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## FAIR TAXES FOR ALL

By Jack Miller, Indiana AfD

Recent full-page ads in *The Indianapolis Star* show the incredible lengths to which wealthy right-wing interests will go to cut taxes on the elite while simultaneously destroying public services for the ordinary citizen. These ads cost \$10,300 to \$14,725, depending on the day. They show an elderly woman imploring readers to "Tell Sen. Bayh we need his help to preserve what we've worked our whole lives to save," and urge everyone to tell Sen. Bayh to eliminate the "unfair double tax" on stock dividends. Readers are assured that such a tax cut will put "an average of \$936 in the pockets of each of the 9.8 million seniors who receive dividends." What the ads don't say is that for 70 percent of elderly taxpayers (those with incomes below \$50,000) the average tax savings would be \$44. They also forget to mention that three-quarters of the elderly don't receive any taxable dividends at



all. The lion's share of this \$396 billion give-away goes to the richest 2.7 percent whose tax savings will average a whopping \$12,300 annually.

Besides the hit on the federal budget, cash-strapped states will lose \$4.5 billion every year because of this one tax cut. Impoverished Indiana will lose \$48 mil-

*Fair Taxes continued on page 14*

## AfD OPPOSES WTO IN SACRAMENTO

By Henry Clark

The convergence of 50,000 people on Seattle in November 1999 alerted America to the outrages perpetrated by the World Trade Organization in its attempts to promote global corporate domination. Since then, people opposed to global corporatization have mounted attacks on specific WTO policies like those having to do with goods and services, privatization of water, and food and agriculture.

*AfD Opposes WTO continued on page 2*



*AfDer Bruce Hering wants democracy*

## NORTH BRIDGE CHAPTER TAKES ACTION To Restore Civil Liberties and Avert Water Privatization

By Kati Winchell

Owing to the efforts of the North Bridge AfD Chapter, the Town of Lincoln in Massachusetts overwhelmingly resolved "To Restore Our Civil Liberties and Rights" and "To Protect Our Public Water." The first resolution addressed the unconstitutionality of the PATRIOT Act, the Homeland Security Act, as well as certain Executive Orders and

the proposed PATRIOT Act II. The second focused on the dangers of water privatization, and the corporate/government-driven actions to promote it.

Lincoln's Selectmen sent letters to designated federal and state officials informing them of Lincoln's position on these issues, and urging them, in the first case, to actively work to repeal those por-

*Civil Liberties and Water continued on page 6*

## AfD Opposes WTO

*Continued from page 1*

With Sacramento the venue for the U.S.-sponsored Expo on Agricultural Science and Technology on June 23-25, ministers from almost all the WTO member countries were coming to town. Opportunity was ripe to support the concerns that many WTO members have about the long-term impacts of corporate ag.

The Sacramento chapter of the Alliance joined with other AfD units in Northern California and other Central Valley progressives to form the Sacramento Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture (SCSA), which organized a counter-convention designed to challenge the thrust of the Expo. The SCSA brought together a group diverse in age and ethnic make-up.

For the USDA Ag Expo, SCSA mounted an ambitious people's program of teach-ins, tactical workshops and non-violent street demonstrations intended to inform the public and the visiting WTO ministers about the inequities and the insanities of what high-tech agribusiness corporations are up to.

The counter-convention successfully achieved its educational objectives with a day-long workshop at California State University - Sacramento and with an evening panel debate between corporate ag proponents and representatives of the global south who have been victimized by global corporatization. The perils of genetically modified foods were convincingly explained, and the serious environmental damage caused by certain economic and technological prac-



*Jan Moore and Mary Gaedre of the Ukiah CA AfD make their point on the Capitol steps*

tices was decried.

Direct actions on Sunday as well as Monday's well-attended rally and march through the streets of Sacramento created a public awareness and understanding that was enhanced by balanced media coverage, which coalition members nourished with well-targeted visits to broadcast and press outlets. Between the facts and analyses of the *Sacramento Bee's* articles and the catchy slogans captured on marcher's signs ("Food for the Needy, not Profits for the Greedy"; "Genetically Modified Food Can be Dangerous to your Health"; "Don't Let the Agribizz Corporations Rape Mother Nature"), the people of Sacramento understood what the demonstrations were about. One veteran AfD activist observed that the counter-conference received far more media attention than did the predictable

goings-on at the Expo!

The police were out in force, but the two million dollars spent on the police presence was out of proportion to the actions and purposes of the counter-convention. The focus was on constructive protest that provokes thought and leads to new political insight and behavior on the part of voters and stakeholders. Participants in Monday's march through the downtown area of Sacramento wore signs on their backs that said "No Violence to People or Property," a message which pertained not only to action on the streets but also to the likely consequences of the non-organic or genetically altered seeds and food being hyped at the Expo. The action outside the convention halls successfully supported the delegates' resistance to the so-called "Washington consensus" being promoted inside those halls.



*Citizens demanding Fair Trade face off with police on horseback*

## Legislators Question GATS

The National Conference of State Legislatures sent a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick expressing their concerns about the impact of GATS on state and local authority and directing a series of pointed questions to him. Go to [www.challengeglobalization.org/html/trade/NCSL\\_letter.shtml](http://www.challengeglobalization.org/html/trade/NCSL_letter.shtml) to read the text of the letter.

## THE ROAD TO CANCUN AND MIAMI

By Ruth Caplan and Nancy Price

**N**egotiators and activists are preparing for the Fifth WTO Ministerial scheduled for Cancun, Mexico, September 10-14, and for the next FTAA ministerial scheduled for Miami, Florida, November 19-23. How well we organize over the next few months will help determine whether corporate globalization is stopped in its tracks or leaps forward.

It's time now for Alliance chapters and members to join with local allies to plan teach-ins and actions to educate your community about the economic, social, and environmental impact these trade agreements will have on your local community. Watch the Alliance website for materials and tips about organizing workshops and teach-ins.

### STOP THE MAI COMEBACK IN CANCUN

Yes, that's right, the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) which was designed to protect investors along the lines of NAFTA Chapter 11 is back. Opposing the MAI was AfD's first very successful campaign. Newly formed chapters organized against the MAI in their local communities and the Alliance joined an international network against the MAI which has now become the "Our World Is Not For Sale" coalition.

Now the MAI, defeated in 1998, is being re-incarnated in the form of "new issues" of investment and competition promoted by the European Commission. The European Trade Minister, Pascal Lamy, is trying to get the negotiations moving by claiming the agreement would be nothing like the MAI or NAFTA, but more of a GATS-style format with a bottom-up approach. That remains to be seen. Whether formal negotiations begin on these "new issues" will be decided in Cancun.

Despite a series of mini-ministerials intended to set the stage for Cancun, to which only favored allies were invited, the outcome is very much in doubt. The ministerial could be gridlocked as it was in Seattle or a "consensus" forced upon the unwilling as at the 2001 ministerial in Doha, Qatar.

Between now and Cancun activists must shine a spotlight on the autocratic, secretive process which took place in Doha and organize opposition to a return of the MAI.

If the WTO negotiators cannot get over the hurdle of agricultural disputes, then all else may be stalemated. Despite the friendship between Robert Zoellick and Pascal Lamy, they were hardly locking arms at the June mini-ministerial in Egypt where Lamy called for an agreement on agriculture by mid-July to include EU and developing country concerns. The U.S., joined by Canada, Australia, Brazil and Argentina, said no way.

The Sacramento Mobilization organized to oppose the USDA agenda on genetically modified foods (GMOs), spotlighted this difference and will not make a consensus in Cancun any easier.

The Alliance has been accredited by the WTO to attend the ministerial, but the organizing back home is key. To assist in local organizing, the Alliance will produce a tabloid in English and Spanish to reach people not familiar with trade issues. For activists, the Alliance will produce a handbook on water and trade.

### COME TO MIAMI TO STOP THE FTAA

Closer to home, the trade ministers from the 34 nations of the Western Hemisphere, excluding Cuba, will gather in Miami for the FTAA ministerial November 20-21. The U.S. hopes to expand NAFTA into the Free Trade Area of the Americas, ignoring the devastation that NAFTA has already caused to local economies and workers in the U.S., Mexico and Canada.

Activists are already beginning to plan events running from November 19 to 23 including a people's gala, a march and rally, a worker's forum organized by the AFL-CIO, a women's space, the launching of the U.S. Interfaith Trade and Justice Campaign, along with many workshops.

The Alliance is exploring the possibility of holding a retreat for local activists opposing water privatization to develop joint strategies and to reinforce the links between privatization and trade.

Details about Miami will be posted on Alliance Announce and on our website at <http://thealliancefordemocracy.org> along with tips about organizing workshops and teach-ins with local allies in the months ahead.

For details about Miami, there are several websites where you can get up-to-

date information: [www.stoptheftaa.org](http://www.stoptheftaa.org) will have postings from organizations planning events. Also [www.ftaamiami.org](http://www.ftaamiami.org) will have logistical details posted by South Florida Fair Trade Coalition. The website [www.fairtrade.org](http://www.fairtrade.org) will have background articles.

## MEASURING FREE TRADE

By David E. Delk, Portland AfD

**T**he Portland, OR AfD chapter along with a coalition including the Sierra Club-Oregon, Oregon AFL-CIO, NW RAGE, Jobs with Justice and others has created a Yardstick for legislators and citizens to measure the impacts of international trade agreements. They have also called a town hall meeting in Portland to give testimony on the effects of existing free trade agreements and present the Yardstick to their representatives. So far sixty organizations have endorsed the Yardstick.

The Yardstick is based on nine principles highlighting that trade agreements should: allow nations to follow the precautionary principle; protect public health, biological diversity, and cultural and botanical heritage; promote environmental and worker protection; and contain dispute resolution procedures that are transparent and open, and that trade agreements should not: empower foreign corporations or member states to challenge laws designed to protect the public welfare; include Intellectual property rights in gene sequences or pharmaceuticals; preempt obligations that nations have undertaken under labor and environmental agreements; restrict government's ability to provide a public service through whatever mechanism it chooses or to protect food security and the viability of its agricultural sector; or weaken government's ability to protect vital domestic industries from unfair foreign trade practices.

All groups and towns are invited to use the yardstick approach to raise a public outcry against "free trade" agreements. Go to [www.afd-pdx.org](http://www.afd-pdx.org), click on Actions for a full copy of the Yardstick and other materials.

**ALLIANCE ALERTS**

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**ALLIANCE ALERTS** is a publication of **The Alliance for Democracy**, whose mission is to end the domination of our politics, our economics, the environment, and our culture by large corporations. The Alliance seeks to establish true economic and political democracy and to create a just society with a sustainable, equitable economy.

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**WHAT'S UP WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT?**

**A** PATRIOT Act taking away our civil liberties, military tribunals for American citizens, tax cuts in a time of burgeoning military expenses, armed occupation in Iraq, talk of attacking Syria and Iran — what's up? Where did all this come from?

The people supporting these policies came out of several foundation think tanks, most specifically the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) which boasts staff like Richard Perle and Lynne Cheney who have promoted campaigns like the Project for the New American Century and their new NGO Watch which AEI launched with a conference called "NGOs: The Growing Power of an Unelected Few." But who supports AEI?

Corporations contribute a quarter of AEI's income; another 34% of their income comes from foundations, mainly Scaife, Olin and Bradley, which have deep ties to corporate America. Money is power in capitalist controlled democracy and corporate America is guaranteeing it stays that way.

Are we witnessing the end of the American Republic and the beginning of the American Empire? Or is it the end of the American Republic as the only viable opponent to stop the rise of a global commercial empire where all is for sale? The Bush administration's National Security Strategy promotes "freedom, democracy, and free enterprise. Is "free enterprise" a code name for "money is power"? Is that compatible with democracy and freedom? Will the American people stand up to face the challenge?

**NEWS FROM NATIONAL**

**S**tephanie Scadding reports that all goes well at national headquarters, and that as of press time the audit is almost complete.

The National Council passed the budget printed below. The final two items, "Projected Income" and "Prior Year's Expenses" reflect an expense priority of paying off AfD's startup debt only if the income warrants it.

Council members Kati Winchell and Johnny Burritt both tendered their resig-

nations to the Council, both citing work obligations. The Council thanked both for their contributions to the Alliance. Kati has had a long relationship with the Alliance as both staff and Councilor. She will continue her work with the North Bridge Chapter. Finally, Southwest Regional Rep Rita Huppe graduated from San Francisco State with honors.

The Freedom Flyers are flowing out on the AfD website (www.thealliancefordemocracy.org.) Recent titles include *Awakening to the Lies and False Promises; Is There Anything Left That Matters?*; and *Were We Lied Into War?* Get your flyers and get them out on the street before it's too late.

**LET'S GROW!****Who Do You Know?**

By Peter Mott, Membership committee

**W**ANTED: AfD Regional Reps to fill vacancies in now unrepresented areas of the US, including: two vacancies from the Southeast (e.g., FL, GA.); two from the Northwest (e.g., OR, WA); one from North Central (e.g., IL, WI, MI); and one from South Central (e.g. OK, TX, LA). If you are interested in serving as a regional rep or would like to recommend someone please email [interconnect-mott@juno.com](mailto:interconnect-mott@juno.com)

We also want help in a concerted drive for more members and chapters. Send us your stories of successful recruitment and retention of members so that we all can benefit and grow the membership. **AND REMEMBER:** If we grow we can overcome!

**AfD 2003-2004 Budget**

<b>INCOME</b>			
Membership	36,000	Supplies, Equipment & Misc.	5,946
Contributions	63,260	Telephone & Postage	5,004
Fundraising Events	8,000	Website Management	1,000
Convention Seed Money	2,000	Alliance Alerts & Deep Dem	4,780
Sales	1,500	Printing, Other	2,620
Reimbursed Expenses	3,000	Travel	350
Clean Elections (Bribery Campaign)	250	Globalization Campaign	64,328
Globalization Campaign Grants	74,653	Events, Forums & Convention	6,500
Communications Collective	500	Fundraising Mailings	3,750
Council In-Person Cost Sharing	3,000	Mail List Exchange Mailings	1,000
Council In-Kind Donations	10,500	Bank & Credit Card Charges & Fees	1,950
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>202,663</b>	Interest (Finance & Late Charges)	350
<b>EXPENSE</b>			
Office Staff	33,280	Council In-Person Cost Sharing	3,000
Employee Benefits, FICA, etc.	6,729	Council In-Kind Donations	10,500
Accountant/Audit	2,500	<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>160,912</b>
Rent, Utilities & Insurance	7,325	<b>PROJECTED INCOME</b>	<b>41,751</b>
		<b>PRIOR YEAR'S EXPENSE</b>	<b>41,751</b>

## OMBUDSMEN ROLE UP TO THE MEMBERSHIP

By Jim Tarbell

In July 2002, at the Alliance convention, Dave Lewit and Bonnie Preston were elected the Alliance Ombudsmen.

The Alliance Constitution says:

There shall be two Ombudsmen. They shall be elected at the same time, following each convention .... The Ombudsmen shall mediate disputes and shall conduct membership votes regarding the removal of Council members.

Dave and Bonnie, however, consider the Alliance Constitution "dubious" and in serious need of review. Furthermore, they don't see their role as mediators, but rather as guarantors that the organization remains true to its principles and to "raise a red flag when policies and procedures seem to lead to unfairness or problems for the members."

They exercised this role last fall in questioning the procedures followed in the election of the Alliance female co-chair. This led the National Council to look at the role of the Ombudsmen. Eventually the By-laws and Elections Committee (BEC) developed a more detailed job description which states:

The ombudspersons shall mediate disputes within the Alliance .... Their responsibilities are to: 1) Receive concerns and complaints by Alliance members ... 2) Review all applicable AfD policies and procedures; 3) Contact all parties involved in the dispute to hear all sides of the mat-

ter; 4) Determine if Alliance policies and procedures pertaining to the concerns and complaints have been followed; 5) (Provide) ... the outcome of the investigation and any recommendations... 6) If the matter cannot be resolved ... assist the complainant(s) to develop a formal complaint ...; and 7) At the time any presentation or report (written or verbal) is made to the Council or officers of the Council, provide the same presentation or report to those against whom complaints have been made and formally notify them of their own right to respond directly to the Council.

The ombudsmen, however, believe that the Council does not have any authority over the Ombudsmen and that "authority resides in the membership." In response to the BEC recommendations, the Ombudsmen developed their own vision of the job, which states:

The ombudsmen: 1) are chosen by the Membership of the Alliance and responsible to the Membership; 2) (are to) raise a red flag when policies, procedures or interactions seem to keep the system from working fairly or from living up to its democratic ideals; 3) aim to clarify formal and informal standards of fairness and other ethical standards. They aim to promote helping and inclusion, and to discourage competition among members; 4) (are to) respond to concerns and complaints from members, and may raise issues on their own initiative; 5) may assist complainants to research policies and fos-

ter good practices which may obviate complaints; 6) will maintain confidentiality as requested by members. 7) will make recommendations regarding the application of policies and procedures, or for making ... changes, and any other redress of grievances; 8) will work in the spirit of democratic governance, amplifying the voices of members to ensure that they are heard by Council; 9) will act neither as adversaries nor spokesmen for Council, but will attempt to ensure that a democratic conversation is on-going within the organization; 10) are neither lawyers nor mediators, and may advise parties to certain conflicts of such specialized services. 11) will report their deliberations and views to membership in AfD's official newsletter and listserve, and may comment on fairness issues more generally to the public, e.g., on the Alliance web site. Off the record, the ombudsmen may suggest to members involved in complaints how they may effectively deal with related matters until system changes come about.

The Council, charged with handling Alliance business in the periods between conventions, could not resolve the differences in these job descriptions, so they voted to let the membership decide at the next convention, with the issue presented in *Alliance Alerts* for the membership's consideration.

Concerns in the Council meeting seemed to center on ensuring that the Ombudsmen mediate disputes and not become judge, jury and executioners.

should be representative of member interests in the affairs of the Council. Council members have an organization to run. Ombudsmen can do their work outside of that demanding role, and speak for member interests in a variety of ways.

The Alliance for Democracy will always be a work in progress. In future issues of AA, the ombudsmen will explore some ways that the AfD constitution might be revised to reflect the nature of a movement, which the AfD says it is, rather than a political party, which we are acting as if we are—in bureaucratic ways short of running candidates. We hope other members will take an interest in this and be involved. We believe that through dialogue we will develop a stronger organization.

### OMBUDSMEN'S PERSPECTIVE

By Dave Lewit and Bonnie Preston

We're coming from a place of deep commitment to the ideals of the Alliance for Democracy. Our only difference with others is in our view of where we might go.

We did what we did, because we really hoped that we could give members another chance to vote for female vice co-chair, with the vote based on more complete information, with a more level playing field, and with everyone knowing where to send the ballot. Time was of the essence. We had no intention of being "judge, jury and executioner."

We saw our report regarding the

election as a response to an immediate need to rectify what we saw as a problem. But it also developed out of what we think may be differing views of democracy within the AfD.

Our belief is that democracy is not about winning elections. It is about creating community, with an on-going dialogue involving more and more people. This vision is difficult to realize within the current structure of the Alliance. We deem the BEC job description to be too bureaucratic and legalistic for a membership organization, as well as too weighted toward maintaining the authority of the Council. We believe that authority rests with the membership. The ombudsmen are elected by the membership, and are not a part of the Council. We believe the ombudsmen

# TAKE ACTION— CRY JUSTICE!

## Activism, Organizing and Civil Liberties After 9-11

By Sue Ann Martinson and Ted Dooley

**P**ATRIOT Act I granted the executive branch greatly expanded powers. Now a follow-up act, PATRIOT II (the Domestic Security Enhancement Act), lurks in the wings, giving the Executive Branch even more power, as well as allowing PATRIOT I's provisions to continue indefinitely. Our stake as citizens of a nation built on freedom and democracy is now in danger.

AfD Minnesota has joined many groups taking to the ramparts. The Civil Liberties Defense Coalition has worked tirelessly in the State Legislature to counter the passing of Minnesota laws mimicking the USA PATRIOT Act. On April 4, 2003, the Minneapolis City Council

### Civil Liberties

*Continued from Page 1*

tions of the acts and orders that violate fundamental rights and liberties, and, in the second case, to oppose the GATS, the Water Investment Act, and all other local, state, federal and international measures that seek to privatize water.

For three months prior to the Town Meeting, chapter members held and spoke at neighborhood gatherings, published articles, placed hand-outs in strategic locations around town, posted information on the town's website, and distributed about 1,000 hand-outs at literature tables.

In bringing these issues to the Town of Lincoln, members of North Bridge raised residents' awareness about the potential threats these issues posed for their lives, so that they could then take action. Though most Lincoln residents seemed to appreciate the opportunity to learn about and vote on these issues, a few people objected on the grounds that they were too global, too abstract, and/or too political for consideration at Town

passed a resolution defending the Bill of Rights that basically states that the City of Minneapolis will not comply with laws and executive orders that violate Constitutional rights. The St. Paul Bill of Rights Defense Committee will introduce a resolution in St. Paul.

Members of the immigrant community fear reporting crimes committed against them, and even of going to the hospital, in light of John Ashcroft's push to have the police detain immigrants, even if they have not committed a crime. This fear grips entire immigrant communities, whether documented or not.

Our very right to act, to protest, to assemble, to associate, to protection under the law, even the right to express opinions are threatened. We have a real and present threat to our civil liberties,

to our right to dissent, to be citizens. Now is the time we need to join together to define and address this common problem. We must support each other. We must share our diverse struggles. We must recognize ourselves in each other's eyes. We must gather together and we must stand together. We must create and share strategies. Our struggles are one struggle. We shall lock our arms together and by doing so take the space for our work in these difficult times. Do not be distracted. If we fail to act together now, if we fail to support all of our sisters and brothers now, we will fail in all.

What can we do?

First, plan to join us for CRY JUSTICE! Activism, Organizing, and Civil Liberties After 911, which is the theme of an All People's Activist Conference to be held October 24-26, 2003 in Minneapolis, concurrent with the National Lawyers Guild national conference, Demand Democracy! Put CRY JUSTICE! on your calendar now! For more information visit [www.cryjustice.org](http://www.cryjustice.org).

Town Meeting: a new local Civil Liberties group was formed, focused on repealing the PATRIOT Act and stopping future such legislation; a Lincoln Water Watch Council was formed; and newcomers, inspired by the information that North Bridge provided, have started attending chapter meetings.

Though local in nature, these resolutions did not take place in isolation. Both were part of larger networks. Lincoln is one of three states and 129 cities, towns, and counties representing 16,134,267 residents nationwide that have passed resolutions to protect civil liberties. (See box on page 7 to get involved.)

Lincoln's resolution on water was one of numerous community efforts around the country and the world, aimed at saving public water from commercial hands. Council of Canadians ([www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org)) and Public Citizen ([www.citizen.org/cmep/water.org](http://www.citizen.org/cmep/water.org)), as well as the Alliance for Democracy, have long played key roles in inspiring and supporting these efforts.



Meeting. Despite the Town Moderator's statement that these topics fell well within the criteria for Town Meeting business, they voiced their objections vocally for weeks in the local paper.

It became clear that most people knew nothing about the public-to-private transfer of water currently underway, but were outraged when they heard about it, and grateful for being told. By contrast, an estimated 20% of people had a solid understanding of the PATRIOT Act, about 60% had a vague understanding (most thought it pertained only to immigrants and terrorists, not to them), and about 20% had never heard of it.

What also became clear is that once people were educated, they were roused to action. As a direct result of this awareness-raising process and

## DAVIS FIGHTS BIOTERRORISM LAB

By Nancy Price

In October 2002, Davis, CA citizens learned from a Bay Area paper that UC Davis would apply to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to build a Western National Center for Biodefense and Emerging Diseases on campus. Finally, three months later, UCD released details in a front-page story in the *Davis Enterprise*.

The proposed 305,000 square-foot facility will house biosafety level 2, 3, and 4 laboratories. The planned site is a short distance from the new Mondavi Performing Arts Center and half a mile from a dormitory complex. The facility would be used to carry out Bush's "Strategic Plan for Biodefense Research" and multi-billion dollar "Project Bioshield." Some of the most deadly biological agents would be studied, such as anthrax, smallpox, ebola, hantavirus, and ricin toxin, for how they can be dispersed in the air and weaponized, in addition to developing treatments and vaccines for them.

A level 4 lab has a high security isolation chamber where researchers work in pairs in special suits tethered to air supplies. Scientists make clear that the line between biodefense and bio-offense is almost non-existent and that level 4 will

be used to genetically alter pathogens to study their potential as agents and, thus, how to treat, that is defend, against them.

In its efforts to get required community endorsement for the project, UC Davis created an "infomercial" with the mayor endorsing the lab, prior to any formal vote by the Davis City Council. This infomercial was used to get support from surrounding city councils, county supervisors, health departments, and business councils.

Immediately, the "Stop the UCD Biolab NOW!!!" committee formed with the help of local AfD members. Under pressure, the university and city council held separate forums. Hard work turned the Davis City Council vote from 3-2 for the lab to 5-0 against it, and the Yolo County Supervisors from 5-0 to 3-2 in favor. Senator Barbara Boxer, who originally endorsed the project, submitted a second letter stating that a remote location was most suitable. Additionally, a local AfD member met personally with NIAID officials in late March and delivered a 700-page binder documenting citizen objections.

Most recently, on June 6, the committee filed a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lawsuit against the UC Regents, Gov. Gray Davis, and the State Comptroller alleging, among sev-

geted populations for visits by the FBI, INS, or police. Call or write your senators and representatives in Washington. Write a letter to the editor about this issue. Contact your state's ACLU chapter about starting a petition.

To see the Lincoln, MA resolution/warrant article and the presentation given at Town Meeting, check out [www.aclu-mass.org](http://www.aclu-mass.org)—sixth bullet on the home page.

Materials that North Bridge developed will be posted on the AfD website including the text of the warrant articles, a 10-minute speech on civil liberties (with Powerpoint slides), publishable articles, and actions that newly formed groups are working on. Or email [all@world.std.com](mailto:all@world.std.com)



Workers dealing with anthrax in New York

eral counts, that because the proposal is for one specific site and no alternative is possible, CEQA is violated. To add to the ruckus, citizens in Montana and Boston have also mobilized against labs proposed for their communities.

Despite the community uproar, the project is moving ahead. Recently it was announced that UC Davis is a finalist and NIAID officials were to make a site visit on July 17th.

To date, many scientists have spoken out that proliferation of labs increases the number of personnel with access and poses a serious risk for leaks and domestic terror.

Scientists have also criticized the alarming shift in federal research priorities and control of research funds by the Department of Homeland Security. And, most recently, the Pentagon has finally admitted that during the 1960s and 1970s tests of biological and chemical agents were carried out on land and sea against military personnel and civilians.

To learn about the Davis biolab see [www.simpalife.com](http://www.simpalife.com); for other information visit United Press International, [www.upi.com](http://www.upi.com); Global Security Newswire (nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, terrorism and related issues) [www.nti.org](http://www.nti.org).

To see the Sunshine Project's statement—*Non-Profit Coalition Calls for a National Reassessment of the Biodefense Building Boom*—go to [www.sunshine-project.org](http://www.sunshine-project.org). Tri-Valley CAREs has a petition to halt funding of level 3 and 4 labs, to reallocate funds to public health, and to uphold and strengthen the treaty banning biological weapons.

### How to Organize to Protect Our Rights

Go to [www.bordc.org](http://www.bordc.org) where you can find information to organize a Bill of Rights Defense Committee in your town; support proposed legislation to restore civil liberties; copy flyers about the issue (distribute them at events or give them to drivers stuck in traffic and in need of some reading material!); send Bill of Rights get well cards to your legislators; sign the online petition of the Coalition for Civil Rights and Democratic Liberties; and sign on to a letter to remove Ashcroft as Attorney General.

Prepare yourself and members of tar-

## Nike vs Kasky: A Case in Point

By Jim Tarbell

The corporate person costume was made by Jan Edwards and Leon Schneiderman of the Redwood Coast AfD. They made it for a press conference which the corporate person held in front of Niketown in San Francisco on corporate personhood and the Nike vs. Kasky case. At the time, the U. S. Supreme Court was considering this case on the question of how much corporations can lie.

Over the past 120 years court decisions have given corporations many of the rights given to humans in our Bill of Rights. Courts have given corporations the right to lie about political matters, but still holds them to a truth test about commercial matters.

In Nike vs. Kasky, corporate lawyers tried to expand the corporate right to lie into commercial speech. After agreeing to hear the case in January, the Supreme Court in late June said that their decision to hear the case had been premature and sent the case to trial in California. Upon hearing the decision, Jeff Milchen, Director of Reclaim Democracy, which was party to an amicus brief in this case, stated, "It's a relief to hear that the Court is not prepared to consider what would be extreme judicial activism on behalf of corporate America and against U.S. citizens by creating a corporate right to lie."

Meanwhile, at the press conference the corporate person answered, "Why would the Supreme Court want to give corporations the right to lie?" with a smug, "Because we want it, and the Court always gives the corporations what we want. That's good for business." Then it went on to say, "There is too much government regulation of corporations. Those laws are bad for business. . . The political opinion of the corporation is what is good for business." Then the lawyer advising the corporate person added, "The business of America is business. Certainly the corporations should have as much to say about politics in this country as any other person. Probably more!"

By Jan Edwards and Leon Schneiderman

### Step one: Materials

Body box at least 24" x 24" x 32" high or bigger if you want to tuck your arms and legs inside. (Maybe use an appliance box); 12" cube [head box]; Blue pin stripe suit; black plastic window screen 12" X 24"; spray glue and hot glue; black paint, gray spatter trunk paint; stiff white paper in big sheets; matte knife and cutting board; velcro; foam rubber; something for the top [we used lightweight bundt pans]

### Step three: Constructing the head box

Glue or velcro the top flaps shut. Glue foam rubber to the top of the box so that it fits the head snugly. Fold up and glue the bottom flaps (except the front side).

### Step eight: Finishing the head box

After you have painted it (see step six) fold the black plastic window screen in half and glue into place inside the front of the head box covering the cut-open windows. Now tuck back the front flap and glue in place. It helps hold the screen.

### Step five: Creating the windows and frames

Draw the window design on stiff white paper For the head, windows are 2 1/4" wide X 3" high with 5/8" between and borders of 2" on the sides and 1 1/4" top and bottom. There are 3 rows of 3 windows for the sides and back of the head box. The front of the head box has 2 rows of 3 windows. When you have patterns for the sides and back, cut out the windows leaving the window frames. These patterns become part of the costume later. Trace the windows on the front [face] of the head box [the lower 2 rows of 3] and cut them out

For the body, each window is 3" wide and 3 1/2" high. On the sides and back there are 5 windows across and 6 down. On the front there are 5 across and 5 down because, at the top, we left a place for the sign that was one window high. The spaces between the windows are 1 1/2". Make patterns for the front back and sides and cut out the windows in them once again making window frames.

### Step seven: Glue on the window frames

After the frames are painted, spray glue them over the body and head boxes with painted window areas.

## HOW TO MAKE A CORPORATE PERSON COSTUME



# E PERSONHOOD COSTUME



## Step four: Constructing the top of the box

This could be almost anything you want as long as it is light enough. We used 2 lightweight bundt pans topped with a plastic thing we found to which we added an antenna. But we thought of lots of funny things from a helicopter landing port to a satellite dish made from a metal vegetable strainer.

## Step nine: The logo and corporate name

The logo on the forehead of the head box is downloaded from the internet and glued to foam core. Velcro is glued on to make it removable and change the corporate identity.

The sign on the front of the box is printed on a computer and mounted like the logo.

## Step two: Constructing the body box

Glue the bottom flaps tucked up inside. Close the top flaps and cut hole for head. Put the box on the wearer dressed with the suit jacket and pants. Adjust the head/neck hole so the box sits on the shoulders and rests parallel to the floor. Either velcro or glue the flaps together. Mark armholes slightly to the front. Slowly cut the holes till they are big enough and comfortable for the wearer. Glue pieces of foam rubber to the inside of the box to pad the shoulders.

## Step six: Painting the costume:

Spray the boxes lightly with glossy black paint on the areas where the windows will be. Do not cover the boxes completely with the black. This makes it look as though the windows are shiny. Do not spray the face of the head box, but the other 3 sides.

Lightly spray the stiff paper window frames with gray spatter trunk paint. You can get this at an auto supply store; and you will need 2 cans. Also spray the face of the head box and the top of the body box and head box and whatever else you want to appear as "stone."

## Street Theater Ideas

By Jim Tarbell

If you want to recreate the educational and entertaining press conference with the corporate person, it is available as a script. Email [rtp@mcn.org](mailto:rtp@mcn.org) for a complete copy. The Redwood Coast Chapter of the Alliance won first place in their Fourth of July parade with the corporate person, handing out Big Money (see below) and entertaining the crowd.

We also came up with the following idea for a repeatable skit either for a parade or the street:

Construct a corporate personhood costume. The person wearing the costume has to be able to sit down and draw their arms and legs inside. You will also need at least one person dressed up as a judge and half a dozen citizens dressed in corporate personhood t-shirts (see page 15). You will also need to have what we call Big Money handouts. These are 4"x10" pieces of paper with the image of \$1,000 bills on one side and information about corporate personhood on the other. You will also need at least one corporate logo American flag from Adbusters and a regular American flag.

Action starts with the corporate person sitting on the ground, so that the costume is just a building. The judge stands above it. Suddenly arms appear from the costume and hand the judge some Big Money. The judge takes the money and gives the corporation corporate personhood. The costume now rises up and looms over the judge inundating her/him with Big Money. The judges crumble to the ground. The corporate person raises the corporate logo American flag and dances in victory.

The citizens now jump into action. They help the judge up. They take the money away from the corporate person and force it back into being just a corporation, sitting on the ground with arms and legs drawn back inside. They take down the corporate flag and raise the American flag.

The judge and citizens dance in victory handing out the big money educational material to the audience.

## BOOK REVIEW

*How Corporations Hurt Us All: Saving Our Rights, Democracy, Institutions & Our Future*  
by Dan Butts

244 pages, 8 x 10 1/2, \$19, Trafford Publishing, Victoria, BC.

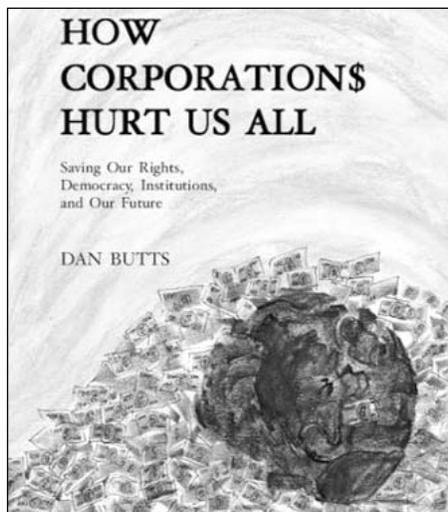
Reviewed by Professor Mike Whitty

Slowly but surely a scholarly literature of fresh alternatives to capitalism is being established. Human imagination and visionary scholarship have combined to show that another world is possible.

*How Corporations Hurt Us All* by Dan Butts (Metro Detroit AfD) presents a new paradigm for human culture based on spiritual values and economic democracy. It urges harnessing human spirit through ethics, justice, cooperation and sustainability. This book continues and expands the mainstreaming of AfD's anti-corporate populism into the wider universe of progressive responses to a world ruled by corporations. *How Corporations Hurt Us All* offers alternative solutions to world problems. Dan Butts envisions a worldwide social democracy with a soul. Not just soulless socialism but economics with a human face and a universal cosmology. *How Corporations Hurt Us All* reflects a global trend which is not only transforming economic and political culture, but also transforming society and thereby the individual human. Only when we have transformed self and society will a new post-capitalist balance be achieved.

This visionary author is at one level advancing AfD's explicit vision for a new world as articulated by the new paradigm thinkers, such as Dennis Kucinich, while at the same moment merging these farseeing formulations with other contemporary thinkers such as Leonardo Boff, Noam Chomsky, David Korten, Paul Hawkin and Hazel Henderson who believe another world is possible.

When we see the values and visions of POCLAD and AfD leaders joined by Noam Chomsky, Frei Betto, Leonardo Boff, Marcos Arruda and Sohail



Inayatullah, among others, we are able to forecast a paradigm shift away from capitalism.

In light of these concrete post-capitalist socio-economic models for a better world, many social justice organizations in civil society are embracing the neo-humanist approach to the possible future and the possible human. AfD and this book are in the mix of future trends which are making another world probable.

As a futurist and student of social his-

tory, I urge educators and social activists to adopt *How Corporations Hurt Us All* in their courses and political work. *How Corporations Hurt Us All* should be listed in the catalogue of the World Future Society and be presented on all occasions when we are asked for solutions and alternatives to the current world power system. Order a box of books and build lectures and seminars around its many timely themes. Help AfD birth neo-humanism and create a post-capitalist era of peace and justice.

Copies of the book can be ordered from your local bookstore, or ordered on line from Amazon.com or from the author at 40 Oxford, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069; 1 copy \$15, 3 - \$40 4 or more \$12 each including shipping and handling. Email [dunebutts@aol.com](mailto:dunebutts@aol.com). Allow one to two weeks for delivery.

*Professor Mike Whitty of the University of Detroit Mercy is a futurist, a founding member of the Metro Detroit AfD and an inspirational speaker available to speak to your chapter, without fee, on topics which deal with the possible future and the possible human, a winning plan to defeat Bush and how to fight the right and win the cultural wars.*

## AMERICAN DREAM RADIO.ORG

By Jerry Krantman



At a time when media is reporting very little about what's gone wrong with America, American Dream Radio is talking about the most central threats to our democracy.

Many U.S. citizens have disengaged from politics altogether, perhaps from disgust or denial. Meanwhile, in the absence of a politically active and effective citizenry, corporate interests are having their way with us.

Our politicians know who butters their bread. Both Republicans and Democrats are compelled to serve their corporate "sponsors." American Dream Radio talks about the influence of the largest corporations on our government, our culture, and our American Dream.

We all can see the dream receding

before our eyes, yet cling to the hope that it's just temporary. American Dream Radio explores how globalization and corporate "values" affect our lives.

If there is hope, we must rouse the citizens. However, citizens resist being roused. Most U.S. citizens, afraid to lose jobs and security, are afraid to speak out. Media doesn't address this intimidation, either. When citizens do manage a political awakening, they feel isolated.

Twenty-four-hours-a-day American Dream Radio broadcasts a stimulating range of ideas for those who are exploring how to begin to make a difference. We let people know that they are not alone.

We interview people who have found ways to work against the juggernauts and live to tell the tale.

Please check us out and e-mail your friends about us. Create a link from your website to ours. Keep the information flowing. American Dream Radio is only on the Internet (slow connections—24,000bps—work fine).

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS ALLIANCE CASE AGAINST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

By Ronnie Dugger

In "The Secret War on Judges: Buying Justice," the 7/21/03 *Forbes* magazine exposes "a secret war on judges now being waged" by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and allied corporations to knock liberal state judges off the bench. Cliff Arnebeck, attorney (and AfD Council member), has been battling the Chamber in this war on behalf of the Alliance since the plot first surfaced in the 2000 re-election campaign of the Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Alice Resnick. The issue is whether corporations can use corporate money to beat judges they don't like.

"Insurance giant AIG, Home Depot, and Daimler-Chrysler are chipping in" to the Chamber's political war chests against the judges they detest, *Forbes* reports, but according to the story the Chamber "cloaks its efforts by sidestepping disclosure laws ... Instead of donating cash to candidates, it provides ad money and couches the effort as 'informational' and policy-based."

### COMMUNICATIONS COOP NEEDS YOU

By Jack VanderVen, Greater Cincinnati AfD

An Internet-based communications network linking progressive and populist organizations from coast to coast and enabling them to work together on a long-term basis in pursuit of common goals is "an idea whose time has come." This conviction, coupled with the realization that it will take a powerful concerted effort on the part of like-minded organizations and individuals to stop the radical right's Bush-fueled juggernaut in its tracks, energizes the members of the Alliance's Communications Cooperative Planning Committee to continue our efforts to organize a conference to establish an Independent Allies communications network. Although the original organizing conference had to be cancelled, most of the organizations we invited expressed a strong interest in the con-

cept, and we are encouraged to press on. We are determined to lay to rest Jim Hightower's analogy that getting progressives to work together is like loading frogs into a wheelbarrow. However, the achievement of that objective will require adding some people to the active ranks of the Planning Committee. The varied tasks encompassed in the preparations for the projected organizing conference require more time, energy and commitment from more persons than are currently active on the planning committee. Please seriously consider adding your efforts to ours in the development of this important progressive/populist enterprise! Committee discussions are conducted by conference call, with other intra-committee business transacted primarily by email.

To join the Planning Committee and/or to obtain more information please contact Jack VanderVen, Planning Committee Chair, at 513-542-0958 or difalcm@email.uc.edu.



The Ohio Elections Commission, however, recently voted 4-3 in favor of the Alliance and Common Cause. The next hearing in the matter at the state election commission was scheduled for July 24.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Chamber has appealed to the Common Pleas Court and, Arnebeck

advises *Alliance Alerts*, "We will be litigating over the obligation of the Chamber to report the names of the corporate contributors and our right to then bring new complaints against those corporations ... We are in discovery determining how many times the attack ad ran, how many corporate contributions were received and the research basis for the content of the attack ad." The court hearing on the merits is likely to occur on November 13.

The ongoing controversy receives prominent play in Ohio newspapers. On April 25th the *Toledo Blade* reported that even though the Chamber was fined \$1,000 for violating state campaign finance law, it said it will never be forced to reveal who contributed to its effort to unseat Justice Alice Robie Resnick and then continued:

The chamber struck a deal with Common Cause that ... narrowed the focus of the case to whether corporate money was used to influence the outcome of an election. The goal was to ultimately set up a court appeal that would test a 1976 U.S. Supreme Court decision that such ads are constitutionally protected speech as long as they don't use keywords like 'vote for,' 'elect,' or 'defeat.'

The state chamber did not reach a similar deal with its accuser, the Alliance for Democracy. The state chamber still faces allegations its ads contained falsehoods and could yet be forced to reveal who financed its efforts.

Recently Arnebeck testified before the Ohio legislature against a "tort reform" proposal. "It is being pushed by the same gang of unethical corporations that tried to knock off Justice Resnick in 2000 so that they could get such legislation upheld by the Ohio Supreme Court," he told AA.

## CHAPTER REPORTS

### Virginia

Our overriding priority is to oppose Bush's re-election in 2004. We are working to distribute and inform people through the *Freedom Flyer*, by copying videos for distribution and through op-eds in our local paper.

We copy programs from CSPAN2 and Free Speech TV by people like Noam Chomsky, Arundhati Roy and Howard Zinn, since these presentations are not available through mainstream media.

We network with the Virginia Organizing Project and the Lynchburg Peace Education Center on state issues like tax code reform and local justice issues.

Some of us protested and demonstrated weekly at our Monument Terrace from 9/11 until recently. A few of us demonstrated in D. C. and Richmond this spring. Two of us were at the recent "Take Back America" event and got to shake hands and encourage Dennis Kucinich.

We are also promoting a Buy Local campaign, which encourages citizens to support locally owned and operated retail businesses and manufacturers in order to keep profits in our communities, jobs in the local economy and the community healthy and informed.

*Don Morrison, 412 Woodway Dr,  
Lynchburg, VA 24501*

### Lake Superior Basin

Over the past year, we've conducted a spirited community discussion circle (Lake Linden, Michigan), a strategizing session for activists (Marquette, Michigan), written letters-to-the-editor on the corporate abuse theme, participated in the activities of the local peace alliance (Houghton/Hancock, Michigan), and attended the "Revitalizing Democracy" conference (Duluth, Minnesota).

Currently, we're participating in an in-depth study circle where the theme of corporate abuse of power is prominent.

While we have been involved in these tangential activities, these experiences have illustrated the difficulty in organizing specifically around the AfD mission in local communities, for several reasons:

First, local activists and liberals want to stay with their single-issue causes, and

find the concept of the corporate role too abstract and removed for their interests.

Secondly, it is difficult for local activists who express interest in the corporate abuse of power issue to sense how they can meaningfully get involved in what is essentially a national-level issue, leaving them feeling disconnected. In addition, I find that the national AfD organization does not have an effective or workable mechanism by which new AfD members can feel an integral part of national efforts.

*Vern Simula, vsimula@btc1.up.net*

### Portland, Oregon

Portland General Electric, Oregon's largest private electric-power provider, and the only profit-making asset of bankrupt Enron, is on the run. Our chapter allied with the Pacific Green Party and others in an effort to form a People's Utility District to "kick Enron's thieving butt" out of Oregon. We gathered more than half the required signatures and now this question of bringing power to the people will be on the November '03 ballot in Multnomah County.

In addition, several AfDers have worked for the past eight months on Campaign Finance Reform, both for candidate and initiative campaigns. We should start gathering signatures soon. We are also involved in a coalition to preserve the estate tax both on the national and state level. We found that pro-estate tax groups had never approached our congressional delegation.

*David Delk, DavidDelkatAFD@aol.com*

### San Fernando Valley

We've been experiencing steady growth. This past May we held a symposium on corporate personhood and also sponsored an inspiring talk by Steve Rohde on "Liberty and Truth are the First Casualties of War."

All of our members who have email receive alerts on different actions. Our main focus has been on a single payer health bill introduced by State Senator Sheila Kuehl, and the Corporate 3 Strikes bill written by our member Bob Benson. The health bill is moving along and will be in the state assembly. Many of us will be involved in the protest against Mr. Bush this week at Century City.

*Dolly Arond, djarond@earthlink.net.*

### Indiana

There are 10 to 20 activists in the (Indianapolis) Indiana Alliance for Democracy chapter, and they are involved with causes like Indiana Fair Trade Campaign, Living Wage Campaign, and Indiana Clean Elections Coalition. Indiana AfD joined the Fair Taxes for All Coalition, and has a web site – [www.inafd.org](http://www.inafd.org).

Jack Miller investigated the public/private water company deal with the City of Indianapolis and U.S. Filter, and his report led to further investigation and a new commission is being formed.

*Stefanie Miller, jackandstef@earthlink.net*

### Capital District of NY

The Albany AfD Chapter hosted a Concert for Democracy! fundraiser to benefit the Alliance for Democracy on June 20th, featuring David Rovics, nationally acclaimed folksinger. Amy Goodman calls David Rovics the musical version of Democracy Now! Rovics is a rabble-rouser who performs regularly at protests, festivals, campuses and the like, to help spread progressives' words.

Other chapter members have been lobbying the NYS legislature for Clean Money/Clean Elections CFR; they've been holding forums, rallies, letter-writing and phone-in campaigns on peace issues; and working with various other local groups to help bring together a movement.

*Joe Seeman, seeman\_joe@yahoo.com*

### Rochester

On June 5th the Rochester chapter hit a triple, maybe a home run. With great publicity, we had hundreds of people attend an evening co-sponsored by us and the local Raging Grannies, featuring: first, Granny D, who charmed and inspired everyone; and second, a campaign reform program in Monroe County, New York, that was launched by our AfD Chapter.

The Demonstrate Democracy Project calls upon all candidates running at the Monroe County level and below, along with all political parties, local governments and the media in Monroe County, to demonstrate their commitment to democracy by VOLUNTARILY adhering to a simple set of campaign guidelines and

*Chapter Reports continued on page 13*

## Chapter Reports

Continued from page 12

VOLUNTARILY agreeing to work cooperatively as democratic partners in the electoral process. Two of the guidelines are NO money from corporations or unions, or from the candidates themselves, and NO more than \$100 from any contributor.

AfD chapter members are reaching out to all of the elements mentioned above and to the general public to lobby for their support. We have over 200 signatures in our first week, thousands more to come.

If you would like to learn more about the Demonstrate Democracy Project, you can contact the project coordinator, Rome Celli, by email CelliR@RochesterAlliance.org. Copies of the petition are also available in printed form.

Rome Celli, CelliR@RochesterAlliance.org

### Mass. Bay South

**W**e co-sponsored a talk by Randy Forsberg, author of *Urgent Call for Voter Education 2004*. (See [urgentcall.org](http://urgentcall.org).) We continue to collect signatures at a weekly vigil.

In June we held a mini caucus with spokespeople for progressive candidates, coinciding with MoveOn's "primary."

We're concerned that the next election could be stolen by computer fraud, as Ronnie warned at our forum after the last election, so we're publicizing Rep. Rush Holt's bill to require a paper trail for all voting machines (<http://holt.house.gov>). We are also looking at long-term strategy as outlined by non-violent conflict theorist Gene Sharp in *There are Realistic Alternatives*, available on line at [www.aein-stein.org](http://www.aein-stein.org) at "New publications."

Jean Maryborn, maryborn@earthlink.net

### Boston-Cambridge

**C**larke University Professor Dick Peet riveted AfDers with his analysis of "free trade" beliefs. We look forward to his latest book *Unholy Trinity: the IMF, World Bank, and WTO*.

We interviewed four officials in Burlington, VT to see if participatory city budgeting (Porto Alegre style) might be transplanted to the U.S. and found that Burlington has substantial citizen participation. It may be a model.

Dave Lewit, dlewit@igc.org



## THESE MEN HAVE STOLEN OUR DEMOCRACY:

### We're Hitting the Road to Take It Back!

#### From the Democracy Caravan

**T**his fall we will launch the first national Democracy Caravan to help build a movement to reclaim democracy in America. We want to communicate with the small business people, family farmers, homemakers, steelworkers, moms and dads, artists, activists, educators, professionals, students, retirees, veterans, unemployed, and just average folks--and listen to what you have to say about the state of our union.

More and more Americans of all stripes are fed up with the disastrous turn of events coming out of Washington. More and more of us feel the urgent need to mobilize in direct ways to rally the American people in this time of national crisis. The Democracy Caravan will be one such visible marker on the political horizon: traveling testimony to democracy in motion.

Join us now to build this catalyst for democratic renewal. Imagine a caravan rallying the people in every state. Dream of the day when we can put aside party affiliation and build a movement to recover our basic democratic rights to full and fair participation by all Americans in our political life.

The Caravan will be a grand spectacle on our nation's highways and a vibrant sight in small towns across America. Help us locate local organizers, impassioned speakers, and committed travelers who share our hope for democratic renewal. Regardless of your situation, you can be

a part of the caravan: join us on the road for a day, a month or a year or more.

OUR FIRST FOUR MONTH LEG of the journey begins in California, **Oct 1:** Central Valley, LA, Palm Springs, Slab City/Niland; **Oct 11** Arizona: Quartzite, Yuma, Phoenix, Tucson; **Oct. 15** New Mexico: Silver City, Deming, Las Cruces, Alamogordo; **Oct 21** Texas: El Paso, Fort Stockton, Kerrville, Austin, Waco, Arlington; **Oct. 31** Oklahoma: Durant, McAlester, Muskogee, Tulsa; **Nov. 5** Iowa (via Abilene & Atchison, KS, and Maryville, MO) locations to be announced depending on presidential candidate activity; **Nov. 16** Illinois: Galesburg, Peoria, Springfield, Carbondale; **Nov. 21** Kentucky: Mayfield; **Nov. 25** Thanksgiving break; **Dec. 1** Tennessee; **Dec. 6** Mississippi; **Dec. 11** Alabama; **Dec. 14** Florida; **Dec. 21** Winter Break; **Jan 5** Georgia: Savannah, Plains, **Jan 10** South Carolina; **Jan 13** North Carolina: Asheville, Durham; **Jan 16** Virginia; **Jan 20** Washington, DC -- Alternative State of the Union Gathering **SECOND LEG: Spring 2004** Emphasis on primary states in Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern regions **THIRD LEG: Summer 2004** -- the upper Midwest and Northwest **FOURTH LEG: Fall: 2004**

The Presidential Election: Registering voters in Swing States--the Presidential Debates

Go to [www.democracycaravan.org](http://www.democracycaravan.org) for more information or call Ben Sher 916-489-3363.

## THE BILDERBERG

By Sharon E. Thompson, AfD - MN

If you were to mention the Bilderberg in a conversation, you would likely get a blank stare and a response of "The what?" By design, the existence of the Bilderberg escapes public attention. What is the Bilderberg? The Bilderberg (named for the hotel in which its initial meeting was held) is an unofficial, secretive group of powerful U.S. and Western European corporate and government elites. It meets annually on an "invitation only" basis. The Bilderberg mingles central bankers, defense experts, press barons, government ministers, prime ministers, royalty, international financiers, and political leaders. It provides a secure venue for frank discussion and consensus-building among corporate and government leaders.

Why was it created? Following World War II, the elite of the victorious Allied powers determined that the basis of the post-war world economy would be a system of global corporate capitalism. This would require cooperation of the ruling classes of the leading industrialized nations. In response to this need the Bilderberg was formed in May 1954. It has

no formal membership, but each year a mysterious "steering committee" devises a selected invitation list of approximately 100 names. (Guests this year from the U.S. included Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, banker David Rockefeller, as well as various members of the Rockefeller family, and Henry Kissinger.) The Bilderberg does not invite or accept Asians, Middle Easterners, Latin Americans or Africans.

Since the Bilderberg has no official status, is it just a harmless "discussion group" of politicians, academics, and business tycoons as some would contend? I think the answer to that can be best decided by quoting David Rockefeller (speaking at the June 1991 Bilderberg meeting) as he expressed his gratitude to the major media for their discretion in maintaining their silence over the years concerning the discussions held at the Bilderberg meetings.

"We are grateful to the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Time Magazine* and other great publications whose directors have attended our meetings and respected their promises of discretion for almost forty years. It would have been impossible for us to develop OUR PLAN FOR THE WORLD



*David Rockefeller, founder of the Trilateral Commission, Honorary Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations, past CEO of Chase Manhattan bank*

(emphasis added) if we had been subjected to the lights of publicity during those years. But, the world is more sophisticated and prepared to march towards A WORLD GOVERNMENT (emphasis added). The SUPRANATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY OF AN INTELLECTUAL ELITE AND WORLD BANKERS (emphasis added) is surely preferable to the national autodetermination practiced in past centuries."

## Fair Taxes

*Continued from page 1*

lion. According to reporter Bill Theobald, dropping the tax will also drive up the cost of state and local borrowing – a cost passed on to other taxpayers. A delicious irony here is that much of the money from tax cuts on the wealthy will be loaned back by those wealthy folks to the government (for a fee).

So, who's pushing this plum for the rich? At the bottom of the ads are the sponsors – The Seniors Coalition and 60 Plus Association. Both of these organizations claim to work for the best interests of the elderly, but a background check proves otherwise. Both are front groups started by archconservative and Unification Church stalwart Richard Viguerie, and both have been denounced as "fear factories" by the Council of Senior Citizens. Both are members of Citizens for Better Medicare (CBM), a front group set

up in 1999 by the pharmaceutical industry's lobby, PhRMA, to protect that industry's bloated profits from common sense legislation. The Seniors Coalition (TSC) boasts three million members and revenue over seven million dollars, but its tax return lists zero revenue from "membership dues and assessments." Much of its funding appears to come from corporations which want to buy a ready-made grassroots movement. The TSC website shamelessly trolls for "corporate partnerships" – asking, "Are your expensive education and lobbying efforts hampered due to the lack of effective consumer support? Would an army of more than three million seniors...working on important legislative/regulatory issues be valuable? Team up with The Seniors Coalition!"

Check out the team: Co-founder Dan Alexander drew a \$23,000 monthly "consulting fee" from TSC during some of the four years he spent in prison for extor-

tion; a Congressional Committee called TSC's deceptive mailings "particularly egregious;" *The Minneapolis Star Tribune* called a TSC smear campaign in Minnesota a "shabby attack" by a "sleazy interest group."

It's worth noting also where the money for this tax cut is going to come from. The House version provides for deep cuts in domestic programs that currently help our nation's poorest and most vulnerable citizens—Medicaid, child care, food stamps, children's health, school lunches, supplemental benefits for the elderly and disabled. Hefty cuts would also be made in benefits for veterans. It's important to remember that this tax cut is more than a gift to the already rich. It is in fact a shameless attack on government's ability to serve every citizen regardless of wealth—on democracy itself. Anti-gov-

*Fair Taxes continued on page 15*

**Fair Taxes**

*Continued from page 14*

ernment, anti-tax reactionaries get positively misty-eyed when they reflect on the aristocratic splendor of the late 19th century. You remember reading about those days of low taxes and, oh yes—grinding poverty, child labor, disease ridden slums, fetid water, tainted medicine and food, sixty-hour work weeks, no minimum wage, no pensions...the list is long and disgraceful.

One such misty eyed conservative, Grover Norquist, is called the most powerful man in Washington you never heard of. Norquist heads Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) and his goal is “to cut government in half—to get it down to a size we can drown in a bath tub.” Norquist’s conservatism hasn’t prevented him from accepting heavy funding from corporate interests including tobacco, gambling and alcohol. Other backers of his include Microsoft, UPS and AOL Time Warner. Representatives of the White House regularly attend his weekly strategy sessions on privatization, cutting government programs and

taxes. Bush, Cheney, and Rove all love Grover Norquist!

Let’s remember the government that Grover Norquist and his wealthy powerful allies want to “drown in the bathtub” is the only force in America with a balance of powers and democratically elected officials. Government, too, is unique in having a charter that protects the rights of every citizen regardless of wealth. The poorest, dirtiest, least-humane countries on Earth also have the lowest taxes and least government “interference.”

Taxes in the U.S. are already the lowest in the industrial world. Americans of all ages need to decide soon whether we want to live in the best place or just the cheapest, because it can’t be both. A good place to start would be taxing people who can afford the taxes, and eliminating some taxes on workers, the unemployed (that’s right—unemployment benefits are taxed), and others who are barely getting by. Citizens can get more balanced information from a real grassroots coalition aptly named Fair Taxes for All ([www.fairtaxes4all.org](http://www.fairtaxes4all.org)).

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## ASHCROFT AND THE ALLIANCE — AN UPDATE

By Ronnie Dugger

The Federal Election Commission continues to stall the Alliance for Democracy lawsuit to force it to take action on a complaint against alleged campaign law violations by Atty. Gen. John Ashcroft when he was running for the U.S. Senate in 2000.

More than two years ago, in March 2001, the Alliance, with Common Cause and two Missouri voters, filed an administrative complaint at the FEC stating that Ashcroft's leadership PAC, Spirit of America, had secretly donated to Ashcroft's campaign a fund-raising list created at a cost of more than \$2 million and on which the campaign earned \$116,000 in rental income and that neither the PAC nor the campaign reported it to the FEC.

In its summer newsletter, the National Voter Rights Institute, which is litigating this issue concerning the FEC, commented: "Enforcement of the law in this matter is particularly important because the violations at issue are so egregious and because it is important that the campaign finance laws be enforced against all people, including those at the highest levels of power."

Three and a half months after the complaint was filed, the newsletter reported, "a supervisory attorney at the FEC told NVRI Executive Director John Bonifaz that the FEC had not even assigned an attorney to the matter."

Oddly enough, federal law prohibits the FEC from providing any information about a pending enforcement matter to anyone, even the complainants, until the FEC finally resolves the matter. After waiting more than a year, NVRI, on behalf of three plaintiffs, the Alliance and two Missouri voters, Ben Kjelshus of the Kansas City AfD and Hedy Epstein, sued to force the FEC to take action.

The court entered a confidentiality order, and the plaintiffs "are not allowed to know the information" pertaining to the charges of the lawsuit, the newsletter observed. "...the FEC has not resolved the complaint. There has been no settlement with the Ashcroft campaign or Ashcroft leadership PAC. And the FEC has not filed its own enforcement lawsuit against the Ashcroft committees."

The FEC has moved for summary judgment against the plaintiffs, and "We are currently waiting for the judge's decision," the newsletter reported. "Hopefully, we will soon be able to report that the FEC has finally acted on the complaint--and that such action included enforcement of the law."

## CORPORATE CRIMINALS HOME FREE IN CALIFORNIA

By Bob Benson, SFV AfD

Corporate crime walked free on June 4, 2003, in the California Senate when three Democrats joined five Republicans on the Appropriations Committee to kill the Corporate Three Strikes Act. Senate Bill 335, instigated by California AfD members and introduced by Senator Gloria Romero (D- Los Angeles), would have been the toughest corporate accountability law in the nation, putting out of business in California any company convicted of three felonies in a ten-year period. The Bill was friendly to business because it restored honest competition. It was unfriendly only to corporate felons. The Republicans all instinctively voted against it. But three Democrats on the Committee also followed the Republican beat. Democrats Debra Bowen (D-Redondo Beach), Jackie Speier (D-San Francisco) and Michael Machado (D-Stockton), whose votes could have saved the bill, killed it instead.

All scholars who have researched corporate crime have concluded that its costs far exceed the costs of ordinary crime by individuals. Senator Romero had thought that after the recent scandals with Enron, Andersen, WorldCom, Halliburton, Tenet Healthcare and other corporate miscreants, the California Legislature was finally ready to get tough on corporate crime. Today, the Republicans and Democrats Bowen, Speier and Machado signaled that it is still business as usual when it comes to coddling corporate criminals. Romero says she will reintroduce the bill next year.