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**A democratic alternative
to the Corporate Media**

RadioActive Speaks With Head of Bangor Central Labor Council

RECORDED BY ANDY BUCKLEY
TRANSCRIBED BY ALASDAIR POST-QUINN

On December 13th Meredith DeFrancesco and Amy Browne of the show RadioActive on WERU-FM spoke with Jack McKay of the Central Labor Council of Maine about the condition of Maine workers. RadioActive is a grassroots environmental and social justice news journal. RadioActive airs every Thursday at 4-4:30 AM on WERU-FM. WERU can be heard on 89.9 in areas surrounding Blue Hill, and on 102.9 in Bangor. This interview is edited for length.

Amy Browne: Recently, it has been officially determined that the country has been in recession since March. This, combined with repercussions from the events of September 11th, has had a huge impact on America's workforce. The AFL-CIO has been a primary proponent for the creation of an economic stimulus package to help unemployed workers, both union and non-union alike. But there has been deep partisan disagreement over an economic stimulus package, with the Bush administration and Republicans focusing on corporate tax cuts, and Democrats insisting on more direct help for the unemployed. The House has voted on a 100-billion dollar economic bill, which includes an acceleration to 2002 of income tax cuts, now set to take effect in later years, a repeal of the corporate alternative minimum tax, and an enhancement of business expense and depreciation writeoffs. A Senate bill was stopped by a procedural measure from getting out of committee. The House's bill, which dramatically leans toward aiding corporations rather than workers, has been a huge concern for the Bangor area Central Labor Council. Today with us we have on the phone Jack McKay, president of the Bangor area Central Labor Council. Welcome, Jack!

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The Bill of Rights

As provided in the FIRST TEN AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES
Effective December 15, 1791

Preamble

The conventions of a number of the States, at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed a desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best insure the beneficent ends of its institution.

- 1 Right to Freedom of Religion, Speech, Press, Assembly, Petition.** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
- 2 Right to Keep and Bear Arms.** A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.
- 3 Rights on Quarters of Soldiers.** No Soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by Law.
- 4 Right against Unreasonable Search and Seizure.** The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.
- 5 Right to Protection of Persons and Property.** No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless in a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.
- 6 Right of Persons Accused of Crime.** In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.
- 7 Right of Trial by Jury.** In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.
- 8 Right in Protection Against Excessive Fines, Bail, Punishments.** Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.
- 9 Rights not enumerated retained by the people.** The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.
- 10 Rights reserved to the States and the People.** The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Speaking of Terrorism ...

We explore the loss of civil liberties since September 11th in two articles this issue. In "Is the Police State Here?" (p.3) J.D.Tuccille looks at the subtle ways the all Americans are losing their rights. In "Usual Suspects" (p.15) Randall Shelden explores how having the wrong last name can land you in jail in today's America.

Bill of Rights Cartoon by
Paul Conrad, California --
Los Angeles Times Syndicate

The New Media Projects

COMPILED BY ED DEMOCRACY, ROB FISH, AND HILLARY LISTER

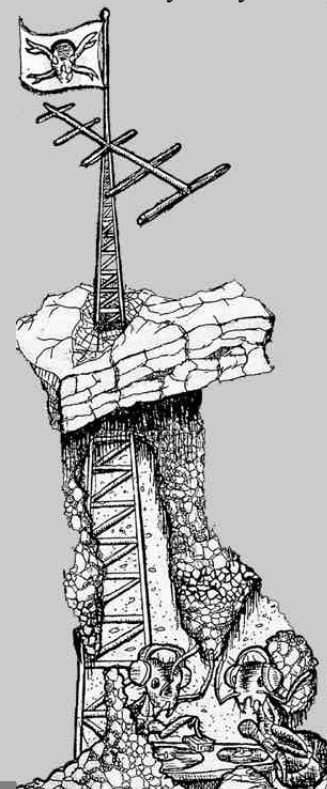
Past months have seen new independent media outlets appearing throughout Maine. In Portland there is creation of a new public access show, the "Portland Commons." On Mount Desert there is a new print publication in the form of the "Mount Desert Islander". In Rockland there is a new community radio station, WRFR. Many hope this will be part of a trend to counter the rapid consolidation of local media across the state. On television, the major news channels are owned by multinational corporations. NBC is owned by General Electric, ABC is merged with Disney, CBS is merged with Westinghouse, the list goes on. Currently in Maine, 54 of the major radio transmitting frequencies are owned by out of state corporations such as Cumulus, Clear Channel, and Citadel. Recent years have seen local newspapers being bought up rapidly, such as when the Seattle Times Co. bought Maine's largest daily, the Portland Press Herald, plus the Kennebec

Journal, Morning Sentinel, and Coastal Journal. Partly in response to this consolidation of the media, people across the state people have begun to take the media into their own hands, so that the Maine news and views that are often being ignored by the out-of-state corporate news sources can be again heard throughout the state. In this issue of the Maine Commons we will explore new independent media in three mediums - TV, radio, and print.

It is true that each of these new media projects - WRFR radio in Rockland, "Portland Commons" in Portland, and the "M.D. Islander" in Bar Harbor - will only reach limited sections of the state. Many hope to change this with time, by collaboration between independent media projects across the state, such as exchange of tv shows between public access channels, exchange of radio shows between stations, and exchange of articles between publications. The fact that these projects exist will also provide a base of experience & connections that can greatly help those wanting to start making media in their local areas.

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The Maine Commons

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(Maine IMC is not based solely in Waterville, although we have a PO Box there. Our members and distribution are spread all throughout the state of Maine)

"The Maine Commons" is the new name for the paper formerly known as "The Maine Free Press." When we realized there was another independent paper in Maine with a similar name, we decided to change it before any conflict occurred.

Founded in 2001 as a side project of the ME Independent Media Center, The Maine Commons was created to be a Maine Media Commons where diverse ideas of diverse people are free to meet and congregate. We especially focus on viewpoints and stories that have been ignored by the mainstream media, and issues of effects of corporate control on the freedom of expression. In order to increase public consciousness and understanding of the events and issues at hand.

Mission Statement

The Maine Independent Media Center (MeIMC) is a not-for-profit collective of independent media makers and journalists offering grassroots news coverage and media education for the state of Maine, and enjoying yummy food. We are not the mouthpiece of any particular political party or commercial viewpoint - rather, we are the voice of all those individuals and communities who want to get involved and report the news as they experience it. Unlike the corporate media, we do not claim complete objectivity. Subjectivity comes with any human's observation of an event. We believe in open dialogue, and placing the means of communication back in the hands of people and away from the drive of profit.

The Maine Independent Media Center works to demystify media through media literacy education and by fostering the skills and providing equipment necessary for people to be the media. We seek to become a recognized and utilized media source in the state. Maine IMC provides an interactive website at <http://www.maineindymedia.org>, and an interactive Maine events calendar at <http://calendar.maineindymedia.org>, through which up-to-the-minute information can be posted and made available throughout the world. Acknowledging that a large amount of people in Maine, and the world, do not have access to the Internet, in addition to working to make this technology more accessible and available to all interested, we focus on providing and educating people in other mediums of media, including print, in the form of the regular publication The Maine Commons, public access television and community and low power radio.

The Maine Commons Editorial Policy:

The Maine Commons will accept submissions of articles, photography, letters to the editor, opinion pieces, poetry, and graphics from any person via mail or email. Slides and undeveloped film cannot be accepted. Scanned graphics must be at a resolution of 180 dpi or higher, and should be clear in both color and grayscale. Articles should be no longer than 1400 words and must be submitted as computer files or crisply printed or typed high-contrast text. The editors reserve the right to correct errors and edit down pieces that are too long. Submission does not guarantee publication. Current issues and those relevant to Maine will be given priority; ongoing projects may be held until the next publication if space is an issue. Email to editor@maineindymedia.org or send hardcopy, floppy disks or CDs to Maine Independent Media Center, PO Box 1444, Waterville, ME 04903. Thanks!

Letters to the Editors

I just picked up a copy of your second issue and all I can say is WOW...at last, an alternative to the usual dreck that is out there that I can't bear to buy or bring home and have to recycle in disgust because there isn't news in these crummy papers that is fit to be printed. I have been living in Kennebunk for the past 21 years and have yet to figure out how to get out of Bush Country. I am kind of attached to my home and gardens here. So I was amazed to find my copy of your second issue in the Bunk's Free Library, right there amongst all the free golfing and fly fishing and better homes and gardens magazines and other yuppie castoff stuff. WOW...a REAL newspaper.

I am disgusted because I can't pick up WERU. I play with my FM antenna and move it all around but no dice. I can listen to WERU when I am up on Mt. Desert Island and got all excited one dark night this fall when I was driving the back way to Ellsworth and think I drove right past the station there. I lose it after I drive past Augusta. Do you know of any way I can pick up this station down here in Kennebunk? I can get public radio but I like that WERU better. We need to get it down here.

My daughter graduated from College of the Atlantic in 99. She married a guy who also graduated from COA. She has remained up there on that windy island, bought a place in Salisbury Cove and owns a little gardening and greenhouse business. I help her out with it when I can which is why I go up there frequently. Her husband works as a dock manager at Beal's Lobster Pound in Southwest Harbor. Anyways tonight I am emailing them your website address and hope they can get their hands on your current issue, maybe at the Alternative Market in downtown Bar Harbor. Am excited too to learn that there is now an alternative to the Bar Harbor Times -- the best part of that paper for us has been The Police Beat news which we read aloud religiously and find very entertaining.

I have yet to read everything in your second issue, am sort of saving and savoring it but read some of it while eating a nice ripe honeydew melon half. So far I really liked the Joseph Sobran article on Patriotism or Nationalism. And Carolyn Chute's piece ... she is so feisty.

I have been quoting Tommy Smothers lately, saw him recently on some lame TV show called Polit-ically Incorrect where he took time detailing the differences involved with the concepts of patriotism and nationalism and how the Smothers Brothers got kicked off the air in the sixties because they were patriotic, not nationalistic i.e. loved their country but were questioning things rather than loving their country right or wrong. I always liked those two guys.

Thank you very much for your great newspaper and for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

BETH WARNER
 KENNEBUNK, MAINE

Beth --

Thanks much for your response. We hope you will find this issue as savory as the last one. As for tuning into WERU, we have the same problem here in Waterville -- the local college station overlaps its frequency. We appreciate getting Colby radio, but often we wish we were able to listen to WERU as well. There is the option, of course, if you have a computer, of listening to RadioActive (a show on WERU), much of which gets posted to the newswire at maine.indymedia.org. If we had a more solid network of community radio stations in Maine, there might be a possibility of mirroring WERU shows around the state, but until then, you'll have to savor those moments when you drive through their area.

ALASDAIR POST-QUINN
 EDITOR, MAINE COMMONS



photo credit: Beth Warner



Opinions & Editorials

Is The Police State Here?

BY J.D. TUCILLE

Since the bloody terrorist attacks of September 11, I've written a series of columns pointing out the dangers inherent in the government's new "war against terrorism." From military tribunals to national ID cards to expanded police power, it's grim stuff to write, and probably no more pleasant to read.

It'd be nice if a column on civil liberties could be just a tad more upbeat.

All of this unhappy news leads to a logical question: Is America becoming a police state?

First off, while the term "police state" is tossed around with an intuitive understanding of what it means, it's rarely defined in a specific way. For what it's worth, my Random House College Dictionary defines a police state as "a nation in which the police, esp. a secret police, suppresses any act that conflicts with government policy."

Well ... that definition obscures more than it illuminates, suggesting that perhaps it's time that I traded in the ratty old Random House for something with a bit more precision. After all, every government uses its police, secret or otherwise, to enforce its laws, since breaking those laws is against government policy. That puts every nation at risk of being defined as a police state.

So much for the Random House College Dictionary.

Let's instead suggest that a "police state" is one in which the police are given relatively free rein, with few restraints on their power. That may mean that they have blanket authority to be exercised over the hoi polloi, or it may mean that the laws are so all-encompassing that everybody is at risk of breaking some statute or other and so running afoul of the law enforcement authorities.

In this sense, then, the United States are, indeed approaching police state status, if they're not already there. Since September 11, the thrust of the government's response has been to loosen restraints on law enforcement authorities. While the

police have not been given carte blanche, they've certainly been handed greatly expanded authority to conduct wiretaps, detain suspects and demand private records based on a lower threshold of evidence than before.

Of the obnoxiously named USA PATRIOT Act, an important piece of legislation that most members of Congress hadn't even read before they cast their vote, the Portland Herald (Maine) said:

The act broadly expands domestic law enforcement surveillance powers, allowing the government to request information from companies during criminal investigations much more easily and for much less cause than in the past.

Said "information" includes any data that the companies may have compiled on you in the course of doing business.

Even in the absence of legislation, the Bush administration has been exercising rather broad power on its own say-so. In particular, many civil libertarians, immigration advocates and even members of Congress would like to know what's being done with the great many detainees who were taken into custody in the wake of the terrorist attacks, and have been held without charges.

The Hill, which covers congressional doings, recently reported:

The chairman and ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee are increasingly frustrated by the failure of Attorney General John Ashcroft to respond to any inquiries concerning his broad new powers in dealing with accused terrorists.

Lawmakers want information about the more than 1,000 people detained in the criminal investigation, changes allowing law enforcement to listen in on lawyer-client communications in some cases, what law enforcement might have done to prevent the attacks, and how to ensure civil liberties under sweeping anti-terrorism legislation signed into law.

Of course, these are the same legislators who voted for the USA

POLICE : CONTINUED ON PG. 7

An Anti-Authoritarian Critique

BY CAL CLARK

On a cold November 17th in Kennebunk, I took part in a demonstration against the war on Afghanistan. This event accomplished what most demonstrations have: It rekindled my doubts about the movement. Speaking of movement, where are we actually moving to?

Perhaps that question can be rephrased - How much mobility in our daily life can we justify as being a product of our own free will, even these protests?

For example, at this demo, authoritarianism and elitism reeked through the air. Few spoke at the beginning of the demonstration. Do few being entertainers while everyone else is the audience equate to an ideal culture? Isn't that what we already have in the capitalist society, a few control everything?

The march itself felt restrictive. Everyone marched on the right lane of the road. Additionally, a permit was obtained and police supervised. Also, a person waving a huge American flag lead the march, giving the impression that it represented all of the demonstrators,

Marching to the Bush compound was simply a symbolic act. This was an area consisting of wealthy people who are only there for the summer. Amongst the crowd were people who either thought we could convince George W. Bush that war on Afghanistan was wrong or that we could work to get people into office that would represent our views. Very few upper class people will wake up to what the institutions they live under do because they benefit from the system!

Not only was it irrelevant to working class people because of crappy outreach, it was also focused on issues that dealt only with the people of Afghanistan. I'm against this war, don't get me wrong; I'm against all government wars. However, I'm fighting for myself to be able to live my life based on my free will. That fight includes showing solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, true. But their suffering isn't as relevant to someone in

America whose crappy job, school they hate, or their deranged social relations are on their mind.

Most appalling to me were people I once knew as anti-authoritarian clapping for the cops for allowing us to demonstrate. One person thanked police for protecting her sign she made from a George Bush supporter. Little does she realize, if we didn't get a permit these cops wouldn't have let us march without repercussions!

Police throughout history have oppressed people, murdered dissidents, worked with the CIA, FBI, and other counter-intelligence programs to destroy activist and revolutionary groups in many countries including America. They target the working class and non-white communities. They beat and murder people, innocent people, and get away with it!

I have personal reasons not to applaud police as well. Cops have shoved my face in the pavement for simply marching in the street. They have shut down plenty of events where me and my peers were trying to have fun without going to the mall, and for many reasons that lack little if any legitimacy in the laws that they are supposed to abide by and enforce. But then it comes to people who aren't politically active, "legitimacy" is surely something they can do without. This sort of "legitimacy" convinces reformist liberals that government recognized them, but that's only because those activists just aren't challenging many social boundaries, if any such as police existence altogether!

After demonstrating, people headed over to a teach-in. There were workshops and casual conversation. One workshop was titled "Anarchist Perspectives of the War." The individual who proposed this workshop gave a short rant about how war's a product of government and capitalist society. One of the responses to that was the feeling that it's not necessary to follow "anarchist principles."

I don't want to get into a long list of misconceptions about anar-

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Call & Response

Maine Commons Writers Respond to Maine Commons Readers

I was more than a little disturbed by Carolyn Chute's article in the last issue calling for pacifists to consider supporting a war. (See "War or War, Issue 2) [Carolyn states] "Punching somebody gives relief." Perhaps so, but I don't believe relief is the feeling you get when that person you punched comes back with his two buddies to help settle the score. She said that oppressed people are not going to be satisfied with talk of peace, and in that, she is correct. However, Ms. Chute makes the same mistake that so many others have. A pacifist does not just talk of peace. The people standing on the quad in Berkeley holding signs and shouting with megaphones are war protestors, which are not the same as pacifists.

A pacifist works for peace every day. Justice, equality, compassion, understanding, and respect bring about peace. A pacifist takes every opportunity to advance these ideals, and does not wait until her country happens to be involved in a war to march in a demonstration. Pacifism is not equivalent, and I would argue is contrary to, passivism. Pacifism requires constant action. So I will not join in a call for war on any front, but I will continue, as I did long before 11 September, to work for peace and dispel this false notion of pacifism.

There is currently a bill in Congress (H.R. 2459) to establish a Department of Peace. (Which, by the way, does not bear the names of either of the Maine representatives on its sponsor list.) The writers of this bill call us to "review age-old challenges with new thinking wherein we can conceive of peace as not simply being the absence of violence, but the active presence of the capacity for a higher evolution of the human awareness, of respect, trust, and integrity." War is a crutch that only slows us down. It reminds me of the Jerry Seinfeld bit where he says that men know catcalling and whistling at women don't work, but those are the only ideas they have. We are certainly able to come up with better ideas.

Aimee Phillippi
Waldoboro, ME

Dear Aimee,

You and I both know that the so-called "polls" about "unity" of the American people are fibs. We both know that these polls are part of PR firms' press releases and video kits, all paid for by mega-bizzes and governments. But we also know that the media does do a randy dandy job of managing opinion (minds) of most people who watch a lot of TV and read a lot of mainstream news and then go out and talk with others who do the same.

It becomes "conventional wisdom".

So it is probably true that most Americans are for the war on Afghanistan.

Most Americans are afraid. They have been afraid for themselves and their families for a long time. They work all the time for the DOLLAR and the word "family" is just a husk. It was easy to direct that fear into rage and direct that rage onto Afghanistani-people-Taliban-bin-Laden-terrorists-Middle-East-Weirdo-Evil-Other, as the blur of media sound-byte-blitz works media "consumers" into a fervor.

The PR people are no slouches. They know what they are doing. They are working for \$\$\$\$\$, not ideology, not virtue.

They have the average American in the palm of their very green hand.

They know the word "peace" is a nothing word. It is ethereal and marshmello. It has no PICTURES. The PR agencies have pictures. Pictures of the heart-breaking and awesomely terrifying attack on the WTC. They have all kinds of real details and anecdotes of MISERY and EVIL. Yes, evil.

To many people the word peace means restraint. Control. And cowardice. And to others it means nothing.

To some it means the professional class, or honor students, who they see as having assaulted them in every way since kindergarten and now by pushing for laws to take away their rights to self defense and their rights to teaching their kids their own way, the old traditions etc. To them PEACE means assault on them.

The PR firms know this. This is why they are winning and the Peace people are not. Yes, winning over the average person to support this EVIL war.

You picked from the piece I wrote about the relief people feel from burping, orgasm, punching etc. Well, it is true. Peace people want to avoid the deeply fleshy human realities? The PR firms don't.

I want to see a War on Corporate Madness. I want to see all the fear and rage channeled onto the ENEMY, the system of Mammon. Like in games of basketball, baseball etc people would scream: Go for it!!!! And WIN!!!! They would wave their American flags, the flag they see as the flag of the American people, and they would BURN the skull and crossbones flag of the Corporate Charter and all the institutions created in its image.

We would end Constitutional Rights to Corporations in a campaign of ZEAL and, yes, VENGEANCE.

Concerning a Department of Peace. It sounds like the biggest PACIFIER ever, like the rubber thing that goes into the screaming baby's mouth.

Anyone who sees the rulers of a system bracing to institutionalize a rebellion ... when we see these rulers offering a Labor Day or a Peace Day or any of these things, Peace Department (Peace Compartment), we (a) need to notice that the rulers are worried, and (b) need to remember from history that playing the game by their rules is when the game ends.

I agree that there is a difference between pacifists and peace work, a difference discernable within that "culture." Actually, even pacifists are really "activists." But that was not the point in my piece "War or War."

Maybe I'm repeating myself here, but here goes. Usually activists are privileged people, the professional class, the buffer class, the one that stands between the rulers and the servant class.

People in the servant class (nowadays it is called Working Class but it is the SAME) are not activists. Only a few rare cases. (The Black Bloc, the young Anarchists of today are a good portion working class so there is hope!). Generally the servant class is passive. They are shy, apathetic, distracted, exhausted, afraid. And by nature, just want a small world. Family, neighbors, a life.

Maneuvering through the

political process, even in just joining a street protest, is an "honor student" activity. Think about it. Remember school, the institutional training ground of Industrialism, to determine who will serve, who will manage, who will rule. Most servant class people of today won't recall being "honored" then. Their kinds of gifts and natural strengths were not part of the classroom thing. The classroom worked best if it was manageable and PEACEFUL.

The modern school institution peacefully crushes and abuses those who are not classroom material. These children grow up with learned helplessness, or, having channeled their zest and craftiness into "anti-social" behavior, might now be out of sight out of mind ... in prison.

In the ways of working the hierarchical governmental politics, these people are not going to touch it with a ten foot pole, even the most loud and lively of them all.

But many of them DO vote. And almost all of them watch TV. And they have opinions and bumper stickers.

Do you really want them involved? Do you really like them? If Corporate Power is to be brought down, do you think the Working Class needs to be included in the fight ... ahem ... the project?

Many times when I have given workshops or interviews with professional class "activists" (I like the word "citizen" better) or reporters, they seem not to have a clue about what working class people want or even who they are.

To many professionals, the servant class are just invisible human vending machines until they cry "WAR!" or their men whistle at the professional class's women. And it showed in your letter that that whistling thing bothers you. To us working class gals, whistling might be an introduction to that construction guy. You might walk by the next day, and when he whistles, you wink. That was the idea. See, now you know.

There is a lot about the professional class which is beyond me. Should we talk more? Can we? What would it do for making a better life for us all?

I am coming to suspect that the class divide, the biggest divide of



D.I.Y. Media

A How-To Series To Help You Be The Media

Putting Your Interview or Song on the Internet

BY ANDY BUCKLEY

The following is a brief overview of how to put audio content on the internet. This description is somewhat Windows-centric since that is the type of computer with which I am most familiar. I have tried to include the names of equivalent programs for Linux and Macintosh where possible. This article assumes basic computer knowledge. It is not designed to cover every aspect of audio creation, but to give you a basic run down of what is involved.

Putting audio into the internet involves the following:

- 1) Recording the audio on a minidisc or cassette recorder.
- 2) Getting the audio into a computer
- 3) Editing and saving in the audio in formats the average web surfer can listen to.
- 4) Putting the audio on the internet where interested people are likely to find and listen to it.

Recording the Audio in "the Field"

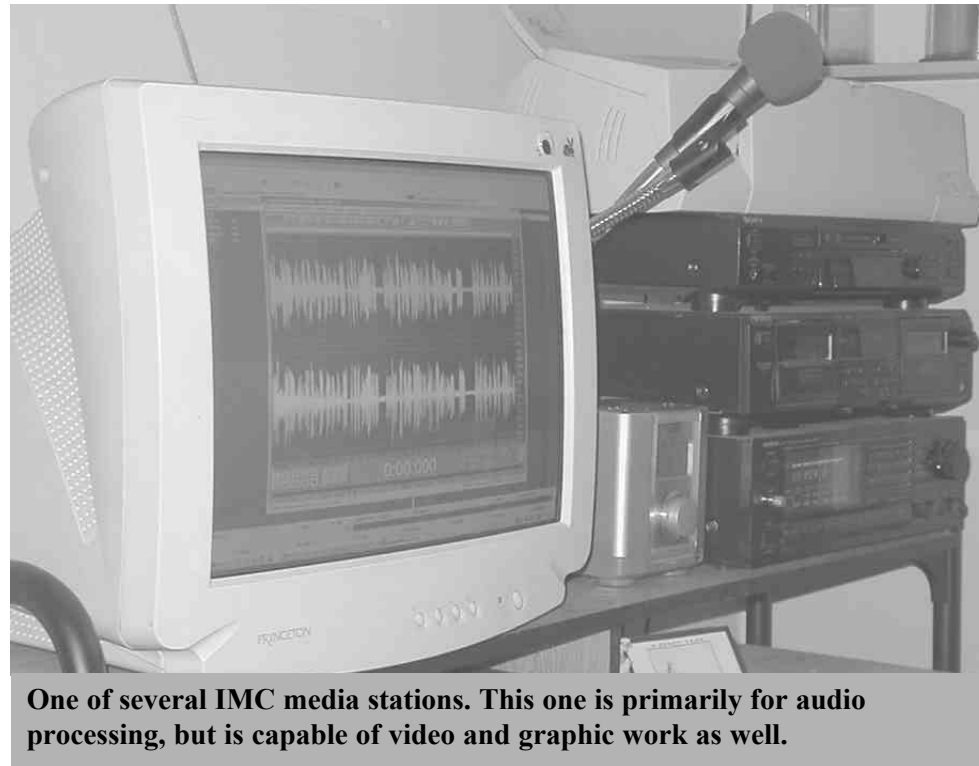
The preferred method of recording audio would be in digital format. Minidisc recorders can be purchased for approximately \$150-\$300 and are the least expensive way to achieve high quality digital recordings. These devices have become a popular item among radio journalists.

Minidiscs can easily be mistaken for cassette playing Walkmans at first glance. They also function similarly except that they play and record onto square minidiscs that look like a weird hybrid of floppy disc and cassette tape. However, unlike cassettes, minidiscs record digitally and thus avoid the hiss common when recording onto cassettes. Although it is also possible to record audio onto cassette tapes, minidiscs will produce a hiss-free sound that will translate into crystal clear audio.

If a minidisc is out of your price range, look for a high quality portable cassette recorder. In addition to a minidisc or cassette recorder, you will also want to get a good quality microphone, headphones and a cord to attach your microphone and recording device. Long extension cables can also come in handy when recording in large halls if you don't want to wear

out your batteries.

One thing to be aware of if you are using minidisc recorders is that with many of them you will have to be fairly still while recording. These devices do not like to be bumped or jostled. They are great for recording where speakers are at a podium, speaking into a microphone. You can usually get away with walking while recording, but if you were to try to record during a protest situation you will probably not be able to run or move very quickly while trying to record,



One of several IMC media stations. This one is primarily for audio processing, but is capable of video and graphic work as well.

because the unit will not record properly.

Getting the Audio into Your Computer

Once you have audio recorded onto minidisc you will need a "mini stereo cable" to connect your minidisc recorder and computer. Mini stereo cables are available at electronic stores such as RadioShack. The term "mini" has to do with the size of the plug. They are the same type of connection you use to plug in headphones into a portable cassette player. You'll need about 4-6 feet of this type of cable with 2 male ends, one to plug into the minidisc and one to plug into your computer.

Depending on the type of soundcard your computer has, you'll either be plugging the mini stereo cable into the "line in" or "micro-

phone" in jacks in the back of your computer. You'll then plug the other end into the minidisc recorder. On my system I plug one end of the cable into the "microphone" jack of the computer and the other end into the "phones" jack on the minidisc.

Programs that will allow you to record audio as a file include Goldwave, Soundforge, Cool Edit for Windows, Sound Studio for Linux and Sound Edit 16, Pro Tools for Mac. [Please note that I have not actually used this type of software on Linux or a Mac and other, more up-to-date programs may be available] A free shareware version of

WAV format in a program such as Goldwave or SoundForge. WAV files can be very large, but you'll usually only need to keep them in this format until you convert them into other formats such as MP3, RealMedia, Ogg Vorbis, or others

Translating the Audio into Multiple Formats & Uploading

Once you have your WAV file, save it immediately! Occasionally Windows will crash while editing or converting extremely large files such as this (perhaps we can thank Bill Gates for that).

WAV files can be incredibly large. Although it would be possible to upload a WAV file to the web, it would take hours for potential listeners with 56k modems to download it. A 300 megabyte WAV file would take someone with 56k internet connection approximately 15 hours to download (and would provide them with only 3 or 4 minutes of audio). Thus, you will need to convert and save your audio into smaller more manageable formats that the average web surfer will be able to listen to.

Once your WAV is saved, you can convert it to other formats. I'd recommend creating MP3 and RealAudio versions since these formats are currently very popular. If the audio software you are using does not include support for RealMedia (RealAudio), you can download a free version of Real Producer at the real.com web site, which will allow you to convert WAV files to RealMedia format.

I regularly convert the audio I am working with into MP3 and RealMedia (RealAudio) formats. I usually save a 64kbps stereo MP3 version and a 20kbps and 8kbps RealMedia version of the programs I work with.

A few numbers to give you some reference:

128kbps is a little less than CD quality audio for music, but fine for speech,
64kbps is about FM radio quality
20kbps is somewhere between FM and AM quality
8kbps is low quality for slow modems.

RealMedia sound files are good because they can be streamed, or listened to while the file is being lis-

Goldwave can be downloaded that will not expire, but limits the number of editing steps you can make without closing and reopening the program.

Most audio software programs have "levels". You'll want to adjust these before actually recording the audio as a file on your computer. Play your audio into the computer without recording first and adjust the volume on the minidisc recorder accordingly. You'll want the levels in software to be somewhere in the yellow, occasionally maxing during louder moments, but not constantly hitting "the red" or your audio may wind up sounding distorted. Once you have the levels set restart the audio, hit "record" in your software and allow the audio to record onto your computer as a file.

On a Windows machine you'll want to capture your audio in



New Media: Television Portland Commons

People across the country have been turning to public access television in order to get their news to the public, in a way that doesn't depend on convincing commercial tv channel to devote a few minutes to their issue. Despite what some people may say or wish, the primary means of spreading information, ideas and entertainment in this country still is the television. As one observer put it, "People are much more likely to stand around the proverbial water cooler and discuss the previous day's episode of "General Hospital" or the shocking "Dateline" segment rather than the thoughtful, funny, or controversial editorial in the morning's newspaper or the long-running debate in an internet newsgroup." As a result, instead of simply rejecting tv outright, many are trying to take control of what's on the television.

"Portland Commons: Common Issues for the Common Good," is the newest show on Channel 2 - Portland Public Access Cable TV. The concept for the show was developed by four people -- Ed Democracy, Josh McDonald, and Heather Curtis, who met through the Portland Tenants Union in November 2001, and Molly O'Neill, the Coordinator of Channel 2. The basic concept is to emphasize the most pressing issues for the people of Portland; to give voice to common people of Portland; to bridge communication between all people, activists, and policymakers; and the help find the common ground where the people of Portland can stand together.

In general, "Portland Commons" covers social justice issues. A diplomatic and assertive approach is being taken with the show, as opposed to a militant and aggressive approach. A conscious decision was made to reach out beyond those actively work for social justice. The hope is that the show will boost the morale of those working on the issues covered, while at the same time, reaching out to a broader segment of people to engage them and enhance their awareness on social justice issues.

Portland Commons is not even two months old, yet it has already aired 2 shows, has a website (www.portlandcommons.org), and is talking with the Maine Indymedia Center about helping to start a new show. These discussions are only in their beginning stages but there

seems to be a great deal of interest to date. The new show could be a similar show to Portland Commons, but statewide or possibly more edgy.

The general format of the show is to cover 3 or 4 issues. For each issue, a field video segment is shot to capture real people discussing their experience/perspective on the issue. Then, in-studio, activists or pol-

icymakers react to the video and offer stats, facts, context, latest developments, and opportunities for people to get involved and make a difference. Contact info for each guest, organization, and issue are displayed on-screen. The show wraps up with calendar highlights of upcoming events. The Maine IMC Activist Calendar (<http://calendar.maineindymedia.org>).

is featured on each show. On the first show, in December, the issues were housing, lead paint, and homelessness. The guests were Nathan Smith, Portland City Councilor and Chair of its Housing Committee, Dave Littell, an attorney

TV : CONTINUED ON PG. 7

A Biodiesel Conversion Story

BY JONATHAN COOK

If you have ever eaten fried food, you have tasted the potential for Biodiesel, a fuel for diesel engines made from vegetable oil. Even the used grease from restaurants can be very simply converted to power buses, generators, trucks and 1980 VW Dasher wagons like mine.

Almost 100 government fleets, transit agencies and school systems nationwide are already using Biodiesel. In fact, METRO, the fixed-route transit provider for the greater Portland area, is considering using Biodiesel in their buses. Biodiesel can be purchased from many distributors or manufacturers, and at least one San Francisco gas station now carries it.

Organic farmers use Biodiesel as chainsaw bar lubricant in order to make their sawdust compostable. Sailors who want fresh air untainted by choking diesel fumes find Biodiesel brings them closer to what they seek. The list of uses continues to grow.

Any diesel engine will burn Biodiesel, but cars made before 1994 should use a blend of about 20% Biodiesel because older fuel systems have natural rubber parts that will eventually corrode in stronger mixes.

When we discovered that Biodiesel is available in nearby Arundel at the Solar Market (www.solarmarket.com), my family began the hunt for the right diesel car. For us, it was time for a different car, anyway. Our two-door Chevy Cavalier has served us well for 182,000 miles, but how much more can we expect from it? And, like everything else with a baby in the family, our car needs to give us room to grow. We thought we could use a wagon, or bigger.

Having had the Chevy for a long time and never having paid

attention to diesels except to hold my nose when they go past (biodiesel, on the other hand, smells like cooking French fries), I knew I'd have to do some searching. First, I looked in the classifieds in the Portland Press Herald. Ads for several Mercedes caught my eye but were quickly dismissed at the thought of high maintenance costs. Volkswagen makes diesels as well, but all the ones I found initially were too small for us. Pick-ups were out for the same reason. Suburbans come in diesel. There was a thought. Easily big enough and made in America (maybe), if only I could find one within our budget of about \$2,000.

After a few weeks of squint-reading the classifieds in multiple sources, I found it, a model from the mid-eighties for \$1,500. We had to drive from southern Maine down to Lynn, Massachusetts to see it, but we didn't mind after all our searching.

We loved it. We had agreed on a price when the seller told us he had to go to his sister's house for the title. Seemed odd, but we didn't dwell on it. We wanted that 'burban. So we waited in our car parked on the road. We watched children in the street jumping rope and bicycling. Ten minutes came and went. My daughter slept in her car seat. My wife said, "Maybe we should just go home."

We waited another minute. Then we heard angry horns approaching from the intersection behind us. A small pick up truck stopped short, directly in front of us. Another car I didn't get a good look at slammed its headlights into the truck's bumper. Before all the glass had hit the pavement, the driver of the car was out, moving toward the truck, holding a pick ax in both hands. A group of teenage boys in identical green shirts tumbled out of the truck and readied for combat.

I don't know what happened next, because I was weaving backwards through a city street until I could turn and get out of there. I didn't want to leave without our 'burban, but I had to be glad to be going back to Maine in one piece.

Having risked my safety for clean fuel (no pollution, no money to the petroleum cartel), I felt duty-bound to redouble my efforts. I had to expand the search. Investing one-and-a-half dollars in Uncle Henry's Swap-it Guide rewarded me with the ad for what I knew would be our very own bio-wheels right down the road in friendly North Berwick. 48 mpg, it claimed. I read it over again. Yup, 48 miles per gallon. Imagine. I thought our Chevy was doing well at 24 mpg.

We happily paid ... well, the bill of sale says \$500. Between you and me, let's just say we happily paid and leave it at that.

First thing we did after the silly hassles of inspection and registration and taxation and running all over creation because of a typo in the VIN, first thing we did after all that was drive on down to the pump at the Solar Market and set up an account. The price ranges from \$1.90 to \$2.40 per gallon depending on how much you buy in advance. Regular gasoline is cheaper, currently about \$1.20, but our diesel engine is so efficient it saves us money even when we pay more per gallon.

But it's not really about saving money. It's about doing things a better way. Not only does Biodiesel produce less hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter, leaving more fuel for energy (even better efficiency), but it is also, biodegradable, non-toxic and free of sulfur. Not only that, but if everyone used it, Saudi princes would no longer control the price of fuel. Instead, American farmers would do that.

**AUDIO : CONTINUED FROM PG. 5**

tened to. Some other formats allow this as well such as windows media format and MP3. I create an 8kbps version of my files because while the sound quality will be diminished, even people with 28.8 or even 14.4 speed modems will be able to listen to these streaming files.

If you have the web space, the right software and the time, consider converting your audio into other formats as well.

This audio can then be uploaded to Indymedia sites, radio4all.net or other places where people interested in audio news stories are likely to visit. The Indymedia sites allow you to upload using your web browser. Sites such as radio4all.net require an FTP program. There are several free versions of FTP programs available.

In addition to the Indymedia sites, I recommend uploading audio to the radio4all.net site, which has become popular with community radio programmers and microradio broadcasters. Good luck and have fun. If you have any questions feel free to email me at: noreastah@acadia.net

Helpful Audio Tools Web Sites:**- All About Minidiscs**www.minidisc.org/**- How To Record Your Own Radio Documentary**www.soundportraits.org/education/how_to_record/**- Goldwave digital audio editor (Windows)**www.goldwave.com**- Sound Forge digital audio editor (Windows)**www.sonicfoundry.com/**- LAME MP3 Encoder**

(Windows, Linux, Mac)

www.mp3dev.org/mp3/**- SoundEdit16 digital audio editor (Mac)**www.macromedia.com/software/sound/**- Sound Studio digital audio editor (Linux)**sourceforge.net/projects/studio**- WS FTP (Windows)**www.wsftp.com/**TV : CONTINUED FROM PG. 6**

and lead paint awareness activist, and Wayne Russell of the Oxford Street Shelter.

On the second show, in January, the issues were housing, lead paint, universal healthcare, and the national homelessness marathon. The guests were Portland Mayor Karen Geraghty who has set housing as her first priority, Portland State Rep. Glenn Cummings who is a lead awareness activist, Jay Houghton who is Chairwoman of the Healthcare Coordinating Committee of the Maine People's Alliance, and Karen D'Andrea who is organizing Portland's contingent of the 2002 National Homelessness Marathon, and on Tuesday, February 5th at 9am, will start a 24 hour stay on Monument Square in Portland.

According to the show's creators, "an important element of the show's concept is to be a media outlet of the people, by the people, and for the people. The bottom line of this type of show is not a quarterly profit/loss statement. Rather, the bottom line is whether people are getting the results they want. This show allows the flexibility to stay with issues or revisit issues if it can make a difference by helping to develop a critical mass of awareness on key issues at key times."

Next month, February, is Black History Month, and the theme will be civil rights and civil liberties. The guests will be Gerald Talbot, the

are building isn't some cartoony reproduction of Nazi Germany; it's an America of the future that looks much like the United States of today, but works as if the whole country has been turned into an airport security checkpoint. It'll be like Mexico, with everybody averting their eyes as the cops stroll by, but with better plumbing. It's a country that has a familiar flag, regular elections and outraged civil liberties columnists, but where it's easier than ever to get yourself arrested for things that our parents wouldn't have considered crimes -- or just for annoying the wrong people.

Yes, America is becoming a police state. But unless you pay attention, you might not notice until it's too late.

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first black legislator in Maine and founder of the Maine Black History Archive, George Coleman, President of Portland Organization to Win Economic Rights (P.O.W.E.R.), a guest from the N.A.A.C.P., a guest with a background in working for civil liberties.

Starting in March, the previous month's show will also air on Channel 4, which reaches all of Greater Portland. Future plans include developing a news gathering operation and creating a critical mass of video activists who can develop into a true community of independent media activists. Channel 2 has staff, equipment, meeting space, office space, a studio, and enough existing volunteers to offer a basis infrastructure to begin production of independent TV shows. With the collaboration of others around the state of Maine, that production can be expanded and a statewide distribution network to the state's public access cable TV stations and alternative radio stations.

A new live show is aired the first Saturday of each month. The taped show airs every Saturday at 11am & 7pm. There are production meetings on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month at Channel 2, 100 Oak Street, Portland, at 6:30 pm for anyone interested in joining the team. Call 207-775-2900 ext. 3 for more info.

BY ED DEMOCRACY
AND HILLARY LISTER

POLICE : CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

PATRIOT Act without reading the damned thing, so don't expect too much.

Without doubt, since September 11, restrictions on the police have been greatly loosened, and law enforcement authorities are exercising vastly more autonomy than before. Wherever you draw the line that defines a police state, America is closer to that point than it was just a few short months ago.

Of course, the United States have been here before, in a worse way. Whatever you may think of my warnings about expanded government power during our rather vague "war on terrorism," at least I can issue such warnings. My ramblings might've landed me in prison during the Civil War or World War I, and would likely have gotten me mysteriously fired and rendered unemployable during World War II (when the authorities had grown more sophisticated about such things).

The United States have certainly been through more authoritarian times. We can be thankful that the reaction to September 11 has been relatively mild. The reason that I and others like me can speak our seditious minds now is that the restrictive pow-

ers assumed by governments during past emergencies were repealed after the emergency was over.

Mostly repealed, that is. Some extra powers were left over after each incident. And the actions of the past have always been used to justify the excesses of the present. President Bush's executive decision, without congressional input, to try accused terrorists before military tribunals has been justified by references to the military trial of German saboteurs during World War II. That the trial of the saboteurs was legally and ethically shaky at the time is irrelevant now; it provides a handy hook on which to hang new suspensions of the usual rights to due process.

The risk in all of these "emergency" police powers and extraordinary exercises of authority isn't that the Constitution will be completely suspended or that troops will close the door of Congress and turn the U.S. into a banana republic. The real risk is that existing legal barriers between the population and the government will be further eroded. The emergency powers of today build on the precedents set during the last emergency and will be used to justify actions taken during the next.

The police state that politicians

Keith Pearson of Maine IMC traveled to the Oneida Iroquois Nation in upstate New York to help film the struggle happening on the territory. Due to a long and complex power grab on the part of one of the people on the territory who is backed by the BIA, a large number of the native families are being harrassed, beaten, and forced off the land. The Oneida's have urgently been calling for photographers to come out to the territory and film and be legal observers. Keith's video is available online at media.maineindymedia.org. You can learn more about this struggle at www.oneidasfordemocracy.org. If you do not have internet access, you can call Heather at 775-0270 for more information.



N17 : CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

chist philosophy, or why capitalism is bad, but it's not about following "anarchist principles!" People perceive anarchism as something that is trying to be pushed immediately into society like a bill being lobbied in Congress, or that it's another dogmatic practice (not to say there aren't people who consider themselves anarchists who are elitist and authoritarian.) It's about changing our lifestyle, challenging structures and conditions set for us. If you don't like working for a boss, feel unequal amongst a groups of people, have a lack of say in the entirety of your daily life, or feel isolated due to oodles of restrictions, then shouldn't something be done about it?

As a youth I've been brought

up in a world where there's constant laws and hierarchical structure. I was taught to simply accept them, as if this acceptance was necessary to my survival as food, clothing, water, or shelter is. Most youth have to accept compulsory education, are taught to pledge allegiance to the flag without trying to rationalize why some people are unpatriotic. Youth are force-fed their culture by television and other commercial vehicles. For me, the scarce alternatives to that kind of lifestyle just arrived within my sight these past few years, but remain irrelevant or unrecognizable to most of my peers.

Why would I want to recreate this nightmare? These are a handful of reasons why I'm a passionate believer in anti-authoritarian struggle!

So how do we change? That's a question I ponder daily. I often lack alternatives to my concerns.

I'm sure about a few things though. It starts with building friendships with people with common interests, not always for political reasons, but because of common interests like music, art, crafts, hobbies. It's gonna take criticism of all aspects of everyday living, and that includes being critical of ourselves nearly all the time. It's gonna take reclaiming our lives, by regaining skills that truly empower ourselves, whether that's controlling our own media like the paper sets out to do, obtaining methods of survival, and creating our own fun!

- CAL CLARK

New Media: Radio WRFR

"Every day it seems like we read about more and more consolidation in the broadcast area ... what low-power FM radio will do is create an important new outlet and spark a whole new outlet for creativity and new ideas and new music that we don't often hear on the radio," said FCC Chairman William Kennard in announcing the agency's approval of a new low-power FM (LPFM) radio service. In response to rapidly increasing consolidation of radio stations, especially since the Communications Act of 1996 which greatly increased the amount of stations one company could own, the FCC voted on January 21, 2001 to authorize two new classes of radio licenses. The two new classes are one for 50-100 watt stations with a coverage radius of around 7 miles in diameter, and one for 1-10 watt stations with a range of 2-4 miles in diameter.

The new classes of licenses are non-commercial. The owners of the new stations cannot own other radio stations or have any other media interests, including newspapers or cable systems. During the first two years of the new licensing, only applicants living within 10 miles of a station can be granted licenses. The FCC has also instituted an ownership cap for the first two years that will restrict any individual or group nationwide from owning more than one station. After the first three years, a maximum of 10 stations will

be allowed nationally. For multiple people or groups applying for a license in an area, a points system is used to decide who will receive the license. The points are awarded for established local presence, proposed hours of service, and amount of locally originated programming. Applicants who have been caught for illegal pirate radio broadcasting in the past will be at the bottom of the list.

Only in areas which the FCC has determined would cause no interference to already existing radio stations will the new licenses be granted. This has been a point of much contention between large-scale (commercial and National Public Radio) lobbyists, and low power radio advocates. The large-scale radio groups are claiming that the new low power stations may interfere with their signals (and in more cases than one, they have stated their possibly greater concern, that these stations could interfere and take away from their advertising revenue). As a result of lobbying power of the large-scale stations, the number of frequencies that the FCC states can be used without interference to any other stations has been curtailed by 70-80 percent, according to a recent "Scientific American" report.

In spite of all of these hurdles in getting a low power broadcaster license, there has been a local success. Rockland's Penobscot School received a construction permit for a 100 watt station at its building at 18 Gay Street. The Rockland station was one of the first 25 in the nation to receive a permit for this new class of low power radio. The station will have the call letters WRFR-LP and

will broadcast at 93.3 FM.

The Penobscot School was founded in 1985 as a center of language learning and international exchange. Station manager Joe Steinberger says the station is an opportunity for the school to serve the community in a new way. The new radio station will be operated independently by the Penobscot Radio Volunteers, a new group now actively seeking members. The school intends WRFR to be operated as a community station, open to everyone.

"We are looking for volunteers who are interested in radio, any kind of radio," Steinberger says. "We hope to find people interested in music and poetry, in radio plays, people interested in discussion shows and call-in shows, shows on lifestyles or politics, on cooking, or hunting, or religion, or on anything and everything that interests people in Rockland." Steinberger says he hopes to find not only adult volunteers, but young people as well.

WRFR turned on its transmitter on New Years Eve to test reception. The first tests were successful beyond expectations. Listeners were asked to phone in reception reports. "We were loud and clear in Rockland, as expected, but we also received good reports from Thomaston, Tenants Harbor and Rockport," according to Steinberger. Additional equipment tests will be performed before the station's target date for beginning regular broadcasting, February 14th.

For more info about WRFR, call 596-0731.

BY HILLARY LISTER

CAROLYN : CONTINUED FROM PG. 4

them all, can never be bridged, because class and hierarchy are human nature ... like bees. We can soften it sometimes, but it will always fall back into place. Whether it be small groups or nations, or a hi-tech industrialized world.

Of course, in my War or War piece I didn't mean real bazookas and bombs on these charters ... nor on the 1886 ruling which gave them human rights ... nor on Alan Greenspan's empty but busy checkbook ... but even if real dynamite WAS used, would this be considered "violence" by peace people? Again, please believe me when I say that most of America is afraid and angry and ready for war on something and that RAGE is not going to be transformed into well-behaved peace anytime too soon. I believe re-channeling this rage IS possible if enough good organizers were interested.

CAROLYN CHUTE
PARSONSFIELD, MAINE

New Media: Print Mt. Desert Islander

For most of the last century, The Bar Harbor Times has been the only newspaper serving the Mount Desert Island community. It was owned and operated by people living in the community. Two years ago that that all changed when the Texas-based American Consolidated Media bought The Camden Herald, the Capital Weekly of Augusta, The Courier-Gazette of Rockland, the Ellsworth Weekly, Lincoln County Weekly in Damariscotta, the Republican Journal in Belfast (Maine's oldest weekly paper), and the The Bar Harbor Times, among others. Then on August 3rd, 2001, all of these publications were sold again, to the South Carolina-based Crescent Publishing Company.

Former editor Earl Brechlin, who had worked for the Bar Harbor Times for 18 years, resigned and left his position at the Times in September, after finding the new corporate management's philosophy and approach to producing a local newspaper unacceptable. Earl described the problem, " [When

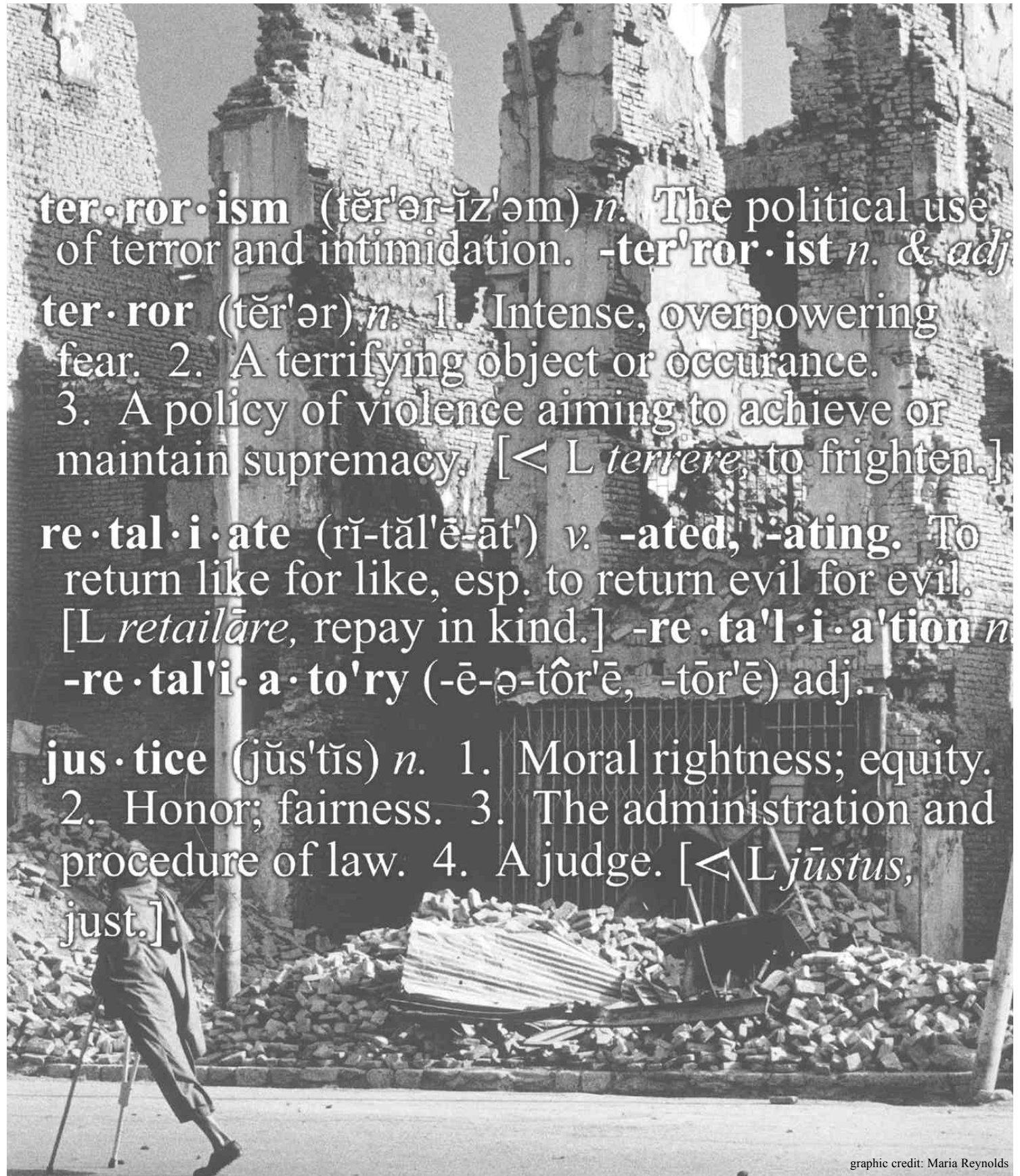
MDI : CONTINUED ON PG. 9

**MDI : CONTINUED FROM PG. 8**

companies buy papers]...they either pay too much, borrow to much, or they just have unreasonable profit expectations. Either way it puts a lot of pressure on the bottom line. ...every group that comes in believes that they are smarter business men than the last guys, and even though they look at the numbers and don't see how the numbers can work, they figure that when they get in there they can find some cuts that they have yet to identify and they're going to make a million dollars. The catch is that there were a lot of smart people before them and those cuts have been made and it leaves nothing to cut but muscle ...naturally in a business you don't cut the advertising reps because they bring in the money so they look to the editorial department and there are hidden changes that can be made. They can give you less pages in the paper, not buy needed equipment, cut employee benefits and not give raises. They can forestall investments they really need to make, but eventually all that's left is people really and the cuts that were planned, the positions that were vacant and not going to be filled were unacceptable.

"...We're not talking about newspaper want a 10 or 15% profit. These people want 20-25% profits. These margins of profit are reached only to the detriment of everything else.... they're not doing a good job and not serving their communities and you don't have that accountability. If someone in a small community doesn't like what they see in the newspaper, they should be able to come and see the owner. You don't get that when it's owned out of state. There are a lot of good people that are trapped in that system and work for these companies that haven't left and any indictment of the system should not be an indictment of those individuals because the truth of the matters is that they care about their jobs.

"It's just a business, ...it's under-reported because the media doesn't like to write about the media primarily because they're all in the same boat. People often worry with consolidation of ownership that there will be this sort of cloak and dagger attempt to shade editorial

MDI : CONTINUED ON PG. 12

graphic credit: Maria Reynolds

ter·ror·ism (tĕr'ər-ĭz'əm) *n.* The political use of terror and intimidation. **-ter'ror·ist** *n. & adj.*

ter·ror (tĕr'ər) *n.* 1. Intense, overpowering fear. 2. A terrifying object or occurrence.

3. A policy of violence aiming to achieve or maintain supremacy. [*< L terrere, to frighten.*]

re·tal·i·ate (rĭ-tāl'ē-āt') *v.* **-ated, -ating.** To return like for like, esp. to return evil for evil.

[*L retailāre, repay in kind.*] **-re·tal'·i·a'tion** *n.*

-re·tal'i·a·to'ry (-ē-ə-tôr'ē, -tôr'ē) *adj.*

jus·tice (jūs'tĭs) *n.* 1. Moral rightness; equity.

2. Honor; fairness. 3. The administration and

procedure of law. 4. A judge. [*< L jūstus,*

just.]

Announcement of Public Hearings

BY NANCY GALLAND

It is hard for those who oppose the on-going policies of war and global domination that this country is perpetrating upon the world to be heard, not only through the corporate controlled media, but also at the state and federal legislative levels. It is hard to get voices heard that draw lines connecting what is being done on the global level to what effects our lives locally. Voices of dissent are drowned out by the clamor for unquestioning loyalty,

and the pressure to give up protections of civil and human rights--all in the name of "security".

At a recent Maine Global Action Network meeting, people from a number of groups all voiced the need for long-term strategy planning and support for the idea of a venue for pulling people together at the statewide, grassroots level.

Public Hearing Scheduled

One strategy is being devel-

oped by the Bangor Peace & Justice Center, based on feedback from a forum they sponsored in December, on "What is Real Security" which drew over 60 people. A two-pronged strategy was developed to first raise public awareness of the issues and then culminate with a "Real Security Public Hearing" to be held in the Bangor area on Saturday, March 2nd. Being an election year, the potential would be optimized to draw local, state and federal legislators and candidates to attend the hearing, at which a variety of folks could testify about how they have been

HEARINGS : CONTINUED ON PG. 15



Maine Solidarity Calendar

January 15 - February 18, 2002 (updated and with more info at <http://calendar.maineindymedia.org>)

TUESDAY JANUARY 15TH

Punk/Hardcore Show and Potluck
Contact: Cal
Phone: 588-0347
Email: urbanhood@yahoo.com
Location: Warren Rd, Off 194, Pittston
Information: Punk/Hardcore show and Vegan/Vegetarian Potluck. Featuring Pinko and the Action Boys, Combat, Decker, USA Waste, and others.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 16TH

REEL Men Gathering

Time: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Contact: Sean
Phone: 786-4697
Email: acla@gwi.net
Location: Lewiston

Information: A monthly social gathering & movie night for gay/bi men men & gay/bi identified transmen of all ages. We show the best in gay cinema. Good food, relaxed atmosphere, great conversation.

SATURDAY JANUARY 19TH

Portland Tenants Union - 1st Annual Meeting

Time: 2:00 PM
Contact: Ed Democracy
Phone: 831-1402
Email: info@portlandtenants.org
Web: <http://www.portlandtenants.org>
Location: King Middle School, 92 Deering Avenue (corner of Park Avenue), Portland
Information: Ratify Bylaws, Elect Board Of Directors, Elect Officers, Elect Portland's Future! Elect Housing Of The People, By The People, And For The People!

The 2nd Annual Cuba Update: A project of Let Cuba Live

Time: 1:00 PM
Contact: Steve Burke
Phone: 273-3247
Email: stevbee@midcoast.com
Location: First Congregational Church, 55 Elm Street, Camden
Information: Light lunch, Cuban music and conversation, followed by presentations that will focus on the Cuban health care system, legal aspects of the embargo, a legislative update, overview of the Cuban economy, Cuban NGO's and tours to Cuba. Followed by general discussion.

The Costs of the September 11th Attacks

Time: 6-9pm (18th), 8:45am-2pm (19th)
Phone: 768-3550
Location: Maine School of Science and Math, Limestone
Free event combining lectures and panel presentations by professionals & academics, will provide significant opportunities for audience participation. Featuring Julie Harris, Douglas Rooks, Nancy Oden, MCLU, UMPI, and Veterans for Peace.

SUNDAY JANUARY 20TH

Maine IMC Meeting

Time: 12:00 PM
Phone: 649-5980 (before 9am, after 7pm, or weekends)
Email: editor@maineindymedia.org
Web: <http://www.maineindymedia.org>
Location: 9-19 Main St, Apt 10, Waterville
Information: Meeting of the Maine Independent Media Center. Open to all interested. Call or write for directions to the meeting. Please bring food to share.

MONDAY JANUARY 21ST

See MLK Events, Page 12

TUESDAY JANUARY 22ND

Common Circle for Human Rights

Time: 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM
Phone: 338-5889
Location: St. Margaret's Parish House, Church St, Belfast

Rally for Unemployed Workers

Time: 12:00 noon
Contact: Jack McKay
Phone: 947-4203
Location: Federal Building, Bangor
Information: Rallies focusing on extending unemployment, health insurance, increasing benefits. All strongly encouraged to attend. There will be a speakout for workers recently unemployed as a result of Free Trade policies. Street theater, signs encouraged.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24TH

Public Forum For Accessible Maine Healthcare

Time: 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Location: St. Francis Room, University of New England, Biddeford
Information: The Maine Access Foundation has announced to go to the public as it seeks ways to improve health care access for Mainers. The work of the Foundation is going to be driven by public input. The purpose of the forums is to hear people's perceptions, experiences and concerns about access to health care and gather ideas about how to improve access.

SATURDAY JANUARY 26TH

Changing Maine Gathering

Time: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
Contact: Claire or Larry
Phone: 674-2358 or 525-7776
Email: rutabaga@ime.net
Website: www.abilitymaine.org/rosc/rindex.html
Location: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 209 Eastern Ave, Augusta
Information: 7th annual Changing Maine Gathering. We'll work together to find ways to bring a diversity of grassroots people together into interconnected organizations with a variety of issues and visions.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29TH

Public Forum For Accessible Maine Healthcare

Time: 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Location: Allagash Room, University of Maine, Presque Isle
Information: See listing on Thurs, Jan 24

THURSDAY JANUARY 31ST, 2002

Knox County Greens Meeting

Time: 6:00 PM
Contact: Tim Sullivan
Phone: 236-0732
Email: tims@maine.greens.org
Web: <http://maine.greens.org/knox>
Location: Rockland Rec Center, Corner Union and Limerock Streets, Rockland

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND, 2002

Northern Regional MAIN Meeting

Contact: Judy
Phone: 947-4371
Email: krjguay@infi.net
Website: <http://www.bairnet.org/organizations/main/>
Location: Methodist Church, Orono
Information: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods works for low-income concerns. Northern Meeting held the 1st Saturday of month. Call first to double-check that the meeting is happening.

War Tax Resisters Annual Meeting and Workshop

Time: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Contact: Larry Dansinger
Phone: 525-7776
Email: invert@acadia.net
Location: Universalist Unitarian Church, 69 Silver St, Waterville
Information: Annual meeting and workshop for war tax resisters & supporters. Workshop on "Introduction to War Tax Resistance." Potluck lunch. Snow date: March 2

Peace Action Maine Annual Peace Supper

Time: 6:00 PM
Contact: Peace Action Maine
Phone: 772-0680
Email: peaceactionme@peaceactionme.org
Location: Woodford's Congregational Church, 202 Woodford St, Portland

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 3RD, 2002

Merry Meeting Green Meetings

Phone: 443-9005
Information: Every 1st Sunday, except holiday weekends. The Katahdin Center meets on the Last Sunday of the month except in summer. The Katahdin Center is the educational/research wing of the Green Party.

MONDAY FEBRUARY 4TH, 2002

Peace Action Maine Disarmament Committee Meeting

Time: 6:00 PM
Phone: 772-0680
Location: 4th Floor, Peace and Justice Center, Portland

Bangor Clean Clothes Campaign Meeting

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Contact: PICA
Phone: 947-4203
Location: Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine, 170 Park St, Bangor
Information: Working to eliminate sweatshops and to encourage Bangor area businesses to carry clothing made in a socially responsible way.

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 5TH, 2002

Homelessness Marathon

Time: 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM
Contact: Karen D'Andrea or Jessica Lockhart
Phone: Jessica at WMPG 780-4598
Email: karen@soundecology.org
Web: <http://www.soundecology.org/www.homelessnessmarathon.org>
Location: Monument Square, Portland
Information: Held in conjunction with the National Homelessness Marathon. Hosted by WMPG Community Radio and Sound Ecology. Event begins Tue Feb 5th at 9AM. Karen D'Andrea, host of Sound Ecology, will spend 24 hours broadcasting live and will host an hour long nationally aired remote broadcast. Continues to Wednesday, February 6th

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 7TH, 2002

Union River Greens

Time: 7:00 PM
Contact: Charlie Wiggins
Phone: 359-2283
Email: eggplant@ct1.com
Web: <http://www.mainegreens.org>
Location: City Hall Auditorium, Ellsworth

Public Forum For Accessible Maine Healthcare

Time: 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Location: Fort Western Room, Augusta Civic Center, Augusta
Information: See listing on Thurs, Jan 24

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 8TH, 2002

"The Politics of Energy and Water" Conference

Contact: Camden Conference
Phone: 236-1034
Email: info@camdenconference.org
Location: Camden
Information: Continues on Saturday, February 9th and Sunday, February 10th



THIS AIN'T
A DEMOCRACY,
IT'S AN EMERGENCY!

THE NEW CHAUTAUQUA Countercoup Times



NEWS & VIEWS ON THE
CORPORATE COUP FROM
MAINE, THE NATION AND
THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Issue No. 1



"To those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty, my message is this: your tactics only aid terrorists for they erode our unity and diminish our resolve."
— John Ashcroft, Attorney General

"The government turns every contingency into an excuse for enhancing power in itself."
— John Adams

"When fascism comes to America, it will come wrapped in an American flag."
— Huey Long

"Those willing to give up essential liberties for a little security deserve neither security nor liberty."
— Benjamin Franklin

"What country can preserve its liberties, if its rulers are not warned from time to time that its people preserve the spirit of resistance."

Thomas Jefferson

"Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prized liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism at your own doors. Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, you have lost the genius of your own independence and become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you." — Abraham Lincoln 9\11\1858



Editorial

"The U.S. Constitution may not be perfect, but it's a lot better than what we've got now."

Welcome, hardy year '01 survivors, to the brave new theater of 2002, the Year of the Horse, and this cavalry call from the Countercoup Times. This lean wiry rag is the newsprint herald of Countercoup 2002, a defiant democracy reclamation project born out of the September New Chautauqua activist summit in Unity, Maine.

Since the consensus of the Unity gathering was that big corporate bodies have captured our politics, culture and media (and we have precious little time to snatch them back), our editorial bywords are INSURRECTION and URGENCY. The CC Times plans to keep you abreast of this quickening revolt with monthly reconnaissance from around Maine, the nation and the web - recon that exposes the coup, reveals its history, shows how to quash it, and boosts our remedial media stratagem, *Countercoup Maine - The Movie*. The latter is a film Chautauqua sponsors are now creating about an imaginary Maine uprising that comes to life, engulfs the state, swallows the filmmakers, cripples corporate power, and saves the world!

The Scene: Maine 2002, the nation's first Clean Election campaign for Governor.

The Story: A hardscrabble band of young and grey rebels seize the opportunity to launch a symbolic ticket advocating secession from Corporate America, workplace democracy, and other antique populist ideals. Gradually, however, their fictional revolt begins to generate its own media, Minutemen and odd political momentum. In fact, they virtually win.

The Cast: Novelist Carolyn Chute and local activist David Kubiak as co-candidates, a radically eminent shadow cabinet, pissed off citizens & seditious celebrities, cunning corporate bad guys persons, and a statewide activist all-star cast of thousands.

The Strategy: To ensure the most attention and impact, the Countercoup campaign (and its associated weekly video news program) will feature movie-staged "rallies" and "press conferences" (attended by real people and real journalists reacting to real ideas) - all organized by movie "campaign offices" that will recruit real volunteers, make real phone calls, hand-out real (radical) literature and build real networks. It will then set up media feedback loops, e.g., filming citizens watching/reading the press response to the movie cast's reaction to real coverage of the fictional campaign's position and activities.

The Point: The movie will fuse show business and political fiction so intimately with real people, events and media reaction that viewers will lose the ability (and perhaps the desire) to tell them apart. As the movie is covered in the news and that news is rolled back into the movie, and the campaign begins to marshal real sympathy and our candidates start to appear in the polls, it will be pretty damn hard for anyone to tell what is "really" happening.

To track or aid the Countercoup's evolution, keep watching this space, write P.O. Box 13, Kennebunkport, ME 04046, or surf to www.newchautauqua.net.

THE NEW CHAUTAUQUA Countercoup Times

An insurgent monthly bulletin for libertarians, progressives, radicals, Sixties moles, students, workers, Yankee independents and every other Mainer who believes that corporate domination of our culture, consciousness and politics has gone entirely too damn far.

Editorial Chores
Big Medicine

Layout & Design
D. Norby
A. Post-Quinn

Please send letters and feedback to cctimes@nancho.net or P.O. Box 13 Kennebunkport, ME 04046

THE CORPORATE COUP

by Jim Hightower

A coup is taking place in Washington. It's not a classic coup of rogue generals rudely ousting the president, but a corporate coup being pulled off with the help of the president himself, as Little George Bush cheerfully waves in an army of corporate executives and lobbyists to take over agency after agency.

The power behind the coup is Dick Cheney, the multimillionaire/former CEO of Halliburton Inc. who was in charge of Bush's search for a vice-president - only to choose himself! Once in office, Cheney connived with Bush to completely corporatize the cabinet, a body of 16 people that contains four CEOs, two former lobbyists, and a gaggle of corporate directors. Then, the chief Washington lobbyist for General Motors, Andrew Card, was brought in as

Bush's chief of staff - sort of a corporate nanny for George W.

Now, the coup is moving down to the operational heads of our government. For example, the new head honcho of the Health Care Financing Administration is Thomas Scully. This is the agency in charge of Medicare and Medicaid - the two health programs that hospital chains, HMOs, and the insurance giants want to privatize. Who is Scully? He's head of the lobbying operation for the hospital chains.

Likewise, the Pentagon is being salted with corporate executives who can work from within for a bigger weapons-making budget to profit their former employers. For example, two companies that are major weapons makers and would



be in line to get billions of dollars for the infamous Star Wars scheme are placing top executives on the inside - a vice-president of General Dynamics is to be secretary of the Navy, and V.P. of Northrop Grumman is to be the Air Force secretary.

Such special interests will further twist government policies to benefit the corporate elite at the expense of the people - a perversion that the people did not vote for in the last election and do not want now. What we have here is a silent, corporate coup that is usurping the right of We the People to self-government.

Bill Moyers Blasts 9/11 Profiteers 10/16/01

There are members of Congress who believe you should sacrifice in this time of crisis by paying for lobbyists' long lunches. And cut capital gains for the wealthy, naturally — that's America's patriotic duty, too. And while we're at it don't forget to eliminate the Corporate Alternative Minimum Tax, enacted fifteen years ago to prevent corporations from taking so many credits and deductions that they owed little if any taxes. But don't just

repeal their minimum tax; give those corporations a refund for all the minimum tax they have ever been assessed ... Give those coal producers freedom to pollute. And shovel generous tax breaks to those giant energy companies; and open the Alaskan wilderness to drilling — that's something to remember the 11th of September for. And while the red, white and blue wave at half-mast over the land of the free and the home of the brave — why,

give the President the power to discard democratic debate and the rule-of-law concerning controversial trade agreements, and set up secret tribunals to run roughshod over local communities trying to protect their environment and their health. It's happening as we meet. It's happening right now.

Our business and political class owes us better than this. After all, it was they who declared class war

twenty years ago and it was they who won. They're on top. If ever they were going to put patriotism over profits, if ever they were going to practice the magnanimity of winners, this was the moment. To hide now behind the flag while ripping off a country in crisis fatally — fatally! — separates them from the common course of American life.

For Full Monty see the web site below:
www.newchautauqua.net/moyers.html

HOW DARE THEY!

The nation mourns, many suffer, and in response a group of highly profitable corporations, and major campaign contributors, demand (and get from the House of Representatives) a \$25 billion refund on all the taxes they paid going back to 1986. **How Dare They!**

Our nation suffers an anthrax attack ... and the big-name pharmaceutical companies pull out the stops to protect their drug patents, preventing the government from obtaining large supplies of potentially critical medicine at affordable costs. **How Dare They!**

A half million people have lost their jobs ... and the airlines, but not their workers, get a \$15 billion bailout. Not only that, in their bill to

keep airport security in private hands, Republican House leaders even tried to undo a provision of the airline bailout bill that capped the compensation of airline CEOs. **How Dare They!**

Emboldened by the airline bailout, now the insurance industry is demanding, and likely to get, tens of billions in government bailout guarantees, while they're holding on tightly to the hundreds of billions they have on hand. **How Dare They!**

The economy may be crashing... and corporate lobbyists' solution is to make business meals and entertainment 100% deductible, which means we taxpayers go back to paying for their three martini lunches. **How Dare They!**

Corporate tax breaks, sweetheart deals, bailouts. How dare the special interests try to take advantage of one of the greatest tragedies

in American history to line their own pockets? Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of workers are out of jobs since September 11th, or barely hanging on, and they can't even get Congress to extend their unemployment benefits or help them keep their health care. They dare to do this because with millions in campaign contributions, they've got the best Congress money can buy.

Big money contributors, who should, along with the rest of the nation, be chipping in during a difficult time, are instead calling in chits. While we have our hands on our hearts, they're picking our pockets. It's time to tell Congress and the President that we're outraged by this. This is a time for all of us to pull together and share in whatever sacrifices are necessary, with no special exemptions for the rich and powerful. www.howdarethey.org

OUR GOVERNMENT & THE ABM TREATY

Worried about nuclear attacks by terrorists and rogue states, President Bush recently pulled out of the ABM treaty in the hopes of building a "missile defense shield". What do you think?

Courtesy of theonion.com

Larry Edwards - Systems Analyst



"This is a wise move on our government's part, considering the fact that terrorists possess such elaborate launching systems for firing nuclear missiles into space."

Will Lathon - Auto Mechanic



"The ABM treaty was a noble but ultimately flawed idea that hindered our ability to bomb the fuck out of countries we don't like."

Thomas Provenza - Lawyer



"A missile-defense system is all the more vital now that we've pissed off Russia so bad."

Marjorie Ready - Student



"It's reassuring to know that after everything that's happened in the past three months, there's still irrefutable proof that Bush is a dick."

Leonard Whitecloud - Cashier



"Treaty pullout? I'm a full-blooded Native American, and I'd like to know why everyone's acting so goddamned surprised."

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

HEY, KIDS! IT'S THE ALL-NEW "WAR ON TERROR" TRADING CARDS!

1 OUR LEADER!

Recounts indicate that more people tried to vote for the other guy--but we don't have time to worry about that now!

17 SAUDI ARABIA!

Our good friend and ally! Also major source of terrorist funding. Is this a wacky world or what?

43 NORTHERN ALLIANCE!

Loose coalition of warlords whose infighting and savage brutality paved the way for the Taliban takeover in 1996. This is gonna work out great!

62 ARMCHAIR WARRIORS!

Commentators advocate everything from torture of detainees to use of nuclear weapons! Watch out, Osama--these guys mean business!

86 REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP!

Bravely combatting terrorism through corporate tax cuts! In this time of patriotic unity, what Democrat would dare to stand in their way?

INFORMATION ABOUT THE WAR!

Everything is under control. Don't worry your pretty little heads about it!

IF YOU DON'T COLLECT 'EM ALL--THEN THE TERRORISTS HAVE ALREADY WON!

TOM TOMORROW ©2001 ... www.thismodernworld.com

THE CORPORATE WAR RACKET

by Major General Smedley Butler; USMC
1933 Post-retirement Speech Excerpt

War is just a racket. A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of people. Only a small inside group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few at the expense of the masses. I believe in adequate defense at the coastline and nothing else. The trouble with America is that when the dollar only earns 6 percent over here, then it gets restless and goes overseas to get 100 percent. Then the flag follows the dollar and the soldiers follow the flag.

I wouldn't go to war again as I have done to protect some lousy investment of the bankers. There are only two things we should fight for. One is the defense of our homes and the other is the Bill of Rights. War for any other reason is simply a racket.

There isn't a trick in the racketeering bag that the military gang is blind to. It has its "finger men" to point out enemies, its "muscle men" to destroy enemies, its "brain men" to plan war preparations, and a "Big Boss": Super-Nationalistic-Capitalism. It may seem odd for me, a military man, to adopt such a comparison.

Truthfulness compels me to. I spent thirty-three years and four months in active military service as a member of this country's most agile military force, the Marine Corps. During that period, I spent most of my time being a high class muscleman for Big Business, for Wall Street and for the Bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I suspected I was just part of a racket at the time. Now I am sure of it. Like all the members of the military profession, I never had a thought of my own until I left the service. My mental faculties remained in suspended animation while I obeyed the orders of higher-ups. This is typical with everyone in the military service. I helped make Mexico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912.

I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested. During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket. Looking back on it, I feel that I could have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents.

Described by General Douglas MacArthur as "one of the really great generals in American history," Butler TWICE won the Congressional Medal of Honor (1914, 1917).

TomPaine.common sense

In the Public Interest

Free Trade Express

The Fast-Track Assault on Democracy

Imagine: Americans paying multinational corporations not to pollute our air... paying them not to poison our water... paying them not to mistreat workers.

Sounds crazy? It is. But it's already law in the United States, Mexico, and Canada under NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Multinational corporations can sue U.S. taxpayers under NAFTA if they believe public regulation has damaged their future profits -- and they are. These claims will not be heard in open court, but before secretive tribunals, no citizens allowed.

Now the same provision could spread throughout the Western Hemisphere if the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) treaty is adopted. It's based on the theory of "regulatory taking" - a radical concept developed by anti-government ideologue Richard Epstein.

When citizens act through government to protect the public interest, Epstein's theory goes, they should pay businesses for limiting or "taking" future profits.

Americans might like to debate whether our sovereign right to protect the common good - clean air and water, public health and safety - should be traded away.

But "free trade" advocates in Congress, portraying FTAA as apple pie sprinkled with stars and stripes, want to limit debate by giving the White House "fast track" authority to negotiate the treaty.

General Electric, Ford, General Motors, International Paper, Motorola, Dow, Dupont, Chevron, Proctor & Gamble, and 3M - these and other companies endorse the "takings" provision in FTAA, saying in a letter to the U.S. Trade Representative that it provides "protection from regulations that diminish the value of investors' assets."

"Jesus, they can't mean that," a retired USTR staffer said when reviewing the letter.

"If they do that," he said, "they're going to put Middle America on the barricades alongside the environmentalists."

This op-ad is adapted from an article in *The Nation* by William Greider

Read it at www.TheNation.com

Visit TomPaine.com for a selection of links to information on FTAA, "free trade" and "takings."

CORPORATIONS ARE NOT PERSONS

By Ralph Nader and Carl J. Mayer

Our constitutional rights were intended for real persons, not artificial creations. Today, however, corporations enjoy virtually the same umbrella of constitutional protections as individuals do. They have become in effect artificial persons with infinitely greater power than humans. This constitutional equivalence must end.

The extension of corporate constitutional rights is a zero sum game that diminishes the right and powers of real individuals... The corporate exercise of First Amendment rights frustrates the individual's right to participate more equally in democratic elections, to pay reasonable utility rates and to live in a toxin-free environment. Fourth Amendment rights

applied to the corporation diminish the individual's right to enjoy privacy and live in an unpolluted world...

Equality of constitutional right plus an inequality of legislated and de-facto powers leads inevitably to the supremacy of artificial life over real people.

The legal system is creating unaccountable Frankensteins that have human powers but are nonetheless constitutionally shielded from much actual and potential law enforcement as well as from accountability to real persons

such as workers, consumers and taxpayers. And now the ultimate irony. Corporate entities have the constitutional right, says the Supreme Court, to patent living beings and, perhaps someday, humanoids...

We need a constitutional amendment declaring that corporations are not persons and that they are only entitled to statutory protections conferred by legislatures and through referendums. Only then will the Constitution become the exclusive preserve of those whom the Framers sought to protect: **real people.**

The Pledge To End Corporate Personhood

A Simple Credo to Quell the Corporate Coup

WE BELIEVE that our Constitution guarantees sovereign power over our nation's fate to "We, the People," the human inhabitants of this land, and entrusts its future to our mindful care and living will.

WE BELIEVE our democratic rights as persons, as affirmed in the Bill of Rights, the 14th Amendment and modern Civil Rights laws, rank among our species' hardest won and most precious evolutionary achievements, and should properly be enjoyed by all humankind, including incorporated workers.

WE BELIEVE the corporate virtues of hierarchy, subordination and synchronized obedience befit primitive despotic states more than free societies, and that children primarily instructed for incorporation will be dangerously ill prepared to exercise or defend our precious liberties and rights.

WE BELIEVE the word "person" as used in the Constitution clearly means a human adult, a man or woman, a living, breathing individual citizen.

"I hope that we shall crush in its birth the aristocracy of our monied corporations, which dare already to challenge our government to a trial of strength, and bid defiance to the laws of our country." - Thomas Jefferson

WE BELIEVE our nation's founders were deeply aware - and wary - of large corporate entities, since their revolt was largely provoked by Britain's tyrannical chartered corporations (the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Companies, the Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland Companies, etc.); and that they purposefully omitted any role for these bodies in either politics or governance.

WE BELIEVE our ancestors saw that bodies which cannot feel or value love, family, justice, spirit, sensuality or the green surround are too primitive to deserve any voice whatever in social policy-making, let alone the final word.

"I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country:.. corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed." - Abraham Lincoln

WE BELIEVE our founders wisely entrusted the power to create, control and dissolve corporate bodies to the citizens of each state, who could best judge their true costs & benefits.

WE BELIEVE corporate bodies are thus in fact not fellow citizens, but our subjects - subject to our sovereign will, and can never rightfully equal citizens in practice or theory nor surpass us in political power.

"We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence by the military-industrial complex. Its total influence — economic, political, even spiritual — is felt in every city, every Statehouse, every office of the Federal government... The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democracy." - Dwight D. Eisenhower

WE BELIEVE that like the Sorcerer's Apprentice we heedlessly animated these artificial servants to build our roads, canals and schools, but now watch aghast as they assume lives of their own and the right to overrun our world.

"Our priorities are that we want to dominate North America first, then South America, and then Asia and then Europe." - David Glass, Wal-Mart CEO

WE BELIEVE vast corporate bodies are indeed largely pathological, that their unbounded growth and rapacity cause or worsen most ills now afflicting our air, water, food, health, democracy, spirituality, sensuality and evolutionary future.

"This is government of the people, by the people and for the people, no longer. It is government of corporations, by corporations and for corporations." - Rutherford B. Hayes

WE BELIEVE we cannot ever regain sovereign control over these bodies or restore our eco-social health until we strip away the illegitimate personhood immunities that fortify and shield them.

"I do not believe the word 'person' in the Fourteenth Amendment includes corporations... A Constitutional interpretation that is wrong should not stand. I believe this Court should now overrule previous decisions that interpreted the Fourteenth Amendment to include corporations."

- Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black

"There was no history, logic or reason given to support this [personhood ruling]."

- Justice William O. Douglas

WE BELIEVE with Justices Black and Douglas that the 1886 Supreme Court's mindless grant of personhood to corporations is not morally, legally or rationally defensible, and neither that Court nor any other has ever had the Constitutional authority to so radically pervert the meaning of democracy, "we, the people" or our founders' clear intent.

WE BELIEVE, for example, that large corporations' personhood claims: (a) to unlimited political spending (as 1st Amendment protected free speech) corrupt our

electoral, legislative and referendum processes; and have created our present coin-operated governance; (b) to 14th Amendment rights (to forbid community "discrimination" against their entry and introduction of mall sprawl, ad drench, chain stores and trash storms) imperil our public health, cultural vitality and natural environment; and (c) to 4th Amendment guarantees against unreasonable searches (to shield toxic dumps or workplace hazards from public inspection) are inexcusable and absurd.

"The government has ceased to function, the corporations are the government."

- Theodore Dreiser, An American Tragedy

WE BELIEVE that despite this threat, We - the real People - still retain enough intelligence, craft and power to reclaim our land and future from corporate domination, if only we awake and act in time.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

THEREFORE ON BEHALF OF OUR PLANET, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND POSTERITY, WE PLEDGE TO END CORPORATE PERSONHOOD AND TO SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMACY OF NATURAL PERSONS EVERYWHERE.





Maine Solidarity Calendar

(continued from page 10)

To have your event listed in the next issue of the Maine Commons as well as online, email the event info to: editor@maineindymedia.org

Regular Events Continued

MONDAY FEBRUARY 11TH, 2002

Gay Men's Potluck Dinner

Time: 6:15 PM
Location: UU Church, 169 Pleasant St, Auburn

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 14TH

"The Vagina Monologues"

Contact: Kristen Hurd
Phone: 581-1296
Email: kristen_hurd@umit.maine.edu
Location: Minsky Recital Hall, University of Maine, Orono
Information: The Student Women's Association of UMaine presents "The Vagina Monologues." All proceeds go to benefit Spruce Run and Rape Response in Bangor. \$6 student tickets, \$8 non-students. Shows continue until Sat-urday, February 16th

MAIN Meeting

Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Contact: Judy Guay
Phone: 947-4371
Email: kjguay@imfi.net
Location: Maine Equal Justice Center, 126 Sewall St, Augusta
Information: Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods Meeting. For work on low-income issues.

Peninsula Peace & Justice potluck supper

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Contact: Judy Robbins
Phone: 326-4405
Email: robbins@downeast.net
Location: Blue Hill Congregational Church, Main St, Blue Hill
Information: Peninsula Peace & Justice meets 2nd Thursday each month for potluck supper and conversation. All are welcome.

Northern Lambda Nord Meeting

Time: 6:30 PM
Phone: 498-2088 or 800-468-2088
Location: 658 South Main Street, Caribou
Information: All interested persons invited to attend.

MONDAY FEBRUARY 18TH

Greater Bangor NOW Chapter meeting

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Contact: Joanna days, Deanna evenings
Phone: Joanna at 989-3306 or Deanna at 947-5337
Location: Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center, 362 Harlow Street, Bangor

For events past this date, please consult <http://calendar.maineindymedia.org>

Weekly and Bi-Weekly Events

SUNDAYS:

Belfast Weekly Peace Vigil

Time: 12:00 PM
Location: Southeast corner (Hayford Building) of High and Main St, Belfast
Information: Women in Black and Standing for Peace will hold a weekly Peace Vigil on Everyone is Welcome. Wear black to symbolize mourning for all victims of war. Bring signs and banners.

Food Not Bombs Distribution

Time: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Phone: 774-2801
Location: Monument Square, Portland
Information: Free vegetarian food distribution every Sunday. Volunteers always needed.

Bowdoin Peace Vigil

Time: 4:30 PM - 5:45 PM
Contact: Barbara
Phone: 443-2899
Location: Bowdoin College, Brunswick

Blue Hill Candlelight Vigil

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Email: robbins@downeast.net
Location: Grounds of Town Hall, Outdoors on the Main St. front lawn, Blue Hill
Information: Vigil for Peace. Sponsored by Peninsula Peace and Justice. All are welcome.

Brunswick Peace Vigil

Time: 6:00 PM
Contact: Barbara
Phone: 443-2899
Location: Brunswick Mall, Brunswick
Information: Join weekly peace vigil on the Mall in Brunswick.

MONDAYS:

Youth Adelantando Meeting

Time: 5:15 PM - 7:30 PM
Contact: PICA
Phone: 947-4203
Location: Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine, 170 Park St, Bangor

Lewiston Peace Vigil at Kennedy Park

Time: 5:30 PM
Contact: Matt
Phone: 946-4478
Location: Kennedy Park, Lewiston

Portland Vigil For Peace

Time: 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Location: Monument Square, Portland
Information: Sponsored by Peace Action Maine, Veterans for Monument Square, Portland Peace, and the Maine Labor Party

Bangor Outright Meeting

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Contact: Drew
Phone: 990-3626 or 1-800-429-1481
Email: drew_eman@hotmail.com
Website: <http://www.maineaidsnetwork.com/outright>
Location: 80 Exchange St, Bangor
Information: Meets every 1st and 3rd Monday. Providing supportive and affirming space for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning youth ages 22 and under.

TUESDAYS:

Bangor Candlelight Vigil

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Phone: 942-9343
Location: Federal Building, Harlow St, Bangor
Information: Vigil for peace. Bring signs and candles. All are welcome.

SMEGAN Meeting

Time: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM
E-mail smegan@end-war.com for info.
Location: Portland Peace And Justice Center, 1 Pleasant St., 4th floor, above Hi Bombay.
Information: For those who want to be directly involved in changing our world, join forces with the Southern Maine Global Action Network. SMEGAN is a grassroots organization whose goal is to end the violation of human rights and the exploitation of the environment at the hands of corporate power and governmental policies. SMEGAN meets every 2nd and 4th Tues. of every month at 7pm.

WEDNESDAYS:

Bucksport Peace Vigil

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Contact: Karen
Phone: 469-3946
Location: In Front of Town Office, Main St, Bucksport

THURSDAYS:

Rockland Peace Vigil

Time: 5:30 PM
Location: Rockland Public Library, Union St, Rockland
Information: Every Thursday, 5:30pm, at the Rockland Library. Discussions, forums, films may follow.

Central Maine Outright Meeting

Time: 7:00 PM
Phone: 621-6393
Email: centralmaineoutright@hotmail.com
Location: 11 King Street (near Pat's Pizza), Augusta

Information: We have a weekly safe drop-in program for GLBTQ and allied youth ages 22 and under.

FRIDAYS:

Food Not Bombs Distribution

Phone: 772-2486
Location: Tommy's Park, Portland
Information: Free Vegetarian Food Distribution. Volunteers always needed.

Lewiston/Auburn Outright

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Contact: Penny
Phone: 786-2717
Email: outright_la@hotmail.com
Web: <http://www.outrightla.org>
Location: 145 Lisbon St, 3rd Floor, Room 302, Lewiston
Information: Meets every Friday. Providing supportive and affirming space for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning youth ages 22 and under.

Portland Outright Meeting

Time: 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM
Phone: 828-6560; toll-free (888) 567-7600 for young people calling long distance in-state
Email: outright@outright.org
Location: Outright space (Above Portland Glass), 832 Congress Street, Portland
Information: For GLBTQ youth ages 22 and under.

Downeast Outright Meeting

Time: 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Contact: Mary
Phone: 667-3506
Email: dean@downeast.net
Location: 25A Pine St, Ellsworth
Information: Every first and third Friday. Providing supportive and affirming space for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning youth ages 22 and under.

Coastal Outright Meeting

Time: 7:00 PM - 9:30 PM
Contact: Coastal AIDS Network
Phone: 800-207-4064
Email: coastaloutright@yahoo.com
Location: Rockland
Information: For GLBTQ youth in Knox, Lincoln and Waldo counties, ages 22 and under. Meets the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month.

SATURDAYS:

Camden Farmers' Market Winter Marketplace
Time: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Location: State of Maine Cheese Company, Rte. 1, Rockport



MARTIN LUTHER KING COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15

Martin Luther King Breakfast

Time: 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Contact: Greater Bangor NAACP

Phone: 827-4493

Location: Wells Conference Center, University of Maine, Orono

Information: Keeping the Dream Alive. He gave his life; we can attend a breakfast and commit to keeping the Dream Alive in personal ways. Keynote: Jim Lucas - Dramatic Readings of ML King. There will be a special honoring of those who lost their lives and those who survived the Sept. 11 attacks. Hosted by the Greater Bangor NAACP. Cost: \$5 students, \$10 non-students.



SUNDAY, JANUARY 20

Martin Luther King Birthday Commemoration

Time: 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Contact: Peace and Justice Center

Phone: 942-9343

Email: info@peacectr.net

Location: Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine, 170 Park St, Bangor

Information: Affirmation and celebration of the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. Potluck supper and General Assembly meeting of the Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine from 5-6pm. At 6:00 a group of young people from Americorps will facilitate a consciousness-raising activity about prejudice and diversity, and at 6:30 we'll show, "An Amazing Grace: Doctor Martin Luther King," the only documentary about King made by black people. A discussion of the relevance of King's life and thought for today will follow the showing of the film.

MONDAY, JANUARY 21

Portland Martin Luther King Breakfast

Time: 7:00 AM

Contact: Janet or June

Phone: 253-5074 or 1-888-252-5074

Location: Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring St, Portland

Information: 21st Annual Portland Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast. Keynote speaker is Dr Ali A. Mazrui who will be speaking on this year's theme "Speaking Truth To Power." Sponsored by Portland NAACP. Tickets are \$15. Doors open at 7am, breakfast begins at 8am.

Waterville's 16th Annual Martin Luther King Breakfast

Time: 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Contact: Stephen Collins

Phone: 872-3549 or 465-3870

Location: Muskie Center, 38 Gold St,

Waterville

Information: Martin Luther King Jr. Day will be observed in Waterville with a community breakfast. John Jenkins, a pioneering African-American legislator in Maine and former mayor of Lewiston will be the featured speaker in a program celebrating Dr. King's life and work. The public is invited. Tickets (\$5 for adults and \$2 for children age 12 and under) may be obtained from Debra Silva at Senior Spectrum (873-4745), Ann Beverage at City Hall (873-7131 ext. 265) or Stephen Collins at Colby College (872-3549). Advance tickets are recommended. In the event of a storm, notice of cancellation will be broadcast on local radio stations Monday morning.

Informational Ski Tour

Contact: Sunday River Inn & XC Ski Center

Phone: 824-2410

Email: info@sundayriverinn.com

Location: Sunday River Inn, 23 Skiway Rd, Newry

Information: Come celebrate the Civil Rights Movement with an informational ski tour. Meet famous figures from throughout history and learn how they contributed to the Civil Rights Movement. Join us for a fireside remembrance of Martin Luther King with Don Coverdale at noon in the Sunday River Inn

14th Consecutive Belfast Gathering

Time: 3:00pm

Contact: Percy Daley

Phone: 338-5470

Location: First Church Parish Hall to Post Office, Belfast

Information: At 3pm people will gather at the First Church Parish Hall for a talk by Mahmoud El-Begearmi on Judeo-Christian-Islam tradition, and misconceptions of Muslims, including misconceptions on the treatment of women. Discussion will follow. There will then be readings from Martin Luther King Jr. and songs. Finally, there will be a can-

delight march to the Belfast Post Office.

"Reflections" at Colby College

Contact: Jeri Roseboro

Phone: 872-3104

Location: Page Commons Room, Cotter Union, Colby College, Waterville

Information: Colby Collegee will commemorate the life of Martin Luther King Jr. with a dramatic performance and a 24-hour video marathon. On Monday, actor Jim Lucas will perform his dramatic one-man show "Reflections," in which he portrays the life and times of King through renditions of King's speeches. A 24-hour movie marathon will lead up to the keynote performance. Videos will be shown in the Pugh Center of Cotter Union beginning at noon on Sunday, January 20, and ending at noon on Monday, January 21.

Bates College Events

Location: Bates College, Lewiston

Information: Special programming scheduled throughout the day, with an emphasis on the theme Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?

10 a.m. Keynote Address: James H. Cone, America's pre-eminent black theologian and Charles A. Briggs Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology, Union Theological Seminary, New York.

12:45-1:45 p.m. Debate: Bates College debaters will square off against Morehouse College debaters on a civil rights topic. There Chase Hall Lounge

2-3 p.m. and 3:10-4:10 p.m. Workshops: To observe Martin Luther King Jr. Day, academic departments will host discussions and speakers on various topics at locations in Pettengill Hall. For a complete schedule of workshops, call 207-786-6436.

4:30 p.m. Lecture: African American Mysticism: A Father and Son's Spiritual Journey with Contemporary Mystic Howard Thurman. John McClendon II and John McClendon III, associate professor of African American and American cultural studies at Bates. Spiritual Journeys: Stories of the Soul 2001-02 Series. Skelton Lounge, Chase Hall

7:30 p.m. Performance: A Cappella recording artists Suddenly Seven will present a musical program. Bates dancers, under the direction of Lewiston hip-hop choreographer W. Barry Dean, will perform an original piece commissioned for King's birthday. Olin Arts Concert Hall.

MDI : CONTINUED FROM PG. 9

opinion or drive what people think, but in many cases, just the opposite is true. These corporate owners don't care what's in it. That's secondary and I don't know how you can be in the newspaper business and put that second because when it comes down to it, what's in it is why people buy it and because people buy it, people advertise in it, but that gets lost in the shuffle."

As a result of these problems Earl decided to start a second newspaper for the Island, the "Mount Desert Islander." Alan Barker, of the Ellsworth American, has said that he feels the "Mount Desert Islander" would have an advantage over the "Bar Harbor Times" because of the fact that it's locally owned. Some business owners in town have expressed concern that it would split advertising and possibly force businesses to declare a loyalty to one paper or another. Others have asked simply if there's enough happening on the Island that would need two papers. Earl has tried to not frame this as a competition, and is not asking people to choose one paper over the other. "I think the Bar Harbor Times is a great paper and has a great readership - it's been here a long time - I'm not asking people to pick one or the other and I think this is a well educated, well read and a news hungry place and I think that there will be more than enough room for another voice, another approach and for more news. People want to read about themselves and that's what we're going to give them."

BY ROB FISH
AND HILLARY LISTER

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Who Have Helped Us Make
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Help with Distribution



The Criminal Injustice System: Supermax

BY STEVE LIWICKI

The following is a brief introduction to the solitary confinement system presently being used in the U. S. to punish and control some of its "most notorious inmates." It would be impossible to give this subject its due in such a tight forum. I only hope to present some what of an idea of what goes on in these places. As an activist, it's my job to expand the level of popular understanding of what is happening in Supermaxes, and in the nation's criminal injustice system, and make it relevant to the lives of the people that I may touch.

A Supermax is a state of the art dungeon where isolation, sensory deprivation, intimidation and malnutrition are some of the tools used by administrators to break an individual's spirit, with the intentions of controlling them. Prisoners who have been arbitrarily and capriciously categorized as violent or disruptive are held in almost total isolation. The majority of prisoners in Supermaxes are kept in their cells for 23 hours a day, with an hour out for "recreation," in what is essentially just another cell. The cell blocks are noisy and filthy, with poor ventilation and no unfiltered light. The temperature and lighting are unchanged day after day. Often prisoners are held incommunicado under the pretense of disciplinary sanctions.

Over the last ten years there has been an alarming increase in the number of Supermax prisons, also known as SHU (Secure Housing Units) and control units. An argument can be made for the proliferation of a core prison population of "undesirables," insuring job security for those responsible for the management of these torture chambers, which by some estimates, represent up to 10 percent of the various correction system's staff. Guard's unions around the country have a direct interest in these units because they feel the units provide a "safer working environment." What is unsaid by the union is that the work is easier, in addition to the cover that these places provide for guard on prisoner violence and torture. Evidence of these points are the heavy political contributions from these unions made to "law and order" and "tough on crime" political candidates, combined with the unions' spoken desire to build more units.

There is a notion in the pop-

ular mind that those who end up in these places are the prison system's most ruthless, the "worst of the worst," to use the politicians' and administrators' catch phrase. Sounds reasonable, right? In all actuality, you most often see the antithesis: people who are mentally ill, illiterate, cognitively impaired, those with neurological difficulties, and political and prisoner activists. Those who find themselves "maxed" usually have little outside support, and more often than not are victims of the ubiquitous racism that plagues the nation's prisons.

There is little argument from anyone that when a person leaves an extended (six months or longer) stay in a Supermax they are in worse shape than when they arrived, both physically and emotionally. First of all, a person who is in solitary confinement for an extended length of time is going to have difficulty understanding what is going on around them in terms of interpersonal interaction when they leave because of the lack of it for so long. Try to imagine what a dog or cat would be like after a year of living in a four foot by six foot cage, being fed and forced to use the toilet there, and is constantly awakened or disturbed by the ambient loud noises. The analogy is a very disturbing thought. Such is life in the Supermax.

Perhaps more important is the lack of an adequate level of sensory and intellectual stimulation. In order to maintain an adequate level of alertness and mental activity, a person needs some kind of external stimulation couple with intellectual stimulation. If a person is deprived of either to a great extent, they'll end up psychotic, confused, easily agitated and delirious. A loss of the capacity to maintain an adequate sense of relationship to their surroundings is also common.

Often, due to the symptoms of the sensory deprivation experienced in these units, a person unwillingly and unknowingly digs a deeper hole for themselves. Prisoners begin to resent and hate the guards and each other. And because of the lack of meaningful stimulation to preoccupy them, prisoners become bored to the point where the only activity is to antagonize the guards. The negative attention may be the only interaction with another human being these prisoners have. This impulse-driven and

chaotic behavior often leads to infractions that can continue to keep the individual on "max" status.

To live in one of these hell-holes is to relinquish not only physical but psychological control of your life.

Daily abuses and inhuman practices that happen in the Supermax violate at least a dozen International and regional human rights Treaties and covenants to which the U.S. is a signatory. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention Against Torture and the U.N. Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the American Friends Service Committee are just a few of the organizations who are adamantly fighting against solitary confinement and Supermax units.

The list of atrocities taking place in the nation's Supermaxes are too many to list here, but some of them are the use of stun guns and belts, tasers, restraint chairs, poor ventilation and lighting, sensory deprivation, assault, malnutrition and the lack of appropriate medical and mental health services. This list only

scratches the surface. Supermaxes are evil and prisoners being held in them need help. For more information on Supermax prisons and solitary confinement and what you can do, please refer to the resource list below.

Amnesty International U.S.A.
322 Eighth Ave.
NYC, NY 10001
212-807-8400

Human Rights Watch
485 Fifth Ave.
NYC, NY 10017
212-972-8400

Bonnie Kerness, Associate Director
Criminal Justice Program
A.F.S.C.
972 Walnut St. 6th Fl.
Newark, NJ 07102

This is the first in a series of Maine Commons articles on prison issues and/or written by people in prison.

Steve Liwicki is currently serving time in Thomaston, ME. He can be reached at:

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LABOR : CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

JM: Hello.

AB: *Perhaps to start off we can talk about the reality here in Maine. What's the situation here? What do the unemployed workers of Maine need?*

JM: Currently there are 29,600 unemployed in the state of Maine. I'm sure many have read the papers recently and seen sort of a litany of closings that have affected us recently - Saucony Shoe in Bangor just a short while ago, Dexter Shoe in both Dexter and Milo, just yesterday Penley, a wood products manufacturer laid off 39 jobs. Earlier in the year, Envisionet, and just today the two International Paper plants which were running skeleton crews, in Passadumkeag and Costigan shut down. There is supposed to be a new mill there, but nevertheless that's a real loss of jobs there. Bangor and Aroostook Railroad is currently in Chapter 11; in addition there's a meat product company, I believe it's Jordan Meats, shut down earlier in the year. So it's been pretty dire for many workers who have really been pushed against the wall. In particular, one of the members, well, many members of the Central Labor Council, but one in particular [Pat McCoy], joined us in our trip to Senator Collins' office.

AB: *[We were] going to have [Pat] with us today if possible -- because of what happened with Costigan and Passadumkeag recently, he wasn't able to join us.*

JM: That's right, and to give a little bit more of a picture of what it's like to lose your job in the Bangor area, he's supplied me with some information. Of the workers laid off in those two locations, Passadumkeag and Costigan, 262 people - and it'll be 300 in a few weeks when those shut-downs are complete - after seven months, 27% of those workers remain unemployed. For those who have obtained jobs, which is about 75% of them, they are now earning, on average, \$3.50 less than what they received before. 24% of those who do have jobs are making between 7 and 9 dollars an hour, which is 3 to 5 dollars less than their old average rate of \$12.50

AB: *And living wage in Maine is supposed to be somewhere around \$11/hour, right?*

JM: That's right, and this is substantially down from that, in part because if you look at the health-care premiums they're being forced to pay (\$45 to \$115 a week) versus \$31 at their previous job. This is forcing the workers, in many cases, to choose between food and medical assis-

tance, health care for both themselves and their families. It's not a good situation. We have this in mind as well as the recent bailout of the airline companies immediately in the aftermath of September 11th. It wasn't reported as widely but there was \$15 billion [in assistance] for the airline companies, but for the 140,000 airline workers who were laid off, they didn't receive a penny. So part of the economic stimulus package, the impetus for it, is the needs of workers, not only in Maine but throughout the country, in particular after September 11th, but also throughout the year. Nationally, 2.2 million workers were unemployed this past year - this is a 40% increase over the previous year and the largest annual increase in over 20 years. What's happening in the Bangor area is certainly happening around the country. So we went into Senator Collins' office, we organized a meeting with her. One of our big concerns is health insurance, and for those people in Costigan and Passadumkeag who lost their jobs, they're looking at paying family premiums of \$800 a month on unemployment insurance, which currently only covers on average 33% of people's earnings. The senate finance package you mentioned earlier, which would aid workers with \$31 billion worth of aid, was derailed in the Senate due to a partisan vote. Senator Collins and Senator Snowe voted against it, which is very unfortunate for the workers of Maine. That package would have given 75% of the payment for COBRA. These workers who've lost their jobs are entitled to get health insurance but they have to pay the premium under COBRA legislation. They don't have the money to pay it, so this 75% assistance would allow them to pay for it. It was not passed, it was derailed in the Senate, so workers have not received that benefit. So when we walked into the Senator's office, we were talking to the Chief of Office, and we told her about what had been happening to workers in Passadumkeag and Costigan, and these are the best jobs in the area, they're good paying union jobs, the Senator's proposal was to give a tax credit to workers paying their health-care insurance, and they could use this tax credit come April. There are two assumptions in that - one is that they have some income in April, and two that they can pay for it today. So we asked her, "What good is this going to do for workers today in Maine, who can't afford the \$800?", and the Chief of Office told us, well, they can put it on their credit card. (Laughs) I mean, credit cards sometimes charge 28% interest - on \$800 per month from now until April? So it was a pretty staggering approach. We've since learned that Senator Collins has a bit more nuanced pro-

posal, and that would include a credit so that maybe the workers could get the money up front, but it's still very much out of touch with the reality that workers have right now. It's much less than what the Senate Democrats are proposing, and it still begs the question that there's a good proposal on the table. It was November 14th when she voted against it and basically killed that legislation that would have immediately helped the workers, and that legislation was crafted much in the spirit of the bailouts for the airlines.

AB: *Do you know what some of the intricacies are that they're looking at right now in the Senate's version? Where do you think they're leaning towards now if not the proposal they had before? Are we going to be seeing more of what the House has passed with the repeal of the alternative minimum corporate tax?*

JM: I certainly hope not ... even Dick Amey has come out against it, as well as President Bush ... So I don't think anything like that is going to go through, but some of the accelerated tax breaks are still very much on the table, and those accelerated tax breaks are something that help the well-off to workers today. 4/5 of the tax cuts would go to the best-off 10%, according to one set of statistics that I have. I think the things we really want to see is help for the COBRA, direct aid, as well as an increase in the unemployment insurance, because that currently replaces 33% of income, whereas a few decades ago it replaced 50% of income.

AB: *So the premise that Collins and others like her seem to be going on is to gear aid toward the companies rather than the workers themselves. Is that correct?*

JM: Yeah, it's incredible the things that are said, because we pointed out that it was very tough to watch Washington take care of the airline companies without a penny to the workers. It seemed that Congress was okay with taking action to help companies that were about to be devastated, realizing that that's a terrible thing, but the 140,000 families that are being devastated, that is not grounds for concern. So we said to the Chief of Office exactly that, and she said "Well, companies employ people." - but they're not employing the 140,000, and that's the sort of trickle-down view, the view that companies provide all the good in the world, they provide all the jobs, and I think this trickle-down economics, we saw it during the 80s, we saw it devastate our working class...

AB: *And the disparity between what*

the CEOs are making and what the workers are making, if they even actually have jobs, just continues to increase.

JM: It's absolutely astounding, these ongoing patterns. Since 1990, if the minimum wage had increased at the same rate as the average pay of a CEO, it'd be \$24.13/hour. In 1999, CEOs made 458 times as much as production workers. These are just astounding figures, not to be found in any other country that's comparable to us in wealth, in western Europe or South Korea or Japan or Taiwan, etc. Another statistic, and this is the sort of trend that Senator Collins' policies are reinforcing, from 1979 to 1998, those in the top fifth of income, the wealthiest 20%, gained 38%, while those in the bottom fifth lost 5% of real income. So these policies they're debating in Congress, sometimes it seems arcane, there's this rule and that rule, and what is COBRA anyway, but the bottom line is that they are aiding the wealthy and not aiding the working class, the poor. It's just very disturbing when we go and talk to them about this and their response is "Let them use their credit card."

AB: *Right ... and in the state of Maine the disparity, while our economy is always at the bottom end of the scale anyway, but when we talk about the disparity between CEOs pay and workers' pay, we have some of the lowest paid workers and also, the CEOs of companies that are in this state are very rarely in this state to see the workers. This is kind of like a colony for the companies, and the CEOs, oftentimes, are in some other state, in some other place. They don't even see the workers.*

Meredith DeFrancesco: *Just in a nutshell, if you could, what is it that you would like to see to help workers in this economic stimulus package?*

JM: Well, an increase in unemployment insurance to come up to current standards, aid for health insurance, and that it happen soon and that it happen now.

AB: *You came onto this program in October to talk about Fast Track. So can you address the current developments and your concerns about the inadequacies of the trade adjustment assistance which now Fast Track proponents like Senator Collins and Snowe may be relying on to address workers' needs?*

JM: The background to this is that the idea of basically free trade is a great thing. There was a big step ahead in that when the House voted 215 to 214 to pass Fast Track authority which allows President

**LABOR : CONTINUED FROM PG. 14**

Bush to negotiate trade agreements like NAFTA, the trade agreement between the United States, Mexico and Canada, with other countries. The next one on the block is the FTAA, which is the Free Trade Agreement for the Americas, basically NAFTA for this hemisphere. The concern that many have is that these trade agreements are not being done with environment and labor standards, and it's been very devastating to workers in the area. The Senate Finance Committee voted 18-3. Senator Snowe voted for it...and she had previously said in 1992, in terms of FastTrack when she voted against it, "We are contemplating letting bureaucrats and other unelected interests negotiate America's future in the new global economy. If history is any indication, we will be making a grievous mistake." Those are pretty good words, and I wish she'd kept to them, because that's where she should be today.

AB: And now they're hoping to fall back on this TAA, this trade adjustment assistance that's been in place for a while, it was something that was supposed to aid workers that might lose their jobs to imports, so

they're hoping that a program like this will help workers out who lost their jobs to imports, but history has proved differently, is that correct?

JM: Right, and the idea that in free trade there are winners and losers, and the federal government should help those that are unfortunate enough to be in the losing industry. I should say that there are 4,400 in the footwear industry in Maine - these are a lot of jobs at risk, think of what happened to Envisionet, these jobs are here. Up at Passadumkeag and Costigan, it was shut down in March, they applied for trade adjustment assistance, because it was Canadian imports that caused those plants to close, or certainly a contributing factor. They were denied, and they appealed it, and it took maybe eight or nine months before the appeal was reprieved and the workers were given TAA. However, the workers were running out of money and took whatever job they could get, Walmart, whatever, \$7 or \$8/hour jobs. Basically what TAA does is it gives additional unemployment insurance so that workers can go to school, and give them travel expenses, enough to get by so that they can learn a new trade, a new career. What happened with

Passadumkeag and Costigan is that, because they had a job, the way TAA works, if you have any job, no matter how terrible, you can't quit it and join TAA. So TAA is basically the opportunity to start a new life, there's been so few jobs in the lumber products industry, and it's been denied to these folks. The TAA doesn't work all the time and basically that's the main cushion for workers who have been devastated by free trade [agreements].

AB: We're going to have to end now, Jack, but is there some sort of contact information you want to give or any last words you want to quickly add?

JM: Yeah - I think it'd be great if people contacted Senator Susan Collins at 945-0417, that's her office in Bangor, as well as Senator Olympia Snowe, at 945-0432. These are incredibly important issues and I'd encourage people to get involved.

Update: Jack McKay would like to announce that on Tuesday, January 22nd, there will be a rally in front of the Federal Building in Bangor. For more info see page 10 (The Solidarity Calendar).

Round Up the Usual Suspects

BY RANDALL G. SHELDEN

Nineteen-year-old Ahmed Atta made the mistake of having the wrong last name; in this case the same last name as one of the men who hijacked one of the jets that crashed into the World Trade Center on September 11. Although his last name is a rather common one in the Middle East - sort of like Jackson, Richards, and many other American names - he has been caught up in one of the largest police dragnets in the past 100 years. According to a Los Angeles Times story (November 4), Mr. Atta and his roommate Salman Hyder, were two college students in Southern California attending college on a student visa. But he made the mistake of taking on a part-time job, to help pay expenses. It seems that this is against one of the myriad rules applying to student visa recipients.

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impacted by the "war on terrorism" and what they need to feel more secure. WERU is willing to help raise public awareness of the issues with a series of four one hour call-in programs to lead up to the hearing with possible follow-up as well.

Bringing candidates to a public hearing to specifically listen to people who oppose the current US. policies, and who have an analysis of how they affect our lives here in Maine, could be a winning formula to get good press coverage and allow voices of dissent to be heard.

A survey has been sent out to many organizations to register priority areas of concern to be addressed in the radio call-in shows and at the hearing. If readers would like to participate in the planning, receive the survey, or give feedback on areas of concern, contact Ilze Petersons at the Bangor Peace & Justice Center: 942-9343, or email peacectr@peacectr.org. All who are opposed to the so-called "War on Terrorism" are encouraged to take part in getting these voices heard in your communities.

A Corporate History Of Maine:

Part 1

BY PETER KELLMAN

This is Part 1 of a short review of some important history which the State of Maine has experienced that has brought us to our present situation in which for-profit corporations have become the dominant institutions in our culture.

First Encounter

Maine's first encounter with the corporate form likely occurred in 1607, when the Plymouth Company established a colony at Popham. The first Plymouth Colony failed. A second Plymouth Company was chartered in 1622 by King James of Great Britain, creating the Province of Maine through a grant of incorporation to Captain John Mason and Sir Ferdinando Gorges, "... and their successors and assigns, that they shall be one Body Politic and Corporate perpetual" and this body "shall be known, called and incorporated by the name of President and Council established at Plymouth in the county of Devon, for the planting, ruling and governing of New-England in America."

The second Plymouth Company also had a brief existence because in 1635 the King of England revoked its charter. Eventually, much of Maine came under the jurisdiction of another King-made corporation, the Massachusetts Bay Company.

The Massachusetts Bay Company was incorporated by King Charles I in 1628 and took over the job of "planting, ruling and governing" Massachusetts. However, the Massachusetts Bay Company almost went the way of its predecessor, the Plymouth Company, in 1664 when the Massachusetts Bay Company took exception to a commission appointed by the King to inspect the conditions of the colonies. The commissioners responded on behalf of their King, making it crystal clear to the Corporation that the King was in charge, the King was sovereign, not the Corporation. The King did not grant away his sovereignty over you when he made you a corporation. When his Majesty gave you power to make wholesome laws, and to administer justice by them, he parted not with his right of judging whether justice was administered accordingly or not. When His Majesty gave you authority over such subjects as live within the limits of your jurisdiction, he made them not your subjects, nor you their supreme authority.

The English King ruled over

New England until 1776 when 13 English colonies on the eastern seaboard declared themselves a Republic. Whereas in England the King claimed his power to rule came from God, in the new United States of America the people were sovereign and the power to form a government came from them. "We the People ... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

It is important to point out here that the "We the People" of the early Republic in reality applied primarily to white men with property. It has taken several centuries of struggle on the part of those left out of the original "We the People" for them just to get the vote. Today's struggle of "We the People" to wield authority over the few who manage today's transnational corporations is a continuation of that struggle of "We the People" to create a democracy and exercise sovereignty over the institutions created in our name.

This column is the first of a continuing series: The Maine Lost History Project. Each month we will feature a column on the forgotten history of Maine - the "unofficial" history, the oral history, labor history, cultural history, forgotten victories, etc. If you or someone you know could write or tell (we will help in recording stories) some lost history, please contact the Editors of this paper.



USUAL : CONTINUED FROM PG. 15

Not that this would ordinarily draw attention, but these are times of national hysteria. In the case of Mr. Atta and his roommate, such hysteria resulted in their detention by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Finally, on December 11 they were released on bond - Ahmed on a \$50,000 bond (while placed on electronic surveillance), Hyder on a \$100,000 bond.

In still another case, a 21-year-old college student in San Diego with another common Middle Eastern name - Osama Awadallah - was accused of lying to a grand jury probing the 9/11 attacks. He testified that he knew one of the hijackers, but was charged with lying about the exact nature of his association with another hijacker. "By lying to the grand jury, the defendant's acts promoted terrorism," claimed a U.S. attorney prosecuting the case. He was finally released on bail (he was being held in a New York jail) after about three months (Los Angeles Times, 12/14/01 and 12/15/01).

Then there are the cases of a 34-year-old Egyptian who was taken from his Southern California home and taken to a detention center in Brooklyn and housed with about 60 other Arab Muslims. Plus dozens of Mauritians rounded up in northern Kentucky and detained, based mostly on tips that turned out false (Los Angeles Times, 11/4/01).

All of these men - and thousands more - have been questioned about their knowledge of terrorist activities, with many being locked up with little or no access to a lawyer. Under pressure from the Media, Attorney General Ashcroft finally released the names of about 100 suspects, out of at least 1,100 rounded up so far (as of December 1). While a handful have serious charges leveled against them, the majority have either no specific charges or minor charges mostly related to their visas.

And so will an additional estimated 5,000 or so individuals with similar last names, according a federal initiative that seeks some answers about terrorist activities in this country. Federal authorities say these individuals are not "suspects," but rather they are wanted for "voluntary" interviews, based upon the assumption that they might have something to offer about terrorist activities. (The INS can hold someone for a "reasonable period of time" - a time that has never been defined) Even certain religious groups (and we know who they are) are likely to be "monitored." Where did these

5,000 names come from? Apparently from a list of those who entered this country with a passport from a country that a terrorist might be from.

I am not an expert on terrorism, but this seems a bit farfetched. This effort reminds me of one of the classic lines from the film *Casa-blanca* where Captain Renoit says "Round up the usual suspects" right after "Rick" (Humphrey Bogart) has just shot Major Strasser (a Nazi officer). Translated this means that there are a group of individuals - usually among the most marginalized and outcast in a society - who together form a grouping that is almost always suspected of some form of "crime" - no matter how minor. They are among the "dangerous classes" that we should always be careful of, lest they "get out of hand" and upset the current social order.

But this is nothing new. During the second decade of the 20th century there was a similar concern about another group of "foreigners." These were mostly Italian immigrants who came to this country, like millions of other immigrants, to search for a better life. They took seriously the words written on the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore." But these were tense times, since in 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution occurred in Russia and there was a worldwide revolutionary fervor against the capitalist system. Indeed, this was at the height of the labor movement and among those in the forefront were some with certain extreme views, namely that of socialism and a relative known as anarchism (still a much misunderstood term). Among those espousing the anarchist perspective were a good number from Italy. The hysteria reached its zenith during the so-called Red Scare of 1919 when a relatively new law enforcement agency known as the Bureau of Investigation (which started in 1908 and later became known as the FBI) engaged in a systematic roundup of mostly Italian immigrants in the segregated communities where they lived. Hundreds of these were eventually deported. The plan was authorized by U.S. Attorney General Palmer, who turned the roundup over to a young and energetic agent, who in turn carried out the details of this sweep. This little known agent was a man named John Edgar Hoover.

It was about twenty years

later that a similar procedure was used to weed out another segment of the "dangerous classes." In another time of national hysteria, shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, over 100,000 Japanese-Americans were stripped of their property and livelihoods (many owned businesses at the time) and sent to what were called "Relocation Centers" - newspeak for "Concentration Camps" or just plain prisons. All this in the name of "national security."

But we were not done, for similar tactics were used during the McCarthy era in the 1950s during our "war on Communism." During this period of hysteria, again in the name of "national security," thousands of lives were ruined because someone in authority merely accused them of being a "communist." The term "communist," like "anarchist," "socialist," and "terrorist," defies precise definition. (Some critics rightly point out that it is "terrorism" when "they" do it, but not when "we" do it. But this is the subject of another commentary.) During this era if you even were casually acquainted someone who just attended a meeting of alleged "communists" you were therefore a "communist." Can we not say the same thing with "terrorism" today?

We were still not done, for the FBI was at it again during the 1960s and 1970s with the infamous COINTELPRO investigation that successfully eliminated the dreaded Black Panther Party. With Hoover in charge, the successful tactics of the Red Scare were once again used, this time with more sophistication than ever before. This program has been rightly called a form of "domestic terrorism." And we know the results.

Similar tactics have been used in the "war on drugs." And we know the results, as millions languish in America's jails and prisons for mere possession or even "trafficking" in substances that harm relatively few in comparison to tobacco and alcohol, not to mention the dangerous prescription drugs that drug companies "traffic" in every day.

What do all these have in common? Several themes run through these horrible episodes. First, the Bill of Rights are practically thrown into the toilet. We often forget that the Constitution specifically states that no "person" shall be "deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Second, when we declare a "war" on something, these rights are typically ignored, mostly because those who

are targeted are among the most marginalized, the most uneducated and the poorest in our society. Third, in each and every case it turned out that the threat was highly exaggerated (most Italians were not avowed anarchists, Japanese-Americans were solidly American, most "communists" turned out to be rather ordinary people with liberal views on most problems, the Black Panthers did more good than harm to their communities, while the hysteria focused on the weapons they had, fully protected by the Second Amendment.)

The problem with using the metaphor of "war" is that it almost invariably sets up a simple dichotomy of "us vs. them." This is because in any war there has to be an "enemy" and that individual, group, or nation is generally seen as "evil" or "sick" or "alien" or just plain "dangerous" and perhaps even a threat to the "American way of life" (the usual translation is: a threat to corporate profits). Also, when such a war is declared all manner of reason and logic seems to be thrown in the toilet with little or no attempt to find and root out the causes. All too often the solution is to simply get rid of the "enemy" (either literally via the death penalty or segregating them in prisons or ghettos or deportation). So it has been with the "wars" we have engaged in: on drugs, gangs, communism, and now terrorism.

Like the war on gangs and drugs, the war on terrorism has not resulted in great success. Gangs are still more or less permanent features of our poorest communities, drugs are just as widely used as ever and even cheaper, and so far the "round up" of the "usual suspects" in our war on terrorism has not produced much, despite the expenditures of millions of dollars.

Yes, indeed, let's "round up the usual suspects." This catchy phrase (or something similar) has been used repeatedly by law enforcement agencies over the past 100 years in order to pacify a frightened public or powerful political leaders who want to at least look like they are doing something, when they know there's not much they can do. But it makes for some good headlines.

Randall G. Sheldon is a Professor in the Criminal Justice Department at University of Nevada - Las Vegas. He is the author of Controlling the Dangerous Classes: A Critical Introduction to the History of Criminal Justice (Allyn and Bacon).



News Blurbs

Compiled from various news sources by Hillary Lister

The US Postal Service is nearing an agreement that would raise postal rates on June 30th, several months earlier than was originally proposed. In return for agreeing not to seek another rate increase this year, the Postal Service will raise rates of first class stamps from 34 to 37 cents, postcards from 21 to 23 cents and increase rates 8.7 percent on average.

In 1999 Mainers voted in favor of a referendum to legalize the use of small amounts of marijuana for medical purposes. While Maine has legalized marijuana for use by those with medical needs, federal law continues to view marijuana as illegal. The Supreme Court ruled in 2000 that there could be no legal distribution system for marijuana. Despite this, some Maine lawmakers are planning to continue to buck these decisions. Sen. Anne Rand, D-Portland, is putting forth a bill with various provisions that will help implement the availability and responsible use of medical marijuana, such as establishing a registration system for those using medical marijuana, changing and increasing how many marijuana plants an individual legally may cultivate for medical use, and setting up a statewide distribution network. Other lawmakers want to make changes to or kill the bill. On Tuesday, Jan. 22, a subcommittee meets to continue to discuss the bill.

On Tuesday, January 1st, Maine's minimum-wage increased by 12 percent, from \$5.15 an hour to \$5.75 an hour. This is the first stage of a two-step increase. The next increase will come in January 2003, when the minimum-wage will increase to \$6.25 an hour.

Following a decision by officials of the Westminster, Mass.-based Aubuchon hardware company, Aubuchon Hardware on Water Street in Waterville closed its doors on January 3rd. The reasons cited for the closing were the fact that the lease is coming to the end of its current term and that long range prospects in the Waterville area are not good, due to the fact that Home Depot will be opening in the town in the spring. It was announced in early spring of 2001 that Home Depot would be opening a store in Waterville. The closing of the Water Street Aubuchon follows the closings of two other area hardware stores, Campbell's True Value Hardware store in Fairfield, which shut down in November, and Blake Family Hardware of Oakland which closed its Waterville branch in April.

The Bush administration announced in December that it intends to eliminate the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau and shut its 10 regional offices. A bipartisan group of 69 members of the House of Representatives is urging Department of Labor Secretary Chao to reconsider that decision. The Women's Bureau has worked since the 1920's to carry out its mission to promote the welfare of working women, improving their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment. In a letter written by the 69 lawmakers, they expressed concern that the elimination of the Women's Bureau Regional Offices, coming not long after the Department eliminated the Equal Pay Matters Initiative, is sending a signal that the Administration is placing a low priority on the concerns of working women.

The 82-year old Temple Cinema in downtown Houlton closed its doors on December 31st. In the last months, the theater was operated solely by its manager, Herbie Hockenfull. Movie-goers from Houlton will now have to travel either south to Orono or north to Presque Isle to the closest remaining movie theaters. Due to decreasing returns for showing films (for many movies, the theater only gets to keep 30% or less of its opening week's ticket sales,) and competition from video, dvd, cable, and state of the art multiplex cinema chains, small theaters across the country have had to close their doors in recent years.

On November 7th, the College of the Atlantic passed two initiatives designed to use the college's market power to bring about more sustainable forest practices. The first of the initiatives drastically alters the colleges paper purchasing policies through a shift to 100% recycled, old-growth-free, chlorine-free and certified forest-friendly paper products. The second initiative requires that the college committee responsible for lumber purchases

and the planning of new campus structures only purchase wood products that are independently certified as sustainable by a third party independent certifying organization, such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The initiative also requires the committee to give first preference to recovered (salvaged), recycled, or more socially and ecologically sustainable non-wood alternatives when purchasing building materials, furniture, and other supplies. College of the Atlantic will also not purchase any wood products from old growth forests, U.S. public lands, new conversions of natural forests to plantations, chipboard or oriented strand board (OSB) from virgin tree material, and genetically engineered trees.

L.L. Bean has announced that due to a slowing economy and a 3-year long restructuring plan, it will be making major job cuts. The number of jobs lost will not be announced until late January, but it is expected to be the most serious job cut since 1995, when L.L. Bean cut 350 jobs due to a drop in overseas sales. All of the job cuts are expected to be in management and administrative positions, especially marketing positions, with no expected cuts in jobs of hourly-wage Bean workers.

The Portland Public Safety Committee is considering a proposal by Chief of Police Michael Chitwood to crack down on people driving with suspended or revoked licenses. The proposal is modeled on a California law that allows police to impound vehicles for up to 30 days if the driver has a suspended license, and to confiscate and auction off vehicles driven by repeat offenders. The law also allows that a vehicle may be impounded or confiscated, regardless of who owns it. The law holds vehicle owners responsible for ensuring that the person driving their vehicle has an active, valid license. None of these acts to impound a vehicle would require a court hearing. Chitwood said he expects the Portland ordinance to carry all of the same consequences. The law would apply to anyone driving with a suspended license in Portland, regardless of where they live. Chitwood predicts that Portland would collect about \$500,000 annually from an impoundment program such as this.

The Lewiston City Council has approved a multimillion dollar package of tax breaks and other incentives for Wal-Mart to open a 480,000 foot food distribution center in 2004 on the Alfred Plourde Parkway in Lewiston. The center is expected to provide 350 jobs, paying \$12 to \$15 an hour. In return, Wal-Mart will get nearly \$10 million in tax breaks and utility work from the city. It will be getting \$4.7 million in equipment tax reimbursements and \$1.86 million in tax-based incentives from the state. The state also will pay \$1.5 million for road improvements and up to \$360,000 in training incentives.

Despite the fact that the City of Portland offered tax breaks and incentives to the company, the Bindley Western Industries drug distribution warehouse in Westbrook will be closing and laying off 111 workers this March. The drug company, originally J.E. Gould and Co., owned by a Maine family, is now part of Bindley Western, one of the largest drug wholesalers in the country. It was originally located on Riverside Industrial Parkway in Portland and moved to 5 Bradley Drive in the Westbrook industrial park after the Westbrook City Council approved a Tax Increment Financing agreement in May 1998. The agreement called for the company to get about 50 percent of its property taxes rebated over 15 years. The TIF is saving the company \$98,500 off its property tax bill this fiscal year. The City Council in Portland also recently approved a zoning change to resolve a problem the company had with a setback requirement. The city hoped the change would help keep the company from moving. The company did not consult with the city before announcing plans to close. Bindley Western reported net income of \$42 million in fiscal 2000.

A National Academy of Sciences report released on January 7th, definitively concluded that Maine's wild Atlantic salmon are genetically unique, and as a result, worthy of protection under the federal Endangered Species Act. This goes against what Governor King and some other state officials have long contended, in an effort to


BLURBS : CONTINUED FROM PG. 17

repeal the listing of the fish as endangered. A more complete report on the status of the wild salmon, focusing on the cause of the fish's decline, is due at the end of the year.

On January 3rd, the Penobscot Job Corps Center in Bangor and Loring Job Corps Center in Limestone received certification from the Department of Education to operate as nontraditional limited purpose schools. This means that they will allow students enrolled in Job Corps to receive high-school credit without taking regular public school classes. This program will be the first of its type in the nation. The program rests on strengthened ties between state education and the Job Corps program, and the understanding that there's a need to educate in the diversity of ways in which people learn. It is part of a nationwide initiative designed to bring the Job Corps into the educational curriculum throughout the country.

On December 7th, the U.S. Senate voted to give members of Congress a \$4,900 pay raise in January 2002. The increase will raise Senator's annual salaries to \$150,000. It will be the third pay raise in four years.

On January 7th, Maine lawmakers passed a bill to increase the salary of the next governor from \$70,000 to \$123,000, effective as of January 2003. Based on current gubernatorial salaries, this will increase the Maine governor's salary from the third lowest in the nation to the ninth highest.

Due to a 30 percent cut in federal funds slated for the United Way of Aroostook, there will be a shortage of money to help area food and shelter programs. United Way of Aroostook uses the federal funds to assist 10 area agencies that operate soup kitchens, homeless shelters and to provide some limited assistance to help people pay rents, electricity or heating fuel bills. The federal funding is based on the unemployment rate for September in the Presque Isle-Caribou area. Unemployment was down in that area at the beginning of September, and so the funds to the United Way were cut. Critics have stated that this formula does not take into account the needs of

children, elderly, those who are working low-wage jobs with little or no benefits and not making enough to provide for their families, and those no longer on the unemployment rolls but are still without jobs. For many of these programs, a large portion of the funding comes from private-sector donations. But after September 11th, donations to local charities were down for September and October. They have picked up since October, but are not near the levels they were prior to September.

Insurance companies in Maine have been given approval to exclude terrorist acts in damage covered by their policies. State Insurance Superintendent Iuppa said the reason for this was to preserve the market for insurance companies in Maine. He felt that if the exclusions were not granted that some carriers might have pulled out of the state. After January 1st, most all reinsurance companies (companies which insure insurance companies in cases of extraordinary losses) stopped providing coverage for losses due to terrorist activities. Under the new law, insurers must get Iuppa's approval to change the terms of policies issued in Maine. The changes will show up as people renew their policies. Some consumer groups and others are criticizing this change, arguing that people have been paying premiums for protection for many years, and that it is unfair to lose that paid-for protection, and that the definition of terrorism may be too vague and that insurance companies could use it as an excuse not to provide reimbursement for damage.

The weather of December 2001 set records for the warmest December days in Maine ever recorded. The average temperature for the month in Portland was 34.8 degrees, or more than 8 degrees warmer than the usual average of 26.5 degrees. In Caribou, the average daily temperature was 26.5 degrees, 11.7 degrees above average. Every day of the month in Portland had above-average temperatures. It was also the first time ever that every single day of the month was above freezing. It was far drier than average, with Caribou having the second driest December ever recorded.

Childhood Lead Poisoning: The Maine Facts About Lead

BY SUSAN THORNFELDT

So you think childhood lead poisoning is a pediatric, public health issue of the past? Think again ... and again. Most Mainers would be surprised to learn that Maine children are at considerably high risk for lead poisoning -- and the source of this exposure? Most often the child's own home.

Since lead was removed from most of the nation's gasoline supply, most current environmental exposures to U.S. and Maine children come from lead paint, lead-contaminated dust, and drinking water. In 1978, the federal government took a major step and banned lead from being manufactured in residential house paint. So what's all the fuss about if lead hasn't been present in our gasoline and house paint in over 20 years? Most of Maine's housing stock was built before lead was banned, representing a significant risk factor for childhood lead poisoning. Approximately 80% of Maine homes have some presence of lead-

based paint, while 60% of the reported childhood lead poisonings in past years are attributable to unsafe home renovations and remodeling projects in these older homes. Other potential harmful sources are older water pipes, lead-contaminated soil, imported goods, and marine and commercial paints, which are still presently made with a lead additive.

Young children under the age of 6, and pregnant women are the most vulnerable populations at highest risk. Young children, typically exhibiting hand-to-mouth activity, ingest a greater amount of lead through dust or paint chips. Pregnant women also ingest lead, which easily crosses the placenta and enters the fetal brain where it interferes with normal development. A recent study completed last year by the Maine Medical Assessment Foundation cites medical research which strongly suggests that lead can permanently impact a child's development; neurological damage can include increased impulsiveness, aggression, behavioral problems, learning disabili-

ties and reduced IQ. This same report shows that Maine's screening rates for children remain unacceptably low, and currently estimates that 6,410 Maine children are lead poisoned annually.

Reacting to the Maine Medical Assessment Foundation's findings, Dr. Dora Mills, the state's medical Director for the Bureau of Health, has publicly acknowledged that the Maine Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program has failed, and that lead poisoning remains Maine's No. 1 childhood environmental health hazard. Currently, no remedies have been implemented by the Bureau of Health or current administration to address the exorbitant magnitude of this problem.

In light of the Foundation's report and the failure admission of the Bureau of Health, the Maine Lead Action Project, a state-wide, grassroots organization specifically addressing childhood lead poisoning has drafted and submitted universal screening legislation for consideration in the 2002 Maine Legislature. In a nutshell, the legislation proposes to blood screen all 1 & 2 year olds for lead, with a risk questionnaire given to all 3, 4, 5 & 6-year olds. Upon making its way to through the legislative

pipeline, the legislation has been met with some resistance. While the Bureau of Health has acknowledged that Maine children are at high risk for lead poisoning, they are resistant to support any legislation that would put them in poor favor with physicians state-wide. Historically, physicians are opposed to policymakers mandating any type of healthcare. Flashback to 1992: Legislation was considered for a universal screening law, which was defeated by the Maine Medical Association, Maine's physician lobbying organization, who staunchly opposed the mandate, but vowed to voluntarily increase their screening rates. Now, almost 10 years later, screening rates among Maine children aged 1-6 are at a dismal 16%, while the housing stock has considerably aged, becoming more toxic to children. Medical and scientific research has made public the enormous intellectual, physical, emotional, and economic costs of lead's impact on children's health, but the efforts of Maine's lead prevention program must be viewed as a failure.

For more information on the universal screening campaign, contact the Maine Lead Action Project at 775-5935 or leadsafe@gwi.net.



The "Stuff to Copy or Cut Out" Page

New! The Maine Commons is now accepting ads and inserts!
Take advantage of our statewide volunteer-powered circulation to promote your non-profit group or local business!

Ads are priced at \$30-\$100 per issue, depending on size, with discounts for contract-based repeat ads. Write us for an ad form and full ad policy. We accept ads from businesses at our discretion.

Inserts (see example in this publication) are given a base price of \$200, which covers the cost of 4 extra pages and the insertion of a header bar, but may cost extra for additional processing if any is necessary. Write us for a full specs and policy sheet for an insert for your organization. Currently we are not accepting inserts from for-profit businesses.

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- Organizational:** Event planning, public relations, facilitation.
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Waterville, ME 04903

Turn over for Donation Form



As I have been calculating the cost of medical costs to Americans, it seems that we are getting screwed by insurance companies. In profits and bigger-profit-guaranteeing tactics, the cost is MUCH higher. Millions of people are being left out and people are dying and suffering needlessly, but also we are just plain being fleeced. But, Abby, wouldn't Free Medical Care be socialist? I grew up believing socialism is creepy. Abby, I need some advice on this.

Yours, Earnest in Edgecomb

Dear EE,

No need to discuss here the pros and cons of socialism here because Free Medical is NOT socialism. And it is not welfare either.

It is one of the few ways in which taxpayers can get a return on all those paid-and-paid-and-paid dollars to state and/or IRS, generations of dollars (hard-earned thousands paid by my parents and grandparents and great grandparents and unks and aunts and cousins, and my brothers, and my in-laws and myself and my hub and my neighbors and all of your relatives and neighbors etc) ... all these tax dollars which through government and corporate deals have disappeared into the corporate maw forever, while we work, work, work, work, work increasing hours for less and less and less and less.

We have PAID for free medical with dollars and much more.

PAID IN FULL.

And yet the great swallowing mouth of the Mega-Mammoners (government programs for the rich) is never satisfied. And so it LIES to us and scares us with words like SOCIALISM and COMMUNISM, telling us that if we expect a return on any of our tax dollars, we aren't real Americans or something. Well, gosh, that implies that Americans are DAMN FOOLS!!!

Another thing we all have to remember is that any ads you see on TV or in the paper that are against Free Medical ARE PAID FOR BY INSURANCE companies even if they appear to be some group of "concerned citizens". These groups are called "astroturf groups" (fake grass roots). The big companies even provide the networks with "news" which is really "opinion management" video tapes and press releases.

One doubts with all these Mega Millions of dollars invested into confusing the Maine people about this subject that many Mainers will make it to the voting booth with a clear head.

But just remember, you already paid for it. It's IN THE STATE and FEDERAL VAULTS.

And remember, politicians LIE.

And remember, Free Medical is Complete Medical. Insurance companies give less and less and less medical coverage every hour.

This is a LIFE and Death issue to you and me. To the insurance company Mega-Investors, it's just another billion dollar haul.

Yours Forever in Truth, Revolutionary Abby.

Maine Draft and Military Counselors Want You -- to be prepared.

If cooperating with the draft or with the military disturbs your conscience, you are not alone. Many people feel that in a nuclear age we can not afford any military buildup.

If you are bothered by your military obligations, talk to a draft counselor. Brochures on conscientious objection are available from Maine Draft and Military Counselors.

You are the person most affected by the draft, and you deserve to know what the government may expect of you. Draft procedures can be hard to follow, and the Selective Service System (SSS) and Post Office won't help you understand them.

Things can change fast. If the draft were activated tomorrow, you might find yourself in uniform in less than two weeks. Plan ahead what you will do if this happens. Be prepared with necessary documents.

For more info or free counseling, contact: **Larry Dansinger/MDMC, PO Box 776, Monroe, ME 04951**

<http://www.abilitymaine.org/ros/mdmc.html>