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JUSTICE RISING 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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Corporate ethics, filled with lust for the bottom line and disregard for the common good, dominate our electoral system. Getting Congress to certify the presidential Electoral College vote is the bottom line in the Presidential election. Cheating, suppressing, lying, and partisan corruption that takes place in the process are embraced as strategies to get to that bottom line.

Like resource corporations that ravage our natural resources and destroy the global environment, showing no long-term responsibility to the resource they are exploiting, political campaigns and the politicians they produce often follow suit, destroying our common electoral system by cutting as many people as they can from the electoral roles, making it as difficult as possible for their opponents to vote; and privatizing as much control of our voting system as they can into the hands of secretive corporations. They show little responsibility for the well-being of the electoral system and fail to nurture an election system that truly reflects the broad public policy sentiments of the citizens of the country. They have no drive to create a real election.

It is time to separate corporations and the ethics they inculcate from our electoral system. We must place responsibility for our elections in non-partisan citizen commissions that are dedicated to electing policy makers who look out for our common good not for their political bottom line. One of the first actions of these citizen commissions should be to install a system of publicly observed, hand-counted paper ballots, just as they do in Columbia County, New York, so we can all have confidence that our elections are being recorded and counted fairly. They must expand the vote to as many citizens as possible and make voting as easy as possible. Cheating, vote suppressing, lying, and partisan corruption must be punished with severe penalties. Elections are the basis of our democracy. They must be legitimate if the will of the people is going to guide us into a healthy and prosperous future.

Many of the people that believe in this future helped put this issue of *Justice Rising* together including the authors of the articles and the artists that created many of the graphics. Special thanks go to Victoria Collier and Ben Ptashnik of the National Election Defense Coalition, and Nancy Price, Ethan Scarl, David Delk and Ruth Caplan of the Alliance for Democracy.



Clockwise from upper left, the gerrymandered district comes from reclaimtheamericandream.org; The Paper Ballots protester photo came out of a comment on paper ballots in Kentucky on democraticunderground.org; The lower left cartoon

is by Adam Zygliss at Buffalo News; The photo on the lower right is by Michael Fleshman at an Occupy protest in New York City; The sign in the center oval is from the movie *Stealing America: Vote by Vote*.

Dedicated to Ronnie Dugger, Ground Breaking Journalist

by Nancy Price

Over his 60-plus year career, Ronnie Dugger has produced "journalism of conscience, as a writer, editor, publisher, biographer and mentor," from his founding of the Texas Observer in 1954 to the founding of the Alliance for Democracy in 1995. He received the 2011 George Polk Career Award for a lifetime of achievement in journalism based on his three guiding principles: fairness, accuracy, and moral seriousness.

Believing journalists have a professional and ethical responsibility to penetrate a story deeply, Ronnie brought a topic into the light because it was both close to his heart and animated a desire to ensure a functioning democracy for all. His

1988 "Counting Votes" in *The New Yorker*, on the rise of computerized voting, and increasing disenfranchisement, especially of African-Americans that concerned only some election officials and lawyers, was a path-breaking, before-its-time article. He wondered, if "votes would be tabulated according to rules that programmers and operators, unknown to the public, fed into computers."

Ronnie's revolutionary 1995 "A Call to Citizens: Will Real Populists Please Stand Up!" in *The Nation*, was another path breaker, a "call to hope and to action...to reclaim and reinvent democracy...to the hard work of reorganizing ourselves into a broad national coalition, a call to populists, workers, progressives and liberals to reconstitute ourselves into a smashing new national force to end corporate rule." He continued, "We are ruled by Big Business and Big Government as its paid hiring, and we know it. Corporate money is wrecking popular government in the United States. The big corporations and the centimillionaires and billionaires have taken daily control of our work, our pay, our housing, our health, our pension funds, our bank and saving deposits, our public lands, our airwaves, our elections and our very government." This call raised the alarm among readers who met with Ronnie in Chicago to plan AfD's 1996 founding convention, in the Western Hills of Texas, heartland of 19th century Populists.

We dedicate this issue of *Justice Rising* on "The People's Vote Must Count" to Ronnie Dugger because of what he has done for so many years in so many prescient ways as both a journalist and active citizen. Ronnie is still "percolating along" at 86 years old, writing about the dangers of corporate power and the need for us all to be global Citizens. Thank you Ronnie for all you have done and continue to do.

