free trade corridors

By Mark Anderson

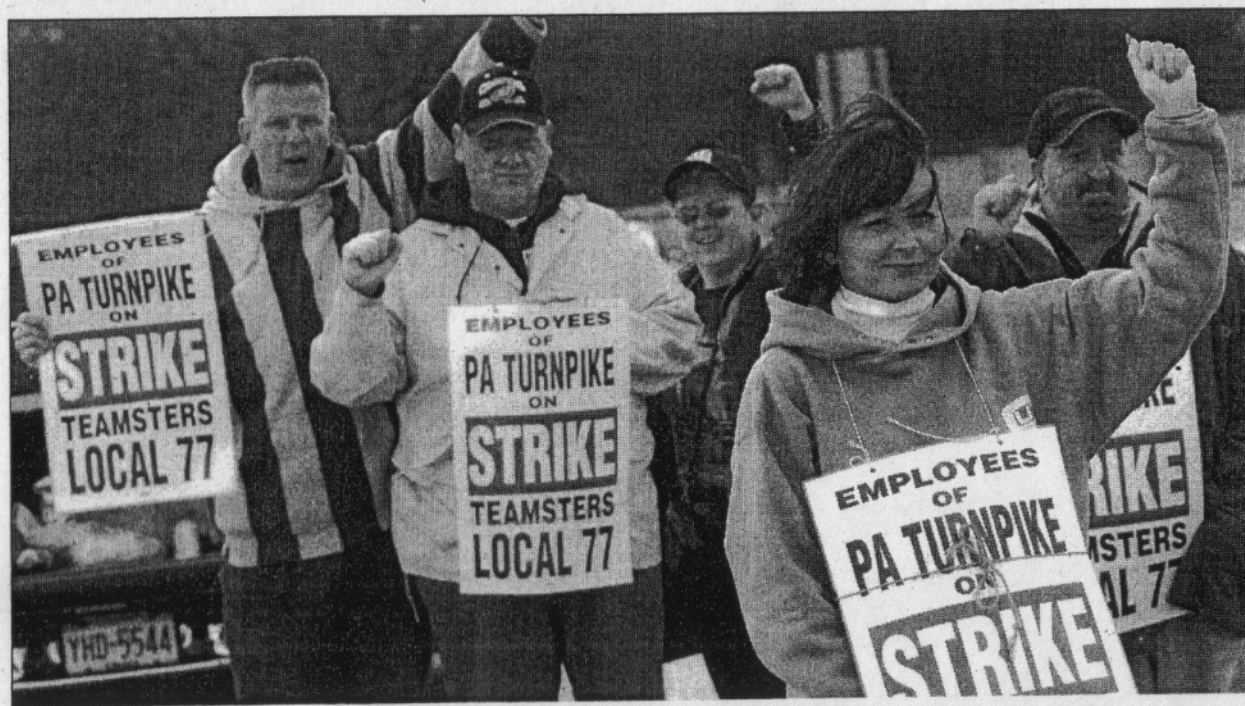
In a move that many grassroots activists believe signals a coming trend, two states have put taxpayer-financed toll roads up for sale to foreign companies. More disconcerting is the fact that these have the potential becoming a massive network of toll roads facilitating free trade throughout North America under the framework of the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA.

In Indiana, foreign interests are obtaining the first lease agreement with a state government to privately operate an existing toll road—paying \$3.8 billion for a 75-year lease to operate the Indiana Toll Road.

In addition, the historically significant Pennsylvania Turnpike also may be headed to the proverbial auction block, as confirmed by *American Free Press*. But apparently it's not a done deal.

AFP reported last December that Pennsylvania state Rep. Richard Geist had planned to introduce House Bill 1 to sell the Pennsylvania Turnpike to private investors.

The Indiana Toll Road deal prompted Hoosiers to send scores of "Ditch Mitch" bumper stickers critical of Gov. Mitch Daniels's unwavering support of the sale. It involved



WILLIAM THOMAS CAIN/GE

(OVER)

I have added main parts of Pres. Bush's E.O. which caused it.

... Daniel's unwavering support of the sale. It involved a deal between the state and ITR Concessions LLC, a partnership of the Cintra Company of Spain and the McQuarie Bank of Australia.

McQuarie and Cintra, as AFP previously noted, also are involved with the highly controversial Trans-Texas Corridor, a planned toll road system that would ripple through the Texas countryside, gobbling up large tracts of land. It would largely be used for trucking foreign merchandise to the United States. A number of safety and security concerns have been raised.

In Pennsylvania, Geist, a Blair County Republican, is employed as a "consulting engineer-legislator," according to his official web site. He is the ranking minority member of the Transportation Committee. Democrat Joseph F. Markosek is the chairman.

A spokesman for Markosek told AFP on Jan. 29 that, as it turns out, House Bill 1 was active in the previous legislative session but the bill died when the session ended at the close of 2006. Look for the bill to surface with a new number in the 2007 session.

According to the Jan. 16, 2007, Patriot-News, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC), an agency of the state government, "hired a team of well-connected Harrisburg insiders to fight any proposal to sell or lease the turnpike." However, Bill Capone, the PTC's communications director, claimed that's not true. He said the PTC only has been involved in the governor's study of the critical lack of state transportation funding concerning mass transit, toll ways and possibly converting non-toll ways into toll roads. Proposed remedies include leasing or selling the turnpike to raise state revenues.

Though the toll way's actual construction was not financed until the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal," the Pennsylvania Turnpike's origins can be traced

Executive Order 12803—
Infrastructure Privatization

April 30, 1992

Section 1. Definitions. For purposes of this order: (a) "Privatization" means the disposition or transfer of an infrastructure asset, such as by sale or by long-term lease, from a State or local government to a private party.

(b) "Infrastructure asset" means any asset financed in whole or in part by the Federal Government and needed for the functioning of the economy. Examples of such assets in-

clude, but are not limited to: roads, tunnels, bridges, electricity supply facilities, mass transit, rail transportation, airports, ports, waterways, water supply facilities, recycling and wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, housing, schools, prisons, and hospitals. THIS EXECUTIVE ORDER SIGNED BY GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH IN 1992.

back to the days of Washington, according to the PTC.

"President Washington publicly favored the establishment of roads to promote the westward expansion of our nation," notes a passage on the PTC's web site. "In 1791, the legislature of the Pennsylvania Commonwealth approved a statewide transportation plan and a year later created the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike Company."

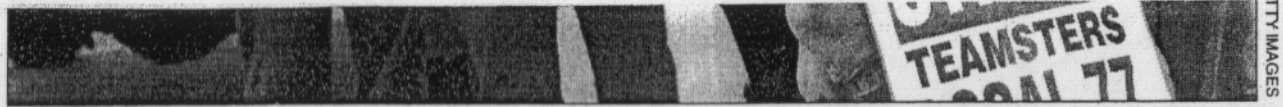
The company's charter called for constructing a 62-mile long-surfaced road, providing successful transport for settlers and their goods over muddy territories.

After 1800, the route of the future Lancaster Turnpike was replaced by a canal, and then replaced in the 1880s by the early stages of a railroad. A series of decisions and changing national transportation needs over the years led to today's turnpike, now in its sixth decade of service.

"The original 160-mile route," the PTC's web site adds, "has been expanded to 514 miles, carrying 156.2 million vehicles a year at a toll of just over 4.1 cents a mile. . . . Today, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, part of Interstate 76, can be recognized, as the first of a new breed of American toll ways in the interstate highway system."

But it's not as if only existing toll ways are under consideration. New ones, with up to six lanes in each direction, are envisioned for the Trans-Texas Corridor, which seems well-suited as a linchpin for fastening together the United States, Canada and Mexico under the umbrella of a "North American Community."

China has a big interest in the toll ways because of its commercial shipping in Pacific and Atlantic seaports. Some imported goods can be routed away from West Coast ports, to be unloaded off ocean vessels at cheaper Mexican ports



TTY IMAGES

POLITICAL CROOKS: Many Americans think that since taxpayers paid for American highways, they are owned by the people. You are wrong. Many politicians in our great country are trying to pull off the greatest heist in American history—they are actually planning to sell off our highways to the highest foreign bidder. This incredible plan smells so bad that all taxpayers who know of it suspect—with reason—that the palms of the pols who want to pull off this job will be well-greased by the so-called buyers.

and transported by truck and rail through Mexico into Texas and beyond by Mexican trucks and drivers.

Kansas City, Mo.—despite being 1,000 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border—has been dubbed a major hub, including as a customs inspection location, for the goods and raw materials transported through the area on existing rail lines and toll ways, and on the new ones that may be built, forever altering the physical, economic and political landscape of these United States.

To voice your views on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, call Rep. Geist at (717) 787-6419 or (814) 946-7218, Rep. Markosek at (717) 783-1012 or (412) 856-8284, and the Turnpike Commission at 800-331-3414. Call Pennsylvania Sens. Robert Casey (D) at (202) 224-6324 and Arlen Specter (R) at (202) 224-4254. ★

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notice that they can sell off America but not be limited to this list only! all done by the stroke of one man's pen! Wake up, America!