



Justice Rising

Grassroots Solutions to Corporate Domination

Progressive Religion vs. Pervasive Corporate Corruption

by Henry Clark and Elizabeth Sholes

The challenge to faith communities is tackling global corporate policies that have decimated regions of the US and Third World.

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The political clout of religious reactionaries is not something to be ignored or treated with mere ridicule.

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Protection of people from concentrated wealth lay at the heart of the nation's original 'moral values.'

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Corporate powers try to influence mainline churches to change stances on corporate divestment, and to be a partner rather than a critic of the gross accumulation of wealth.

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Corruption and morality dominate public and private discourse. The quest by religion and faith to install conscience as our leading light in an age of overwhelming amoral corporate power is the subject of this *Justice Rising*. We do not deny there is utility in the market. As Adam Smith observed, society does not depend upon the benevolence of the baker to have enough bread to eat—it is the self-interest of the baker which leads him to produce a sufficiency of this commodity.

The problem is that in any market, money is power. Concentration of wealth in the 19th century led to legal manipulations that steadily removed the balance between workers and owners as well as that between producers and consumers. Laws ultimately ceded rights to capital and eroded or removed those for everyone else. Laws made labor a commodity, gave civil rights to corporations but not to workers, and abandoned job creation to the fickle whims of profit demands. After the downturns of the 1970s, accumulation for the few, not the well being of the many, became the corporate norm.

But the evils of 21st century global capitalism have reached a new zenith in the ideology of *market fundamentalism*. This madness has been sold to the public by means of a massive propaganda campaign bankrolled by wealthy neo-conservatives. In this age of mass media, corporate propaganda has succeeded in convincing Americans that everything ought to be for sale. Jobs providing social well-being are sacrificed to create greater private profit. We no longer have a safe supply of good drinking water provided by a public utility. Now we have—at enormously increased cost—bottled water.

Market fundamentalism gives government no right to allocate any economic resource for the common good. In this amoral, corporate model, government is, for all practical purposes, abolished. Governmental agencies which ought to regulate disproportionate corporate power and balance public and private goods are bypassed or eliminated. Legislators in the pockets of lobbyists "earmark"

expenditures and tax breaks for the wealthy while abetting the erosion of rights and supports for those who are either displaced in the quest for ever-cheaper labor or harmed by dangerous working conditions and poorly designed products.

The right-wing ideological offensive has created more than unjust laws, policies and outcomes. The real corruption of our time is not simply the blatant theft of public money by the Abramoffs, DeLays, and Cunninghams inside and outside the beltway, but the wholesale promotion of the proposition that it's a dog-eat-dog world, a zero-sum game—the "I got mine" vision of society. Herein lies the great disconnect of our time: this is Social Darwinism practiced by those who repudiate Darwin in science. Conservative Christians and conservative economics have become strange allies in this world of private salvation and private acquisition run amok.

Although progressive and mainstream Christians as well as non-Christians, outnumber arch-conservatives, the practice of the Social Gospel, in which the presence of the common good is essential, has practically vanished from our national awareness. The work by progressive people of faith has gone on unabated but has been rendered virtually invisible in our national consciousness and public policy. The articles included in this edition of *Justice Rising* are part of the voice of that justice-seeking community of faith that is motivated not by drive for theocracy but by faith principles exercised on behalf of all.



photo: Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice

Creating a Moral Economy in a World Corrupted by Corporate Power

by Elizabeth Sholes

The role of faith communities in creating a just society begins with the traditional role of charity—feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless. It must then move on to social justice, seeking not to ameliorate desperation but to alter the conditions that cause it. The progressive faith community has historically participated in major social movements from abolition through the anti-war and women's rights efforts. In each case the outcome favored progressive faith principles. While these followers of the traditional Social Gospel have recently been overshadowed by the Religious Right, their quest for justice has not been undone.

The newest challenge to faith communities is tackling global corporate policies that have decimated regions of the United States as well as Third World nations. From North American steel towns to Latin American rain forests, transnational policies have destroyed economic self-sufficiency, depressed wages, eliminated benefits, eroded community cohesion, and even threatened cultural survival. We now have robber barons and worker despair on a worldwide scale.

Progressive missionaries and others have helped some Third World communities find a measure of economic self-sufficiency through creation of producer and grower cooperatives and other innovative programs that restore increased local control over production and consumption. Improvements in community cooperation coupled with a relative independence from global markets have breathed new life into a few once-desperate areas.

The same objective is now gaining a foothold within depressed American cities as a renewed vision of urban sustainability has begun to take root. Churches across the country are instrumental in generating economic life in community-directed productive and consumptive projects. Economic revitalization programs from East Oakland, California to Buffalo, New York have had faith community support and direction. Faith leaders are grappling with rebuilding a "moral economy" in which people count at least as much as private gain and communities can embrace sustainable businesses to fill unmet needs in socially responsible ways.

Faith communities, therefore, have had to get smart about public policy. Advocacy for the social safety net is no longer sufficient. Faith leaders have



graphic: Employee Ownership Foundation

Churches across the country are instrumental in generating economic life in community-directed productive and consumptive projects.

begun to understand the importance of using existing laws and creating future legislation that can shift the locus of control back to ordinary people.

Plant closing laws can help institute local control. Created to offset forced closings of liquor producers during Prohibition, federal tax laws permit accelerated depreciation of closed businesses to give the parent company huge sums back from past taxes. Declaring their abandoned business virtually worthless, companies get millions in cash from the government. That windfall has been the 'cash cow' of corporate business since the shutdown of Youngstown Sheet & Tube in Ohio in the 1970s. Bethlehem Steel was handed nearly \$1 billion from the government when they closed their Lackawanna, NY plant in 1983.

Many shut-down businesses abandon workers and communities without fulfilling existing obligations they assumed when accepting state and local tax breaks and incentives. In lieu of repayment, state and local governments could acquire the business—but at this vastly depreciated price set by the corporation. Faith and community organizations could then work with state and local governments to re-sell these businesses at low prices to the abandoned employees or the community, which can operate the business once again.

As in times past, progressive faith groups can lead economic revitalization by combining their traditional on-the-ground community organizing with savvy public policy. More important, they can redefine what is a "moral good" and once again use their leadership to bring about greater social justice for all.

Elizabeth Sholes is the Director of Public Policy for the California Council of Churches



Theocratic extremist Rob Schenck on the steps of the Supreme Court stumping for mandatory inclusion of the Ten Commandments in public places. photo: NPR

by Henry Clark

Market fundamentalism is not the only dangerous superstition we have to battle against today. Enlightened civilization is also menaced by *theocratic fundamentalism*, an ideology that is determined to make everything it calls sin punishable as a crime by the state.

Back in their Texas days, Carl Rove and George W. Bush realized that the corporate right could not rule without allying with the theocratic fundamentalists of the Christian Right. No less an establishment figure than Kevin Phillips is worried about the power this has given evangelicals in pushing this country toward what he does not hesitate to label "American theocracy." Nearly a third of his book by this title is taken up with an issue-by-issue account of how the policies thrust upon this nation and the world by Bush's band of neoconservative ideologues have been aided and abetted by their alliance with religious conservatives. Phillips joins a host of writers whose work appears in *The Nation*, *Harpers* and other mainstream periodicals in pointing out the fruits of the unholy alliance between neoconservatives and theocratic fundamentalists.

Bush in turn has made administrative directives driven by fundamentalist religious philosophies. These measures have corrupted the integrity and effectiveness of science, education and family services. In exchange, this fundamentalist base supports Bush's corporate-driven military adventures and his class warfare against wage-earners, union members and taxpayers.

Thus we must conclude that the political clout of religious reactionaries is not something to be ignored or treated with mere ridicule. So much—one is tempted to say everything—depends on what kind of religion attracts the loyalty of believers and inspires them to energetic action. If mainstream religion recovers the ethical vitality it had only a few decades ago, then there is a chance we will see a splendid resurgence of political and economic justice. If, on the other hand, the three faiths rooted in the Biblical

How Dangerous Is Theocratic Fundamentalism?

Abraham continue to be outrageously misinterpreted by fundamentalist fanatics, the world may be ravaged by jihadist wars and programs of ethnic cleansing. Believers of various kinds deserve respect, but the same cannot be said of all beliefs, especially those of self-styled "defenders of God" who feel themselves duty bound to impose their reactionary notion of righteousness on every citizen.

We are often told that, even though an appropriate supply of military power may be an essential ingredient in the battle against Islamic terrorism, it is even more important for our country and its people to side with mainstream Muslims in their necessary campaign to discredit and disarm Islamic jihadists. The same must surely be true of our stance and our action against theocratic fundamentalists inside the household of faith in Judaism and Christianity. Otherwise, the Bush crowd will be partners in giving Osama bin Laden exactly what he seems to have wanted: a 100-year culture war between Islam and the Judeo-Christian civilization of Europe and America.

Fortunately, progressive churches are busy on several fronts these days. The examples of vigorous action on behalf of economic justice and ecological sanity contained in this issue of *Justice Rising* can be multiplied by reference to those being undertaken by the National Council of Churches as recounted in Dan Wakefield's *The Hijacking of Jesus*. Other agencies such as the California Council of Churches are not only running similar social justice programs, they are also reaching out to mosques and other Muslim organizations to promote ecumenical understanding, mutual respect and cooperation.

As Thomas Wolfe wrote in a famous essay warning of the rise of Nazism and hoping for its defeat, "A wind is rising, and the rivers flow."

Henry Clark is a former Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in NYC, Duke and the University of Southern California. His latest novel, Trophy Boy, was just published by Author House.

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photo: United for Peace and Justice

Members of Clergy and Laity Concerned about Iraq march to the White House, including: Rev. Dr. Rita Nagashima Brock, El Hajj Talib Abdur-Rashid (Imam, Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood), Rabbi Arthur Waskow (Director, The Shalom Center), Rev. Dr. Walter Wink, Rev. Amy Stapleton, and Father G. Simon Harak (Anti-Militarism Coordinator, War Resisters League)

Morals in The War of America's Overclass

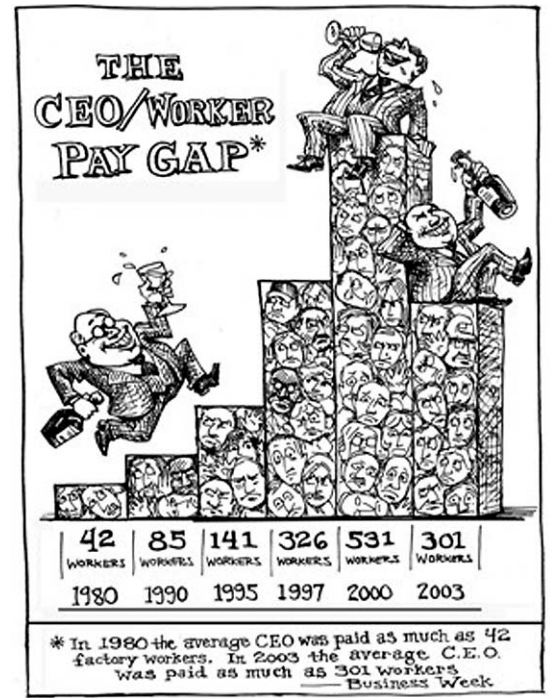
by Peter Laarman

Throughout the 19th century and up to the Reagan Revolution, anti-monopoly and antitrust sentiment drove a significant part of our politics and democratic discourse. Justice Brandeis spoke for a whole nation (minus its plutocrats) when he wrote "we can have a democracy or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of the few. We cannot have both."

We now know that the decline in our private pension system is partly caused by siphoning off worker pension plans to pay for lavish executive retirement benefits. Take the 430/1 ratio of current CEO/worker pay and ratchet that ratio up by several factors as the big cheese and his wage slaves enter their sunset years. The executives get pension payouts at a rate of 60 to 100 percent of their pre-retirement compensation. Meanwhile, the drones get 20 to 30 percent of their pre-retirement pay. This is all going on while companies move as one toward "cash balance" plans for their peons that have the effect of slowing the growth of older workers' pensions or stopping it altogether.

There is a theme here that the corporate media chooses to miss even when it manages to report grim realities, such as a first-quarter aggregate economic growth rate of 4.8 percent while average wage growth of 0.7 percent fails to keep up with surging costs in housing, health care, and gasoline. Meanwhile, inflation-adjusted profits since the last quarter of 2001 shot up more than 50 percent, yet real wage income rose less than seven percent over the same period. What's even worse, the likelihood of workers experiencing sudden drastic drops in household income has been as bad during these years of "recovery" as it was during the 1990-91 recession. In short, the yachts at the top of a rising tide have been bobbing along merrily, but all around them millions of tiny boats have been sinking while millions of other boats are shipwrecked.

The Labor Department says that seven of the ten occupations expected to grow most rapidly between now and 2012 pay less than \$13.25 per hour. In 2004 nearly half of America's workers earned less than \$13.25 per hour. This wage compression has not come about because American workers lack skills and education. Rather, our workers are hurting because their wages are being pushed below their actual skill and productivity level by greed at the top, by rampant outsourcing,



graphic: Matt Wuerker

and by the shocking effect of Wal-Mart's "monopsony" throughout the economy, i.e., the ability of this giant retailer to ruin suppliers and their workforces. "Always Low Prices!" masks unspeakable destruction below the surface.

Our ancestors didn't take kindly to class war from above. Protection of all people from the impact of concentrated wealth lay at the heart of the nation's original "moral values." Our Founders could have been less entranced by John Locke's notion of the sanctity of private property and contract law, but they also recognized the latent despotism in too much property in the hands of monopolists. Madison denounced any concentration of economic power that could deny Americans "the free use of their faculties, and the free choice of their occupations."

Reagan and his corporate sponsors moved immediately to dismantle antitrust law and did so with barely a murmur of congressional or press protest. Japan was supposedly eating our lunch back then. Nothing could stand in the way of efforts by "our" corporations to fight back. Never mind that completely surrendering to the global competitiveness mantra would unleash a brutal reign of terror on small businesses, on unions, and on ordinary working families.

That reign of terror has been intensifying ever since. So how long will we tolerate such violence and such gross usurpations of our American liberties and birthright by those whom trust-buster Teddy Roosevelt called "malefactors of great wealth"?

Peter Laarman is Executive Director of Progressive Christians Uniting

How long will we tolerate such violence and such gross usurpations of our American liberties and birthright by those whom trust-buster Teddy Roosevelt called "malefactors of great wealth"?



Quaker Minister James Nailor entering Bristol with his revolutionary message. graphic: Bristol Radical History Group

by Jim Tarbell

Absence of ethical considerations in corporate/imperial decision making began with the birth of corporations, empire and liberal democracy in the 1600s. Coming out of the reformation that broke the iron grip of the church, the merchant class rose to hail the sanctity of individual accomplishment and personal gain as their morality.

In the first decade of the 17th century, the East India Company and the Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie received charters as the first modern corporations. Under the authority of the British and Dutch states, these trading companies then raised armies and began conquering the world in the name of business profits. Big business and politics were intertwined from the beginning. The first three governors of the British East India Company also served as Mayors of London. Parliament became increasingly controlled by the merchant class.

By the mid 1640s, Parliament raised the New Model Army based on merit rather than inherited titles, defeated the monarchy and beheaded the king. Under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell, the New Model Army became a revolutionary political force. Elements within the army realized that all processes of the state apparatus, educational institutions and religious organization were succumbing gradually to theamoral logic and imperatives of the market. Accounting had become the norm. The relationship with God and the church was becoming contractual and depended on "calculation" rather than beliefs. As Christian redemption became commodified, true religious seekers became outraged.

Searching for a solution, groups within the army advocated the end of the monarchy as well as the aristocratic House of Lords. They promoted universal male suffrage and the elimination of private property. They embraced communally-owned land, resources and means of production.

Alarmed by these ideas, Parliament forced Cromwell to purge the army of the radicals. The ensuing unrest led to the emergence of the Quakers who developed their own universal covenant with God within. They did not have to

Corporate Empire & the Selling of the Soul

The recontainment of Christian faith into the private sphere was absolutely vital if capitalism was to operate without serious moral constraint.

— Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism*

depend on the King, Parliament or the army to communicate with God.

Quaker preachers rallied huge crowds in northern England as they pointed out that "The emerging capitalist contract promised material ease and great profit to those willing to stifle the witness of the universal covenant." They saw that capitalists created a "covenant with the World" where everything is for sale according to the values of the market, where divine judgement and guidance are not allowed.

They implored that "trading has become a trap, to captivate men in deceitful dealings and vain customs and fashions, to serve the adulterous eye and vanity. In this trap the just become a prey to the insatiable, the obsessively self-interested." Vainglorious clothing and amusements "have lost the man of the heart through vanity." Consumerism "destroys the creation." Flattering merchandisers "cheat poor country people." "What traps there are in laws, which should protect the simple."

Quakers even suggested that lawyers and judges, like the Quaker preachers should serve without pay. They reasoned that since the lawyers and judges were making new laws under the developing capitalist order, they would be more likely to serve the common good if they served without pay, for otherwise they would serve the good of the corporate class which paid them.

Such pronouncements outraged merchant-class politicians. Parliament arrested James Nailor, the first Quaker minister to approach London. Then they spent three weeks convicting him of "horrid blasphemy." They publicly flogged the poor fellow and made him a spectacle for all to see. But the public flogging of the pious Quaker caused such outrage that Cromwell realized that the state had to get out of religious affairs and he instituted the first move toward separating church and state. Douglas Gwyn notes that "England's rise to world dominance, built upon militarism, imperialism, colonial slavery, and ruthless exploitation of domestic labor demanded" this separation of church and state in order to allow corporate empire to rule without moral constraint.

"England's rise to world dominance, built upon militarism, imperialism, colonial slavery, and ruthless exploitation of domestic labor demanded" this separation of church and state.



graphic: PBS

Justice Rising

15168 Caspar Road, Box 14
Caspar, CA 95420
707-964-1323

jr@TheAllianceforDemocracy.org

Jim Tarbell

Editor and Layout, *Justice Rising*

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

The Alliance for Democracy

P. O. Box 540115
Waltham, MA 02454
Tel: 781-894-1179
Email: afd@thealliancefordemocracy.org
Webpage: www.thealliancefordemocracy.org

Nancy Price and Lou Hammonn

Co-Chairs of the AfD National Council
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Justice Rising



Elizabeth Sholes and Henry Clark joined forces to help create this issue of *Justice Rising* on the campaigns of progressive religion to create a moral economy in the face of pervasive corporate corruption. Elizabeth is a faith-based warrior for economic and social justice and now the Director of Public Policy for the California Council of Churches. Henry Clark is a charter member of the Greater Sacramento Chapter of the AfD, former Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in NYC, Duke and the University of Southern California. His latest novel, *Trophy Boy*, was recently published by Author House.

The concentration of power, property, production and profits in the hands of a corporate elite free of any spiritual or moral bounds is a situation destined to enslave the human spirit and destroy life as we know it. Under similar circumstances, the Social Gospel, which applies religious principles to social problems, arose during the age of the robber barons. The time has come for the true people of faith and moral concern to engage in that Social Gospel and take on the elites that accumulate an increasing portion of global assets as they disregard the long-term harm they are causing on the planet. Only with a broad and inclusive struggle by all people of high moral concern will there be a promise of a just, equitable and healthy future for ourselves and the planet we live on.

On that note, the next issue of *Justice Rising* will look at the corporate role in the destruction of our environment. Submissions of articles and graphics are welcome. Please let us know by April first if you want to be involved.

Welcome to New Council Members

New blood is flowing into the AfD National Council. Members recently elected Jacqui Brown-Miller, CJ Jones, Steve Scalmanini, Bonnie Preston and Ruth Caplan to the Council.

Jacqui Brown-Miller, a government attorney practicing environmental law, works for the Washington Oil Spill Advisory Council. She helped facilitate both the state Democrat's 2004 platform plank against corporate personhood and local legislation to keep large corporations with a history of non-compliance from locating within the community. Jacqui acted as the prime-mover to organize the South Puget Sound and Greater Seattle AfD chapters and helps produce the *Reclaiming Democracy* TV show.

CJ Jones worked on organizing the political resurgence in Santa Monica, CA.. As one of the founding members of the Mendocino Coast AfD Chapter, he was engaged with all local Alliance activi-

ties and co-hosted "Corporations and Democracy." He recently re-established himself in Tucson, AZ. He is excited about being the SW regional rep on the AfD Council.

Steve Scalmanini of Ukiah, CA, is Secretary and Board member, of the local Veterans for Peace

Chapter. He is also a board member of United Peace Relief and the Mendocino Environment Center. He has served as the local AfD chapter secretary and manages the monthly-video program. He was also a volunteer coordinator for the successful campaign to prohibit the growing of genetically engineered organisms in Mendocino County.

Bonnie Preston is the past Chair of the Baltimore AfD Chapter. She now heads a chapter in Blue Hill, Maine and is the AfD representative on the Maine Fair Trade Campaign Board. Her other activities include the Peninsula Peace and Justice Center, League of Women Voters (LVW) Downeast, Wise Planning for Ellsworth (Wal-Mart site fight), and the Hancock County Democratic Committee. She has sponsored film showings, led LWV discussions, presented a program at the Maine Social Forum (MSF), and assisted in planning the water track for the MSF. She has also served as the AfD Ombudsman.

Ruth Caplan has been active with the Alliance since its founding convention in 1996 where she was elected national Co-chair with Ronnie Dugger. Since 1997 she has co-chaired AfD's Corporate Globalization /Positive Alternatives Campaign and represents AfD in the international Our World Is Not For Sale network opposed to the WTO. She serves as national coordinator of AfD's Defending Water for Life campaign. Ruth also chairs the national Sierra Club's Water Privatization Task Force and its Corporate Accountability Committee.

New Tapestry of the Commons Radio Spots

Start the Commons conversation in your community! Jan Edwards and the AfD are producing two-minute audio commentaries on the Commons. Download these spots now at the Tapestry of the Commons link at www.theAllianceforDemocracy.org For more information or to request a CD with 10 spots for your radio station contact Nancy Price at nancyprice@juno.com or 530-758-0726.

AfD Victory Over Corporate Corruption of the Judicial System

by Jim Tarbell

A six-year battle by the Alliance for Democracy to end corporate corruption of the judicial system has come to a victorious end. In December, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce front group, Citizens for a Strong Ohio (CSO), dropped its appeal of an Ohio Elections Commission ruling that CSO had illegally campaigned against the election of Ohio Supreme Court Justice Alice Resnick. Known as the “conscience of working Ohioans,” she had been attacked by business interests for writing decisions for a bipartisan majority of the court in support of constitutional school funding and against restricting citizen rights to fully recover corporate torts.

In 2000, when Resnick last ran for re-election, the Chamber and its front group spent \$4.2 million to defeat her. Funding also came from a rash of corporate donors including Home Depot, Daimler Chrysler and the Insurance Giant AIG as part of the US Chamber’s separate expenditure of \$3 million.

Resnick won the election despite the ads and with the help of an AfD/Common Cause win at the Ohio Elections Commission against the Chamber, which was reported in every newspaper of the state on election day. Six years later the Alliance finally finished its case when the Chamber “decided it was time to put an end to it.” Lawyer in the case and past AfD Co-Chair Cliff Arnebeck told the press the long battle was worth it. “We had to fight to get the Chamber to adhere to the same law everybody has to adhere to. It’s important when large entities are held accountable.”

At least partially as a result of Arnebeck’s and the AfD’s efforts, the corruption of the judicial system by business contributions and independent corporate campaign support became a topic in national media. In its July 21, 2003 issue *Fortune* magazine featured a cover article on *The Secret War on Judges*. Then in the November/December 2003 issue of *Mother Jones*, Michael Scherer wrote an article called the *Making of the Corporate Judiciary: How Big Business is Quietly Funding a Judicial Revolution in the Nation’s Courts*. (www.motherjones.com/news/feature/11/ma_564_01.html).

In 2006, the *New York Times* took up the case of corporate contributions corrupting the judiciary. In *Tilting the Scales: The Ohio Experience: Campaign Cash Mirrors a High Court’s Ruling*, Adam Liptak and Janet Roberts highlight the case of Supreme Court Justice Terrence O’Donnell. He is the candidate that Resnick defeated in 2000. But he won a seat on the Ohio Supreme Court in 2002. In 2004 he was run-

ning for re-election and “accepted thousands of dollars from the political action committees of three companies that were defendants” in a case the Ohio Supreme Court had under consideration. A few weeks after he won re-election O’Donnell voted for a resolution of the case that “handed the companies significant victories.”

Paul Pfiefer, a Republican member of the Ohio Supreme Court says, “I never felt so much like a hooker down by the bus station...as I did in a judicial race...They mean to be buying a vote. Whether they succeed or not is hard to say.”

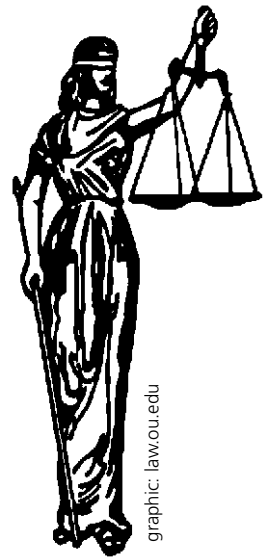
To find out if contributors have succeeded in corrupting the judicial system, the *New York Times* did an exhaustive investigation covering 12 years of Ohio Supreme Court decisions. They discovered that 70 percent of the time judges voted in favor of their contributors. Judge O’Donnell voted for his contributors 91% of the time.

The *Times* reports that “Now that business groups are outspending their adversaries, the court has become dominated by more conservative justices. And the court’s decisions are no longer markedly sympathetic to people claiming injuries.”

According to a *New York Times* story on December 12, 2006 called *Judges for Sale* by Dorothy Samuels, this latest trend started in 2000 when the US Chamber of Commerce put millions of dollars into campaigns in Ohio, Mississippi, Michigan and several other states. This started a contributions race that saw state supreme court candidates increasing spending by 61% over 1998. Then they discovered that “the \$24.4 million (state supreme court) candidates and interest groups spent on TV ads in 2004 more than doubled the previous record set in 2000.” In 2006 contributions continued to increase at this alarming rate.

In January 2007, Justice Resnick retired from the Ohio Supreme Court. When she left there was a 6-1 slant for business interests on the Ohio Supreme Court. The AfD may have won a battle, but the war to stop corporate corruption of our judicial system goes on.

On the other hand, with the sense of pervasive political corruption in Ohio, which the Chamber litigation had a part in creating, the Democratic Party won big in the November 2006 elections. They won the governor’s office, as well as the Secretary of State and Attorney General and made significant gains in the Ohio legislature despite Republican gerrymandering.

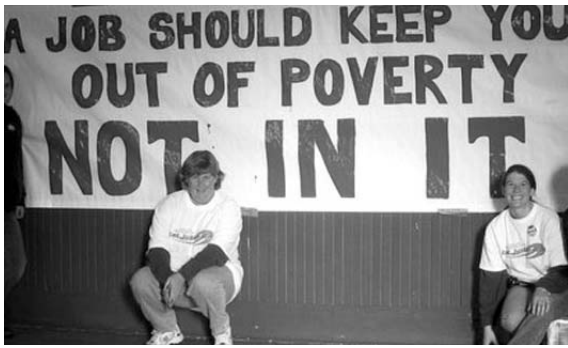


graphic: law.cou.edu

“I never felt so much like a hooker down by the bus station...as I did in a judicial race.”

Ohio Supreme court
Justice Paul Pfiefer





A Moral Wage i

by Rev. Paul H. Sherry

A job should keep you out of poverty, not keep you in it!

That's the bottom line of the Let Justice Roll Living Wage Campaign, organized to raise the minimum wage at the federal level and in selected states. We are a nonpartisan campaign composed of faith-based, community-based and labor bodies. We believe with Martin Luther King, Jr. that "There is nothing but a lack of social vision to prevent us from paying an adequate wage to every American (worker) whether he (or she) is a hospital worker, laundry worker, maid or day laborer."

Though the federal minimum wage has been stuck at \$5.15 per hour, in recent months we have had significant success in a number of states, including Michigan, West Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, Pennsylvania, and won increases in Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Arizona, and Colorado in the recent election. Now the Democratic House has passed a bill to raise the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour. These recent victories and the victories we are anticipating in the near future have led us to believe that raising the minimum wage may well be the most viable instrument available today to combat the poverty that afflicts so many of our nation's people.

Why have we had this success in a time of political and social conservatism? Part of the answer is good organizing. But more importantly, legislators are increasingly aware that people from all walks of life and points on the political spectrum are morally offended by a wage that keeps families in poverty rather than helping them climb out of poverty. Given that awareness, a growing number of legislators are increasingly eager to get on the right side of an issue whose time, finally, has come. Raising the minimum wage is a moral imperative for the very soul of our nation.

It is immoral that workers who care for children, the ill and the elderly strug-



Minimum wage history

When The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 was enacted during the administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, it was designed to eliminate "labor conditions detrimental to the maintenance of the minimum standard of living necessary for health, efficiency and general well-being of workers." Place that visionary statement—that strong commitment—against the current federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour (a wage that places a family of three about \$6000 below the poverty line) and we will see rather quickly, and dramatically, how we have turned on its head the very purposes that the Fair Labor Standards Act was enacted to accomplish. Indeed, rather than eliminating labor standards detrimental to the maintenance of a minimal standard of living, the current minimum wage reinforces those conditions.

One other bit of history. We all remember Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech on the Washington DC mall during the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. However, we oft times forget that a key demand of that 1963 March was for "a national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living." Dr. King, we are still waiting to fulfill that vision. Think of it! The 1963 minimum wage, in effect at the very moment that so many gathered to seek justice for all Americans on the Washington DC mall, was worth more than \$8.00 in today's dollars, about \$3.00 more than the current \$5.15 minimum wage. The real minimum wage—the wage adjusted for inflation—reached its highest point in 1968. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, it would take more than \$9.00 to match the minimum wage peak of 1968, adjusting for inflation.

Martin Luther King did not dream that in the year, 2007, the minimum wage would not have the buying power that it had in 1950. He did not dream that in this new millennium we would be debating whether to "raise" the minimum wage to the level employers paid in the 1960s. In fact, we are living his dream in reverse.

s a Living Wage



photos: LetJusticeRoll.org



Myths about the minimum wage

There are a number of myths surrounding the minimum wage.

- It is said that most minimum wage workers are teenagers living with their families and working for "fun" money. Not true! Rather, a typical minimum wage worker is an adult woman.
- It is said that raising the minimum wage hurts the economy and leads to fewer jobs, particularly for low wage workers. Again, not true! In fact, contrary to myth, states with higher minimum wages have shown stronger employment trends than the other states, including retail business and smaller businesses. In this regard, the following statement by Dan Gardner, Commissioner of Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industry, is particularly telling: "Overall, most low-wage workers pump every dollar of their paychecks directly into the local economy by spending their money in their neighborhood stores, local pharmacies, and corner markets. When the minimum wage increases, local economies benefit from the increased purchasing power."

gle to care for their own families. It is immoral that the minimum wage keeps people in poverty instead of out of poverty. Decency and morality demand redress. Down deep, most people know this and, we are finding, more and more people, when confronted by the facts of the case, respond and begin to call and act for positive change. Certainly, modest minimum wage raises are far from sufficient in bringing many low-wage workers and their families out of poverty. Rather, these raises are but way stations on the way to a living wage for low-wage workers and families. Though not sufficient, they are essential for people struggling to afford the basic necessities of life and bring with them the promise of better things to come in the days ahead. Raising the minimum wage is a women's issue, it is a family issue, it is a children's issue and it is a racial justice issue. By increasing the minimum wage we are engaged in nothing less than the struggle for justice for women, for people of color and for all working people whose honest labor deserves our committed support. In the words of President Roosevelt, it's time, long past time, for "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work." And the good news is this: when we make that case, when the myths are cleared away, when we organize for change, people respond with power.

You can find out about us and our work at our web site, www.letjusticeroll.org. I also want to invite your participation with us in the Campaign. You can sign on at the website. Please do so.. We need your help. Deep down, people know that a job should keep you out of poverty, not keep you in it.

Rev. Paul H. Sherry is the National Coordinator of the Let Justice Roll Living Wage Campaign

Raising the minimum wage is a moral imperative for the very soul of our nation.



Interfaith Groups Bring Justice with Spirit

by Elizabeth Shole



in focus, and therefore well known such as the National Council of Churches (www.nccusa.org) and the Interfaith Alliance (www.interfaithalliance.org). Still others are new, growing, and welcome participants to engage in social and political activism with them.

There are many progressive faith organizations working on social justice issues including challenging global corporations and protecting the environment. Some are national



A number of states have Councils of Churches with regional Councils. Many support public policy advocacy as well as programs dealing with social change. The largest advocacy operation is California Church IMPACT, the sister organization of the California Council of Churches. With 1.5 million members, they are active on both state and federal legislation, training and mobilizing activists on how to speak with individual moral voices on legislation and social justice issues. CCC/CCI are progressive on gay rights, women's right to choose, universal health, sustainable



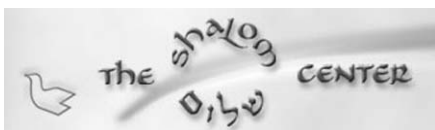
economics, democratic communities, and environmental justice. www.calchurches.org and www.churchimpact.org



democracy for the sake of social justice and the community. Based in Chicago, their advocates also witness on public policy for a wide range of progressive issues including GLBT rights, economic justice and other matters.

In Illinois, Protestants for the Common Good maintains an advocacy presence at both state and federal levels. Protestants for the Common Good educates and mobilizes people of faith to participate in political

Virtually every denomination has federal and some state legislative advocacy operations. One such leader is Friends Committee on National Legislation (www.fcnl.org) with issues supported at the state level by groups such as The Friends Committee on Legislation in California (www.fccla.org) and the Indiana Friends Committee on Legislation (www.quakerifcl.org). They have been leaders on matters of war and peace, capital punishment, and prison reform.



The Shalom Center raises issues of peace, war, torture, and justice in the Mideast from both a traditional Jewish view and from a broader 'Abrahamic' tradition uniting Christians, Jews, and Muslims on issues of common ground. www.shalomctr.org

CrossLeft has an ambitious program of creating a clearing-house for all groups and individuals grounded in faith-related social, political, and economic justice. They maintain a news site and a blog through which activists can engage with one another around common interests and actions. They have developed the Institute for Progressive Christianity, to provide philosophical reflection to counter religious conservatism through scriptural analysis of justice issues, and to develop progressive public policy.



also provide education on legislative issues and critical public policy debates. www.progressivechristiansuniting.org

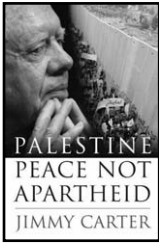
Organizations engaged in 'on-the-ground' social change include Progressive Christians Uniting in California, which brings people together around a range of social justice issues such as sweatshop action, labor rights, criminal justice, drug policy reform, and environmental justice. They

Other groups like Bread for the World and Church World Service focus on specific issues, such as hunger and sponsor actions such as the CWS "Crop Walk" to raise money for hunger programs around the world.



www.bread.org and www.churchworldservice.org. Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life unites congregations on myriad environmental issues. See www.coejl.org

Writings on the Religious Right & Moral Left



Many books have been published recently on the dangers posed by the political onslaughts of the religious right and about the progressive counterattack. A number of public affairs journals have published book review articles covering several such books; see, for example, the November 27, 2006 issue of *The*

Nation for an assessment of nine books ranging from Bill Moyers to Jimmy Carter. We are especially appreciative of "an evangelist's lament" by Randall Balmer, author of *Thy Kingdom Come: How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America*. Damon Linker, who worked for many years as an editor of Richard John Neuhaus' journal *First Things*, has written an insider's eye-opening exposé of the machinations of Roman Catholic right-

wingers called *The Theocons*. We are glad that Kevin Phillips—a political writer usually identified solidly with the Establishment—devoted almost forty percent of his *American Theocracy* cry of alarm to partisan evangelical figures and currents of thought.

An even more alarming book on the same topic has been penned by Chris

Hedges, the eloquent journalist-philosopher. His just published *American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America* warns of a particularly virulent form of right-wing Christianity that openly espouses a Taliban-type theocracy for the USA.

Dan Wakefield's *The Hijacking of Jesus* is an insider's view of the pain and outrage felt by a liberal Catholic. The final chapter of

Wakefield's book provides a useful summary of what liberal and progressive religious institutions are doing to turn back the insidious distortions of religion by the right. It surveys the efforts now being carried out by reformers (perhaps they deserve to be called "reclaimers") such as *Tikkun's* Michael Lerner and *Sojourners'*

Jim Wallis as well as reminding us that ecumenical bodies such as The National Council of Churches (NCC) are by no means dead. The new program thrust of the NCC—and the theological vision it expresses—are more fully dealt with in its new general secretary's recent book, *Middle Church: Reclaiming the Moral Values of the Faithful Majority from the*



Religious Right, by Robert Edgar.

Yes Magazine's Winter 2006 issue, themed *Spiritual Uprising*, devotes itself to the new interfaith uprising against the increasing economic, social and environmental injustice of the world. It has a great list of resources, articles on jubilee, empire

and fair trade.

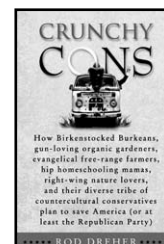
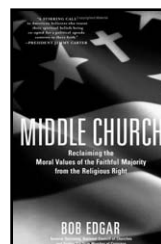
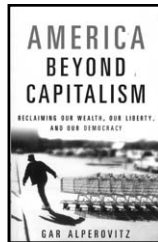
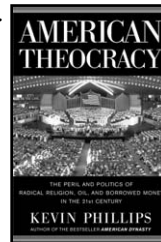
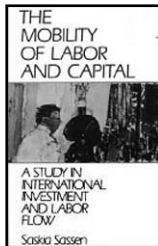
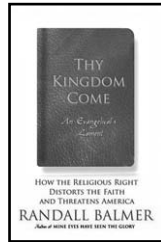
Theologian John B. Cobb, who co-wrote *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future* with Herman Daly, traces the biblical history of common land/ private property and sustainable community. He has also written articles on *A Buddhist-Christian critique of Neo-Liberal Economics*, *A Sustainable Society* and *Against Free Trade: A meeting of Opposites*. These articles are available at religiononline.org.

Activists who want to be effective in setting and pursuing goals for economic life in the modern world can profit from reading *The Mobility of Labor and Capital* by Saskia Sassen and *The Soul of Capitalism: Opening Paths to a Moral Economy* by *The Nation's* fine analyst, William Greider. This is a great primer on how global capitalism works.

Gar Alperovitz's *America Beyond Capitalism; Reclaiming Our Wealth, Our Liberty and Our Democracy* is a clear vision of what the moral economy looks like and how it might come about. He examines worker-owned firms, enterprising cities, building community and local democracy.

The last section of his book, "Toward a Morally Coherent Politics," lays out how change could "come much earlier and much faster than many now imagine."

In *Crunchy Cons*, Rod Dreher adopts a slightly less consumptive, but nevertheless self-satisfied form of materialism. He does think environmental stewardship is a social good, but that's where he begins and ends as far as taking on corporate power. He adopts what liberals do—and then disdains liberalism. He has set up liberalism as a straw man to knock down with utterly false assumptions. There is not one word about social justice—he embraces the global free market as an absolute good. This is evangelical social Darwinism eating organic food.



Environment, Faith, and Corporate Influence

by Cassandra Carmichael and Rebecca Barnes-Davies

In one of the *Bible's* most disarming stories, Jesus enters the Temple area, drives out all the merchants and overturns the tables of the money changers. Churches seek to emulate Jesus' ministry—a ministry attuned to poverty and striving to turn the tables on unjust societal powers. However, living in a world based on the bottom line and corporate influence, churches still get caught in the struggle of corporate power and global wealth. Individual pastors, churches, and national offices all struggle with "speaking truth to power."

Churches often face the challenge of providing for those in need with limited church resources. Churches also need to balance their nurture of all members and a righteous challenge for all people to live simply. How do churches pastor CEOs as well as non-profit Executive Directors? How do churches spread a message of justice and condemnation of some people or institutions while spreading a message of unconditional love, acceptance, and forgiveness?

Corporations directly impact these struggles. Corporate powers try to influence mainline churches on many levels—to buy products or services, to change stances on corporate divestment, and to be a partner rather than a critic of the gross accumulation of wealth around the world. Whether it's local or national, the global economy is encroaching, or at least trying to encroach, on local communities of faith. A gospel of wealth, of deserved accumulation of material goods, and of unchecked consumption can be heard in many pulpits across the nation.

Yet, ecojustice—ecological health and wholeness together with social and economic justice—is intrinsically a part of Christian scriptures, theology, and practice. Christian communities have every reason to be active in the call to ecojustice. The problem is that many Christians today, used to a gospel of wealth and unfamiliar with a gospel of ecojustice, would be hard pressed to articulate how and why our faith leads us to work for justice. This problem stems from the reality that in the church, those who are in power have been the ones writing the history. Fortunately, other voices in scripture and in tradition, have refused to be silenced.

Our job is to help uncover these biblical, theological, and ethical



voices that urge us as Christians to work for justice—for the earth, all people, and creatures. It is our calling to live in hope, to preach good news, and to extend love to all while also preaching sustainable personal lifestyle changes and corporate accountability. We are finding ways to challenge ourselves and the world with this eco-justice gospel, confident that our faith impels us to work for justice and to struggle for sustainable conditions for all on earth.

Inspired by this gospel message, Christians across the nation are working for ecojustice. A few examples of the ways we witness this good news springing up in Christian churches across the country include:

- teaching Bible studies on ecojustice, simple living and lifestyle changes;
- worshipping around a theme of caring for God's creation;
- planning outdoor activities and service projects such as local stream clean-ups or collecting electronic waste for recycling;
- demanding environmental protection for migrant farmworkers;
- showing popular global warming movies and seeking to influence public policy on global warming;
- landscaping church grounds with native plants, rain water gardens, beneficial insect gardens, vegetable gardens (with produce going to local food banks), compost bins;
- designing buildings with green roofs and solar panels; and
- conducting environmental and energy audits and committing to the proposed changes.

In pews, pulpits, and public politics a new gospel is being preached and heeded in Christian churches across America. We hope and pray that this good news spreads as far and wide as did the message that began Christianity, and that indeed we can be a part of justice rising around the world.

Cassandra Carmichael is the Director, EcoJustice Programs for the National Council of Churches.

Rebecca Barnes-Davies is Coordinator of Presbyterians Restoring Creation

Ecojustice—ecological health and wholeness together with social and economic justice—is intrinsically a part of Christian scriptures, theology, and practice.



Toward An Ecumenical Movement for Democratic Trade that Protects Communities and Nature

by Nancy Price

Since the "Battle in Seattle," the impact of "free trade" on jobs and wages in the U. S. is more commonly recognized and experienced. The general public, however, still has little understanding, of just how undemocratic, even, perhaps, unconstitutional, trade agreements are when multinational corporations can sue over laws that protect communities, public health, labor and the environment in order to promote corporate profits and investor rights. Is it possible, however, that the reality of global warming could be a catalyst that will bring people of many different political and religious ideologies together against "free trade"?

While scientists amass and analyze evidence for the causes and threats of global warming, people everywhere observe and experience real impacts. Arctic and Pacific Island communities have to abandon villages to thawing ice and rising seas. Subtle changes with cumulative impacts finally become apparent, such as earlier springtimes and migrations. Every example drives home the connection between people and nature and how we must break the strangle-hold corporate leaders and business groups have on national policy and politics.

Understanding the connection between people and nature was fundamental to the environmental movement of the 1960s and '70s. By the 1980s, however, James Watt and Ronald Reagan began to demonize environmentalists arguing that laws to protect people's health and the environment; federal public lands from private logging and mining; and endangered species from development were anti-American, anti-capitalist and anti-jobs. Environmentalists were labeled as liberals in contrast to conservatives who believed in no regulation, free markets and small government. As the evangelical community engaged with the conservative political movement, if you were for the environment you were against God.

Now, though, as Bill Moyers' show, *Is God Green?*, reports, "a new holy war is growing within the conservative evangelical community, with implications for both the global environment and American politics. For years liberal Christians and others have made protection of the environment a moral commitment. Now a number of conservative evangelicals are joining the fight, arguing that man's stewardship of the planet is a biblical imperative and calling for action to stop global warming." Today, then, we are witness to an emergent ecumenical



photo: ReligiousWitness.org

menical movement based on a concept of stewardship as many churches address global warming and its impact on people and the environment each from a different theological basis.

In this changing political reality, states are asserting their rights in the face of federal inaction on global warming. States recently highlighted this case by arguing before the Supreme Court that the Federal Environmental Protection Agency can regulate CO₂ emissions under the Clean Air Act. This action reveals the crisis in jurisdiction between the federal government's inaction due to corporate influence, on the one hand, and state governments that are responsive to public pressure, on the other hand.

Such a crisis is also fundamental to the free trade agreements that trump local, state and even national sovereignty over law-making and enforcement. How will CEOs of multinational corporations respond when communities, states and/or the federal government pass and/or enforce laws to curb global warming? How will religious principles of stewardship of the environment be enacted, if corporate profits and investor rights must be protected first? Could it be that many religious and political groups will come together in a broad ecumenical movement to take on corporate hegemony and rule and fight for democratic trade that respects the rights of communities and nature? If so, indeed, the implications for American politics will be profound.

Nancy Price is the Co-Chair of the Alliance for Democracy National Council and represents the AfD on the California Coalition for Fair Trade and Human Rights.

Conservative evangelicals are joining the fight, arguing that man's stewardship of the planet is a biblical imperative and calling for action to stop global warming.

"Is God Green?"

Last Fall, Bill Moyer's PBS special, *Is God Green?* sent shock waves through the Christian Faith. The promo for the show points out that:

"Is God Green?" explores how a serious split among conservative evangelicals over the environment and global warming could reshape American politics.

Check out this important program at www.pbs.org/moyers/moyersonamerica/green/index.html You can get the transcript at www.pbs.org/moyers/moyersonamerica/print/isgodgreen_transcript_print.htm



Thomas Berry & Rights for Nature

Human rights do not cancel out the rights of other modes of being to exist in their natural state.

Legal rights for nature are entwined with Thomas Berry's vision of a mutually enhancing Earth Community. A Catholic monk and cultural historian (he calls himself a "geologian" rather than a theologian), Berry lists ten basic precepts to explain why rights are not a human concept, but a universal reality for all of nature.

1. Rights originate where existence originates. That which determines existence determines rights.
2. Since it has no further context of existence in the phenomenal order, the universe is self-referent in its being and self-normative in its activities. It is also the primary referent in the being and activities of all derivative modes of being. (This means the Universe determines all aspects of existence.)
3. The universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects. As subjects, the component members of the universe are capable of having rights.
4. The natural world on the planet Earth gets its

rights from the same source that humans get their rights, from the universe that brought them into being.

5. Every component of the Earth community has three rights: the right to be, the right to habitat, and the right to fulfill its role in the ever-renewing processes of the Earth community.
6. All rights are species specific and limited. Rivers have river rights.

Dedication to *The Great Work*

To the children,
To all the children
To the children who swim beneath
The waves of the sea, to those who live in
The soils of the Earth, to the children of the flowers
In the meadows and the trees in the forest, to
All those children who roam over the land
And the winged ones who fly with the winds,
To the human children too, that all the children
May go together into the future in the full
Diversity of their regional communities.

—Thomas Berry

Birds have bird rights. Insects have insect rights. Differences in rights is qualitative, not quantitative. The rights of an insect would be of no value to a tree or a fish.

7. Human rights do not cancel out the rights of other modes of being to exist in their natural state. Human property rights are not absolute. Property rights are simply a special relationship between a particular human "owner" and a particular piece of "property" so that both might fulfill their roles in the great community of existence.
8. Since species exist only in the form of individuals, rights refer to individuals and to their natural groupings of individuals into flocks, herds, packs, not simply in a general way to species.
9. These rights as presented here are based upon the intrinsic relations that the various components of Earth have to each other. The planet Earth is a single community bound together with interdependent relationships. No living being nourishes itself. Each component of the Earth community is immediately or mediately dependent on every other member of the community for the nourishment and assistance it needs for its own survival. This mutual nourishment, which includes the predator-prey relationships, is integral with the role that each component of the Earth has within the comprehensive community of existence.
10. In a special manner humans have not only a need for but a right of access to the natural world to provide not only the physical need of humans but also the wonder needed by human intelligence, the beauty needed by human imagination, and the intimacy needed by human emotions for fulfillment.

To explore how these precepts would work within legal systems, Thomas Berry worked with lawyer Cormac Cullinan on his book *Wild Law*. Cullinan explains, "Fundamentally changing our governance systems will require more than reforming existing laws or making new ones. We need to take a long hard look, not only at our legal systems, but, more importantly, at the legal philosophies that underlie them. Only by creating a vision of an 'Earth Jurisprudence' will we be able to begin a comprehensive transformation of our governance system."

Thomas Berry's books include *Dream of the Earth*, *The Universe Story* (co-authored with cosmologist Brian Swimme) and *The Great Work*. Cormac Cullinan's book, *Wild Law*, is available in the US at www.100fires.com

Jan Edwards is the creator of the "Tapestry of the Commons" which is online at www.TheAllianceForDemocracy.org. She is a member of the Redwood Coast Chapter of the AfD.

Justice Rising

Grassroots Solutions to Corporate Domination



Vol I #1, 2005 Creating Honest Elections

The Problem, the People, the Solutions.

Including articles by David Cobb on The New Voting Rights Movement; Paul Lehto on Voting Machine Companies; and Following the Money by the Center for Responsive Politics

Vol I #2, 2005 Information and Democracy Corporate Control and the Rise of Popular Media

Peter Phillips on media interlocks with corporate America. Ross Gelbspan on the corporate generated culture of denial. A history of grassroots media reform by Dee Dee Halleck.



Vol I #3, 2005 The Next Millennium: Global Corporate Empire or Popular Governance?

Herman Daly, David Edeli outline business as a system of power. Roger Burbach, Dave Lewit and others explore what it will take to create popular governance



Vol II #1, 2006 Reclaiming the Commons From the Jaws of Corporate Privatization

An issue on the popular movement to reclaim our Commons guided by Jan Edwards and illustrated by Peter Veres, Kjersten Jeppensen, Anthony Rees and John Chamberlain.



Vol II #2, 2006, Water for Life, Not Corporate Profit

Ruth Caplan and Nancy Price highlight the local, national and international movements to insure that water is available to everyone. They reveal: the PR scheme that led to the bottled water scam; the popular victory in Barnstead NH and a list of why you should care and what you can do.



Vol II #3, 2006 Corporate Origins of War and Grassroots Struggles for Peace

Mike Ferner on creating a movement to stop the corporate war machine. Ted Nace on war lobbyists, Jim Tarbell on the history of corporate driven foreign policy.



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Why You Should Care?

Concentrated corporate wealth ruins our politics and economics.

Laws have been passed ceding rights to capital and eroding or removing those for everyone else. Laws made labor a commodity, gave civil rights to corporations but not to workers, and abandoned job creation to the fickle whims of the market. Corporate monopoly unleashes a reign of terror on small business, unions and working families as "Always Low Prices" masks unspeakable destruction below the surface.

Market Fundamentalism has corrupted our economy.

Government no longer has the duty to allocate economic resources for the common good. Jobs providing social utility are sacrificed to create greater private profit. The market has no morals and imperial global capital rules with no morality.

"I Got Mine" economic and social policy is a zero-sum game.

As CEO pay and retirement packages skyrocket, average worker wage rates stagnate and pension plans are destroyed. Meanwhile, minimum wage rates keep workers in poverty instead of helping them out.

Global corporate policies are decimating regions of the world.

In the race to the bottom, corporate trade policies are eviscerating laws controlling capital. Nations are forced to lower their wages and environmental standards to stay alive. Jobs have no security, companies have no loyalty.



What You Can Do

Help establish community economic security. Join a group to insure that economic opportunity stays in your community by helping to localize the economy and insure that ownership and control rests with local people. Help start cooperatives or worker-owned businesses.

Join a group to define a moral economy. Decide what is a moral good. Research the anti-elitist movements of biblical times to support the social gospel and economic and social justice inherent in a moral economy.

Join an interfaith activist group. Contact legislators about your moral concerns with the injustice of our economic system. Help stop the global corporate decimation of our planet by protesting unfair trade treaties.

Become involved in guaranteeing a living wage for all workers. All that is "lacking is hard work and a social vision to pay an adequate wage to every American." Educate yourself about the myths and history of wage laws, then educate others.