



Banishment from the Financial System: the War on Dissent

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): Hey everyone, it's Glenn Greenwald, welcome to a new episode of System Update here on our home on Rumble. It is really not an exaggeration to say that there is a rapidly escalating war on dissent by the neo liberal ruling order in the West, and I'm going to have an article up on Substack either shortly prior or shortly after publication of this video, detailing exactly how that war has evolved and what all of its component parts are and where it's likely to go from here. I think for the first time, people are really understanding the gravity of how much of a multipronged attack there is on dissent as a result of the events in Canada that have been quite stunning. Watching the Canadian government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau- who essentially is a political prince, his father was the prime minister several decades ago, he sort of is part of this political dynasty and is very much acting like a member of the royal family simply declaring a state of emergency, which eliminates civil liberties when so clearly the conditions aren't meant for that and has eliminated civil liberties and is now crushing what was a peaceful movement of dissent against vaccine mandates and other dissatisfaction with the government- it's obviously shocking to watch both the gravity of it and the fact that it's in Canada, which means it could be essentially anywhere in the West. So I'm to focus in that article on the broad scope of what this war on dissent is. But I want to focus on one particularly disturbing element of that war on dissent in this video, because a lot of people seem to think that it has just newly emerged and that is the very stunning weapon of simply freezing bank accounts or otherwise banishing people from the financial system, an incredibly draconian penalty and elimination of the ability to function in society, often without due process, simply for punishment for one's ideological crimes or participation, and what ought to be illegal protest. But the reality is, this weapon, banishment from the financial system not through proving in court that anyone is guilty of crimes but through extrajudicial or extralegal punishment by the government, has been at least a decade in the making. And I want to walk you through exactly where it began and how it has evolved, because back then, a decade ago, it was a small handful of us

warning about how dangerous the emergence of this weapon was and how likely it was to lead to exactly what it is we're seeing in Canada and elsewhere throughout the West. This weapon banishing people from the financial system without proving they're guilty of any crime actually began, like so many of the repressive measures against dissent with the US war against WikiLeaks. It was 2010 when WikiLeaks did their series of disclosures that really put them on the map, the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs, followed by the diplomatic cables. WikiLeaks had already been on the radar of the US government. In 2008, the US army had proclaimed them an enemy of the state and had prepared a secret document plotting how to destroy WikiLeaks, which got leaked to WikiLeaks, and they promptly published it, which obviously made the government hate them more. But it was 2010, when the fury and rage and really fear of WikiLeaks inside the US security state escalated with those blockbuster revelations. And the Obama Justice Department under Eric Holder convened a grand jury investigation to attempt to prove that WikiLeaks was guilty of crimes and to try and indict WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. And they couldn't do that. They couldn't find evidence that WikiLeaks had done anything different than The New York Times and The Guardian or El Pais, or any of the other newspapers which had partnered with WikiLeaks on these publications and had done exactly what WikiLeaks had done. So in lieu of proving that WikiLeaks was guilty of crimes which the US government under the Obama Justice Department concluded it could not do, they decided instead to punish WikiLeaks using extrajudicial means. Let me repeat that because of how alarming that ought to be. The only way the US government should be able to punish anyone, a citizen, a journalistic outlet, an activist group, is if they're able to go to court and present evidence that the person or the group they seek to punish is guilty of a crime and convince a court or a jury that they're guilty. That's foundational to how a functioning democracy operates. The government can't just go around punishing whoever it wants without evidence that they've committed a crime. But they were so determined to punish WikiLeaks, despite the fact that they were incapable of proving WikiLeaks committed any crime that they began to resort to extralegal means to do so. Extralegal means a punishment. And one of them was to try and prevent WikiLeaks from participating in the financial system by pressuring private companies to deny WikiLeaks the ability to have accounts, to receive funds, to use funds, to use credit cards, to use banks, to basically destroy WikiLeaks without having to bother to prove that they were guilty of any crime. Now I spend a lot of time this year, both here on Rumble and at Substack, reporting on how the US government is doing something very similar with censorship. The US government, of course, can't and doesn't censor the internet directly because the First Amendment precludes that. What they do instead is they pressure private companies Facebook, Google, Twitter and others by implicitly or sometimes even explicitly threatening them that if they don't censor the people and the messages that the US government wants censored, those companies will suffer legal and regulatory reprisals. And I've been covering how that is clearly a violation of the First Amendment. This was the tactic that the US government in 2010 and 11 used against WikiLeaks to get them banished from the financial system, to pressure private companies to basically, simply exclude or expel WikiLeaks from the system of financial services. And it was led at the time by the neoconservative senator

from Connecticut, Joe Lieberman, who, as many of you may recall, was the vice presidential running mate of Al Gore in 2000. He was then defeated in 2006 by Democratic Party activists as punishment for his support for the Iraq War, but he ran as an independent and won in 2006. And so by 2010, he was the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee in the Senate, a very potent post. And what he did was he used that platform to threaten financial companies to banish or kick out WikiLeaks by alleging, without having to prove that WikiLeaks was guilty of a crime and therefore by allowing WikiLeaks to raise funds through MasterCard or Visa or Bank of America or PayPal, or to be able to have a hosting service with Amazon, he accused those companies of aiding and abetting a threat to national security, and you can watch Joe Lieberman here on video on December 2nd, 2010, where he went on an interview on MSNBC to justify what it was that he was doing.

Joe Lieberman on MSNBC: We've got to put pressure on any companies. Like Amazon just cut WikiLeaks off from using its servers to distribute. There's a company now in Sweden, I think it's called Bahnhof AB, which is providing that kind of access to the internet to WikiLeaks. We've got to stop them from doing that, and we've got to apprehend Mr. Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, and bring him to justice as a violator of the Espionage Act. Because if we don't, this will keep happening.

GG: Now you can see there, he's saying we ought to apprehend Mr. Assange and prosecute him, something the Obama Justice Department concluded they could not do. The Biden Justice Department is now doing it after the Trump administration dropped those charges. But he was also saying even before that, even independent of that, we need to be pressuring financial services companies and internet companies to cut off WikiLeaks. And that's exactly what happened. Here you see from The Guardian on December 2nd, 2010, the headline is: "WikiLeaks website pulled by Amazon after US political pressure. Site hosting leaked US embassy cables is ousted from Amazon servers as senator calls for boycott of WikiLeaks by companies". Now remember, and I'll get to this, this is something very similar that was done to Parler when it became the most downloaded app in January of 2021. And then AOC went on to Twitter and said, Hey, Google and Apple, why are you allowing Parler to be downloaded through your store? And Amazon, why are you hosting Parler on your site? And within 48 hours, those companies obeyed her demands and the demands of other Democratic politicians to destroy Parler. That wasn't when it was pioneered. It was pioneered back then against WikiLeaks. And you see here, Amazon capitulated to the pressure from Joe Lieberman, demanding that WikiLeaks be booted off the internet, which they were despite not being convicted of any crimes. Once they succeeded in pressuring Amazon, they turned their attention to what Talking Points Memo in December of 2010 called "other firms", after getting Amazon to boot WikiLeaks, Lieberman eyes other firms. And here you see Talking Points Memo yesterday asked a committee spokeswoman, Leslie Phillips, whether Lieberman was planning to reach out to other companies, quote, "the committee is not reaching out to other companies", she said. Senator Lieberman hopes that the Amazon case will send the message to other companies that may host WikiLeaks, that it would be irresponsible to host

the site. In other words, we don't feel like we need to even contact these companies, we've made very clear what our view is, and our view is the US government will consider you its enemy. We'll consider you aiding and abetting threats to US national security if you don't follow Amazon's example and terminate your services with WikiLeaks. Lo and behold, as expected, numerous companies did that. Here from Forbes, five days later, December 7th, 2010, "Visa, MasterCard Moved To Choke WikiLeaks", quote: "The mounting legal and political forces working against WikiLeaks just scored two major financial blows against the whistleblower site. On Tuesday morning, Visa suspended payments to WikiLeaks, according to the Associated Press". "And late Monday, MasterCard told Cnet that it would also attempt to block payments to WikiLeaks, arguing that its, quote, 'rules prohibit customers from directly or indirectly engaging in or facilitating any action that is illegal'. WikiLeaks hadn't been accused, let alone convicted, of any illegal acts, and yet these companies were doing what the US government told them to do. The article went on, quote, "Visa and Mastercard's moves represent the latest and most serious tightening of the financial vice around WikiLeaks since it released the first portion of a quarter million diplomatic cables last week". In other words, they simply prevented WikiLeaks from raising funds. No longer could you donate to WikiLeaks using Visa, MasterCard and PayPal, and no longer could you find WikiLeaks on the internet using Amazon because those companies capitulated to the US government demands to cut them off as punishment for their crime of reporting on what the US government was doing. The article goes on, quote, "On Friday, PayPal blocked payments to the site, and the finance arm of the Swiss post office, PostFinance, announced Monday that it was freezing Assange's accounts". So as we look at what's going on in Canada with justifiable horror, let's recall that this is ten years in the making, this weapon, and it began when they squeezed and choked and cut off WikiLeaks for its dissent at the time of exposing the crimes of the Obama administration. Here you see from the Sunday Morning Herald December 9, 2010: "PayPal pulled plug on WikiLeaks because the US government sent them a letter". They didn't do it on their own. They did it because of pressure directly from the US government. Just like Big Tech companies are currently censoring because the US government under the Democratic Party is demanding it, just like financial services firms in Canada are freezing bank accounts at the behest and demand of the Trudeau government. The article says, quote, "The US government basically wrote a letter saying the WikiLeaks activities were deemed illegal"- deemed illegal, not proven in a court illegal, deemed illegal in the US- "and as a result our policy groups had to make the decision of suspending their account, PayPal vice-president Osma Bedier said in an internet video address". Now, in response, here you see from WikiLeaks on their own site that "WikiLeaks declares war on banking blockade", because it was destroying their ability to operate, obviously a news organisation or a whistleblower site like WikiLeaks cannot function if it can't receive donations, if it can't receive money, if it can't transact financial transactions. That was the point of doing this, was to destroy a news outlet that had reported on the United States government, a way that made it angry, through extrajudicial means. Here's what WikiLeaks said: "Over the last two years the blockade has stopped 95 per cent of contributions to WikiLeaks, running primary cash reserves down from more than a million dollars in 2010 to

under a thousand dollars, as of December 2012". This was on the verge of destroying WikiLeaks as an organisation. Simply banishing them from the financial system without having to go to court, without having any due process, just through using thuggish and intimidating tactics against these companies. Now, it was at this time when we realised the gravity of what this was doing that we decided to act. We, meaning myself, my colleague in the Snowden reporting Laura Poitras, who was the Oscar winning director of Citizenfour about the work we did, Daniel Ellsberg, the famous whistleblower in the Pentagon Papers case, the actor John Cusack, transparency activist. We all got together and we realised how dangerous of a model this was that if the US government could simply pressure and coerce private actors to do its bidding and destroy press freedom groups and journalistic outlets and whistleblowing sites by just suffocating them from from money, that was a grave attack on the ability to do reporting on the United States government. So in response, we created a new press freedom group, which I announced at The Guardian in December of 2012, when I was still at The Guardian. And there you see the headline: "New press freedom group is launched to block US government attacks". And we created what we called then and is still called the Freedom of the Press Foundation. And the idea was, we said to the public: "WikiLeaks can no longer collect your money because they've been cut off from all their funds, from their credit cards and their bank accounts. But we have it. We have accounts, we have credit card accounts, donate the money to us and we will give it to WikiLeaks as a way of circumventing this blockade". Here's what I wrote at the time knowing how dangerous this model was and how it would be used in the future, quote, "The primary impetus for the formation of this group was to block the US government from ever again being able to attack and suffocate an independent journalistic enterprise the way it did with WikiLeaks". I went on, "Government pressure and the eager compliance of large financial corporations (such as Visa, MasterCard, Bank of America, etc.) has- by design- made it extremely difficult for anyone to donate to WikiLeaks, while many people are simply afraid to directly support the group". Now that last part, I think it's very important. When the US government did this, it wasn't just that they used brute force to cut off WikiLeaks. When the US government comes and says, we think this group is illegal without having to prove it, or when they say anyone marching in defence of election integrity or who views the 2020 election as the by-product of fraud is an insurrectionist without having to prove it, or when the Trudeau government says anyone who is marching in support of the truckers protest is a terrorist or an insurrectionist that not only justifies in their minds, forcing these companies to cut off funds and to banish them from the financial system, it makes everybody else afraid to donate to that group, to support a group that the government has said is a terrorist group, is a threat to national security, is engaged in criminal behaviour because they're essentially telling you- even though we haven't approved it in court- if you support this group, you may be guilty in our eyes of aiding and abetting or supporting criminality. It creates a climate of fear in which dissent by design is impossible. Now, fast forward ten years later, obviously there's what's going on in Canada, which most of you know about, and I'll get to you, but even before that, six months ago, the signs were very ominous that this is going to become an increasingly invoked tactic in the United States in the name of fighting domestic extremism. In July of 2020, the Anti-Defamation League, which

had been a long time group devoted to defending Jews against anti-Semitism or anti-Semitic defamation but has since become a standard liberal advocacy group, announced that they were partnering with PayPal, as the headline says, to research how extremists share money online. And they weren't just doing it for scholarly purposes. The idea was that the ADL would notify PayPal of groups or individuals that the ADL, in its sole discretion, concluded were extremist. Whatever that means to the ADL, a liberal advocacy group, and PayPal would then ban those people or those groups, like they did with WikiLeaks a decade earlier from participating in the PayPal financial system, which is now ten years later, not just a boutique, one kind of isolated way of receiving and sending money, but central to the financial services industry. The article explained, quote, "The partnership will focus on 'uncovering and disrupting the financial pipelines that support extremist and hate movements' by targeting 'actors and networks spreading and profiting from all forms of hate and bigotry,' according to an ADL news release published Monday morning". Their findings will be, quote, "shared broadly across the financial industry and with policymakers and law enforcement, according to the release". So note that even though the partnership is specifically with PayPal, the intention is to spread their findings all over the financial industry. So obviously, when PayPal says we're cutting off this group or we're cutting off this individual because the ADL has determined that they are extremist or have a violent or dangerous ideology no other financial company is going to want to touch those people, either. Exactly like what happened when Joe Lieberman said, No, we don't need to reach out to any of these other companies. We already did it with Amazon, and we think that we expect that the message got sent, and all those other financial services companies will follow suit. And they did. That's what this is about. It's not just PayPal, it's empowering the ADL to get you banished from the financial system that the ADL decides in its own interests that you are an extremist, that you harbour an ideology the ADL dislikes. Now, back in 2010 and 11 there were very few of us warning how dangerous this was when it was done to WikiLeaks. There is now a lot greater awareness. Here, for example, is an article published on Barry Weiss's, Substack by the founding chief operating officer of PayPal, David Sacks, who when he read about this and learnt that PayPal was doing this, he wrote this article- that was a warning- and you can see there the title is: "Get ready for the, quote, 'No- Buy' list. First Big Tech censored speech. Now they want to shut deplorables out of the financial system". And that's exactly what this is about. It's about doing to the internet and Big Tech, censoring and silencing dissenters from the neoliberal order, now removing them from the financial system, banishing people from being able to function in society through this tactic. And in this article, David Sacks goes on to explain that he himself is Jewish, his family, a portion of it perished in the Holocaust, he always respected the ADL as an organisation, but nonetheless, as someone who created PayPal to be a fully apolitical and open financial services company was deeply disturbed by what PayPal is now doing, which is essentially saying we will no longer serve people who have an ideology that the ADL decides is extremist. And David Sacks went on to note that even if the ADL was still what it had always been it would be dangerous because your ability to participate in the financial system shouldn't be dependent upon you having a certain political ideology. But it's particularly dangerous because the ADL, like the ACLU, is

a distant shadow of itself. It is far more a standard liberal advocacy group devoted to the Democratic Party and Democratic Party politics and punishing enemies of the Democratic Party from the right or the left than it is the kind of mythology that it once had under its longtime director, Abe Foxman. Here you see from Tablet Magazine in November 2014 the announcement that the ADL is naming its successor to Abe Foxman, who ran that organisation for decades and the person who was taking over is Jonathan Greenblatt, who, the magazine note, is a special assistant to Barack Obama. And there was concern at the time. And there's even more concern now, seven or eight years later, under his leadership, that he was going to turn the ADL, as Obama's assistant, into an arm of the Democratic Party. And there's no doubt that's what it is. Here from 2015, is from the ADL zoned site, the ADL is, quote, "Disappointed by the Supreme Court Decision That Further Delays Implementation of the Contraception Mandate". What does it have to do with anti-Semitism or defending Jews from anti-Semitic defamation. Here from August of last year, The New York Times reports that the ADL was crusading for Tucker Carlson to be fired. They've repeatedly tried to get Tucker Carlson off the air, the most popular conservative television personality in the country. Hear from Jonathan Greenblatt own Twitter feed in June of 2020, at the height of the Black Lives Matter movement. He posed, "proud that the ADL has joined with 500+ Jewish organisations and synagogues from across the racial and political spectrum to unequivocally say: Black Lives Matter. Please read the statement". Now you may agree or disagree with all of those views the ADL has. The point, however, is that they are a highly politicised organisation whose views are easily proven to be mainstream, neoliberal Democratic Party ideology. So when they go to identify who is a dangerous extremist, it's not some objective metric they're using. They're essentially saying we're going to have the power to remove from the financial system, first PayPal and then other banks and credit card companies, anyone that we deem has an ideology that deviates from our own and therefore is dangerous. Now, amongst the views that the ADL has is the fact that they are a fervent defender of Israel. Now, I bet there are a lot of you watching who share that particular view of the ADL, that you think, OK, I'm also a defender of Israel. It is not, however, a crime in the United States. Nor, I hope, we all can agree should it be to be a critic of Israel and a defender of Palestinians. You may not agree with that view, but I would hope that you acknowledge that people who don't have that view should not be punished, just like people who shouldn't be punished for deviating from any of the other ADL views. And yet, this group of Palestinian activists on this site was extremely concerned about this. As they wrote, "This could mean that the financial tech giant PayPal is letting the ADL, with this lengthy history of spying on human rights activists, dictate what is and what is not 'extremism' with no clear indication that this process will be transparent or accountable". "The group regularly asserts it inserts itself into corporate and public school 'anti-bias' training while mainstreaming anti-Muslim hatred and disparaging Palestinian, Muslim and Arab community organisations". Now again, you don't have to agree or disagree with the ADL to understand that it is a deeply political organisation, and that's what makes putting this power in its hands or any group like it so dangerous to unilaterally decide who will be removed from the financial system. Now, for those of you who do get comfortable and say, you know what, I think the ADL is only going to go after far

right MAGA people and insurrectionists and people like the Canadian truckers, here's an article from The Guardian in November of 2018 that is about how antifa started complaining because, along with the Proud Boys, they were part of a crackdown by PayPal on dangerous extremists. PayPal said, we're going to boot dangerous extremists from our platforms. They didn't just boot the Proud Boys, which the left was happy about, but also antifa. And antifa, of course, can't object on principle and say, we believe in free speech because they don't. Their only objection was, No, we're the good guys. You were supposed to only do that to the bad guys. But this is always how these kinds of schemes work, as they may in the first instance be directed at someone you're happy is getting the boot. Someone who supports Canadian truckers, someone who's a critic of Israel, someone who thinks Donald Trump should be the legitimate president, someone who believes in MAGA, but eventually it is going to expand wildly beyond its original intentions, just like censorship always does. As well as the article says, quote, "By removing anti-fascists and Proud Boys accounts at the same time, PayPal seems to be making a false equivalence and lumping completely different groups together as 'intolerance' and 'hate', the Atlantic Antifa group said in a statement". So they're essentially saying, we support what PayPal is doing. We think they should get rid of the deplorables, but they shouldn't be getting rid of us. But that's exactly why if you don't object on the principle, if you don't defend the principle, you're never going to have any means of objecting. Now, we've obviously seen very similar things happening over the last year in connection with the January 6, Capitol riot, where people have had notices that their bank accounts are being shot. Bank of America is under a lot of scrutiny because they simply turned over huge amounts of data to the FBI without being required to do so. You see the exploitation of the financial system to crush dissent in the West and all kinds of ways. And of course, what we've seen in Canada over the last three weeks is particularly disturbing. It began in early February, when millions of dollars were donated through what people assumed was the apolitical fundraising site GoFundMe and yet GoFundMe announced that they were essentially seizing those funds. At first, they said, We're not going to give these funds to the truckers for the same reason that PayPal and Bank of America and MasterCard and Visa said ten years ago. We're not going to give the funds to WikiLeaks, namely, the government asserted, without proving that it's a criminal organisation. And so what GoFundMe said instead is, We're going to take this money and we're going to give it to other charities of the choosing of the organisers, to groups that the donors did not select. It was essentially stealing. They got this money on the pretence it was going to the truckers and then said, We're going to give this money to someone else. That the donors never agreed to have their money go to was absolutely a form of stealing, whether legalised or not. After that backlash, they agreed, OK, we're going to automatically refund all of the donations. So you see the Canadian truckers were banned just like all those other examples from the basic financial services system, of being able to get money from its supporters. Getting money from your supporters or donating money to a cause you support is a crucial form of political liberty. It's a crucial way of exercising your right to political association in your redress of grievances guaranteed by the Constitution, and this is the right that is being taken away. Now, the BBC article said, quote, "We now have evidence from law enforcement that the previously peaceful demonstration has become an

occupation, with police reports of violence and other unlawful activity, GoFundMe said". Do you see this is how the tactic is used. They simply classify whoever they dislike as criminals, no charges necessary, no convictions required, and then everything from there follows. After that happened, the Canadian government declared a state of emergency the first time in decades that this has happened. Even left wing groups like the Canadian Communist Party objected and the Civil Liberties Association, the kind of ACLU of Canada that seems to at least have some allegiance to its core function, said they were going to sue, that they don't agree that the conditions were sufficient to invoke the Emergencies Act, but they did. And banks, as a result, have started to freeze the bank accounts of anyone the government believes is just linked to the protesters. Here from the CBC: "Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said Thursday financial institutions have moved quickly to freeze the accounts of people linked to the demonstrations in Ottawa, leaving an unknown number of protesters in financial limbo". "Freeland vowed to take more accounts offline in the coming days in an attempt to starve the organisers of the funds they need to continue their occupation of the nation's capital". They're admitting their motive. They're saying, We know that if we get to suffocate people's money, they can't survive, they can't protest. Think about the power that that gives the government to just whenever they want, whenever you're protesting the government, they say, if you keep protesting us, we're going to freeze your bank account. You're not going to be able to buy gas or food or pay your bills or your rent if you continue to protest us. The article went on, "Friedland, who is also the finance minister, said the RCMP and the other law enforcement agencies have been gathering intelligence on convoy protesters and their supporters and sharing that information with financial institutions to restrict access to cash and cryptocurrency". "Citing terrorist financing laws, the government has forced crowdfunding websites and payment providers to register with the Financial Transactions and Report Analysis Centre of Canada, the government's financial intelligence unit". So they're using their surveillance authorities to monitor where this money is going and forcing these institutions to register with the government to report on how the funds are being handled. "In a final warning to the assembled protesters, Freeland said those who have their big rigs on Ottawa's streets will see their insurance cancelled and their corporate account suspended- a move that could make it difficult for these drivers to ever work again". This is the power that they've seized as punishment, not for murdering somebody or trafficking children or trafficking drugs or raping someone or committing any crimes, but for protesting. Protesting government policies. We're going to freeze your bank accounts and take steps to make sure that you can never work again. We're going to destroy your lives if you continue to protest us. Does it take any effort to understand why this is despotic and tyrannical and so much more dangerous than anything these protesters are accused of doing. Here from Reuters, on February 12, give a sense of the scope of the financial attack. "TD Bank freezes two accounts that received 1.4 million Canadian dollars in support of Canada protest. TD applied to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice on Friday to take the funds, which were sent through GoFundMe and bank transfers, so they can either be sent back to the intended recipients or returned to the donors". And as I said earlier, this is very reminiscent of what happened to Parler, which in January of 2021 became the most downloaded app on all of the

internet in the United States from Google and Apple stores. And you see here The New York Times, Apple, Amazon and Google cut off Parler, an app that drew Trump supporters. You see the tactics that are being used. They can't formally criminalise protests, so they're going outside of the law, to impose punishments often more severe on anyone who continues to dissent against them. Now, after GoFundMe decided that they were going to freeze their funds, this other alternative GiveSendGo said, OK, well, we're going to accept these funds and overnight got millions of dollars. And then an Ontario court froze access to those donations as well. There is just no way to get money to these protesters. Here from CTV News from February 19, so the most recent reporting. "At least 76 financial accounts frozen since Emergency Act invoked". "Dozens of accounts of financial services firms have been frozen under new powers granted by the Emergency Act over the past five days, Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino said Saturday". "Speaking at a virtual press conference that began just as police officers clear protesters from Wellington Street in front of Parliament, Mendicino said 'at least 76' accounts containing approximately \$3.2 million had been frozen under the powers of the Act". They just froze \$3 million of dozens of accounts that they decided unilaterally were linked to the protesters with the explicit goal of destroying the ability to continue the protest. So as I said, this is just one of the weapons that the Western neoliberal order has amassed in order to destroy dissent. We all know that there's a lot of censorship going on, that there is the classifying of entire political movements as criminal or insurrectionists or seditionists or as terrorists, there's spying going on, all other weapons designed to destroy the ability to dissent. But this particular one of banishing people and choking them off from the financial system so that they cannot have access to their funds, so that they cannot receive support from their supporters is incredibly odious. And I know people are shocked seeing it in Canada, but I wanted to show you that it's been a decade in the making and that is why when you see these things emerge, that is why it's so important at the time to object loudly. Sometimes you sound like someone who is engaged in hyperbole, warning about the slippery slope of where this can go. Back ten years ago, there were very few of us warning that if the government successfully can do this to WikiLeaks, it is going to be able to do it to anyone who challenges them in any way, just suffocate them by cutting off their funds. And now we see it through the ADL partnership with PayPal. We see it through the invocation of the words insurrection and domestic terrorists to justify doing it in the United States to protesters at January 6. And we particularly see it in Canada now. That is why I said at the beginning, it is not an exaggeration to say that there is a systemic and rapidly emerging war on dissent from the neo liberal ruling order in the West, and this weapon is one of the most odious being invoked in its name.

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