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Statements accompanying the PhD thesis
Associative Corporate Governance: The Steel Industry Case
by Pieter K. Joustra

1. The Anglo Saxon model of capitalism does not correspond with the interests of the steel industry. Concentration of the steel industry through the neoliberal model of mergers and acquisitions forms a serious social and economic threat to the world’s steel regions.

2. Associative Democracy as social and economic regional model, in combination with the regional steelmaker’s membership in an international steel company governed by the same associative principle, forms a feasible and realistic solution to a steel region’s need for concentration and internationalisation. Therefore, the steel industry can become the breeding ground for Associative Corporate Governance, a new perspective in corporate governance.

3. Corporate governance characterised by an exaggerated emphasis on the interests of just one stakeholder does not work, as has been demonstrated by the Yugoslavian model of workers’ self-government and the neoliberal shareholders’ value approach.

4. The ‘black box’ character of regular corporate governance models forms a threat to the democratic process of the public arena.

5. Instead of classifying a more democratic governance of corporations as utopian, I consider the attitude amongst owners, management and their biased education institutions to be, as David Estlund calls it, a ‘utopophobia’.

6. Integrating Corporate Social Responsibility in the corporate strategy of a company is a necessary condition, but it is not sufficient for the sustainable character of the company. CSR needs integrated in the institutional framework of the company in order for sustainable entrepreneurship to be created.

7. The popular 3P’s approach does not work without a fourth P of ‘Participation’.

8. Education institutes have to emphasise education in democratic values and discourse ethics.

9. ‘The business mind, having its own conversation and language, its own interests, its own intimate groupings in which men of this mind, in their collective capacity, determine the tone of society at large as well as the government of industrial society, and have more political influence than the government itself. We now have, although without formal or legal status, a mental and moral corporateness for which history affords no parallel’ (John Dewey, 1930).

10. ‘For as a philosopher he is bound to subvert, break through, destroy, liberate, let air in from outside’. ‘Philosophy should be a perpetual search for new answers in new situations’ (Isaiah Berlin, 1954).