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Volume IV, No. 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY

Spring 2004

DEMOCRACY FOR SALE:

Front Groups

by Jack Miller, Indiana AfD

Going through my files recently, I found a letter from a man criticizing the lack of balance in an article I had written. As a long-time employee of Dow Agribusiness, he was unhappy about the emphasis on adverse health effects of pesticides. It was obvious he had put a lot of thought into his letter, but he seemed to base his objections on shaky

Front Groups continued on page 3



VOTERS BAN GMOs:

Despite Bio-tech Front Group Opposition

by Jan Edwards, Redwood Coast AfD

On March 2, 2004, 56.5% of 26,259 Mendocino County, California voters approved a ban on the planting of genetically modified organisms in the county. The success of Measure H marks the first time a locality in the United States has acted against GMOs.

The Campaign

Money spent on the campaign broke all local records. The No on H campaign spent \$710,000, contributed largely by the Washington, D.C.-based CropLife America, a biotech industry group formed by such corporations as Monsanto, Dow Agrosiences, Dupont, and Syngenta. A \$500 donation was the single contribution from within Mendocino County. The "Yes" campaign spent \$125,000, with most coming from small donations within the county.

"Yes on H" supporters, including many AfD members, put up yard signs; wrote letters to newspapers; tabled; sold buttons, bumperstickers and t-shirts; and organized town hall meetings and debates. They sent mailings to voters and created radio and newspaper ads to convey the dangers GMO crops pose to health and to the county's farm economy. They also stressed the issues of local democracy and of "giant corporations trying to buy votes."

The "No on H" campaign relied heavily

GMOs Banned continued on page 6

POPULAR EDUCATION DRIVES CONVENTION

The 6th ALLIANCE for DEMOCRACY CONVENTION

The American Emergency—The Road Ahead

Simmons College, Boston, MA, July 20-22

by Ted Dooley and Nancy Price

You asked for it and here it is! An un-conventional hands-on, participatory, non-hierarchical, member-focused, chapter-building, movement-building, tool-kit-building, grassroots-developing gathering. A brand new approach, far outside the corporate structure, but...as old as the instincts in peoples' hearts! Maybe we ought to call this the 6th 2004 AfD UN-CONVENTION! Remember the tea party? Boston IS

where the U.S. revolution started. Join your AfD friends and allies as the revolt continues!

On the heels of the AfD Un-Convention comes the Boston Social Forum, "Another World Is Possible," July 23-25 at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. There is public transportation from Simmons College to Umass, Boston; go to www.boston-socialforum.org for information. Then

AfD Convention continued on page 8

The first principle of popular education is the need to democratize power relationships in our society. The means to this end is the creation of mechanisms of collective power over all the structures of society.

CALIFORNIA CLEAN MONEY BILL PASSES COMMITTEES

Tuesday, April 20, 2004, AB 2949, The Clean Money and Fair Elections bill sponsored by the California Clean Money Campaign (CCMC), passed the State Assembly Elections, Redistricting and Constitutional Amendments Committee. The bill then went to the Assembly Appropriations Committee for a price tag and source of funding.

The Bill was considered in the Appropriations Committee May 5. After the author of the bill, Assemblymember Loni Hancock, gave a description of the bill, AB2949 was put in the "Suspense file," a requirement for all bills over \$150,000. The leadership of the Appropriations Committee will decide which bills come out of suspense for discussion and then vote on sending the bill to the Assembly floor.

A vote is expected around May 19. CCMC is planning a "virtual" telephone bank to reach the leadership of the Assembly and the Appropriations Committee before May 19. Three members of the Appropriations Committee—Joe Nation, Patty Berg and Genny Oropeza—on hearing Hancock's description, requested their names be added as co-sponsors. Special thanks goes to Alliance member and leader of the Northern California Clean Money Working group, Steve Fein, for the work he did in getting Assemblymember Joe Nation and other assembly members on board.

The "Clean Money" legislation requires that candidates neither spend his or her own funds nor accept private contributions. If outspent by a non-participating candidate or targeted by independent expenditures, compensatory funds up to three times the original amount will be allotted to keep the campaign competitive.

For over a year the the CCMC has worked to build and cement relationships with many allied groups. Among the groups supporting AB2949 are California Common Cause, California League of Women Voters, National Sierra Club of California, CALPIRG, Progressive Jewish Alliance, Public Campaign, California National Organization of Women, San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women, and The Greenlining Institute.

Campaign president Jo Seidita stated that, "We are going into high gear to set up Grassroots Clean Money Working Groups throughout the state, concentrating first in the districts of key committee members." Working Group members can effectively: lobby key legislators; write letters to the editor; and table at major events throughout the state.

LA Times political columnist George Skelton, quotes Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger saying, "Special Interests have a strangle hold on Sacramento. Money comes in, favors go out, the people loose. We need to send a message: Game over." Skelton points out that the system did not change with the recall. "It's inherently corrupt because most politics—certainly state politics in California—feeds off special interest campaign contributions. Special interests give to get, to

invest in policy and power." Skelton concludes with a reference to the \$80 million a year cost of Clean Money as a good investment. "Either the public buys the politicians or the special interest will."

The California Clean Money Campaign was started by the San Fernando AfD chapter in 1999 and is nourished by AFD members Jo Seidita, President; Ted Williams, Chair and William Forthman, Treasurer. It is dedicated to making sure that this public investment in Clean Elections pays off. "Public funding of elections is a public good, stated Seidita, and we urge California AfD members to get in touch with the CCMC office to find out how they can help:

California Clean Money Campaign, 8800 Venice Blvd, Suite 321, Los Angeles, CA 90034, Tel: 310-837-8748 * Fax 310-837-1363, www.CAclean.org

SPECIAL COUNSEL REQUESTED

Criminal Investigation against John Ashcroft Sought

The National Voters Rights Institute (NVRI) continues to press for action against Attorney General John Ashcroft stemming from a complaint to the Federal Elections Commission originally joined by the Alliance for Democracy and two of its members from Missouri in 2001. The \$37,000 fine imposed by the FEC was not enough for the NVRI. In a letter earlier this year to the United States Department of Justice the NVRI "formally request(ed) that the U.S. Department of Justice appoint an outside special counsel to investigate potential criminal actions involving United States Attorney General John D. Ashcroft, his 2000 Senate campaign committee (Ashcroft 2000), and his leadership PAC (Spirit of America)... (A)ctions, outlined in this letter... raise serious questions about the integrity of the Office of the Attorney General."

The letter then goes on to outline a series of criminal complaints against John Ashcroft that could lead to over

\$100,000 in fines and more than 5 years in prison. NVRI characterizes Ashcroft's attempt to conceal his illegal campaign financing activities as "sham transactions set up by Mr. Ashcroft to launder campaign money." They conclude with the observation that "There can be no doubt that the appointment of an outside special counsel is required in this case to fully investigate potential criminal actions implicating the United States Attorney General himself. Failure to appoint an outside special counsel in this case would send the dangerous message to the American people that the nation's chief law enforcement officer is above the law."

When the NVRI did not hear back from the Justice Department on this request, they sent a letter to the Office of the Inspector General. Inspector General Glenn Fine responded that the matter is now being investigated for criminal violations by the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section.

Front Groups

Continued from page 1
resources at best.

Stapled to his letter were two documents produced by the official-sounding front group, American Council on Science and Health (ACSH). The first document was titled "It's the dose—not the poison." That ancient proposition was dreamed up by a 16th Century physician and alchemist named Paracelsus, and is repeatedly quoted by polluters to justify dumping millions of tons of toxic chemicals into the environment annually.

Paracelsus (ca 1490-1540) was criticized for practicing medicine without a degree and was the first European to use tincture of opium (laudanum). He also administered deadly mercury and lead compounds to treat everything from epilepsy to nearsightedness and malaise. The plucky alchemist was also an early proponent of distilled alcohol, which he prescribed regularly for patients and himself and "often retired for the evening on the tavern floor."

Apparently, his peers didn't admire Paracelsus as much as today's polluters and their apologists, because it's thought his life ended when "he was

thrown from a great height by his enemies."

By invoking the name of a drunken quack dead 450 years, ACSH actually thinks it can dismiss concerns about dangerous modern chemicals. The attachment concluded "most formulations of PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls) are less toxic than table salt" and "table salt is much more dangerous than many pesticides...It is the dose not the poison!"

The other attachment was a "Holiday Dinner Menu" which listed the toxic effects of naturally occurring chemicals in food and concluded once again that "toxicity is dose-related" and "we need not worry about potential health risks here." Writer and researcher Peter Montague charges that "the dose makes the poison' concept is a dead letter. It is an idea whose time has gone. It is false, misleading, utterly without merit."

Let's take a closer look at ACSH. Formed in 1978 as a non-profit by Elizabeth Whelan, PhD, ACSH portrays itself as a "science-based, public health group...providing mainstream, peer reviewed scientific information to American consumers." During its early years of operations, ACSH proudly published its funders' names,

but no longer. That list is a veritable "who's who" of corporations that produce pesticides, junk food, drugs, beer and industrial pollution.. Funding also comes from right-wing foundations such as Coors and John M. Olin. The funders really get their money's worth.

While doing no independent primary research, and doing their "peer review" in-house, ACSH generates an avalanche of media advisories with catchy, quotable phrases that reporters love. With a budget of \$1.5 million, ACSH is one of the most frequently quoted sources on public health and environmental issues. They grind out edi-

torials, pamphlets, press releases and articles defending asbestos, pesticides and food additives while dismissing evidence of global warming and health effects of cholesterol, PCBs, DDT, cyclamates, and even the chemical contamination of Love Canal.

According to the director of the Center for Media and Democracy, John Stauber, ACSH has "actively courted industry support, offering itself as an off-the-shelf, available-on-demand source of 'sound scientific expertise' in defense of virtually every form and type of industrial pollution known to the 20th Century." Defending her funders in the snack food industry, Dr. Whelan has written that, "there is no such thing as 'junk food'" and "there is insufficient evidence of a relationship between diet and any disease." While cashing checks from the beer and liquor industry, Whelan wrote in Newsweek, "We should lower the drinking age to 18." When the EPA forced ACSH patron GE to clean up the Hudson River where they had dumped deadly PCBs for decades, Whelan wrote that the EPA needed "spanking" for spreading needless fear about PCB exposure. The disgraceful bill of particulars goes on and on, but you get the idea.

Front groups abound in our corporate culture. Author and scientist, Dr. Sharon Beder writes, "corporation and industry associations use front groups to put their views into the mouths of others who are portrayed as independent scientists or public interest advocates." For decades front groups like ACSH have been breathtakingly successful at confusing the public and politicians about the scientific basis of health and environmental problems. Our republic and our health depends on a well-informed citizenry and it's up to all of us to engage our own best critical thinking when we hear any claim.

Years ago my dad gave me some advice that I now call "Pop's Principle." It goes like this: "When you're unsure which fellow is telling you the truth, determine which one stands to make money on it, and nine times out of ten you've got your liar." In my experience I would modify Pop's Principle only slightly—it's 10 times out of 10.



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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Nancy Price and Ted Dooley

Co-Chairs of the AfD National Council

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BUDGET IN BLACK

At the May phone-in council meeting Treasurer Vikki Savee reported that there is \$9000 in the checking account and that \$10,000 in debt has been paid off over the past year.

According to the 2004/05 budget AfD national will pay off another \$32,357 in debt over the next year and end up with a \$6664.76 contingency fund.

This transformation is largely due to the reduction in payroll expenses made possible by the all-volunteer staff running the national office. Ted Dooley also announced at the last meeting that AfD had settled its problems with the IRS.

The council thanks everyone who responded to the end-of-year appeal letter. Your generosity to date has sent us over the \$10,000 mark. A special thanks to long-time supporters Ken and Dottie Reiner for their \$3,000 gift.

POPULAR EDUCATION WORKS

I have long been an admirer of the consciousness-raising techniques of Paolo Freire to educate and organize the workers and peasants of northeastern Brazil. The most amazing result I have witnessed from this technique has been the success of the indigenous peoples' movement in Ecuador over the past thirty years. When I was a Peace Corp volunteer there in the seventies, politics were run by competing elites utilizing the military to achieve their goals. The indigenous community was relegated to the role of brute laborers completely disenfranchised from the political process. In those years a Catholic archbishop began using Freire's popular education techniques to raise indigenous understanding of their plight in the world. This led to the creation of the Ecuadorian National Indigenous Confederation (CONAIE). In the 1980s when the International Monetary Fund began imposing austerity measures on Ecuador, CONAIE sponsored classes on the workings of the globalized international economy in indigenous communities across Ecuador. In 1999 when the Ecuadorian government adopted the US dollar as its official currency, the indigenous people shut down the country and took over the government for four hours until the US and the Ecuadorian military threatened "blood in the streets." In November of 2003, the CONAIE candidate won the Presidency of Ecuador and newspapers around the world declared that CONAIE was co-ruling the country. — Another world is possible.

PRELIMINARY 2004-2005 AfD BUDGET

INCOME	
Membership	Income from FY2004 (Restricted)
Renewals	Corporate Globalization
New	American Town Hall
Member Contributions	AfD IRS Trust Account
Sustainers	Judicial Litigation
Non-member Contributions	Campaign Income
Chapter Donations	Corporate Globalization
Events/Convention	Communication Collective
Sales/Convention	Transforming Corporations
Reimbursed Expenses	American Town Hall
Unrestricted Income (2004)	TOTAL INCOME
4924.87	120,873.35

EXPENSE	
ACCOUNTING SERVICES	Communications Co-op
CPA	American Town Hall
Payroll Service	EVENTS
OFFICE, EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES	Special Events, Forums
Office Rent	Convention
Utilities	COUNCIL and COMMITTEE EXPENSES
Office Supplies & Exp	Council In-Person
Equipment Rental – Copier	Membership Appeals
Insurance (Tenants Policy)	Membership & Development
COMMUNICATIONS	In-Fact Mailing
Telephone	Publicity
Conference Calling Service	Chapter Start-up Kits
Website, Listserves	New Member Mailings
Misc Printing	MISCELLANEOUS
Alliance Alerts/DD Printing	Bank Credit Card Fees
AA/DD Postage	Bank Service Charges
Postage	Interest Expense
NATIONAL ACTION CAMPAIGNS	Debt Repayment
Corporate Globalization	Contingency Fund
Transform the Corporation	TOTAL EXPENSES
500.00	120,873.35

VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF THE AfD

Convention and Beyond

by Dave Lewit, Boston/Cambridge AfD

Concerning the AfD convention, what we need is no-name experts who can explicitly connect the dots and bring stories of how local actions have disabled predatory corporations, or how local or national laws—US or foreign—have hobbled corporations or enabled their positive side to emerge and dominate their activities. Or outsider experts who can facilitate OUR connecting such dots and enabling democracy locally—facilitators who are savvy in hard-nosed systems. What I am saying is (1) the AfD should be practical as well as theoretically dedicated to shrinking megacorporate power, and (2) that AfD should act systematically.

Probably the thing we could do best in the short term, with our limited membership and resources, is to gently but systematically hound local organizations—in their board and membership meetings—to think corporate, and think systemic. To measure their organizational effects in terms of weakening intercorporate and corporate-governmental collaboration, strengthening of democratic institutional arrangements and participation, and/or increasing civil disobedience and alternative activity. If we can also do original research, say, on municipal or county participatory budgeting, or on federal takeover of county sheriff positions, so much the better.

We need to work on our internal mobilization, education, planning, motivating, local action, and review. These should be the primary focus of the current and future AfD conventions. Perhaps this 2004 convention will be AfD's last national convention—OK. We should be going for regional conventions, and otherwise sharing information by visiting, email, phone, etc. If we ever have a national staff again, it should be to facilitate the above, not to redundantly do what Common Cause, Greenpeace, or Jobs with Justice already do.

Using Strategic Metaphors to Cast a Broader Net

by Jerry Krantman, Ukiah Valley, CA AfD, jerry@tech-support.biz

I am of the opinion that, to achieve the Alliance's goals, we must carve out a broader political niche for ourselves. I am not talking about changing our mission issues in the least, just some of our rhetoric and to outreach to more politically moderate individuals and groups.

I'd like to see the Alliance begin to intentionally identify its progressive agenda more with the center, than the left; promoting a multi-party alliance of disillusioned moderates, potential populists, rather than moving our agenda ever leftward to try to beat the right.

I'm not talking about a wimpy moderate agenda, but an energized middle way that works to prevent all large, special interests from making large contributions to political campaigns. Certainly, this would include working against corporate influence, but might not be limited to decrying only money from corporations; hopefully, easing the way for more Independents and moderate Republicans to get on board.

I know this idea often doesn't neatly fit people's mental categories (as reinforced by the media and our politicians), so it's not easy to talk about. I want us to promote our agenda as being a moderate one, even though others may label our issues as liberal. Remember that Dwight Eisenhower was a Republican, and yet he strongly warned America about the runaway

influence of corporations. I think we need to find, and make friends with, some of those sorts of Republicans, if they aren't extinct.

I'm looking for a new "framing" of our AfD corporate agenda, using new metaphors that won't require us to always announce that we are not anti-business.

Working, middle class people of all political stripes are being hurt by the economy and by many of Bush's policies. I've talked to quite a few who are ready to consider new ideas. I think we would do well to test how to talk about our issues to more of a political cross-section than we usually draw.

We have to find a way to stand up and say that caring for one another, the environment, our children, and our futures is not extreme left. Extreme left is when the government takes over the factories, not when people get health care.

I want to start a dialogue about creating new metaphors that might make the Alliance's message palatable to more people. I'm interested in testing new metaphors by having lots of us have local conversations with people who are not already members of our choir. I'm interested in seeing which of our issues and approaches seem to get these people to sit forward and get enthused. If we share our results with one another, we can multiply our learning and further refine our approach.

The Right has already produced and promoted such effective metaphors as "bleeding heart liberal" and "tax and spend Democrat". These labels are now in the public's mind so their negative images and attitudes can be easily evoked, by speeches and newscasts, without requiring further explanation. We need to promote metaphors of our own choosing.

I would like to begin a dialogue with others who understand the power of testing to find good metaphors. If you would like to explore such issues with me, write back. Perhaps we could begin an on-line forum discussion to explore strategic approaches toward delivering our message. Email me at jerry@tech-support.biz.



Dave Lewit



Jerry Krantman

BERKELEY TO LIMIT CORPORATE RIGHTS?

by Jan Edwards, Redwood Coast AfD

Over 80% of Americans agree that big corporations have too much power and influence on government. On May 3, 2004, twenty citizens, including Nancy Price speaking for AfD, addressed that issue in public statements for twelve Berkeley, CA Peace and Justice Commissioners, convincing eleven of them to vote for the *Resolution on Corporate Constitutional Rights*. Speakers were indignant about Monsanto's bovine growth hormone in milk, tobacco industry marketing to children, the Enron mess, Diebold voting machines, and the oil industry's and other corporate influence over trade, foreign policy, and war.

An abbreviated version of the resolution reads: WHEREAS corporate influ-

ence is transforming our government from one that is by and for the people to one that is by and for corporate interests; BE IT RESOLVED that Berkeley citizens support constitutional amendments declaring that corporations are not granted the rights of persons, nor is corporate money constitutionally protected speech.

The Resolution will probably be on the Berkeley City Council's agenda in June. Please email Berkeley City Council members and Mayor Bates expressing support for the "Resolution on Corporate Constitutional Rights" saying corporate money should not buy elections. Go to the City website at www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/Elected/default.htm and click on the names in the left column or contact: City Clerk, Sherry Kelly at 2180

Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704, (510)9811-6900 FAX (510)981-7188 email clerk@ci.berkeley.ca.us

Corporations have more rights than humans. Undemocratic judicial decisions named them legal "persons," granting them rights created for We the People. Wal-Mart used the 14th amendment to sue for discrimination when communities decided they didn't want big box mega-stores. This resolution is not anti-corporate because most corporations never use constitutional rights for political purposes nor to avoid accountability for harms caused.

I believe we are coming close to a tipping point of understanding about corporate personhood, and the passage of this resolution by a large city like Berkeley could be just the straw we need.

GMOs Banned

Continued from page 1

ly on mailings, radio and newspaper ads, and a controversial telephone "push poll" conducted by ProMark, a Texas firm. They relied on creating specious arguments rather than addressing the central issues.

"Yes on H" hosted Percy Schmeiser, a canola farmer from Canada, and other anti-GMO activists who spoke around the county. An Alliance Forum with Schmeiser and the Mayor of Fort Bragg, CA drew more than 200 people. Public radio station KZYX and cable access station MCCET in Fort Bragg broadcast debates, and local newspapers followed the campaign closely. National media, including NPR, USA Today, the New York Times, and the Chicago Tribune, picked up the story. Dr. Marc Lappé, director of the Mendocino County-based Center for Ethics and Toxics appeared on the Today Show.

Now, legislation may be presented to the State Legislature in an attempt to close the "loophole" that allowed Mendocino County to ban GMOs. The fundamental issue is jurisdiction: Which level of government is legally allowed to make such a decision? By passing Measure H, voters said "We want to make this decision at the

county level." However, federal and state governments usually oppose local control.

Although the GMO lobby has opposed meaningful regulation of the bioengineering industry, they may now seek to bring the technology under the regulatory mantle of the FDA. Under such circumstances, corporate lobbyists will work to create federal standards that the industry finds acceptable.

Oddly enough, GMO corporations could also bankroll a lawsuit brought by a Mendocino County farmer claiming his right to grow any crops he wants. This approach frames the debate as individual rights in opposition to government regulation.

Another line of attack is to claim that corporations' constitutional rights to interstate commerce are being violated. Such action would generate another battle over jurisdiction because there are products, like alcohol, that counties are allowed to regulate.

In addition the US Supreme Court has ruled that a regulation can be deemed a "taking" under the Fifth Amendment. That means a person or a corporation could sue Mendocino County for the "taking of future profits" they would have made from selling GM seed or growing GM crops in the county.

Mendocino County residents will urge



their elected representatives, from county to federal levels, to stand up for voters' rights to make this decision. They can also promote legislation asserting the right of county voters to decide this matter democratically.

The success of Measure H has given a big boost to activist morale. Democracy proponents are bolstered by the decisive victory over corporate money and power. The Vermont Senate, following on the heels of Mendocino County, passed legislation protecting farmers from contamination by GMO crops, and a House vote is pending. Humboldt and Sonoma Counties, which have groups actively working on measures of their own, feel renewed energy. New campaigns, however, would be wise to keep an eye on legal challenges to Measure H and craft their measures accordingly.



ANOTHER KIND OF EDUCATION IS POSSIBLE

Barnum & Olds Bring Paolo Freire Model to Alliance Convention

Experienced Minnesota AfD members Betsy Barnum and Larry Olds will guide the upcoming AfD Convention along a popular education pathway. They will provide the tools for an educational technique practiced by the Highlander Institute since the 1930s and utilized by Paolo Freire in his highly successful efforts to educate and organize the Brazilian underclass. Barnum and Olds help produce the Popular Education News.

by Betsy Barnum and Larry Olds

Most educational events such as conferences are organized on a model familiar from our years of schooling, in which students receive information from a teacher. Whether 3rd-graders or adults attend-

ing workshops, we are used to considering ourselves empty vessels to be filled up with the knowledge the person behind the podium distributes to us.

It is possible at educational events to change the focus from podium-centered distribution of knowledge to participant-centered creation of knowledge. Doing so can help people step out of the passive role of receiving knowledge and see themselves as active creators of what they need to know for organizing to challenge oppression and work for democratic social change. A popular education approach and popular education methods can help us mobilize to build a movement.

The session will: introduce and animate discussion about popular education as a participant-centered approach to learning; demonstrate a number of popular education tools; and invite participants to use the principles of popular education to create their own tools and methods. Betsy will demonstrate the popular education timeline, an interactive tool that can be used in educating about any topic, using a timeline depicting corporate personhood. The rest of the session will introduce other popular education tools and engage participants in coming up with ways to use these or new ideas they develop to educate about issues that concern them and help build a social movement to bring about change.

REGISTER FOR THE AfD NATIONAL CONVENTION IN BOSTON Simmons College July 20-22 for AfD Convention, July 23-24 for Boston Social Forum

Name	AfD Convention registration*									
	Full conference registration (before June 20) - \$65.00									
Address	Late full conference registration (June 21- July 1) - \$80.00									
City, State & Zip	One day Conference registration (Check days you want)	Tues 7/20	Wed 7/21	Thur 7/22						
Phone	Regular, \$30.00/day.									
email	Students \$15/day sliding scale.									
	Lodging (One bed in a double room) (Check nights you want)	AfD 7/20	AfD 7/21	AfD 7/22	BSF 7/23	BSF 7/24**				
	without a/c \$30.00/night									
	with a/c - \$40.00/night									
	with linen, additional \$10/night									
	Meal Plan (breakfast, lunch & dinner)*** \$25.00/day									
	<input type="checkbox"/> Please check box if you want dinner on Tuesday 7/20****									
	Tax Deductible gift to convention scholarship fund									

Please send registration to :
Alliance for Democracy
Vikki Savee
3141 Cloudview Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833

Method of Payment (circle one)
Mastercard Visa AmEx Check
(Check payable to Alliance for Democracy)
Card #

Exp Date

Signature

TOTAL

*Complete registration packet with Simmons College & BSF transportation information will be provided after individual registration form and payment are received.

** Check out on Sunday morning, 7/25. Luggage may not be left at college.

***Meal plan available only for 7/21 & 22. On other days, meals may be purchased individually on site.

****Dinner will be approximately \$12 and payable in the dining room on 7/20.

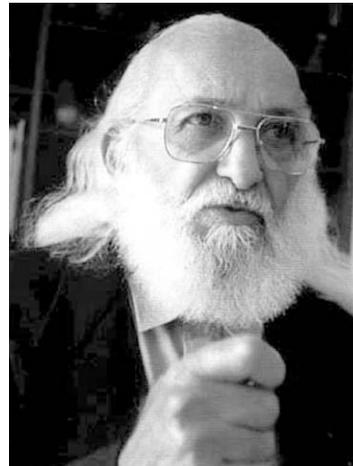


AfD Convention

Continued from page 1

comes the Democratic Party Nominating Convention, July 26-29. Note: you may stay at Simmons College through July 24 to attend the BSF, so reserve and pay for a room from July 20-24.

There is a preliminary convention schedule to the right. There will be some administrative matters and Alliance business which MUST be done. There are plenary presentations and special workshops. At convention registration, you'll receive a complete packet of materials. After you register and pay in full, confirmation notice and transportation information will be mailed. Public transportation to Simmons College is convenient from Logan Airport, South Station and the main bus station. Check: www.simmons.edu/visit/directions.shtml for directions and campus map. To register for the convention: tear off the registration form on page seven and mail it to Vikki Savee, 3141 Cloudview Drive, Sacramento CA 95833



Paolo Freire, Popular Educator who released a revolution in Brazil



Star indicates Simmons College

AfD CONVENTION BASIC INFO

When:

July 20-22

Where:

Simmons College in Boston, a small campus near Fenway Park and Museum of Fine Arts. Approximately 30 minutes by public transportation from Logan Airport.

Go to www.simmons.edu/visit/directions.shtml for directions and campus map.

Estimated Costs:

Three nights double-room without air conditioning \$30 per person per night; with air conditioning \$40 per night. Linens \$10. per day extra. Dorms have elevators. Meal plan, \$25 per day.

Make travel plans now!

With the Boston Social Forum and the Democratic National Convention in Boston, bargain plane tickets and convenient flights will not be available for long.



A
f
D

Popular Education is: rooted in the real interests and struggles of ordinary people; overtly political and critical of the status quo; committed to progressive social and political change in the interests of a fairer and more egalitarian society

Tuesday, 20 July

4 - 8 pm Registration, check-in, dinner (to 7:00 pm), visit - have a little fun! Video screenings and creative arts!

Wednesday, 21 July

7- 9 Breakfast

9-10:30 Music by Tom Neilson (remember Tom from Gettysburg?)

*"Opening Ceremony Surprise" and Greetings from Granny D (Doris Haddock); AfD Business

10:30-3:15 PLENARY I: Popular Education: What exactly is "popular education"? Larry Olds and Betsy Barnum

- *The Popular Education Tool Kit - illustrated
- *Corporate Personhood: Betsy Barnum uses the Popular Education tools for presentation
- *Break for lunch into interest circles , or regions.
- *Back to Popular Ed—summation and reports

3:15 -3:30 Take a breath and stretch!

3:30-5:30 WORKSHOPS I and II (on Thursday)

- *Advanced Popular education: Larry & Betsy
- *Trade & Water Theft: Ruth Caplan
- *AfD (re)-visioning, strategy, and planning: Ted Dooley, facilitator
- *Chapter successes and future local actions: a dialogue: Nancy Price., facilitator
- *Independent Allies and Communications

PRELIMINARY

Network: Ronnie Dugger, Vander Van, Peter Mott...

*Other Workshops: see below

6:00-7:30 Dine with the...

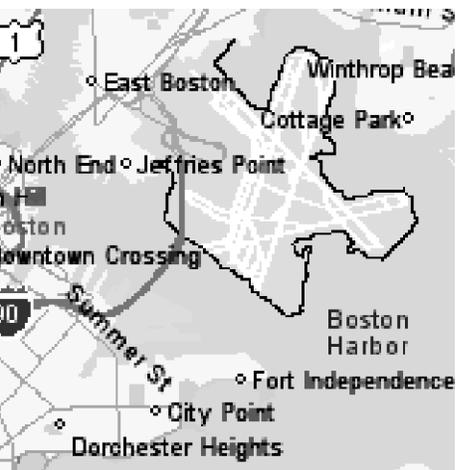
7:30-9:30 PLENARY II : Music and Panel: Contesting Before & After Bush-Kerry has a different approach remedy for a stolen election: legal actions in violation of evidence, re-extralegal measures, institution political parties, actions. Jonathan Z. Professor, intellectual property expert; Jonathan Simon, lawyer; Ronnie Dugger, article in The Nation on Copeland Brown, veteran for federal agencies; Deborah Bonifaz, founder National Institute, handling campaign Ashcroft for campaign

9:30 More music with T...

Thursday, 22 July

7-8:30 Breakfast with from your regions, or is

8:30-8:55 Greetings, cel...



Central location in Boston



David Rovics, "the musical version of Democracy Now."

BOSTON SOCIAL FORUM

Coming to the Alliance Convention in Boston July 20-22 at Simmons College? Plan to stay on for the Boston Social Forum (BSF) taking place on the University of MA Boston campus July 23-25. The Alliance has gotten a special deal so you can stay on in your Simmons College room for the BSF.

The Boston Social Forum is the first regional forum in North America, modeled on the World Social Forums which have taken place in Brazil and India. Peace and race will be overarching themes while a wide variety of other themes are being developed.

The Water Allies Network, which the Alliance helped to establish last November, is planning a full program on "Water for Life" which will deal with the rapid encroachment of global corporate domination of water and the struggles to liberate it for the commons and for accessibility to all. Maude Barlow, the inspiring and passionate speaker from Council of Canadians, will be one of the convocation speakers. There will also be plenaries, seminars and participatory workshops. Activists from Canada to Nicaragua will tell their stories from their own neighborhoods and around the world. The closing plenary will look at the road ahead in taking on the Water Barons.

The Water program is only one of five Alliance-led programs at the Boston Social Forum. Dave Lewit of the Boston-Cambridge Alliance is developing a set of presentations on Strategic Nonviolence and another on Localization. The latter will be in conjunction with Ethan Miller of the Maine Center for Justice, Ecology & Democracy's program on Solidarity Democracy, and will deal with community and regional economics---networked globally---as an answer to global corporatism. Strategic Nonviolence addresses state terrorism and civil nonviolent resistance to nationalism, militarism, and corporatism. Jack DuVall (A Force More Powerful) and Bruce Gagnon (Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space) are among the speakers.

Ruth Weizenbaum of the North Bridge Alliance is spearheading a BSF program on Democracy and another on Environment. The Democracy series will deal with mythology and history of US democracy, foreign models, tools such as honest voting, economic democracy such as participatory budgeting, alternative media, and global democracy. The Environment series will include catastrophic effects of global warming (Ross Gelbspan), alternative energy development, and other topics.

If you would like to work with them in these endeavors, you can reach Dave at 617-266-8687 and Ruth at 401-724-3141.

To register and for up-to-date news about the BSF go to www.bostonsocialforum.org. Another world is possible! See you in Boston.



AFD CONVENTION PROGRAM

Peter Mott, Jack Joe Davis

8:55-9:05 Opening by Ronnie Dugger
9:05-10 PLENARY III : ALLIANCE BUSINESS - Phase I

Under Workshops

10-noon WORKSHOPS II a continuation of Workshops I or new ones

from your region

Noon-1:30 Lunch & AfD Members' Quilting Bee

with Tom Neilson

1:30-3:00 PLENARY IV : AfD BUSINESS - Phase II

Stolen Election: 004. Each panelist preparation and such as appropriate, development and revoting, environment of opposition and other civil, Harvard Law Party and software merger pollster and or of forthcoming ironic voting; Alice software engineer democracy activist John Voting Rights against Atty Gen. ce violations.

3-4 Recircling; a regrouping of the issue/action circles: a recap of processes introduced.

4-6 PLENARY V : AfD BUSINESS - Phase III

6-7:30 Dinner - no work at all!

7:30-9 Celebration and Music by David Rovics

million

WORKSHOPS: Every workshop will include participant dialogue, using the Popular Education tools we've discussed earlier and should address local impact, local actions or regional strategies. In the workshop we will actually begin to create materials to bring the action into your community. Each workshop circle will choose a notetaker, and we'll create a way for the workshop dialogue circles to report back to the plenary.

chapter, friends lies

*If you would like to propose a workshop please email Nancy Price (ntprice@juno.com) or Ted Dooley (614grand@winternet.com) Also let them know if you will help facilitate this workshop and remember to include telephone contact information.

ion ceremony

CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

by Joe Davis, Providence, RI AfD

A Resolutions Committee has been appointed to encourage and process resolutions for consideration at the AfD Convention in July. In order to disseminate proposed resolutions and generate discussion by AfD members prior to the Convention, the committee will utilize an Internet web site called American Dream Radio, created by Jerry Krantman, a member of the Ukiah (CA) Chapter.

Any AfD member may post a draft resolution on the web site, and any AfD member may enter comments, which can be reviewed by all. The committee will ask that resolutions be drafted in a specified format, and that the discussion be conducted according to a protocol that will make the discussion productive and without the clutter of extraneous information. The format and protocol are posted on the web site.

The committee will review each resolution for conformance to the format. Before sending the resolutions to the Convention Committee, the committee will rank them in order of importance, giving priority to resolutions that propose: (a) changes in policy, or (b) actions to be taken on an AfD-wide basis. The deadline for posting a proposed resolution is Thursday, July 1.

To get to the American Dream Radio web site to post a resolution or enter into the discussion:

- 1) Go to www.americandreamradio.org
- 2) Page down and click on DISCUSS.
- 3) A menu of forums is displayed. Page down to forum on Convention Resolutions.
- 4) If this is your first time, click on "Register" Enter required registration fields. Click on "Submit"
- 5) You will then be asked to log in. Enter your Username and Password.
- 6) Page down to the Convention Resolutions forum.
- 7) To get approval to use this forum, click on "e-mail your request here"
- 8) Send e-mail to Administrator (admin@americandreamradio.org)

Identify yourself as an AfD member. You will get an e-mail with approval.

9) Go back to American Dream Radio and log in. If you checked the box for remembering your Username and Password, you will be logged in automatically.

10) Go down to the Convention Resolutions forum. Click on the title. You will be able to view the Protocol, all resolutions that have been posted, and any replies that have been made.

11) To post a new resolution, click on NEW, then DISCUSSION, and follow instructions.

12) To post a response to an existing DRAFT RESOLUTION, click on REPLY and follow instructions to enter your comments. To print, click on TOOLS .

If you have questions about American Dream Radio, send an email to: Jerry Krantman, jerry@americandreamradio.org or Joe Davis joe.davis2@att.net. Or mail your resolution to: Joe Davis, 67 University Ave, Providence, RI, 02906.



NOMINATIONS FOR AfD COUNCIL AND OFFICERS

Share your experience and vision to help guide AfD over the next two years of work to end corporate rule and rebuild democracy from the grassroots up.

Every two years Council Members, including officers, are elected by the membership at the national convention. Nominations for the Council may be made by: 1) the Nominating Committee, 2) a petition from a chapter or by one member of another chapter, or 3) petition at the convention.

For this year's election, nine signatures are needed for a field petition or for nomination at the convention. This number is based on the official attendance count at the last convention in Gettysburg.

The council positions are: Female and Male Co-Chair, Female and Male Vice Co-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and five at-large representatives. Also elected at the convention are the two ombudsmen who are not council members. Regional representatives are selected by the

members and chapters in the respective regions. More information on this will be in the convention packet to be mailed out shortly.

Please think seriously about joining the council. This is an exciting and challenging time for us as we rethink our strategy and structure. Our national office is now run by member volunteers. We will not have guaranteed long-term funding for a national coordinator in the immediate future. Over the past eight years we have been in the forefront of bringing the message of the corporate theft of our democracy to the American people and countless others have taken up the call. Everywhere many people have become aware of the danger.

Now, for us, the question is: What Next? The council, over the next two years, will have the challenge to create a new approach to our mission and the opportunity to refocus AfD energies into local and regional grassroots movement build-

ing and development. We all have a chance to approach these challenges with a renewed sense of shared responsibility in working together and with our allies to build the democracy movement.

The minimum council member requirements are to attend two working in-person council meetings per year, held at different chapter locations around the country, and to participate on one council conference phone call per month. There are various committees in which you can share and use your experience: publications, outreach, finance and grant-writing, and others.

Please send nominations, including a short biography and statement: to Dolly Arond, at djarond@earthlink.net and Warren Felt at dawf@earthlink.net or call 818-893-9691 and to Ruth Caplan, rca-plan@igc.org, 202-244-0561.

*Key Freire Principle:
No education is ever neutral - education is either domesticating or liberating.*



TRADE ALERT

by Ruth Caplan and Nancy Price

KeeP Saying "NO" to Un-Fair and Un-Democratic Trade Agreements. The attempt to privatize the Western Hemisphere by expanding NAFTA with the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) is stalled.

The talks on the FTAA that were to continue after the ministerial in Miami, November 2003, have stalled, for the third time in two months. Even though some "framework" had been thrashed out in Miami, it appears to be unworkable.

After the second day of informal negotiating in Buenos Aires talks were postponed with no dates or times set for continuation. In fact, the Chilean delegation signed a statement on the demise of the FTAA. Furthermore, there is more disagreement than ever on agriculture, services, and intellectual property.

In addition, the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) is facing growing opposition in Congress, even though the agreement has been finalized by Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic. The administration will submit CAFTA for a congressional vote on "Fast Track," as early as the first weeks of June, but is unlikely to do this if they don't have the votes

But that's not all: the administration is negotiating bi-lateral agreements with a U.S.-Panama Free Trade Agreement as a way to expand NAFTA into Latin America. As Larry Weiss, Executive Director of the Citizens Trade Campaign puts it, "the Panama FTA is a Trojan horse for the stalled FTAA...Many Latin American countries refuse to go along with the Bush administration's plans to extend that model. The administration is twisting arms of small and weak governments in the region." Colombia is also targeted. While these bilaterals are intended to give a sense of momentum, in actuality they will provide very little leverage over the major Latin American economies like Brazil.

WTO Tries To Restart After Cancun Collapse

Meanwhile in Cancun the WTO ministerial collapsed last September, partly due to US intransigence on its cotton subsidies which are devastating North African farm-

ers. The EU's stubborn effort to get negotiations started on investment also led to the collapse. Meanwhile, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), that covers 70% of the U.S. economy including police, fire, healthcare, education, insurance, transportation, banking, and possibly water—to name a few—is far behind the schedule set at the previous ministerial in Doha. Only 40 countries have responded to requests with offers. At least 50 more countries will have to make offers if the negotiations are to be concluded and the US and other developed countries are looking for more substantive requests.

Abdel-Hamid Mamdouh, director of the WTO's services division wants to "inject new life" into the current round of negotiations. This could happen if WTO members reach an agreement on a framework for negotiations on agriculture and a non-market tariff agreement this July.

So the U.S. and its free trade allies and corporate supporters are pressing to get an agreement and have all WTO members ratify it in 2005. The process involves a series of bilateral negotiations between WTO member countries where one country makes requests of other countries and the other countries decide how to respond, in other words what additional services they are willing to have covered under the GATS rules.

If this sounds like horse-trading and arm-twisting, you're right. The administration is willing to trade away our public services, natural resources, and democracy to

gain access to the markets of WTO member nations. They also bully developing nations by threatening to withdraw development aid.

The first phase of "request-offers" was supposed to be concluded in March 2003, but few offers were made. The US did refuse the EU request to subject our public water services to GATS rules, but not waste water treatment. Who knows what will happen as the negotiations continue.

So, call your representatives and senators, and tell them what you think of unfair and undemocratic "free" trade agreements. Ask them to voice their opinion now, so that Bush won't bring CAFTA up for a vote. Ask for a "NO" vote on CAFTA and on any bi-lateral trade agreements with countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Also ask them to:

- 1) Keep water and water services out of GATS;
- 2) Protect all public services;
- 3) Make public the "offers and requests."

Horse-trading should be done in full daylight. It was only because the EU requests to other countries were leaked last March that we knew in the US what the EU had requested.

In fact, tell them you want WTO/GATS negotiations stopped altogether before more of the world's essential services are subjected to corporate greed. Why not? We have stalled FTAA and CAFTA. Anything is possible. Another world is possible. Call toll-free: 1-800-839-5276 (Capitol switchboard).

FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Nancy Price and Ruth Caplan, Co-Chairs of AfD's Campaign on Corporate Globalization and Positive Alternatives, were invited to participate along with forty other invitees in the conference, "The Commons, the Public Trust, and the Precautionary Principle," at the Wingspread Conference Center, in Racine, WI.

This conference was convened by the Science and Environmental Health Network with the purpose to combine the commons, the public trust, and the precautionary principle "into a framework for a social change movement that is larger than the existing parts," particularly in regard to our relationship to natural

resources and the environment.

Nancy says: "This invitation is wonderful recognition for the work of our 'Defending Water for Life,' project." Most recently, they did work around the FTAA meetings in Miami for which Ruth Caplan wrote a handbook and together they produced a special edition AfD tabloid, of which 5,000 copies were distributed in Miami. Additionally, the Alliance was instrumental in bringing 40 water activists to Miami to form the Water Allies Network for which Ruth is convening the working group on trade and Nancy the working group on Clean Water—Healthy Communities. Be sure to visit the new website: www.waterallies.org.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Sacramento CA

We carry on a host of activities that advance worthy objectives that pertain to the agenda of the Alliance; e.g., taking part in continuing peace demonstrations, lobbying against the Patriot Act, fighting privatization and "free trade" encroachments, and addressing local environmental issues.

Much of our energy is also being devoted to lobbying for Clean Money. We are contacting labor people, church groups and other progressive organizations in Sacramento in an effort to promote support for an Assembly Bill that would put a Clean Money initiative on the ballot in 2004 (or, failing that, 2006). We believe that if California could join Maine and Arizona in enacting public financing of elections, the momentum for more meaningful campaign finance reform would receive a decisive boost.

In addition, of course, we continue to stay abreast of alternative media analysis as provided by Tom Wodetzki of the Mendocino area AfD, and relayed to our chapter members by Vikki Savee. Tom and Vikki are the Paul Reveres of progressive news and interpretation in Northern California!

Henry Clark, henc@earthlink.net

Mass. Bay South

In February we pursued letters-to-the-editor challenging Bush's "strengths" as president. Our goal was to have every member get three letters published between now and November. So far five letters have been published. We are also continuing with the AfD "Video Distribution Project," which involves distribution of progressive television programs to local access TV. Titles include talks by Howard Zinn, Daniel Ellsberg, and Charles Derber. Mass Bay South members Randy Johnson and Katherine Henderson volunteered to distribute videos to their home towns of Hull and Weymouth.

In March we met with the Brockton-based Coalition for Social Justice at its 2004 kick-off meeting. The Coalition is a progressive local grassroots organiza-

tion that provides space for all local activists to meet and socialize; it includes many neighborhood organizations working in economically depressed blue-collar communities. Though the Coalition focuses mainly on local bread-and-butter issues they were also prominent in the regional anti-war effort last year. Mass Bay South is investigating how we may work with the Coalition and promote Alliance ideas among its members about the corporate/democracy conflict.

We made a brief presentation on the Alliance at this meeting and distributed literature. We also tentatively plan a meeting with Coalition leaders to discuss future strategies. We hope to use this as a model for Alliance ventures where we serve a niche role in larger progressive efforts, providing Alliance perspective on the factors behind many social and foreign policy problems.

Bill Haff 781-769-9750 x3053 bhaff@horizon-house.com

San Fernando Valley

We've been getting new members almost every month. Our programs seem to be an enticement to draw in new people in addition to our involvement with others through endorsements or direct action.

In February, we had Tom Stout share his expertise about the dilemma of voting machines. In March Warren Felt discussed the oil shortage, which drew in many interested people, and other groups indicated interest in having him speak.

Just to highlight the diversity among our membership, we would like to share some of their achievements.

Ceil Sorenson received the 2004

Local Peace Hero Award from the Season of Nonviolence. She was nominated by the San Fernando Valley Interfaith Council for her life-long involvement in community and world peace and justice activities including, but not limited to: organizing to improve conditions for all worker, organizing to support non-violent resolutions to conflicts, and organizing to oppose the death penalty, and much more. Ceil has been an active member of our chapter and is its current program chair.

Another of our members, Dorothy Boberg, was invited by the Washington Academy of Sciences of the National Science Foundation to present a paper to the symposium "Abstraction and the Emergence of Evolutionary Thinking." Her paper was titled "Complementarity in Evolution." The essence of her thesis was that the cooperative or symbiotic processes of evolution are complementary to the competition of natural selection. It puts a new emphasis on the cooperative processes which differs from Darwin's emphasis on competition. Dorothy observed that men predominated at the conference and that their papers emphasized the war-like nature of humans and the belief that war is inevitable.

Meanwhile, the speaker at the conference dinner meeting emphasized the responsibilities of scientists to address the environmental concerns of our planet. Dorothy says, "I found it instructive to observe the Washington scene." Our chapter feels it is very fortunate to have members like Ceil and Dorothy.

In Alliance, Peace, and Solidarity,

Dolly Around, djarond@earthlink.net

BOSTON/CAMBRIDGE CHAPTER ADVISES...

Among other things such as organizing for the Boston Social Forum (part of World Social Forum), Boston-Cambridge Alliance urges two nation-wide things:

1. Help set up a special book-promotion event in your town, for AfD's Charlie Derber's latest book *Regime Change Begins at Home: Freeing America from Corporate Rule*. Call Dave at 617-266-

8687, or call Charlie directly at 617-552-4048 at Boston College.

2. In case of voting machine fraud in your state or county, provide evidence to require a hand recount. BCA's Exit Polling Committee can advise you: Call 617-266-8687 or committee chair Jonathan Simon at 617-497-9474 (day) or 781-641-4867 (home)

MEMBERS AT LARGE CAN SLAY THE CORPORATE GOLIATH TOO

By Lou Hammann, Member-at-Large

Are Alliance for Democracy members-at-large lesser than chapter members? This dilemma has haunted our organization from its beginning. There are many ways to be a David out to slay the corporate Goliath. Here is one perspective on how to be a bona fide member of the Alliance without being in a chapter.

My wife and I are members of AfD by virtue of the fact that we are involved in a number of local efforts to resist corporate predators. For example, we participate in the Adams County Citizens' Alliance (ACCA). When Wal-Mart began to drool over the local consumer population, the ACCA figured out a strategy for confronting it by clarifying local zoning laws for citizens who otherwise would have been pushed aside, even humiliated by the quasi-legal shenanigans of the real estate corporations.

We are also members of a housing community committed to affordability and sustainability, to energy and water conservation in particular—and to restoring a semblance of village life in a crazy world of self-satisfied individuals. We plan to build 14 houses that use photovoltaic panels for electricity, active and passive solar for heat, and a greenhouse full of aquatic plants to purify our limited water supply. We have refused to be hypnotized by the illusion of corporate convenience. We actively carry on a



Lou and Pat Hammann carry on a discussion of Alliance issues everyday over breakfast

discussion of the vital issues of the Alliance for Democracy every day over our breakfast table.

In Managua, Nicaragua, where the old cathedral has lain in ruins for thirty years, Domino Pizza has built a cathedral that one can only call a travesty. Meanwhile Mercedes-Benz has put a dealership into a newly gentrified neighborhood, and a German supermarket now provides heavily packaged food that 90 percent of the population cannot afford. As part of a Sister City Project we are doing what the corporations are not. Our local cadre scrounges stethoscopes, used bikes, paint, school supplies, and the like to help ease life on the third world frontier.

Many of us joined the AfD Democracy Brigades and allied with Doris "Granny D" Haddock's drive to make the case for

public financing of elections. Those of us who walked the roads and corridors with Doris and with an amazing array of other committed people were not always members of AfD chapters, but we were carriers of the AfD vision. And many of us continued our habit of protest by demonstrating for debt relief, peace and an alternative political agenda. Even though the Goliaths seemed oblivious to our presence, we persisted in reminding an often-indifferent public that there were Davids in the streets and in the halls of power.

Does the promotion of fair-trade buying clubs sound like a project that reflects AfD convictions? Is active membership in the local Water Shed Alliance consistent with one's membership in AfD? How about work in voter registration campaigns? How many other ways are there to bear witness to the anti-corporate agenda of AfD?

In the meantime, of course, there are other "enterprises of great pitch and moment that oft' go awry and lose the name of action," unless Alliance members and their collaborators pursue the anti-corporate cause. But when demographics, competition with other national and local organizations, and other facts conspire against chapter development, what is a person to do? Give up his or her membership in AfD? Of course, not. We just have to be ingenious enough to interpret the AfD vision wherever and however we can.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS: How to Help Us Attract New National Members

By Peter Mott, Chair, Membership Cmte.

Each of us knows people who:

- * Once informed, will want to join and help a national progressive movement
- * Care about saving real democracy
- * Want to build economic democracy
- * Are angry about corporate domination
- * Would be excited about AfD's success in suing Ashcroft
- * And our other lawsuits: UNOCAL, Ohio Chamber of Commerce
- * Would work for clean elections

- * Want to stop corporate globalization including privatization of water and
- * Want to stop misuse of genetically modified organisms
- * Might like to go with you to our Convention 7/20-22 and the Boston Social Forum 7/23-25

LET'S IDENTIFY A FEW OF THOSE FRIENDS -see the new member form herein. Ask for brochures from the National Office. And please share ideas on how to build membership...and how to retain existing ones.

BOOKS

Myth America: Democracy versus Capitalism

by William H. Boyer

216 pages, \$19.95 (softcover) \$34.95 (hardcover), Apex Press, New York

Reviewed by Gary Houser

I would like to draw the reader's attention to a book entitled *Myth America: Democracy versus Capitalism* by William Boyer. Boyer's writing substantially deepens the dialogue and provides a valuable contribution to the growing body of literature revealing corporate dominance of our society. Noted lecturer and author of the highly praised book *A People's History of the United States* Howard Zinn describes Boyer's work as a "breathtaking analysis of American society."

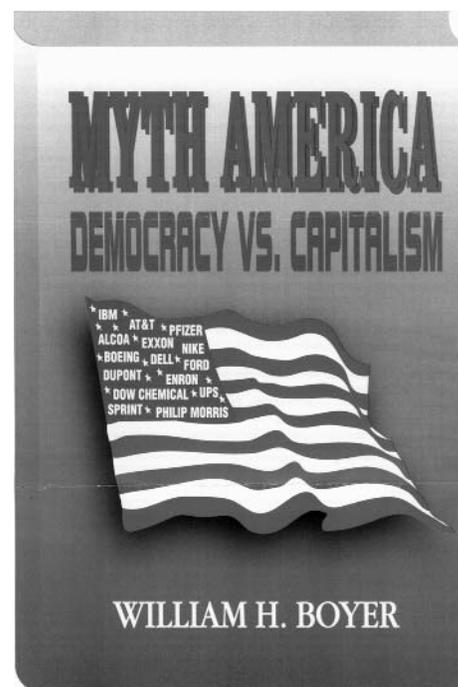
One of the most compelling aspects of this book is Boyer's blunt willingness to take on the American "sacred cow" known as capitalism. He eloquently exposes the deeply ingrained cultural mythology that associates the concept of capitalism with the concept of democracy and which encourages people to believe that promotion of capitalism fosters democracy. He meticulously documents how corporate capitalism achieves precisely the opposite by undermining the democratic aspects of our country. He systematically examines government, the schools, health care, the media, and the marketplace, and shows how each has become increasingly under the control of corporate capitalism. Boyer is not talking about Mom and Pops corner grocery capitalism. He is talking about the power of the multinational giants.

Boyer points to the street protests in Seattle against the WTO as a pivotal moment when it became clear that a live nerve in the body politic was being touched. However, Boyer rightly points out that the public concern which has been generated may be squandered if this movement does not provide more effective strategies.

How does Boyer propose that this be accomplished? By using the precious few democratic resources we still have left to legally mandate that corporate influence be stripped away from our structures of political governance and returned to the people. As an example of such democratic tools that are still capable of creating meaningful change, Boyer highlights the ballot initiative process by which the people themselves can propose and pass binding laws over the heads of their elected representatives.

Boyer also provides useful examples of the kinds of restraints which used to be in place to prevent this kind of dominance. For 48 years - from 1905 to 1953 - the state of Wisconsin had a law which "prohibited corporations from engaging in any form of political activity, where breaking the law was a felony and the corporation could be dissolved for disobeying it." This is precisely the kind of structural restraint which must be brought back. This kind of language—aimed at keeping corporations on a very short leash—used to be included in several state constitutions until intensive corporate lobbying succeeded in removing it.

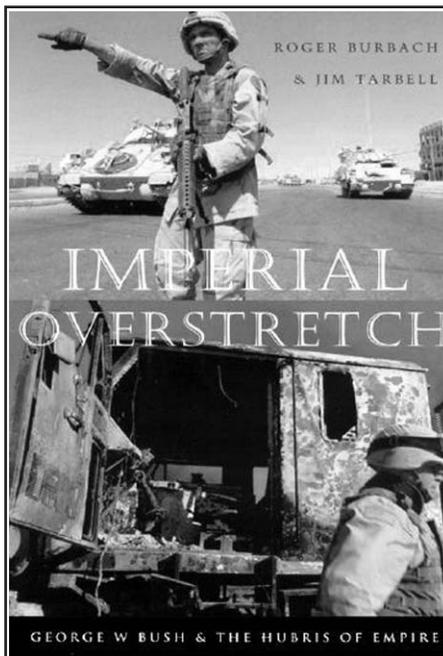
Overall, Boyer's book is a treasure trove of insights and conceptual guidance that have been gleaned from a lifetime of digging for the deeper, more systemic solutions to the ills facing our soci-



ety. These insights will enhance and illuminate the "toolbox" of any activist challenging corporate power.

Copies of the book can be ordered through your local bookstore or by calling toll-free: 1-800-316-2739.

Gary Houser is the primary author of the 1998 Arcata ballot initiative which received national media coverage. Model language and other resources for local initiatives challenging corporate power are available at: www.celdf.org.



Imperial Overstretch: George W. Bush and the Hubris of Empire.

by Roger Burbach and Jim Tarbell

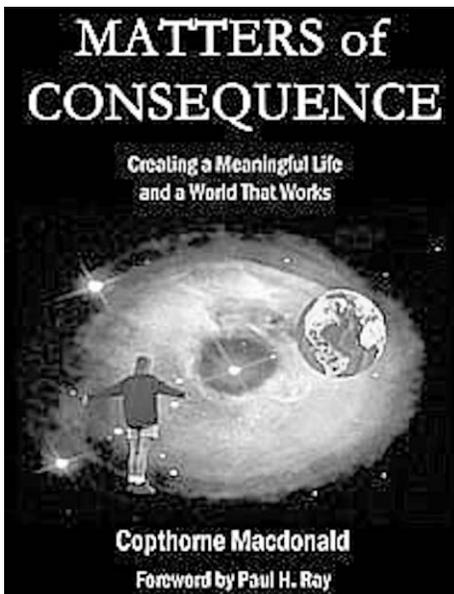
244 pages, \$15.00 (softcover), \$49.95 (hardcover), Zed Books, London

Due out in England in May and in the US in July, *Imperial Overstretch* is co-written by *Alliance Alerts* editor Jim Tarbell. It traces the history of the corporate-driven Global Commercial Empire and makes an accounting of the economic, military, human and moral costs that are destroying America's future. It reveals the origins of the corporate-right political movement that placed George W. Bush in power and offers a vision of hope in the growing World Democracy Movement.

Matters of Consequence: Creating a Meaningful Life and a World That Works by Copthorne Macdonald

6x9, 412 pages, \$24.95 (softcover) \$39.95 (hardcover). Big Ideas Press, Charlottetown, Canada

The Alliance for Democracy is one of the 85 "organizations working toward a sustainable and more equitable world" described in the new book *Matters Of Consequence*. This book is a comprehensive map of the human situation that encompasses what is really important in life. It addresses our personal search for meaning and significance, and deals with humanity's future in a positive solution-oriented way. The book's underlying assumption is: If we come to understand the human situation—deeply, comprehensively, clearly—then what needs to be done, both in our personal lives and the world around us, becomes clear. Toward this end, *Matters of Consequence* presents essential knowledge concerning our cosmic, global and psychological realities—



things we need to know in order to live as effectively as possible. This clarity allows us to see, as a realistic option, the transformation of today's world into a year-2050 world characterized by physical sustainability, economic equity, vibrant local cultures, an electronically facilitated world culture, and sufficient time in people's lives to pursue a full,

rich life. The book concludes with strategies and techniques for getting from here to there, and introduces the reader to a variety of print, Internet, and organizational resources -- including the AfD.

Published in February 2004, favorable reviews have already appeared in *Timeline*, *Future Survey*, and the *Midwest Review of Books*. Cultural Creatives co-author, Paul H. Ray says: "After four decades, here's the book I was looking for as a student." Futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard said: "*Matters Of Consequence* is a master work in applying evolutionary understanding to the critical problems of our time," and system theorist Ervin Laslo adds that it "should be read by everyone interested in the nature of the world, the nature of society, and human nature."

For more information see <http://mattersofconsequence.com> which contains links to the 85 organizations mentioned in the book. The website also has ideas about using the book in reading groups and courses along with ordering information.



ALLIANCE FOR
DEMOCRACY

JOIN NOW! BEGIN THE CHANGE

Fill out this form to ensure that the views of the Alliance are heard at this critical time.

Name _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 membership.
Address _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 regular membership.
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 tight-budget membership.
Phone _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly sustaining member @ _____/mo.
Email _____	<input type="checkbox"/> I want to be a member but can't afford a donation now.
Chapter affiliation _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ additional contribution.

Method of Payment (circle one): Mastercard Visa Check Money Order

Card# _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

Please clip and return to The Alliance for Democracy, P.O. Box 540115, Waltham, MA 02454-0115

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR JULY 13!

Invite Your Friends

by Ruth Caplan

THIRST, an outstanding documentary on water privatization, will be shown on PBS "Point of View" July 13th. It tells the story of communities stretching from Stockton, CA to Cochabamba, Bolivia to Rajasthan, India which are resisting corporate control of their water and water services.

By telling the stories, *Thirst* develops the central questions: Is water part of a shared "commons," a human right for all people? Or is it a commodity to be bought, sold, and traded in a global marketplace?

These water activists from Bolivia, Stockton and India all met in March 2003 at the World Water Forum in Kyoto as part of a new global movement against water privatization. As the Forum reached its final day, the film shows the unanticipated outcome. Alliance members Nancy Price and Ruth Caplan were there and told their story in the Spring 2003 issue of Alliance Alerts.

The central story takes place in Stockton, California. Mayor Gary Podesco proposes to give control of the water system to a consortium of global water corporations. He is surprised by the reaction as Stockton residents create a new grassroots coalition to demand a say in the decision. They are worried about price hikes, water quality, and layoffs of public employees. African-American water plant supervisor Michael McDonald sees democracy itself at stake in this battle.

This is an excellent opportunity to invite your friends and neighbors over to watch the documentary, discuss the film and talk about the Alliance.

For more about the documentary, go to www.thirstthemovie.org. A discussion guide for the film written by Ruth and published by Sierra Club will be available on the site.

Thirst is also available for purchase through Bullfrog Films www.bullfrog-films.com or 800-543-FROG at a public interest rate if you would like to use it for free community showings. The Alliance may also have a copy you may borrow. Contact Nancy Price: ntprice@juno.com, or 530-758-0726.

Key Freire Principle: Radical transformation - of communities not only individuals



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Stockton water plant supervisor Michael McDonald, who sees democracy itself at stake in the water privatization battle.