

Jill Stein

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down where we were and they called a lot of police stations and found out where it was and they were able to sort of hone in on us. They showed up and they were told that they would be arrested if they didn't leave the premises. They were not even allowed to stay in the parking lot or be anywhere near because they weren't supposed to know where we were and they didn't want anybody else to know.

So, we were taken to this dark site. There were approximately 16 Secret Service and police. It was a huge, converted police facility. It looked like an old gym or something that had been converted. My running mate and I were the only people there initially and eventually they brought in a reporter, a journalist and independent media journalist, who was supposed to be covering Chelsea Manning's trial the next day. They arrested this journalist for taking pictures of Secret Service taking pictures. So, this journalist was taking pictures back at the spy state that didn't want pictures taken, so they arrested him. So it was the three of us, basically political prisoners that were being held in this dark site. We

were handcuffed to these metal chairs tightly for seven hours and we were released without cell phones, without jackets. We were basically turned out into the street without any way to contact anyone late at night in November out in the freezing cold, just sort of walking the streets until we could find some kind person that allowed us to use their cell phones for us to get back in touch.

That's how scared they are that word should get out that people actually have a choice that is of, by and for the people."

What did you say earlier about the press, like their mission, about the affliction and the oppressed? It's to comfort the afflicted, and--

"Afflict the comfortable. Right. That is supposed to be sort of the moral mission of a free press. If a free press simply comforts the comfortable and afflicts the afflicted, that's oligarchy. That's aristocracy."

It's pointless.

"Really. A free press is supposed to ensure that the questions are asked to the powerful all the time. They're not supposed to empower the power-

ful, but that's what they do. So, that's how, it's not just independent campaigns that are locked out. It's young people that are locked out. It's African-Americans who are trying to walk down the street without being assaulted, or to drive a car without being shot. These are the kind of questions that should be asked, that, you know, where the press has given up the goat, and when people say to me, 'Isn't it hopeless? Why are you bothering running?', I say, well, change the pronoun there.

It's not me. It's not me that's at stake. What about young people who are at stake? Is it hopeless for them? You know, is it hopeless for African-Americans who want to end police violence? Is it hopeless for people who can't afford health care, even through Obamacare? Are you telling us it's hopeless? If you're saying that, you are telling us that we do not have a democracy, which is reason for us all to rise up right now and fight against what you appear to be defending. 'If you think it's hopeless, Mr. representative of the corporate press, isn't it your responsibility to make it hopeful by opening up this discus-

sion?'

In terms of universities and colleges, even with the UNC system, we can't even have a free press here. We're pretty much under the grasp and control of the administration, and then colleges all across the country have corporate deals that are funded. It just seems like a twisted web of bureaucracy and money. What do you think has to happen in order for the system to be dismantled?

"That's exactly what they want you to think. They want you to think that you are marginal, that your values and your vision is at the fringe, and that it's hopeless. That is their game plan. Because if you're hopeless, then you're powerless. But the reality is to reject the lesser evil, to reject their propaganda, to reject the powerlessness and the hopelessness that they're trying so hard to convince you of, because they are quaking in their boots.

When I was tricked into running for office for the first time, back in 2002, running against Mitt Romney for governor, we were able to fight our way into a debate and inside that debate hall, which didn't have an audi-

ence — it was just the candidates and the moderator — I spoke up for the everyday public interest agenda: jobs, healthcare and education as a human right, cutting the military, greening our energy system, even back then, educating the whole student for lifetime learning, not through a standardized high-stakes test. Those ideas went over like a lead balloon, inside this debate hall, which were just the candidates and moderator.

But when we walked out, I was mobbed by the press for the first time and the last time. They have since been otherwise instructed, and what they said to me was that, 'You've won the debate on the instant online viewer poll' and that completely changed my thinking about this whole process. I had the sense I was doing this out of kind of my moral responsibility, but felt like, oh, it was pretty hopeless, and then I realized, oh my god, it's not hopeless at all. We have won in the court of public opinion, which is the hardest place to win. We have two public relations agents that you could not buy for billions of dollars. One is the climate, and the other

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Environment

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of every grove depends on the belief systems adopted by each community,

"Each sacred grove has its own taboo, different rules and rituals," Ormsby said.

Inside, she discovered some had temples hidden in the center, while others were used to perform rituals.

Ormsby said community conservation is not likely in the United States, because many people are focused on individual rights to own land freely.

"I do not think it is a result of religion that affects environmental efforts, but an attitude toward nature," Ormsby said. "We have the whole idea of my

yard, my house, my fence."

Erin Walker, an environmental science student, said Ormsby's exhibit reveals how cultures with different beliefs in India work collaboratively to protect the forests while allowing room for diverse traditions.

"In our country, a lot of our conservation of the environment is governmental. There are a lot of policies and laws," Walker said. "Whereas those people are looking after the forest as a community, and there is a sense of pride behind it."

Religious influence by missionaries on the peoples of this area changed the spiritual significance of some sacred

groves, Ormsby said. As the Christian belief system became more prominent, community members began to forget some traditional rituals related to the groves. Despite a redirection in spirituality in this area, the communities continue to preserve the land.

"The reason for conservation efforts kind of evolve as belief systems change," she said. She focuses on this correlation between culture and environmental conservation in her work.

"If this cultural respect for the forests doesn't continue, they may be chopped down eventually," she said.

Ormsby said she does not be-

lieve governmental protection of India's sacred land to be the solution; rather, it will depend on individuals and communities.

Walker said she thinks we have a lot to learn from cultures that live in harmony with nature.

"They live in small communities, so it's simpler for them to take care of those areas," Walker said. "But we have spread out so much that we need laws in order to preserve the environment."

Mariah Keogh, a psychology student at UNCA, said she wants to travel and discover places similar to those featured

in the exhibit.

"My favorite photograph is 'Grove and Clothesline,' because the colors are beautiful and it shows how close they are to nature," Keogh said. "I have not really thought about this connection between culture and environmental protection before, but I think they are more connected to nature and aware of their dependence on it than we are. We are not as immersed in it as they are, and I think that affects our attitudes toward it."

Ormsby (far right) conducts an interview in Mythadi village in India