

connections

PRICELESS

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Dec 2010/Jan 2011

SAVE THE DATES

**DECEMBER 3 & 4
PEACEFUL HOLIDAY FAIRE
CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH (P 1)**

**DECEMBER 4
STARLIGHT NIGHT HOLIDAY
STROLL
STOCKTON (P 18)**

**DECEMBER 18
89.5 RADIO MEET
BLACKWATER CAFE, 9 AM
(P 7)**

Prescription for the post-election hangover

Darcy Burner

As you've no doubt noticed, election day was brutal for Congressional Democrats—especially in the House, where it appears we'll lose roughly 60 seats and the majority. Now that most of us have uncurled ourselves from fetal position, there are a few things to note as we plan for what we do next:

First, the brutality was not evenly spread. Progressives fared pretty well, while Blue Dogs and New Democrats bore the brunt of the losses.

The Congressional Progressive Caucus lost only three of their 76 House members: Reps. John Hall of New York, Phil Hare of Illinois, and Alan Grayson of Florida. By contrast, it looks as though the Blue Dog Coalition will lose 30 of its 55 members and the New Democrats will lose 27 of their 69 members. This will make progressives a much larger portion of the Democratic Caucus, with almost 40% of the Democrats in the House and roughly three times as many members as the remaining Blue Dogs.

It's clear that the economy—specifically unemployment—was the major factor. With the unemployment rate hovering just under 10% and no light at the end of the tunnel, neither the Administration nor Congressional Democrats managed to clearly describe their plan for putting Americans back to work. Republicans were even more incoherent, but they could run against the failure, arguing Democrats had run up deficits without creating jobs.

In addition, the turnout and voting patterns strongly suggest that a degree of demoralization among the Democratic base played a significant role in the outcomes.

Younger voters stayed home... not merely compared to 2008, but with a significant drop-off from 2006 numbers when the last Congressional midterm election was held. The same is true for blacks and Latinos. Women shifted sharply towards Republicans, from favoring Democrats by 14 points in 2008 to splitting evenly on Tuesday.

Suffice it to say for the moment that flagrantly throwing women, gays, organized labor, and Latinos under the bus, breaking campaign promises around which significant elements of your base have organized, abandoning the lofty rhetoric of the campaign to cut backroom deals with the people whose greed and bad faith created the messes we're in, and actively and repeatedly insulting the people who communicate most often with your key supporters is probably not the optimal strategy for resounding political success.

So what do progressives do now?

Without a governing majority in the House, it becomes far harder for progressives to act as a swing block to win key legislative concessions. Sufficient power has been centralized in House leadership at this point to allow them to keep legislation off the floor at will, to move or not move bills according to their priorities, and to control what's in any bill and what amendments are allowed to be offered. Since that House leadership will as of January be Republicans, there's a good chance they will only move the things they believe are Republican priorities and for which Republicans will vote as a cohesive bloc; progressive votes won't be needed.

Progressives have more tools at their disposal than just votes,

(continued on page 10)

24th annual

Peaceful Holiday Faire for meaningful gifts



Friday, December 3, 4-9 pm

Saturday, December 4, 10 am-2 pm

Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific, Stockton

The Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County will present its 24th annual Peaceful Holiday Faire on Friday and Saturday, December 3 and December 4. This is a warm and friendly holiday event designed to encourage thoughtful holiday gift giving that reflects positive values and that benefits people rather than corporations.

This alternative gift fair will have unique, nonviolent items for sale by local small businesses and nonprofit organizations. Vendors include local artists and craftspeople, artisans, local organizations, and international service organizations such as Concern. We'll be offering a variety of hand woven goods, artistic gems and jewelry, items for children/infants, and Celtic imports.

The Peaceful Holiday Faire is a joyous event—an opportunity to meet friends, partake of refreshments, listen to live music performances, and purchase gifts that are nonviolent and environmentally friendly. Please come and join us at Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. You may contact 462-3489 for more information or if you want to volunteer to help at the faire, call 943-0539.

Thoughtful gift-giving

Consider these questions before deciding on a gift:

- Does this gift reflect the values I want to share?
- Does this gift encourage conservation rather than consumption?
- Is this gift made of material that does not harm the environment?
- Does this gift stimulate spiritual, mental or physical growth?
- Who profits from my purchase of this gift?

The best gifts are:

- Appropriate for the person
- Especially thoughtful or sensitive to the person's needs
- Gifts of oneself

The worst gifts are:

- Oblivious to the person's real needs
- Reflective of negative values (violent, sexist, racist, etc.)
- Harmful to the environment
- Unsafe or socially irresponsible
- Pointlessly extravagant

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The more things change...

Bruce Giudici

Thirty years ago, when I first graduated college, we endured an election that was to change the course of history. It was a time when Iran had just been taken over by a misogynist religious fanatic faction, holding America hostage for 444 days—ensuring President Carter's demise, due to a backroom deal negotiated by Reagan's future CIA director Wild Bill Casey (who would mysteriously die of a brain tumor before he could tell his tale of deception). It was a time when 4 nuns murdered in El Salvador outraged the peace community, and when a nuclear freeze movement actually believed it could sway the military industrial complex. When Reagan funded the Contras using money raised selling missiles to avowed enemy Iran, Congress rose up and rendered the remainder of Reagan's tenure impotent. All the while, military funding went through the roof, taxes were cut and we were taught by the conservative Republicans that federal deficits didn't matter. When all was put to rest, the Reagan gang was pardoned by the successor Bush I and the legend of the great President Reagan began.

I remember that period as a remarkable time when local activist legends worked the area. Most recently departed from us are El Hoffman and Fran and Keith Taeger, friends, compatriots and moral leaders. Before that, we lost Reid Cerney, Mack Warner, and Bob Green—all veterans of the 60's movement for peace, workers rights and justice for all.

The early 80's were a time of

outrage for people concerned about justice. Locals like Christie Kelley, John Morearty, Paula and John Leveck, Laurie Litman, Dale Steele, Ellen Lyon, Barre Stadtner and others too numerous to mention rallied against the conflicts in Central America, as well as the military build up and environmental assault at home.

At that time, the economy was a mess—unemployment at 12%, interest rates at 20%, inflation at 10%. A huge recession had been created by the Federal Reserve Bank (headed by Paul Volcker, now advisor to Obama) in order to crush inflation created by the '73 and '79 oil crises and unfunded Vietnam military spending—and Americans, upset at Washington politics, swept in a sweet-talking older president who promised to make America proud again. Once in, the economy got worse, deficits rose and Democrats won big in the '82 mid-term elections. But, as the economy cycled back to normalcy, by '84, it was morning in America again and Reagan was re-elected in a landslide...sealing a future of a bigger military, a bigger deficit and increased economic control by the owners of it all—greed, indeed, was good.

Today, electorally, we have had—what stock brokers would call—a correction. Republicans have reclaimed seats they lost two years ago to an enthusiasm for Obama hope. Looking at a blood red map of the United States, it would seem that greed has once again taken over this country—and that hope has died. A people in despair will vote their fears—and this happened November 2. As through the

past 30 years, however, the victories of those interested only in personal gain can only be short in duration. For if the future is not with us who work for a peaceful and sustainable world order, there is no future.

So, flash: rhetoric from the "conservative" victors will be jarring throughout the next 2 years, as we are told to give the rich and powerful a larger share so that some may trickle down upon us, the poor and weak. This message will be mixed with guns, abortions and any other distractive argument, to ensure that, with every year, we become convinced that government is a problem that needs to be done away with—the argument Reagan made 30 years ago.

In California, though, we overcame this message of greed and elected some progressive voices. Sure, Prop 19 failed, but it did pretty well—and big oil lost Prop 23. Anything resembling a tax hike lost—but in this economy, that's to be expected. Kumbaya will have to wait. For now, we have locals we can work with—and some know-how on how to move forward. Some suggestions:

Maybe now, with the Tea Party people anointed by the media as all-powerful, perhaps we can generate some interest in Instant Runoff Voting (the ranked voting process used in San Francisco)—pretty much the best shot for progressives/third parties to win local elections. With cries for decreased Federal spending, now's the time to cut military waste like Star Wars, the Bradley Fighting Machine and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. And, if there



Bruce Giudici, editor



is a push to cut Social Security spending, maybe we can cut the tax rate paid by lower-income workers, while removing the income limit on those with higher incomes. In California, now we have a governor who can sign a single payer health care bill that will save us money while increasing coverage to all. And, with everyone covered, those waiting to turn 62 for Medicare can now retire, opening up jobs for younger folks just starting out. A state the size of California has the resources to marshal, given an experienced hand—and now we have such experience. With the funding crisis still at hand, and all options on the table, the dependence on sales and income taxes may be cut—if Prop 13 can be creatively and progressively modified to provide a more stable funding model for the state. And locally, the City Council and school board lineups look promising. With the passage of Measure H, the logjam of public safety spending has been broken—so we can keep public libraries open and community services alive, making better citizens of us all.

The past 30 years have been tough—we learn and grow from those experiences. From this election, I believe progressives have come out stronger—our voice is clear and focused. Life is a struggle—we live to fight on.

Have wonderful holidays.

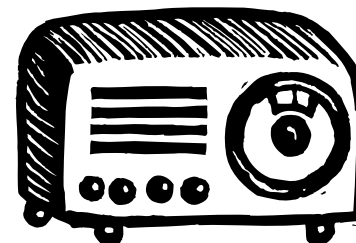
89.5 Valley Community Radio update

Radio meetings continue into the winter. The third Saturday of the next three months (Nov 20, Dec 18, Jan 15), we'll be getting together at the Blackwater Cafe at 9 am. And for those who find evenings more convenient, the Peace & Justice Center will be the venue at 7 pm on the following Tuesday evenings: Dec. 7, Jan 11, and Feb 8.

Moving forward, we will be discussing community development (meeting with local musicians, reaching out to the art and dance communities, discussing programming with the diverse voices that makes Stockton special) and various structural issues. Two existing positions on the RadioHead committee have been taken (Chair

Christie Kelley and Fundraising Tony Kiser), but a few others need attention, including technical, publicity/outreach, volunteer coordinator, social networker, and programming. The need for a locally produced, non-commercial radio presence is now - more than ever.

Consider making good use of your 2011 new year's resolution



and make this radio station your own. See you at the next meeting.

Connections

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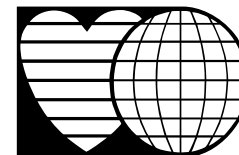
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Community Calendar: vacant

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*"The Peace and Justice
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committed to the vision of a
world in which the equality
of all persons is achieved,
basic needs are met, conflict
is resolved nonviolently, and
the earth's resources are shared
responsibly for the well-being
of all her inhabitants and all
future generations."*

Understanding the urgency of climate change

Why releasing carbon into the air is like filling a water balloon

Many circumstances require immediate action: consider a full bladder or a red traffic light. We usually address such circumstances without delay, because the consequences of inaction—physical discomfort or legal troubles—are clear.

When it comes to climate change, the urgency of the problem may not seem so obvious, since it doesn't sound an alarm or poke us in the eye. The consequences appear to be far away. And we find it hard to comprehend the significant risks posed by global warming, such as the rapid accumulation of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere or the impending rise in sea levels, because we can't, at the moment, see them with the naked eye. Yet if we fail to reduce heat-trapping emissions, we will cross a threshold, and the changes in our world will be irreversible.

Releasing carbon into the atmosphere is sort of like filling a water balloon from an outdoor faucet. If the water is merely trickling in, you can easily remove the balloon from the spout and have room to tie the knot. But if the spigot is gushing and the balloon is swollen with water, you have to act quickly and forcefully to remove it before it bursts.

Human activities, such as burning coal and oil in power plants and cars, have poured excessive amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and the natural world just can't absorb it all. Like the swollen water balloon, the atmosphere is overloaded. The problem with adding more carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide gases to Earth's atmosphere is that they trap heat, causing global temperatures to rise. Even a rise of a degree or two makes a difference in many aspects of the world that people care about. Back in 1960, about 40 percent of a metric ton of emitted CO₂ would remain in the atmosphere. Now that has risen to 45 percent. This means that a ton of CO₂ emissions today traps more heat than it would have fifty years ago.

The evidence that global warming

is happening now and that human activities are the primary cause is overwhelming. Indeed, recent research indicates that Earth's climate is changing more quickly than scientists had projected just a few years ago. Last week NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that 2010 has been the warmest year worldwide so far recorded.

At the request of Congress, the National Academy of Sciences released on May 19, 2010 a series of reports that emphasized the urgency of climate change and why the U.S. should act now to reduce emissions of heat-trapping gases. One central point was this: "The longer the nation waits to begin reducing emissions, the harder and more expensive it will likely be to reach any given emissions target."

The panel of scientists at the National Academies determined that we need to go on a carbon budget, recommending that the United States restrict its carbon emissions to a total of 170 to 200 billion tons of global warming gases from 2012 to 2050. That would represent an 80 percent reduction in carbon emissions compared to current projections. In 2008 alone, the U.S. released 7 billion tons of greenhouse gases. If we maintain business as usual,

we'll blow our budget in no time.

For more than 30 years, scientists have presented their research about climate change and possible solutions to U.S. policymakers, but little action has been taken to reduce carbon-emitting activities. If we continue along the high emissions path, projections show that we risk locking in a rise of 3.6 to 9.9 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100. The upper end of that range is considered catastrophic.

Around the world, informed citizens, motivated by an understanding of the science of climate change, are speaking up for urgent action. Cities, countries, and regions are working to limit the magnitude of climate change by lowering carbon dioxide emissions as well as to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of future climate change.

Climate change carries serious consequences both for humans and for ecosystems. This is a crisis that will affect our food, our national security, our water, our ability to live where we choose, and other basic human needs. Whether and how we address global warming is not a question of science, it's a question of values.

Source: Union of Concerned Scientists, http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/science/understanding-urgency-climate-change.html

Climate change is a crisis that will affect our food, our national security, our water, our ability to live where we choose, and other basic human needs. Whether and how we address global warming is not a question of science, it's a question of values.

10:10* Diary for November

Laurie Litman

As we head into winter there are some new challenges to the carbon-saving lifestyle we're trying to invent. Cold and wet makes it a little harder to save energy. And, yes, we still turn on the heat. Our compromise so far is to use the heater only when needed rather than set the house at a constant temperature. The big shift is that we stop and consider the alternatives before using energy. Often, we find that an extra layer does just as well and we can put off heating the house for a while longer.

The clothes rack continues to function just fine in cooler weather, but it takes longer to dry a load of laundry. Thinking ahead is a new skill I'm trying to develop.

And so far it hasn't been cold enough to keep us from bike riding. That extra layer works here too. After a few minutes of biking it feels good to lose the jacket.

Besides the change in weather, this month was dominated by the midterm elections. I'm having a hard time forgiving the Democrats who did nothing when they had the opportunity to make a big difference in the direction of the country. This applies not

only to climate change but also to the economy, the multiple wars we're fighting, food safety, human rights...you name it, they didn't even try to fix it. I certainly understand the anger that threw Democrats out of office. I'm still going through my stages of grief as I accept that "hope and change" was simply a ploy for votes.

Unfortunately, the alternatives are worse and we're in for a difficult couple of years. Darrel Issa, the incoming Republican chair of the Oversight Committee, has promised to hold hearings on the "fraud" of climate change.

But, while mourning lost opportunities—and perhaps the last chance to turn things around on the climate change front—I'm getting together with a group of people who met during the 10-10-10 actions to decide on our next steps. As Mother Jones famously said, "Don't mourn...organize."

The next issue will be the final one for this year-long diary. It will be an opportunity to analyze and review the accomplishments we've made, what we've learned, and possible next steps. If you have been working on cutting your carbon emissions this year, please share what you've learned as well.



Climate change will impact whole ecosystems, threatening a large number of species on earth with extinction.

*Campaign to cut 10% of carbon in 2010— see <http://www.1010global.org/>



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Climate 2030: A national blueprint for a clean energy economy



The climate will not wait for us. Recent studies have shown that the measured impacts—such as rising sea levels and shrinking summer sea ice in the Arctic—are occurring more quickly, and often more intensely, than Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projections.

The most expensive thing we can do is nothing. One study estimates that if climate trends continue, the total cost of global warming in the United States could be as high as 3.6 percent of GDP by 2100.

The Climate 2030 Blueprint demonstrates that we can choose to cut our carbon emissions while maintaining robust economic growth and achieving significant energy-related savings.

While the Blueprint policies are not the only path forward, a near-term, comprehensive suite of climate, energy, and transportation policies is essential if we are to curb global warming in an economically sound fashion. These near-term policies are also only the beginning of the journey toward achieving a clean energy economy. The nation can and must expand these and other policies beyond 2030 to ensure that we meet the mid-century reductions in emissions that scientists deem necessary to avoid the worst consequences of global warming.

Smart Policies

Reducing oil dependence. Strengthening energy security. Creating jobs. Tackling global warming. Addressing air pollution. Improving our health. The United States has many reasons to make the transition to a clean energy economy. What we need is a comprehensive set of smart policies to jump-start this transition without delay and maximize the benefits to our environment and economy. *Climate 2030: A National Blueprint for a Clean Energy Economy* ("the Blueprint") answers that need.

To help avoid the most dangerous consequences of climate change, ranging from extreme heat, droughts, and storms to acidifying oceans and rising sea levels, the United States must play a lead role and begin to cut its heat-trapping emissions today—and aim for

at least an 80 percent drop from 2005 levels by 2050. Blueprint policies lower U.S. heat-trapping emissions to meet a cap set at 26 percent below 2005 levels in 2020, and 56 percent below 2005 levels in 2030.

The nation achieves these deep cuts in carbon emissions while saving consumers and businesses \$464 billion annually by 2030. The Blueprint also builds \$1.7 trillion in net cumulative savings between 2010 and 2030. Blueprint policies stimulate significant consumer, business, and government investment in new technologies and measures by 2030. The resulting savings on energy bills from reductions in electricity and fuel use more than offset the

costs of these additional investments. The result is net annual savings for households, vehicle owners, businesses, and industries of \$255 billion by 2030.

Under the Blueprint, every region of the country stands to save billions. Households and businesses—even in coal-dependent regions—will share in these savings.

Download the *Climate 2030 Blueprint* at http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/big_picture_solutions/climate-2030-blueprint.html.

Union of Concerned Scientists

Post-election 2010: Next steps for the climate

On election night an unprecedented number of climate contrarians were swept into office.

Moving forward, UCS will continue to expose polluting industries such as big oil, coal, and electric, and their cronies who knowingly mislead the public about climate science. And we're going to challenge them to get their facts straight.

Because when it comes right down to it, the public's confidence in science and scientists remains high. In fact, on election night in California we saw a tangible example of science trumping industry spin, when voters thwarted an aggressive attempt by out-of-state oil companies to kill the state's landmark Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32).

As the victory in California reminds us, there are plenty of other ways to effect change on these issues. In the coming months, UCS will:

- Defend the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to reduce power plant, transportation, industrial, and agricultural global warming emissions;
- Push state utility commissions to shut down the oldest and dirtiest coal power plants;
- Pressure the administration to further boost fuel economy for cars and trucks and decrease tailpipe pollution, and cut our nation's projected oil use in half by 2030;
- Advocate for strong, science-based state and regional climate programs that can reduce heat-trapping emissions at the local level; and
- Bring agricultural experts and scientists together with government officials to build support for scientifically sound, forward-thinking farming practices that can improve our air, water, and climate.

—Union of Concerned Scientists, <http://www.ucsusa.org/>

That election...was actually a split decision

Charles Kaiser

It could have been worse—a great deal worse. Election night was difficult for the Democratic party, but with an unemployment rate stubbornly stuck above nine percent, the loss of the House of Representatives had been a foregone conclusion for some time. And while it is true the Republicans won six more House seats in 2010 than they did in the genuine blow-out of 1994, this time they failed to capture the Senate, despite a stream of stories suggesting that unlimited campaign spending by American corporations would put the Grand Old Party over the top in both houses of Congress.

Especially on the two coasts (where Fox news may be somewhat less influential), it was a terrible night for right-wing women millionaires—and Democratic Senate candidates won by huge margins. In Connecticut, former wrestling magnate Linda McMahon spent \$50 million of her own money and still lost by twelve points to Democrat Richard Blumenthal in the Senate Race. In California, Carly Fiorina spent \$5 million from her own pocket and got walloped 51.9 to 42.6 percent by veteran Democrat Barbara Boxer—and Meg Whitman spent a staggering \$140 million so that she could be humiliated by Jerry Brown in the Governor's race. In another piece of good news, David Cicilline, the mayor of Providence, R.I., will become the fourth openly gay member of the House of Representatives, joining Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, Barney Frank of Massachusetts, and Jared Polis of Colorado in the 112th Congress.

This year was supposed to be all about the energy generated by the Tea Party, but that movement's most important contribution to the election was to guarantee the Democrats control of the Senate, by nominating Sharron Angle in Nevada and Christine O'Donnell in Delaware. O'Donnell was crushed 56 to 40 percent by Christopher Coons, while Harry Reid beat back Angle by almost 6 percentage points. Senate Democratic candidates also prevailed narrowly in Colorado and Washington, and by ten points in West Virginia.

Despite the very best efforts of Roger Ailes and his minions, millions of Americans still won't elect lunatics to the Upper House.

Obama to the right?

But the split decision that was this year's election did not fit the narrative the Beltway boys and girls had been pushing for three months. All they could wonder about on Wednesday was why Obama wasn't abandoning all of his policies in response to what Washington reporters thought could only be seen as a rejection of everything he has accomplished in his first two years in office.

The president actually gave an extremely reasonable, and characteristically intelligent performance at his press conference the day after the election. While acknowledging a "shellacking," he correctly attributed the results to the deep frustration of voters "with the pace of our economic recovery and the opportunities that they hope for, for their children and their grandchildren. They want jobs to come back faster, they want paychecks to go further, and they want the ability to give their children the same chances and opportunities as they've had in life."

The president added, "I do believe there is hope for civility. I do believe there's hope for progress. And that's because I believe in the resiliency of a nation that's bounced back from much worse than what we're going through right now."

And when Fox's Mike Emanuel pointed out that exit polls showed that one in two voters favor a repeal of health care reform, Obama quite sensibly pointed out: "It also means one out of two voters think it was the right thing to do."

Media upset

Naturally these sentiments were judged wholly inadequate by a furious White House press corps. NBC's Savannah Guthrie, another TV reporter whose attractiveness is perfectly matched by her shallowness, told the president, "You don't seem to be reflecting or second-guessing any of the policy decisions you've made,

instead saying the message the voters were sending was about the frustration with the economy or maybe even chalking it up to a failure on your part to communicate effectively. If you're not reflecting on your policy agenda, is it possible voters can conclude you're still not getting it?"

On *Washington Week in Review*, Gwen Ifill declared that there were just two possible interpretations of the president's performance at his press conference, "and neither of them are flattering to the president. He's in the rock and the hard place. Which is, one is, he didn't really hear what the people really said, and the other is, he just is kind of stubborn. There's not a good interpretation of his reaction at least his initial reaction to this drubbing."

That statement was nearly as dumb as the one she made at the top of her show: "What happened on Tuesday," Ifill declared, "was a wave so forceful that even political tsunami warnings didn't prepare Democrats for what it would actually feel like." That was so far from the truth that even one of Ifill's own panelists, Karen Tumulty of *The Washington Post*, felt compelled to correct her:

"I got the sense from calling around to Democratic leaders that they weren't quite as shell-shocked as they were after the 1994 election," Tumulty said. "They did see this one coming. But also, unlike a lot of these big wave elections, in this case the Democrats did pull it out for some very high-profile governor races and very high-profile senate races."

The same night, over on NBC's *Nightly News*, Tom Brokaw managed to sound as out-of-it as he looked, pompously forecasting "a 21st century version of a Shakespearian drama" because of the newly divided government.

The former \$10-million-a-year man castigated Obama for calling families that make \$250,000 a year "rich" (\$1 million should be the cut-off, according to Brokaw). He also said "influential Democrats" believe that the president should



shake up his cabinet, go outside of his Chicago circle, and "move to the center."

Move to the center, of course, is Washington talk for returning to the extreme right positions which prevailed during the previous administration. The truth is, Obama has never been anywhere except the center, accepting countless compromises to get a health care plan passed (including his abandonment of the public option) as well dozens of changes on the way to signing the first serious financial reform act since the depression.

What this election really proved is that America remains split right

down the middle, and victory always goes to the side that manages the best turnout among its supporters. In 2008, that was the Democrats; in 2010, it was the Republicans. If the economy finally manages a robust recovery by 2012, Obama will be re-elected by a wide margin. If it doesn't, he will almost certainly be defeated.

Just one thing is certain: just about everything you've heard on television during the last four days will have no relevance to the ultimate success or failure of his administration.

Source: *The Sidney Hillman Foundation* 11/6/10, <http://www.hillmanfoundation.org>

Contact Your Reps

Pres. Barack H. Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington DC 20500. 202-456-1414; www.whitehouse.gov

Sen. Barbara Boxer, 1700 Montgomery St, Ste 240, San Francisco, CA 94111. 415-403-0100; 112 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3553, senator@boxer.senate.gov

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, One Post Street, Ste 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104. 415-249-0707; 331 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3841, senator@feinstein.senate.gov

Rep. Jerry McNerney (D-11th District) 2222 Grand Canal Blvd #7, Stockton, CA 95207. 209-476-8552. Fax 209-476-8587. 312 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington DC 20515; info@jerrymcnerney.org, 925-833-0643, <http://www.JerryMcNerney.org>

Rep. Dennis Cardoza (D-District 18) 137 E. Weber Ave, Stockton, CA 95203. 209-946-0361, 503 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-6131.

Rep. Dan Lungren (R-District 3), 2262 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515. 202-225-5716. Local office: 2334 Gold Meadow Way, Ste 220, Gold River, CA 95670. 916-859-9906.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, 2201 C St, NW Washington, DC 20520

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2841

State Sen. Lois Wolk (District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7930; State Capitol, Rm 4032, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-651-4005

Assemblyperson Kathleen Galgiani (District 17), 31 E. Channel St., Rm. 306, Stockton CA 95202, 209-948-7479

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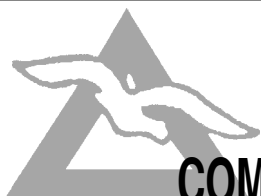
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Nonprofits hide ad fund sources

Anne Lowe

Political ads run by candidates for insurance commissioner illustrate perfectly a point the *Los Angeles Times* made in an editorial: determining whose contributions have funded the ads can be difficult—and sometimes impossible—to accomplish.

A political action committee formed by the California Chamber of Commerce spent more than \$3.8 million in recent weeks to defeat the Democratic candidate for insurance commissioner, Assemblyman Dave Jones of Sacramento. Almost three-fourths of the PAC's money for the final campaign push has come from the insurance companies that would be regulated by the winner of the race between Jones and Republican Assemblyman Mike Villines of Clovis. Meanwhile, political committees backed largely by trial lawyers spent at least \$420,000 on radio ads during the same period to support Jones and bash Villines.

Those statistics—gleaned from Cal-Access, the secretary of state's online database of campaign contributions—provide a revealing picture of how key interest groups view Jones and Villines, both of whom have pledged not to take

money directly from insurers. Regardless of how voters feel about the candidates' positions on the issues, it helps to know who's behind the race's independent electioneering. That information isn't always obvious to voters, though, because commercials and mailers don't necessarily have to identify the real source of their financing. For example, the anti-Jones ads say they were paid for by something called JobsPAC, but do not reveal that most of the funding for JobsPAC came from insurers.

Such details can be extracted from Cal-Access because the insurance commissioner's race is governed by state election rules, not federal ones. Under the Federal Election Commission's rules, the insurers, trial lawyers and unions could have funneled their contributions through a nonprofit that's not required to reveal its donors, such as Revere America on the right or Women's Voices Women Vote Action Fund on the left. Up to \$110 million in anonymous cash has been spent by these groups in 168 congressional races this year, according to the Sunlight Foundation. In addition, nonprofits registered under Section 527 of the tax code don't have to disclose donations that

arrive late in federal campaigns until after the election.

California law has its own loopholes. For example, groups that independently run "issue ads"—commercials that praise or lambaste a candidate without explicitly telling people which way to vote—more than 45 days before an election don't have to reveal anything about their funding. That's why there was not only no disclosure of where the California Chamber of Commerce got the money it spent on an ad campaign praising Villines in September, but no report to Cal-Access by the chamber that it had spent anything at all.

Because the Supreme Court has allowed companies, unions and advocacy groups to pour so much money into campaigns, it's vital that voters be told which interests are trying to influence them. That's why the FEC should require nonprofits to reveal their major donors, and why the state should require campaign ads to include not just who's paying for them but where they got the bulk of their money.

*Source: CalAware Today 11/5/10
http://calaware.typepad.com/calaware_today/public_information*

Why the Deficit Commission won't touch the banks

Dean Baker

The deficit report put out by the commission's co-chairs, Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles, had one striking omission. It does not include plans for a Wall Street speculation tax or any other tax on the financial industry.

This omission is striking because the co-chairs made a big point of saying that they looked everywhere to save money and/or raise revenue. As Senator Simpson said: "We have harpooned every whale in the ocean—and some minnows." Wall Street is one whale that appears to have dodged the harpoon.

This omission is made more striking by the fact that at least one

member of the commission, Andy Stern, has long been an advocate of such taxes. Presumably he raised this issue in the commission meetings and the co-chairs chose to ignore him.

The co-chairs apparently also chose to ignore the I.M.F.. Noting the waste and extraordinary economic rents in the sector, the I.M.F. has explicitly recommended a substantial increase in taxes on the financial industry. It is even more striking that the co-chairs apparently never considered a speculation tax since Wall Street's reckless greed is at the center of the current economic crisis.

In this context, it is worth noting that one of the co-chairs,

Erskine Bowles, is literally on Wall Street's payroll. He earned \$335,000 last year for his role as a member of Morgan Stanley's (one of the bailed out banks) board of directors. Morgan Stanley would likely see a large hit to its profits from a financial speculation tax.

It would have been appropriate for the reporters covering the report to ask about a financial speculation tax. It would also be appropriate to explore the connection between Mr. Bowles' role as a Morgan Stanley director and the absence of any financial taxes in this far-reaching report.

Source: CEPR—Center for Economic and Policy Research release, <http://www.cepr.net> 11/11/10

Ratify START now

Joe Volk

What does the outcome of the midterm election mean for peace work on Capitol Hill?

We need to look at that question in two timelines, first, the lame duck session of the 111th Congress and, second, the convening of the 112th Congress in January.

Lame Duck—111th Congress

The midterm elections, for the most part, do not change the seats in the lame duck session of the 111th Congress. We have to work with the same House until the new Congress is installed in January 2011. Most senators will remain the same, although the newly elected senators from West Virginia, Delaware, Illinois, and (possibly) Colorado will be seated during the lame duck session because they were elected to replace mid-term appointments.

The 111th Congress will reconvene on November 15th. They will stay for about five days and, then, recess for Thanksgiving. They will return November 29th for five days or until Christmas Eve. No one knows for sure.

Everyone knows that the 111th Congress must pass a spending bill, either an omnibus appropriations bill to "write checks" for fiscal year 2011 spending or a continuing resolution, a CR (to temporarily continue spending at current levels until the new Congress convenes).

FCNL is focused on two priorities for the lame duck session of the 111th Congress, one on the House side and one on the Senate side. Let's take the Senate first.

Lame Duck Senate

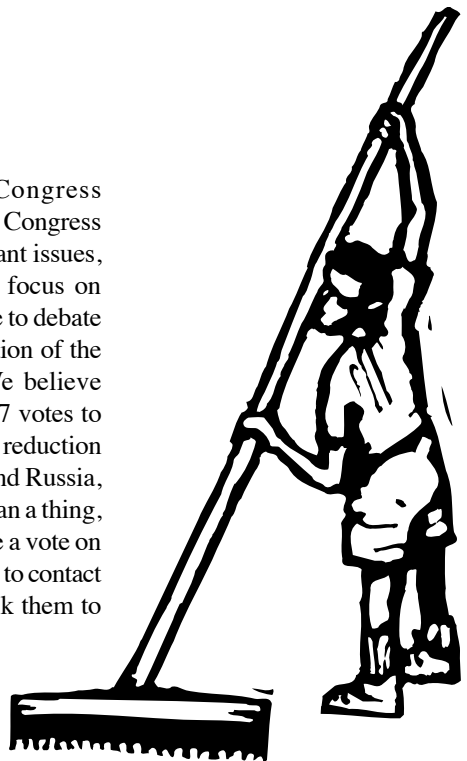
Before the 111th Congress adjourns, FCNL wants Congress to act on several important issues, but, here, I'm going to focus on two. We want the Senate to debate and vote on the ratification of the New START treaty. We believe that we now have the 67 votes to ratify that nuclear arms reduction deal between the U.S. and Russia, but those votes don't mean a thing, if the Senate doesn't take a vote on ratification. We need you to contact your senators now to ask them to do two things:

1. Ask your Senators to demand that their leadership provide time on the Senate floor for a debate and vote on New START, *before* the adjournment of the 111th Congress, and
2. appeal to your Senators to vote to ratify the New START treaty.

Lame Duck House

Before the 111th Congress adjourns, we want every member of the House of Representatives to join Representative Barbara Lee (CA) in calling for the repeal of the September 2001 Authorization of the Use of Military Force (AUMF).

The AUMF brought you the 2001 U.S. military invasion of Afghanistan and the quagmire there today; it brought you the 2003 U.S. military invasion of Iraq and the seven years of war there (it's not over yet); it created the conditions for U.S. sponsored torture, the emblem of which is Abu Ghraid, the indefinite detention of so-called enemy combatants, the creation of virtue "law free zones"



like Guantanamo, running of more than a trillion dollar deficit for war and for spying, and established what Defense Secretary Rumsfeld called "the endless war."

Repealing the September 2001 AUMF is a step away from that endless war. Rep. Barbara Lee is leading the way. You can help her by getting your representative to join as a cosponsor.

Convening of the 112th Congress

The new Congress will convene in January. The Democrats have retained its majority in the Senate, but they now have a smaller, very narrow majority, including a couple of Independent senators. The Republicans have taken back the majority in the House, and they have a very large majority there.

We can be sure of two things which will affect the 112th Congress. First, the House Republicans will have begun already to plan how they will organize the House committees and operations when they assume the majority leadership in January. Second, both major parties will be in 2012 presidential election campaign mode starting today. A question is whether Congress will also be in a governing mode? Will they seek to govern by solving vexing national and international problems? Or will they seek to use problems to advance their electoral strategies? Or can they do both at the same time?

Source: FCNL Staff Blog 11/3/10 <http://fcnl.wordpress.com>

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Bold new approach to foreclosure

The current approach to the foreclosure crisis is not working. We can no longer rely on the good intentions of the financial institutions that caused the crisis to revive the economy. Monthly foreclosure sales have now passed 100,000 per month for the first time in American history, while permanent loan modifications have fallen below 28,000. The Administration needs to adopt a new approach to foreclosure that unequivocally puts the needs of American families and communities ahead of the short-term bonus-maximizing interests of big bank executives.

As networks of hundreds of faith and community-based organizations representing more than three million families, we see first-hand how the flood of foreclosures is driving down property values and prolonging hard times for families. Long-term unemployment is higher than at any time in our lives and the housing markets in the communities in which we work remain in turmoil. More than five million families, including tens of thousands of our members, will receive a foreclosure notice this year. Bank repossessions are devastating for our children and families and impose enormous spillover costs on the entire economy.

We now have ample evidence that it is possible to prevent large numbers of foreclosures through well-constructed loan modifications. Nine-out-of-ten families who have made it through the gauntlet of servicer incompetency and disinterest to obtain a permanent modification through HAMP have been able to stay current on their loans. Not every foreclosure can or should be avoided, but we should not allow foot-dragging by financial institutions and poor program design stand in the way of stopping entirely preventable foreclosures. Flooding the housing market with unnecessary foreclosures is an economic failure that further destabilizes the housing market and impedes job growth; it is a moral failure that causes avoidable suffering; and it is a political failure that contributes to cynicism about government. Many of our members have looked at the handling of the foreclosure issue and concluded

that the Administration is more concerned about bailing out big Wall Street banks than protecting ordinary American families.

The recommendations in this memo are based on a series of eight Community Hearings that PICO and National People's Action and other organizations held with the U.S. Treasury about the Administration's foreclosure prevention efforts, many meetings with Treasury and HUD officials and thousands of conversations with families facing foreclosure, faith leaders and housing counselors. We add our voices to a growing chorus calling for a new approach. With active investigations underway by Attorney Generals across the U.S., legal action by investors and growing public anger over foreclosure fraud, this issue is not going away and will continue to drag down the housing market and the economy if we do not get ahead of it. We know that it is possible to extend sustainable loan modifications to millions of American families, now we need the will to make this happen.

We urge the Administration to take the following steps to prevent unnecessary foreclosures and stabilize the housing market:

1. Institute a temporary freeze on foreclosures of owner-occupied homes until a thorough investigation can be conducted into the foreclosure process, both the document scandal and the systematic failure to follow HAMP guidelines.

A temporary freeze on foreclosure actions against owner-occupied homeowners (not vacant property) is essential to stabilizing the housing market while we put in place a new more successful approach to the preventing a larger volume of foreclosures. More and more local and state officials and non-profits are pressing for an industry-wide foreclosure freeze in response to revelations of widespread fraud by the nation's largest financial institutions. A number of banks have agreed to partial foreclosure moratoriums. The big banks have

tried to diminish fraud accusations, but support for a foreclosure moratorium is growing because ordinary people and economists understand that flooding the housing market with illegal foreclosures hurts everyone's property values and unfairly denies people an opportunity to save their homes from foreclosure. We need a temporary nationwide freeze, not just on final foreclosure sales, but on all foreclosure actions until the systems are put in place to assure that people are being given an opportunity to avoid foreclosure. The moratorium should not end until banks/servicers have provided permanent loan modifications to fifty percent of eligible owner-occupied homeowners.

We also believe that this is just the tip of the iceberg. The big banks got us into this crisis by cutting corners, and these new fraud revelations show that they are continuing to act in an unfair and reckless way that is prolonging the crisis. The State Attorney Generals have provided important national leadership in pressing investigations into wrongdoing, as they did in the years leading up to the financial crisis. The Treasury, HUD, Attorney General Holder and other federal agencies need to step forward with a stronger hand to investigate and prosecute executives who engaged in fraud. We need to hold banks accountable for criminal action.

2. Appoint a senior-level official who will lead the Administration's efforts to fix the housing crisis

There needs to be a senior level official with sufficient clout to champion the fight against foreclosure within the Administration, with the banks/servicers and publicly. Over the past year it has been difficult to understand who, at the highest levels in the Administration, is really fighting to make the Administration's efforts on housing work and to force servicers to follow through. At times the Administration has given mixed signals about its approach to the foreclosure issue. A single point of leadership on this issue would help build public support for the

(continued next page)

steps that people understand need to be taken to stabilize the housing market.

3. Reset the housing market by adopting an aggressive policy that promotes principal reduction for underwater homeowners

Make principal modification a mandatory element of HAMP: Under new HAMP rules requiring an alternative NPV test that includes principal reduction, banks should be required to do the principal reduction when alternative waterfall is NPV positive. Require Government-Sponsored Entities Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to undertake principal reductions. Currently the GSE's are refusing to support principal reduction, which makes it harder to make the case with non-GSE held mortgage loans. Increase capacity of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to make principal reduction by lowering their dividend repayment from 10% to the 5% level that banks had paid for their bailout funds. To make loan modifications more sustainable, change the back-end ratio from 63.3% to below 45%. Support common-sense changes to the bankruptcy code that would level the playing field for homeowners by allowing judicial loan modification

4. Hold servicers accountable for compliance with HAMP

Mandate participation and impose stiff financial penalties on those servicers that are not complying with HAMP, beginning with fines on Bank of America (under the Servicer Participation Agreement, penalties could include reduced servicer incentive payments).

Set clear and ambitious goals for the number of permanent loan modifications per quarter and for standards of customer service, for each financial institution participating in HAMP, and impose financial penalties on institutions that consistently fail to meet these goals.

Strictly enforce the rule that no foreclosure can go to sale until the HAMP review is completed—too many are slipping through.

Increase transparency and

accountability by:

- o Making the Net-Present Value calculation available to public.

- o If a borrower is denied a modification and NPV is given as reason, must include NPV inputs and outputs, in writing to the borrower and counselor.

- o If investor denial given as reason, must include name of investor and copy of PSA

Inputting the NPV factors for property deterioration and vandalism and for the time it takes to resell a foreclosed home on a neighborhood basis—instead of the metropolitan or statewide basis used currently—so that the hardest hit neighborhoods get the appropriate lower valuations. Make loan modifications more sustainable by 1) basing them not only on income but also on expenses by using a back end ratio of debts, plus medical expenses and 2) making loan terms for the life of the loan.

Establish a uniform process to be followed by all lenders and servicers in the process including a point person for each loan review

Auto-convert trial modifications to permanent modifications at end of three months.

Apply trial modification payments applied toward permanent modification.

Repayment for homeowners who pay their trial modifications but are not accepted into permanent modifications for legitimate reasons.

Under new HAMP rules requiring an alternative NPV test that includes principal reduction, banks should be required to do the principal reduction when alternative waterfall is NPV positive

Establish an independent appeals process with enforcement powers.

Release loan-level data that includes race and ethnicity data

5. Require banks to help the millions of homeowners who are unemployed and who are in danger of losing their homes

Financial institutions should be required to extend forbearance—without the accrual of interest—for the period of un- or under-

employment of up to 12 months, by amending HAMP UP so that it sets the forbearance period at 12 months rather than the current 3 months.

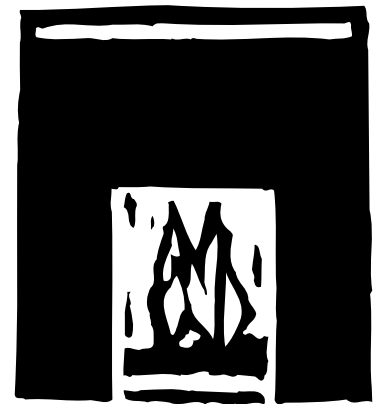
Increase funding to states under the Hardest Hit Fund, from unspent TARP funds that Treasury has for foreclosure prevention, so that more unemployed homeowners can get loans to prevent foreclosure.

Extend Hardest Hit Funds to all states since unnecessary foreclosures are taking place in all states. If the homeowner does not qualify for a modification, servicers, banks should be required to allow homeowners and tenants to rent foreclosed properties at market prices and remain in their homes until the expiration of the lease (if applicable) or until the home is sold to an owner-occupant, whichever is later. HUD must get the new program to help unemployed homeowners up and running as quickly as possible; ensure that people who

currently have forbearance can enter the new HUD program and/or Hardest-Hit Funding program; stop foreclosures on people waiting to qualify for the loan; and when reemployed, ensure that they can also access HAMP to restructure bad loans

We believe that, by taking the steps listed above, the Administration will send a clear signal that it cares about the fate of ordinary Americans and, in their defense, is willing to push hard on the banks that caused this crisis. Doing so will also send a clear message to the markets that the Administration is committed to getting to the root of what has been ailing the housing market and larger economy for three years now, rather than kick the can down the road once again.

Source: PICO National Network—People Improving Communities through Organizing release. tlilienthal@piconetwork.org PICO, 171 Santa Rosa Ave, Oakland, CA 94610 510-655-2801



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Post-election hangover (continued from page 1)

however. We're going to need to fully engage in order to try to keep bad things from happening, build progressive capacity, and set the stage for 2012 and beyond. A few suggestions that ought to keep us busy for the next two years:

Fully understand and use the levers of power of the system in which we're operating.

Rather than complaining about how unfairly the Republicans are doing things, we need to put the pieces in place that will help us build and win. Some examples of this are:

1. Fix funding mechanisms for progressive infrastructure.

As delightful as it is begging rich people for money all of the time, it's not a sustainable model—and it has some pretty serious drawbacks when income inequality is a big problem. Instead we need to focus on creating virtuous cycles where our success leads to increased capacity and reliable funding streams.

Strengthening organized labor is a key example of this: if labor can more readily organize workers, those newly-organized workers not only tend to have higher Democratic voting records, but labor then also has more capacity to fund progressive infrastructure. Developing and supporting entities like CREDO, where funding comes as an inherent part of the business cycle, is another way to address this problem.

2. Make it easier for our Congressional allies to do the progressive things we want them to do.

Right now there are serious capacity problems in Congress that make what we want very hard for even the best-intentioned members and staff to do.

Staffers are profoundly overworked. The majority of all staff time goes to simply trying to keep up with the barrage of constituent communications. There's very little time left to do strategically important work such as analyze legislation, create talking points, coordinate with other offices, prepare questions for committee hearings, do proactive communication with constituents,

draft legislation, hold hearings, and engage with the press.

There used to be internal think tanks in Congress (such as the Democratic Study Group) to do some of the heavy lifting and organizing by analyzing legislation, creating shared talking points, and driving process reforms. Gingrich defunded them after the 1994 election to consolidate more power in the Speaker's office while crippling Democrats. The Republicans invest in outside capacity to get those things done by funding the Heritage Foundation to the tune of almost \$40 million per year; the Blue Dogs have had Third Way for the last few years with a \$7 million per year budget. Progressives have, by contrast, invested almost nothing in Congress-focused capacity. Since a bunch of experienced, top-notch committee staff are about to lose their jobs when the majority changes hands, we have a great opportunity to snap up some of the cream of the crop to make this happen.

3. Change the rules when they're rigged against us.

Filibuster abuse crippled the Senate, making it impossible to do the things necessary to aggressively create jobs, address climate change, and even fill key positions in the Administration and the courts. The country is suffering as a result. Fix the damned rule.

Progressives are incredibly reliant on the Internet as the backbone of our communications infrastructure, but without net neutrality the phone companies and the cable companies are free to turn off DailyKos while letting you see unlimited amounts of streaming Fox News. Don't think they won't: cell phone companies have already refused to allow text message fundraising for organizations they don't agree with, such as NARAL Pro-Choice America. Apply pressure to the administration for a Federal Communications Commission fix now.

And I don't think I need to say anything about Citizens United except to point out that a true fix will require a Constitutional amendment establishing that corporations are not persons, and that such an effort is going to take many years and some extremely skilled organizing.

4. Get incentives right.

Progressives have gotten better about rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies, but if voting against key Democratic initiatives were to cost members support from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee or Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and make them less likely to get committee chairmanships, they might be a little better behaved.

5. Fix the way we do campaigns.

We need to be strategic and data-driven. Right now we are rarely either. We should be targeting districts now in which to recruit progressive candidates, looking at both pick-up opportunities (such as the 61 districts that Obama won in 2008 that will be held by Republicans as of January) and open Democratic seats where we can get a progressive over the primary line. We need to fully support those candidates a full year before the election, ensuring they are on track to have both the money and trained staff to be viable and win. We need to be way more aggressive at using (and sharing!) data to improve campaign processes and targeting. We need make it so that media consultants aren't rewarded for wasting millions on TV when other communications channels would be more effective. And we need to fully leverage technology to actually reach voters with messages we know they care about.

Start treating politics as the team sport that it is.

We need to stop pretending that we can each focus on our own siloed issue and ignore the rest of the progressive coalition. Unless we build the capacity of the progressive coalition as a whole, we won't win anything big.

6. Play nicely with each other across issues.

The fate of all big progressive issues is tied to the well-being of the broader progressive coalition and its capacity to move things. If progressive women are demoralized because they feel they've been thrown under the bus on choice, or if gay donors withhold their political

contributions because Don't-Ask-Don't-Tell isn't addressed, the broad spectrum of progressive issues bears the cost. Losing House seats because women shifted towards Republicans or because Democrats were greatly outspent makes it harder not only to address choice and Don't-Ask-Don't-Tell but also things like climate change and military spending. This means, in particular, that issue organizations need to think about the full costs of their endorsements of candidates who are bad on key progressive issues, because such support weakens the progressive coalition as a whole.

7. Help pick the right team captains.

In the next week or two the House minority leader for next year will be chosen. It might be a good idea to do everything possible to make it a progressive such as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi or Rep. Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., since the minority leader will set the tone and strategy for the whole House Democratic Caucus.

8. Reward team players.

Progressives have gotten better at taking care of their own—witness the very small House losses for the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Rep. Raul Grijalva of Arizona survived his election because progressives swooped in to help. But we should also apply pressure to ensure that people who undermine the Democratic Caucus don't get rewarded with lots of campaign funding and plum committee positions.

9. Grow the farm team.

We need to nurture progressives who are willing to be bold and engage, whether they win or lose. On the right, think tanks have programs to employ key allies who are between elected positions, and career paths for activists from cradle to grave. On the left we leave people to their own devices and often let people drop completely off the radar after a loss or the end of a campaign. We need to invest in long-term capacity in the form of talent.

Expand the definition of engagement.

10. Find ways to engage people where they are, including online.

While Democrats are out of power in the House, there will be an opportunity to help some of them better reach their audiences via new methods. How might they better use Facebook? Twitter? Online question-and-answer mechanisms? Online video? They've got little to do but communicate; let's help them figure out how to do it well.

11. Think outside the box, especially with younger people.

Efforts like Drinking Liberally, the Oregon Bus Project and Trick-or-Vote have come up with some novel and very effective ways to make politics fun for younger people. It works, too; there's measurable impact. Expand those programs nationally while continuing to innovate.

Focus on the things that don't require Congress to pass laws.

It seems exceedingly unlikely that any progressive legislation will pass the House while it's in Republican hands. We and our progressive allies in Congress can still do two really critical things:

12. Pressure the Administration to act on things it can do unilaterally.

The Obama Administration can do a whole lot by executive order, administrative rule-making, and strategic appointments. They could, for instance, end Don't-Ask-Don't-Tell, implement net neutrality, stop separating families through deportation, require that all future Federal Reserve appointees agree to prioritize full employment as equally important as price stability, change procurement processes to reward the creation of American jobs, aggressively prosecute war profiteering, begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan as promised, rescind executive orders restricting access to legal abortions, throw the book at companies that break the law to thwart worker organizing, and enforce existing laws and safety regulations for oil and mining companies as a start. They could do that all today. And a concerted effort from the progressive community and our Congressional allies to force their hands might actually work, especially with 2012 now looming on the horizon.

13. Elevate a clear progressive message.

The American people are actually pretty progressive: While we're not going to duplicate the capacity of Fox News overnight (nor are we going to match the Heritage Foundation's \$38 million/year), we could do a lot more to leverage progressive members of Congress and the soapboxes they have by:

a. Making sure they have top-notch research on issues and messaging;

b. Ensuring that members and progressive spokespeople get top notch training and practice for media appearances and public speaking;

c. Having people whose job it is to book progressive members of Congress and spokespeople into the press;

d. Building new distribution mechanisms for content and information, whether by radio, on TV, over the Internet, in print, in person, by text message, by iPhone app, or some other way;

e. Coordinating messaging so that different people are saying things that reinforce each other;

f. Insisting that progressive leaders use communications best practices, such as telling stories.

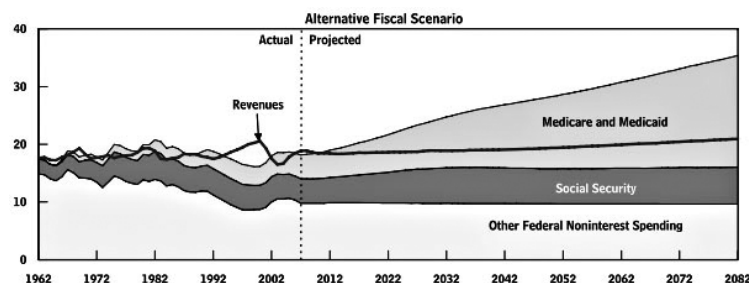
Saying that "women should have access to abortions" is not going to work as well as talking about the woman who showed up at a Catholic hospital late in her first trimester of pregnancy suffering from pre-eclampsia which would kill her if the pregnancy didn't end. The nun in charge got permission to end the pregnancy to save the mother—and then was excommunicated. The next woman who shows up in that emergency room with pre-eclampsia will die.

By eliminating coverage for medically necessary abortions, we've ensured that similar stories will play out all over America: women will die because a bunch of lawmakers didn't understand why what they were doing was a problem.

There is plenty for progressives to do post-election both inside and outside of Congress. Act as if the future of the country depended on it. Because it does.

Source: Campaign for America's Future www.ourfuture.org 11/4/10. CAF, 1825 K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20006

Is the Deficit Commission serious?



Kevin Drum

I've been trying to figure out whether I have anything to say about the "chairman's mark" of the deficit commission report that was released today.

It's just a draft presentation put together by two guys. Do you know how many deficit reduction proposals are out there that have the backing of two guys? Thousands. Another one just doesn't matter.

But the iron law of the news business is that if people are talking about it, then it matters. So this report matters, even though it's really nothing more than the opinion of Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles. So here's what I think of it, all contained in one handy chart from the Congressional Budget Office.

Here's what the chart means:

* Discretionary spending (the bottom chunk) isn't a long-term deficit problem. It takes up about 10% of GDP forever. What's more, pretending that it can be capped is just game playing: anything one Congress can do, another can undo. So if you want to recommend a few discretionary cuts, that's fine. Beyond that, though, the discretionary budget should be left to Congress since it can be cut or expanded easily via the ordinary political process. That's why it's called "discretionary."

* Social Security (the dark blue middle chunk) isn't a long-term deficit problem. It goes up very slightly between now and 2030 and then flattens out forever. If Republicans were willing to get serious and knock off their puerile anti-tax jihad, it could be fixed easily with a combination of tiny tax increases and tiny benefit cuts phased in over 20 years that the public would barely notice. It deserves about a week of deliberation.

* Medicare, and healthcare in general, is a huge problem. It is, in fact, our only real long-term spending problem.

To put this more succinctly: any serious long-term deficit plan will spend about 1% of its time on the discretionary budget, 1% on Social Security, and 98% on healthcare. Any proposal that doesn't maintain approximately that ratio shouldn't be considered serious. The Simpson-Bowles plan, conversely, goes into loving detail about cuts to the discretionary budget and Social Security but turns suddenly vague and cramped when it gets to Medicare. That's not serious.

There are other reasons the Simpson-Bowles plan isn't serious. Capping revenue at 21% of GDP, for example. The plain fact is that over the next few decades Social Security will need a little more money and healthcare will need a lot more. That will be true even if we implement the greatest healthcare cost containment plan in the world. Pretending that we can nonetheless cap revenues at 2000 levels isn't serious.

And their tax proposal? As part of a deficit reduction plan they want to cut taxes on the rich and make the federal tax system more regressive? That's not serious either.

Bottom line: this document isn't really aimed at deficit reduction. It's aimed at keeping government small. There's nothing wrong with that if you're a conservative think tank and that's what you're dedicated to selling. But it should be called by its right name. This document is a paean to cutting the federal government, not cutting the federal deficit.

Kevin Drum is a political blogger for Mother Jones.

Source: Mother Jones blog, <http://www.motherjones.com/authors/kevin-drum>, 11/10/10



MSM = truth? Check out the alternatives & decide for yourself

If you tap in to some of the alternative media, you will get a very different perspective on events. Especially now, when the mainstream media often acts as a cheerleader for whatever the administration does, it's necessary to go a little further to get your news. An internet connection is helpful.

Firedoglake <http://firedoglake.com>

Emptywheel <http://emptywheel.firedoglake.com/>

Calitics <http://www.calitics.com/>

Eschaton <http://www.eschatonblog.com/>

Huffington Post <http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

Hullabaloo <http://digbysblog.blogspot.com>

Daily Kos <http://www.dailykos.com>

Talking Points Memo <http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com>

TPM Muckraker <http://www.tpmuckraker.com/>

FiveThirtyEight.com <http://www.fivethirtyeight.com/>

Congress Matters <http://www.congressmatters.com>

Think Progress <http://thinkprogress.com>

Down With Tyranny <http://downwithtyranny.blogspot.com/>

Crooks and Liars <http://www.crooksandliars.com>

Media Matters <http://mediamatters.org/>

Common Dreams: <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Truth Out: <http://www.truthout.org/>

Raw Story <http://www.rawstory.com>

Open Left <http://www.openleft.com/>

AlterNet <http://www.alternet.org/>

Independent Media Center <http://www.indymedia.org>

The Nation <http://www.thenation.com/>

Hightower News <http://www.webactive.com/hightower/>

Mother Jones <http://www.motherjones.com/>

In These Times <http://inthesetimes.com/>

The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/latest/>

Corporate Watch <http://www.corpwatch.org/home/PHH.jsp>

KPFA (94.1 FM) provides excellent coverage on many issues. You can listen on the internet at <http://www.kpfa.org>

Democracy Now! on KPFA, 94.1 FM and KVMR, 89.5 FM or on the web at: <http://www.democracynow.org>

We're on the web too!

The Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County (pjnsjc) website has information, calendar, media links, and more. Under construction and growing. Share your ideas on how the website should evolve.

<http://www.pjnsjc.org>

Environment loses with new Congress

House: Republican majority presents drastic changes in climate/energy agenda

The sizable Republican majority in the House means that any attempts to put a price on carbon are off the table. Exactly how the new majority will now approach its climate and energy agenda remains to be seen.

Presumptive Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH) may have already laid out the blueprints for a GOP energy bill with the "American Energy Act." That legislation calls for ramping up nuclear energy and offshore drilling as well as creating incentives for renewable energy.

But some observers, such as Manik Roy, vice president for federal government outreach at the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, said he doubts any comprehensive energy bill can move in the next Congress, given that most tea party members campaigned on a fiscal conservative platform against costly legislative proposals. It's speculated that the Republican path forward will be either incremental or promoted in terms of creating economic growth for the country.

Committees under GOP leadership

Under Boehner, committee leaders in the lower chamber are also expected to press the Obama Administration on scientific understanding of climate change and challenge the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ability to regulate greenhouse gases.

Expected committee chairs Darrell Issa (R-CA) of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee and James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) of the Energy Independence and Global Warming Committee may launch investigations into events that they claim cast doubt on climate science. However, some analysts believe the latter committee will be slashed completely or fundamentally altered under the GOP. Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI), a top contender to chair the House Energy and Commerce Committee, publicly called for scrapping the global warming committee in *The Washington Times* last month. Rep. Sensenbrenner alternatively has written an op-ed in the *Roll Call* newspaper urging Republican leaders to retain the committee, citing its value as a platform to

provide for increased oversight over the Environmental Protection Agency.

Both Upton and the other front-runner to Chair the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX), have also promised intensive oversight of EPA. Barton has also been critical of the administration's efforts to shutdown the nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, NV. Rep. Upton has described government regulations on greenhouse gases, coal ash and boilers as "smothering" the economy. Current Chairman Henry Waxman (D-CA) is expected to become the committee's Ranking Member.

Precedent holds that netting the chairman spot hinges on a blend of popularity and seniority. Although Barton claims seniority, he also would need a waiver to be allowed to take the gavel, having already served as the committee's lead Republican for six years. Barton also angered party leadership this past year when he apologized to BP PLC for what he called the Obama administration's "shakedown" of the company after the Deepwater Horizon Gulf spill.

Republicans on the House Natural Resources Committee

will seek to expand oil and gas drilling next Congress and fight the Obama Administration's attempts to regulate energy production, current Ranking Member Doc Hastings (R-WA) has said. Hastings, an eight-term GOP incumbent, also confirmed that he wants to lead the Natural Resources Committee Current Chairman Nick Rahall (D-WV) is expected to serve as Ranking Member for the committee.

Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK), expected to run the Agriculture Committee, has said he wants to ramp up oversight over the Environmental Protection Agency. Many farm policy experts do not expect the party turnover to result in deep cuts to farm subsidies as the policy differences between members of the committee generally tend to be more regional than partisan. Current Chairman Colin Peterson (D-MN) is expected to serve as Ranking Member.

Rep. Ralph Hall (R-TX) is in line to run the Science and Technology Committee. It is not clear, however, if Republican leaders will give him that privilege—Hall is 87 years old and only became a Republican six years ago. Next in line would be Rep. Sensenbrenner (who chaired this committee in the past), a vocal climate skeptic with a demonstrated interest in a committee chairmanship. With current Science and Tech. Chairman Bart Gordon's retirement, Rep. Jerry Costello was next line to become Ranking Member.

Senate: Republican victories boost effort to block climate rules

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to be the target of congressional attacks once the Republicans take control of the House and gain several seats in the Democratic-controlled Senate. For Congressional Republicans, the first order of business could be legislation to stop EPA from regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act.

Supporters of measures to block EPA's climate regulations say it is a foregone conclusion that the Republican-controlled House will pass such a bill during the next session. And in the Senate, where Democrats have spent the past two

years bemoaning the rule requiring 60 votes to defeat a filibuster, that threshold appears to be the only thing that could stop such a measure from passing.

After the election, there now appear to be at least 57 votes in the Senate for a measure to delay the agency's climate rules, 10 more than a similar measure had in June proposed by Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) to strip EPA of the authority to regulate greenhouse gases. That number includes the entire bloc of 47 Republican senators and at least nine Democrats who have already pledged their support for one or more proposal: Sens. Jay Rockefeller (WV), Mary Landrieu (LA), Ben Nelson (NE), Mark Pryor (AR), Kent Conrad (ND), Tim Johnson (SD), Claire McCaskill (MO) and Jim Webb (VA) have all voted or cosponsored legislation to limit EPA's ability to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Democratic Senator-elect Joe Manchin (WV) aired a commercial in which he fired a rifle at the House-passed cap-and-trade bill.

It remains to be seen what form a measure to block EPA's greenhouse gas regulations would take. After the defeat of the Murkowski resolution, EPA critics shifted their attention to a bill from Sen. Rockefeller that would force the agency to wait two years before controlling greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources such as power plants, refineries or factories. That proposal would have spared regulations on cars and light-duty trucks, which have been supported by the auto industry.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has promised the Rockefeller bill a vote during this fall's lame-duck session, but because Democratic leadership has kept similar proposals from reaching the House floor, the campaign to block EPA would likely need to restart in the next congressional session. In the Senate, where the Democrats would decide whether to schedule a vote on a bill, a measure to block or delay EPA's rules could be tacked onto almost anything, including must-pass appropriations to keep the federal government running.

The White House has vowed to veto any effort to hamstring EPA's regulatory authority. However,

Fight continues to save California State Parks

Despite a strong effort by Audubon California and a massive coalition of groups representing conservation, recreation, business and tourism, a measure that would have provided state parks with stable and adequate funding was not approved by voters. Nonetheless, supporters of Proposition 21 promised to continue the effort to secure the future of the nation's most expansive state parks system.

"We're disappointed that voters didn't see the merit of this far-sighted proposal to protect California's natural legacy," said Graham Chisholm, executive director of Audubon California. "It's clear to us that California State Parks are important to Californians, but in the end the state's political and economic environment were

just too much to overcome."

Audubon California pushed for Proposition 21 after seeing the California State Parks devastated by budget cuts in recent years. Threatened with closures nearly every year, the system has built up more than \$1 billion in deferred maintenance and seen reduced hours and program cuts. All of this undercuts the invaluable role that California State Parks play in connecting the state's children and families to the natural world.

"We will work tirelessly with the new governor and the Legislature to find a solution for California State Parks," said Chisholm. "With the coalition Proposition 21 created, our movement will be reinvigorated as it seeks to protect our state parks, conserve our precious

resources and preserve these vital legacies for future generations. We will press on because our goal is too important to leave behind."

Audubon California also supported Proposition 21 because of the importance of California State Parks to conservation. A recent review of Audubon Important Bird Areas in California found that 50 were contained wholly or in part within state parks. State parks not only provide invaluable habitat, but conduct a variety of conservation activities that support sensitive bird populations.

Source: Audubon California release 11/4/10 <http://ca.audubon.org>



2012 presidential election considerations will likely make the Administration more sensitive to the needs of coal-dependent states like Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia, all of which Obama won in 2008.

Other rules under pressure

Environmental groups are worried that the shift in Congress could have an impact beyond climate change, and could also threaten the Environmental Protection Agency's new standards for smog, industrial boilers and coal ash. While such legislation would face an uphill battle passing the two chambers, the House's new Republican leadership will still likely press EPA officials to justify the costly rules.

The dynamic in Congress will depend on the broader strategy chosen by Republican leadership. Environmental groups contend the party would be wise to acknowledge that voters rejected candidates that were most vocal in their criticism of climate science and environmental regulations. Many analysts have suggested that the Republicans would have won the Senate had they not nominated tea party favorites such as Sharron Angle in Nevada, Christine O'Donnell in Delaware and Ken Buck in Colorado.

Opportunities remain for bipartisanship

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell (KY) recently stated he expects energy policy to be an area where his party and Democrats can work together to pass meaningful legislation in the next Congress. In echoing earlier comments made by President Obama and Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), McConnell said plug-in electric vehicles, nuclear power and "clean coal" technology were areas where Democrats and Republicans were in agreement on energy policy. Bingaman prides himself on passing bills with GOP support, including a 2009 committee measure that included a renewable electricity standard and increased offshore oil drilling.

Senate: Boxer to retain top committee slot

California Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer won her re-

election bid and will hold on to her prominent chairmanship of the Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee. The three-term senator ran on a platform of clean energy, environmental protection and civil rights, besting challenger Carly Fiorina, a former CEO of Hewlett-Packard Co. who poured more than \$5.5 million of her own money into the race.

The Senate's diminished majority, coupled with a feisty relationship between EPW Chairwoman Boxer and Ranking Member James Inhofe (R-OK), make it unlikely that comprehensive climate change legislation will move through her committee. Mary Nichols, head of the California Air Resources Board, which is in charge of implementing California's first-in-the-nation cap-and-trade plan, said Boxer's leadership would nonetheless be crucial in a defensive strategy against efforts to roll back existing policies intended to protect the environment.

Elections: Gubernatorial climate skeptics may change state policies

The GOP net gains in at least nine states throughout the country (as of Nov. 8) cast serious doubts about whether states will move forward with cap-and-trade programs and related efforts to mitigate climate change, according to analysts.

The fate of state cap-and-trade programs, renewable energy programs and coal plant permits rests with the incoming group of governors. For many environmentalists, the ascension of climate skeptics to state leadership at a time when federal climate legislation is stalled on Capitol Hill suggests greenhouse gas emissions will continue to increase across the country. According to Americans for Prosperity, an oil business group, several gubernatorial candidates signed a "no climate tax" pledge including GOP gubernatorial victors in the states of Georgia, Kansas, Maine, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin. Florida Governor-elect Rick Scott stated he has "not been convinced" of the existence of global warming despite a general consensus among scientists that human activities are causing global climatic change.

However, there was also support for renewable power and emissions-cutting programs among

many GOP candidates. Howard Learner of the Environmental Law & Policy Center, noted that governors-elect moving from the campaign to governing stage may also "evolve" their thinking on some emissions-cutting programs. As an example, he said governors in the Midwest will be faced with supporting high-speed rail programs or returning millions of dollars of federal grants to the Federal Railroad Administration.

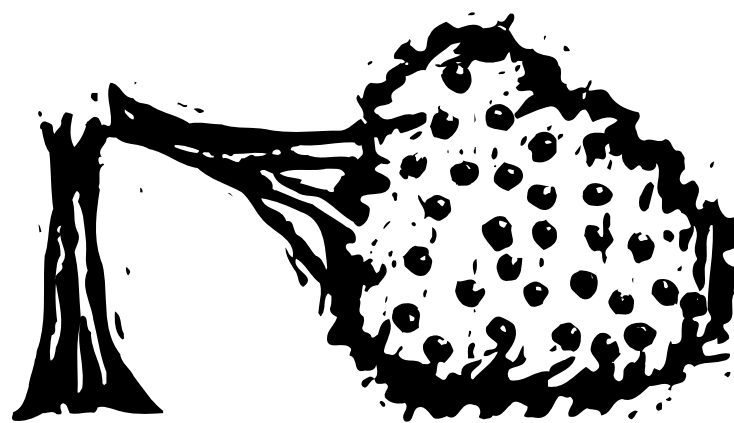
Currently, the nation's only operating cap-and-trade system, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), is undergoing a review that could determine the toughness of its emissions targets in the years ahead. The program, stretching from Maine to Maryland, has come under fire for establishing a weak emissions cap that failed to change business behavior. Supporters praise it as a successful model for capping emissions that will be a leading force in influencing climate policy.

The victories of Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick, a backer of the initiative, and Andrew Cuomo in New York, both progressive Democrats, indicate the program will remain intact and perhaps be strengthened, analysts said. Additionally, Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut hold the majority of the initiative's carbon allowances, so what happens with the rest of New England holds less significance, said Stacy VanDeveer, a professor at the University of New Hampshire.

The fates of two other proposed cap-and-trade programs, the Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Reduction Accord and the Western Climate Initiative, are less certain. Both are still in the planning stage in states where the stances of incoming governors are generally either unknown or oppositional. -ClimateWire

Canada: US midterms beneficial to oil sands

Among the biggest winners in Canada after the U.S. midterm Congressional elections are Alberta's oil producers, which have been criticized by many Democrats for their "dirty oil." Republicans, who will control the U.S. House of Representatives in January will likely emphasize the need to rely less on oil from the Middle East and Persian Gulf.



Canada also faces less pressure to pass its own climate legislation now that the chances for that happening in the United States are tabled for the foreseeable future. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government had been working in step with the Obama Administration before the legislation failed to reach a vote in the U.S. Senate. The loss helped pave the way for Harper to successfully delay dealing with climate legislation in Canada.

The Republican takeover of the House also marks the end of Henry Waxman's chairmanship of the influential House Energy and Commerce Committee. Waxman had championed tough legislation that would have penalized crude from oil sands. He also opposed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's endorsement of the Keystone XL pipeline that would link Alberta oil to the U.S. Gulf Coast.

California: Prop 26 could inhibit polluter fees

California voters approved a measure on Election Day that will tighten how the state constitution defines taxes and regulatory fees.

Proposition 26 effectively expands the definition of a state tax, requiring a two-thirds vote for any new surcharge or levy, even if the money is earmarked for a specific purpose. Its passage could also empower the Republican minority in the state legislature and make it more difficult for California to balance its budget through alcohol, tobacco and other companies that have been targets of legislative fees for decades. The state's business community had been in opposition to these fees for years.

The measure has been called the "evil twin" of Proposition 23 by environmental activists who fear it would inhibit the state's ability to regulate carbon emissions. Prop.

23, which was voted down, would have delayed the state's climate law, A.B. 32, until unemployment dropped to 5.5 percent for a full year.

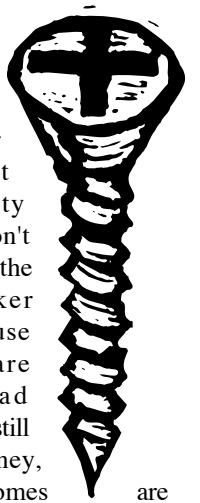
An analysis released last week by the law school at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), found that Prop. 26 could "erect significant barriers" to many environmental programs in California, including A.B. 32 and fundamentally hinder the state's ability to assess environmental fees on polluters of all kinds. This contradicts claims by the "Yes on 26" campaign that the measure would simply make it more difficult to increase taxes.

Lawyers from UCLA's Emmett Center on Climate Change and the Environment and Evan Frankel Environmental Law and Policy Program contend Prop. 26 would affect a number of current laws, among them a green chemistry initiative, two statutes blocking chemical products in landfills and longstanding rules on lead.

Under current law, increasing taxes requires a two-thirds vote by the state legislature. Partisan gridlock has led the Democratic-controlled legislature to pass a variety of fees, which require a simple majority vote. A fee is a levy that is used for a specific purpose, such as fees on chemical pesticides that go toward funding the state's pesticide control agency. A tax may be used for the state's general operating costs, to pay for public education, prisons and health services. Prop. 26 had received multimillion-dollar contributions from the California Chamber of Commerce, Chevron Corp., Philip Morris USA Inc. and Anheuser-Busch Cos. Inc.

Source: *ESA Policy News 11/9/10*, which sourced *Associated Press*, *ClimateWire*, *Environment and Energy Daily*, *Greenwire*, *The Hill*, *LA Times*, *The New York Times*, *POLITICO*, *The Toronto Star*, *The Washington Post*. www.esa.org

America's two economies



Robert Reich

Next time you hear an economist or denizen of Wall Street talk about how the "American economy" is doing these days, watch your wallet. There are two American economies. One is on the mend. The other is still coming apart.

The one that's mending is America's Big Money economy. It's comprised of Wall Street traders, big investors, and top professionals and corporate executives.

The Big Money economy is doing well these days. That's partly thanks to Ben Bernanke, whose Fed is keeping interest rates near zero by printing money as fast as it dare. It's essentially free money to America's Big Money economy.

Free money can almost always be put to uses that create more of it. Big corporations are buying back their shares of stock, thereby boosting corporate earnings. They're merging and acquiring other companies. And they're going abroad in search of customers.

Thanks to fast-growing China, India, and Brazil, giant American corporations are racking up sales. They're selling Asian and Latin American consumers everything from cars and cell phones to fancy Internet software and iPads. Forty percent of the S&P 500 biggest corporations are now doing more than 60 percent of their business abroad. And America's biggest investors are also going abroad to get a nice return on their money.

So don't worry about America's Big Money economy. According to a Wall Street Journal survey released Thursday, overall compensation in financial services will rise 5 percent this year, and employees in some businesses like asset management will get increases of 15 percent.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average is back to where it was before the Lehman bankruptcy filing triggered the financial collapse. And profits at America's largest corporations are heading upward. But there's another American economy, and it's not on the mend. Call it the Average Worker economy.

Last Friday's jobs report showed 159,000 new private-sector jobs in October. That's better than

previous months. But 125,000 net new jobs are needed just to keep up with the growth of the American labor force. So another way of expressing what happened to jobs in October is to say 34,000 were added over what we need just to stay even.

Yet the American economy has lost 15 million jobs since the start of the Great Recession. And if you add in the growth of the labor force—including everyone too discouraged to look for a job—we're down about 22 million. Or to put it another way, we're still getting nowhere on jobs.

One out of eight breadwinners is still out of work. Most families in the Average Worker economy rely on two breadwinners. So if one out of eight isn't working, chances are high that family incomes are down compared to what they were three years ago.

And that means the bills aren't getting paid.

According to a recent *Washington Post* poll, more than half of all Americans—53 percent—are worried about making their mortgage payments. This is many more than were worried two years ago, when the Great Recession hit bottom. Then, 37 percent expressed worry.

Delinquency rates on home loans are rising. Distressed sales are up as a percent of total sales.

Most people in the Average Worker economy own few shares of stock, if any. Their equity is in their homes. But with all the delinquencies and distressed sales, the housing market has a glut of homes for sale. As a result, home prices are still dropping. So the net worth of most Americans is still dropping.

And even though interest rates are falling, most people in the Average Worker economy can't

refinance their homes. They can't get home equity loans. Banks don't want to lend to the Average Worker economy because people in it are considered bad credit risks. They still owe lots of money, their family incomes are down, and their net worth has fallen.

And according to the Reuters/University of Michigan survey of American consumers, expectations about personal finances are at an all time low.

Inhabitants of the Big Money economy are celebrating Republican wins last week. They figure financial regulations will be rolled back, environmental regulations will be canned, the Bush tax cut will be extended to the top 1 percent, and it will be harder for workers to form unions.

Inhabitants of the Average Worker economy aren't so sure. The economy has been so bad they're angry at politicians. They showed their anger at the ballot box. They took it out on incumbents. But if nothing changes in the Average Worker economy, there will be hell to pay.

Robert Reich is Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. He has served in three national administrations, most recently as secretary of labor under President Bill Clinton. He has written twelve books, including "The Work of Nations," "Locked in the Cabinet," "Supercapitalism" and his latest book, "AFTERSHOCK: The Next Economy and America's Future."

Source: Robert Reich's Blog 11/5/10 <http://robertreich.org/post/1488766304>

The Big Money economy is doing well these days. Yet the Average Worker economy has lost 15 million jobs since the start of the Great Recession.

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Fact: economy better off with stimulus

Mickey McGuire

During the recent electoral campaign, several candidates proclaimed that the financial stimulus was a complete failure. Is it true? What do economists have to say?

To answer the question we have to ask where the unemployment and Gross Domestic Product numbers would be today, with and without the stimulus. It is useful to remember what Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said, "We came very close in October (2008) to Great Depression 2.0". It could have been worse!

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), better known as "The Stimulus", is currently estimated at \$814 billion. That amount is comprised of three parts. Tax cuts are 36% and the remainder is divided between aid to states to maintain public services (police, fire, schools, courts, etc.), and direct spending on infrastructure projects.

Last year three private forecasting firms; IHS Global, Macroeconomic Advisers, and Moody's Economy.com came to similar conclusions. They found that the GDP would have been 2% lower and the unemployment rate 2% higher without the stimulus.

Three studies have been published recently that are more up-to-date. Two are government agencies, the Congressional Budget Office and the Council of Economic Advisors, and the third is from two private economists working with Moody's Analytics.

The Congressional Budget Office is considered to be the "Gold Standard" of policy analysis. They provide cost estimates to both Republicans and Democrats on new legislation. The CBO estimates that the GDP is between 1.7% and 4.2% higher because of the ARRA. The unemployment rate is 0.7% to 1.5% lower due to the stimulus. They conclude, the ARRA "increased the number of full-time-equivalent jobs by 1.8

million to 4.1 million compared to what those amounts would have been otherwise".

The Council of Economic Advisors, using two different methodologies arrives at 2.5 to 3.5 million more people employed with the stimulus than without. They conclude, "Following implementation of the ARRA, the trajectory of the economy changed dramatically. Real GDP began to grow steadily starting in the third quarter of 2009."

The third study published July 27 was completed by Mark Zandi, Chief Economist of Moody's Analytics and Alan Blinder a Princeton economist. They write, "The effects of the fiscal stimulus alone appear very substantial, raising 2010 real GDP by about 3.4%, holding the unemployment rate about 1 1/2 percentage points lower, and adding almost 2.7 million jobs to U.S. payrolls."

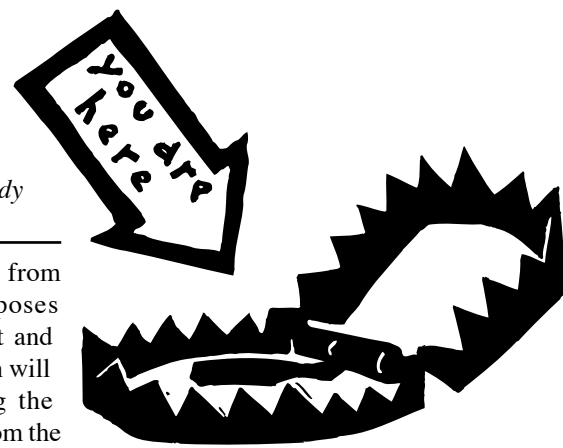
The claim by so many candidates, including David Harmer, that the stimulus was a complete failure is simply not true.

Resist Afghanistan 2014

Matthew Hoh,
Director of the
Afghanistan Study
Group

Today's report from McClatchy supposes that the president and his administration will begin distancing the administration from the exit strategy he advanced last fall. If the administration decides to continue the current strategy through 2014, it would directly contradict President Obama's own directive, which states that there should be an "accelerated transition to Afghan authorities beginning in July 2011." This rumored report would be contrary to the administration's repeated pronouncements that no changes will be made to regional strategy in the near term. The president, at the end of September, even wrote to Congressional leaders in order to reinforce his December 2009 position.

In addition, this month the Department of Defense is scheduled to release its bi-annual Report "Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan." I expect this report will show negative trends across key areas in a manner consistent with the results of the last several years regarding our efforts in Afghanistan. Moreover, I anticipate that the administration will dismiss such trends, arguing that our surge forces have only just arrived, the right form of leadership has only been in place for a few months, and the current strategy has not had enough time to take effect. I also believe the administration to burnish these arguments and others in order to extend continue our militarized effort in Afghanistan. In making these claims, however, the administration will be ignoring the recent poll from the Asia Foundation that claims "Eighty three percent of respondents support the government's attempts to address the security situation through negotiation and reconciliation with armed anti-government elements", as well as other like-minded analysis.



It is imperative that we challenge the administration about their rationales for continuing the current strategy; they must not be allowed to receive a pass on this review. In addition to the current survey data, our challenge is based on several factors including the administration's policies lack of demonstrable effect on al-Qaeda, the \$119 billion the US will spend in Afghanistan this fiscal year, and the nearly 450 American service members killed since the president's address at West Point last year. Given these arguments, it is my contention that, the administration must perform a responsible and thorough review of America's war strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Despite the conflicting rumors and reports, it is important to focus on General Petraeus' December review, and, consistent with these goals, the

Afghanistan Study Group will, over the next couple of months, increase its media and outreach efforts to increase and broaden the debate concerning our Afghanistan policy. These media efforts will push for an alternative strategy which will provide real results and benefits: not only for the US, but also for the nations of that region. In addition to these group efforts we are also relying on individual ones: please assist by calling your members of Congress, writing op-eds, blogs and talking with your neighbors. Because, if the administration and Congress do not feel sufficient political pressure there will be no incentive to change a failing, counterproductive and ineffectual policy.

Source: Huffington Post 11/10/10 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-hoh/us-still-in-afghanistan-i_b_781926.html

G20: US fails

Simon Johnson

It is hard to imagine how the summit could have gone any worse for the US Treasury and the president. The spin machine is now working overtime—and you'll see big efforts to get more positive stories over the coming week, but on all fronts the outcome is very bad.

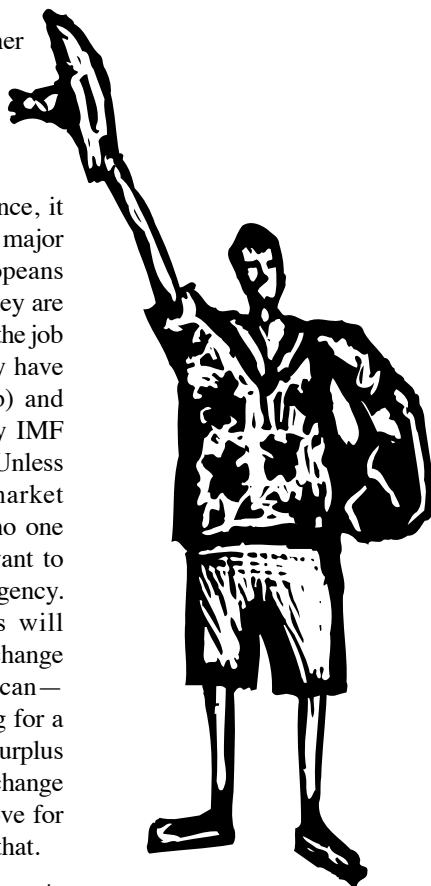
1. There was no substantive progress on anything to do with exchange rates. The "indicative guidelines" to be agreed next year are just a way to kick the can down the road. The Chinese are digging in hard on their exchange rate; this is headed towards a mutually destructive trade war.


2. There was less disagreement at the summit regarding the "regulation" of global megabanks—but only because this had been gutted so effectively by the bankers' lobby and officials who bought their specious arguments. There is nothing here that will prevent

or limit the impact of another major worldwide financial crisis.

3. On IMF governance, over which there was substantial fanfare in advance, it turns out there has been a major step backwards. The Europeans have apparently signaled they are no longer willing to give up the job of Managing Director (they have always controlled this job) and this is a major reason why IMF legitimacy remains weak. Unless and until an emerging market person gets this position, no one (outside of Europe) will want to rely on the IMF in an emergency. As a result all countries will want to "manage" their exchange rates—to the extent they can—along Chinese lines, aiming for a significant current account surplus (so as to build up foreign exchange reserves). See point #1 above for the likely consequences of that.

Source: *The Baseline Scenario News Analysis*, 11/14/10 <http://baselinescenario.com>





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E. Lela Nelson
BROKER



The T is Not Silent

It's the pits

Elena Kelly

When I was a little girl my mother often said that all I needed was to hear someone say “strep throat,” and I would get it. Sore throats were a regular part of my early life experiences, so when I was seven I got my tonsils removed. There was a gorgeous nurse at our local hospital that looked after me. She was interesting and funny and I adored her.

I remember vividly that she asked me what I wanted to do when I grew up. I told her I wanted to be a musician in a rock and roll band. “Oooh,” she sighed. “And what would the band be called?” I told her my band would be named The Pits because my Grandma was always saying, “This is the pits,” whenever she was aggravated, and rock and roll was a true source of aggravation to her. We talked about possible album covers—cherry pits, armpits, and holes in the ground.

Recently I have been fascinated by the news stories of the Chilean miners trapped 2,000 feet inside a mountain, and I cried several times while watching them emerge from that dark pit. I couldn't help but appreciate how the family, friends and even the President of Chile and his wife, were thrilled to tears as each miner stepped out into the light of day after 69 days in darkness.

At the same time I have been appalled by the bullying suicides recently of several young gay men.

I know of transgender women who have committed suicide, but they almost never make the news. And I get frustrated that the death of transgender folk is not newsworthy unless the details are gruesome beyond imagination. As my Grandma would say, it's the pits!

There was a study a few years back that said 33.2% of transgender people have attempted suicide at least once before coming out, and the suicide rate for those who have come out is ten times the national average. What does that have to do with the pits and Chilean miners? Well, it makes a lot of sense to me.

Those miners were trapped in a pit that confined them against their will. They didn't ask to be put in that dangerous situation, they were just there. Now imagine if the crowd above wasn't trying to rescue them. Suppose they would be harassed and despised when they finally clawed their way out. Are you starting to see my point?

What if people who came out of the closet as transgender, gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, or queer were greeted by celebrations, by parties and hugs and kisses, by congratulations on overcoming a huge obstacle and living to tell the story? Suppose the Mayor or Governor, or Congressional representatives came to their party and gave them an award for having

the courage to step out of the darkness and into the light of living their truth.

That is why I started the Stockton Transgender Alliance, and why we get widespread support from so many local organizations, churches, and individuals. We celebrate each life that is saved as they struggle with the courage to come out, and they have a lot of us who cheer them on, supporting them at each step on their journey to wholeness.

There was a time that homosexuality was listed in the DSM as a mental disorder, and gender identity still is. But the real disorder is a society that treats its most vulnerable members with disdain, hatred, and rejection. I applaud those who are working to stop the bullying in schools. It is the job of the rest of us to oppose it everywhere else in society. Otherwise, we all are the pits.

Elena Kelly is an activist minister for the Central Valley LGBT community and Director of the Stockton Transgender Alliance.

She can be reached at elena.kelly@comcast.net.



Choice in the new congress

We now face a Congress stacked with extreme anti-choice politicians. Starting today, we must send a message to John Boehner, who is likely to become speaker of the House, and his anti-choice allies. We are not going to stand by while they attack our right to choose. Starting in January, here's what John Boehner and his anti-choice followers want to do:

- Push the new “Stupak on Steroids” bill. This bill is even worse than the original Stupak ban in health reform. It would

ban coverage of abortion in the new system and impose a tax on Americans with private insurance plans that include abortion coverage. (Keep in mind, 87 percent of private plans include such coverage.)

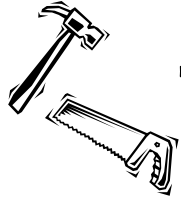
- Repeal the health-reform law. It's outrageous. Our opponents have threatened to overturn the health-care law, which promises major improvements in women's access to birth control and prenatal care services.

- Revive the failed, Bush-era

"abstinence-only" programs that censored discussion of birth control.

- Cut funding for family-planning programs that provide women access to basic health care, such as birth control and cancer screening.
- Reinstate the abortion ban on low-income D.C. residents by usurping the ability of elected city leaders to decide how to spend local funds.

Source: NARAL Pro-Choice America alert, 11/3/10 CAN@ProChoiceAmerica.org



Sawznhammers

In Irish, "muirheartaigh" means "navigator"

Peace by pieces

Almost anything you do will seem insignificant, and it is terribly important that you do it
—Gandhi

John Morearty

Bamboozled by billionaires or not, the people voted. Here are some good signs:

Elections

Dennis Cardoza, who voted for an Afghan War pullout date, was handily re-elected, while Jerry McNerney voted for endless war and barely squeaked by. Encourage Cardoza, suggest McNerney be faithful to his base. Voters saw through two rich flimflammers, and re-elected Barbara Boxer and Jerry Brown. As the new Gov says, "let's move through breakdowns to breakthroughs." Voters re-elected John Chiang, who knows workers need wages, and Debra Bowen, who insisted on paper ballots.

In Stockton, solid Councilwoman Susan Eggman rolls on. Brilliant progressive Sara Cazares made it to the SUSD board, and we expect real education for all our young.

Catholic Bishop Stephen Blaire refrained from telling us how to vote (unlike on the infamous Proposition 8). He did urge us, concerning the infamous Prop. 23, to reflect on our moral responsibility to be stewards of the earth. Thanks, bishop!

Barack Obama says we must create jobs by bipartisan investment to rebuild America's infrastructure. Tax cuts for the rich won't accomplish that; big corporations can make more money exporting jobs.

Our precious endangered young

Jesuit priest Greg Boyle of Los Angeles had the crowd laughing and crying with tales of young gangsters he's been loving like family for twenty years. "Kinship" is the key, he says; service and compassion will not endure, unless we recognize that we and the least outsider among us are kin. No one

is worth less than anyone else, in "the expansive heart of God."

Boyle's Homeboy Industries runs businesses where former enemies work together, earning honest money for their families: Homeboy Silkscreen, Homeboy Bakery, Homeboy-Homegirl Merchandising, Homeboy Maintenance, and "Homegirl Café, where women with records, young ladies from rival gangs, waitresses with attitude, will gladly take your order."

"G dog" also arranges for lasers and doctors to remove more than four thousand tattoos a year. As he says, no one wants a waiter with "F... THE WORLD" on his forehead to inquire, "Would you like fries with that?"

Greg's book *Tattoos on the Heart: the Power of Boundless Compassion* is a heartening swirl of funny stories and true wisdom from modern poets, medieval Christian woman mystics, rabbis, the Dalai Lama, Rumi and Hafez, and of course homies and homegirls. The book's available at Homeboy-Industries.org; the author donates all his net proceeds to Homeboy Industries. Don't miss Laura Bush's tour of Homeboy, or a visit by Greg and three hairy scary dudes to a grand buffet at the White House.

Here at home, a youth-run silkscreen business-tee shirts, banners and so on-is under discussion for the unused storefront space in the Podesto Teen Center, just north of the Chavez library. The city is currently taking bids to manage the Teen Center. To find out who's bidding, or to express your opinion, email the selection committee: tom.nelson@ci.Stockton.ca.us, or michelle.kaufman@ci.Stockton.ca.us.

Community farms in Stockton

PUNTES nonprofit finally has land for its first ORGANIC URBAN COMMUNITY FARM. Puentes just signed with the Port of Stockton for two and half acres (no toxic soil!) in Boggs Tract, west of

I-5 and south of the channel, an old working class neighborhood with strong solidarity. The contract is for five years, renewable. The rent, zilch!! Thank you, Port.

It's a perfect place for folks to begin growing organic food together, feeding families, strengthening bonds. Benefits will extend to the whole city—eventually Puentes intends a farmers' market there, gardening workshops led by master gardeners, seasonal celebrations to which we'll all be invited. Imagine drums and flutes, children and elders dancing, maybe barefoot....

Puentes is led by young visionary Jeremy Terhune and a board of seven (I'm a member). The Puentes Community Advisory Committee, a highly experienced group of seven, will be hands-in-the-dirt. Neighborhood families are signing up. Thanks to the generosity of local businesses and the Unitarian Church, we have insurance and money for some starter tools.

But RIGHT NOW MONEY FOR A FENCE IS NEEDED—PERHAPS JUST A TEMPORARY FENCE, because we have creative ideas and recycled materials for an attractive permanent fence, which will take time. As soon as a basic fence is up, Peoples Gardeners can start building the soil, putting seeds in the ground. Now's the season!

If you can help with tax-deductible donations or labor for a fence, please call Rosemary Atkinson, 478-4380.

Urban farms are sprouting all over the country. Puentes intends more gardens.

Survival and transformation

Barack Obama is trying not to be assassinated, argues Catholic peace scholar James Douglass, in a learned and scary article in the current issue of Tikkun magazine: "JFK, Obama and the Unspeakable," <http://www.tikkun.org/article.php/november2010douglass>. Starting with the Bay of Pigs, John Kennedy defied the steel barons, the generals

Sudan: opportunity to prevent atrocities

On January 9, 2011, voters of southern Sudan will decide on a referendum to secede from the North and form their own country. *That decision and the struggles for power and resources that may follow—between North and South, and within the South itself—could trigger a new wave of violent conflict.

Many of FCNL's partners here in Washington have long warned that the referendum, part of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between southern Sudanese rebels and the Khartoum government, could reignite violent conflict. Preventive diplomacy and active engagement by the United States and the international community are urgently needed to help avert a new chapter of killing in Sudan.

Some members of Congress and officials in the administration are actively working to prevent violence and mass atrocities in Sudan. The State Department is using the new Civilian Response Corps to send "conflict prevention teams" to the South in the lead up

to the referendum. The National Security Council is planning possible response scenarios if violence does erupt. In Congress, Senators Kerry (MA) and Brownback (KS) introduced the Sudan Peace and Stability Act of 2010 at the end of September. The bill spells out the objectives and resources of U.S. policy in Sudan, and emphasizes the need for all parties to commit to peace through the referendum and beyond.

Preventing violent conflict in Sudan also makes a compelling case for S. Con. Res. 71, the Senate resolution to increase U.S. civilian capacities to prevent genocide and mass atrocities. FCNL supports this measure, which is gaining traction with 11 cosponsors and more expected when Congress returns from recess. *Growing bipartisan support for S. Con. Res. 71 as well as the Sudan Peace and Stability Act shows new attention in Congress to the prevention of violence and atrocities.

Source: FCNL release 10/29/10. FCNL, 245 Second St NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330



and the CIA. But on Afghanistan, Obama knuckled under to General Petraeus and the corporations; as Petraeus said, there are trillions of dollars worth of minerals to be extracted there. Will Petraeus be "drafted" for president in 2012?

Douglass notes that Obama said "real change will not come from Washington—it will come when the people, united, bring it to Washington." Obama had a picture of Gandhi on his office wall—but he remembers what happened to Gandhi.

In the same issue of Tikkun, Jon Perkins ("Confessions of an Economic Hit Man") says predatory capitalists now rule the world. Obama can't stop them, it's up to us. "If they're not responsible, don't buy their stuff. Email them, and tell them why."

BOYCOTT. It's as simple as that.

"Tikkun" means "to mend, repair and transform the world." The magazine is an astonishing resource. Published every two months by Rabbi Michael Lerner and the Network of Spiritual Progressives, it's an intense, fearless and illuminating journal of politics, spirituality and culture, by Jews, Christians and many others. I just subscribed, and my mind is sparking.

Holiday gifts

A subscription to Tikkun? Jim Douglass's book "JFK and the Unspeakable," now in paperback? "Tattoos on the Heart"? A fence for Puentes? A donation to our community radio KYNJ? Crafts from the Peaceful Holiday Fair, December 3-4?

Peace on earth to you. Shanti, salaam, shalom, happy new year.

Let's pass some laws before the Republicans head into town

Dear Congressional Democrats:

Welcome back to our nation's capital for your one final session of the 111th Congress. Come January, the Republicans will take over the House while the Democrats will retain control of the Senate. But Dems—here's something I don't understand: Why do you look all sullen and depressed? Clearly you're not aware of one very important fact: you are still completely, totally, legally in charge! When (and if, mostly if) you wake up to the reality that you can do whatever you want for the next seven weeks, you will realize that you have two clear options:

1. You can continue your "Sit Quietly and Hope No One Hits Me" strategy and thus lay the groundwork for an even bigger butt-kicking two years from now; Or...

2. You can actually use the power you hold for the next seven weeks and have the Senate pass the legislation that the House has already passed!

Wake up, Democrats! You are in an awesome position right now. The House of Representatives, in this current session of Congress, has already passed an astounding 420 bills since January of 2009—420 bills that are just sitting there on the Senate leader's desk. The Senate has refused to take up these House bills because they've been afraid of a Republican filibuster. Well, Dems, here's the truth: You can pass all of these bills and turn them into law right now, today, by simply calling for a majority vote of 50 Senators (plus Vice President/President of the Senate Joe Biden).

Yes, you will need to change the filibuster rules. So do it. You have the votes. And yes, the Republicans will scream bloody murder—so let them. Make them. Let America see them in all their hateful, spiteful ways—it will act as a beautiful coming attraction trailer for all the world to see. Let all of America watch the

Republicans as they try to derail democracy by holding up a bunch of bills that nearly every American I know would want to see as the law of the land. Many of these bills are so safe, so innocuous, I have a hard time understanding what the heck the problem was in the first place. Like the bill that's already passed the House to name a post office after Jimmy Stewart. I know, I know, the idea of a post office named after Jimmy Stewart is really, really, incredibly controversial and divisive and somebody on the other side of the aisle might yell at you. Be brave, Democrats!

There's a whole slew of these bills the House has passed. Some are no-brainers; others are absolutely necessary. You can pass them in the next seven weeks. And because you Dems seem to have a problem with properly naming your bills and communicating effectively with the average American, I have helpfully renamed them for you so they sound like what they actually are—things people would really want. Here's a partial list of the bills the House has already passed and are now just in need of approval by the U.S. Senate:

- The "Give Mom a Raise Act," officially known as the "Paycheck Fairness Act," which addresses pay gaps between men and women. Now, who out there still believes women should be paid less than men? I really want to see Republicans try to stop this one.

- The "Don't Amputate Our Feet Act," aka the "Eliminating Disparities in Diabetes Prevention Access and Care Act of 2009." Which Republican will stand to speak out in favor of diabetes?

- The "Pay Up, BP Act," aka the "Audit the BP Fund Act," which makes sure BP is paying people hurt by the Gulf oil spill as quickly as possible—and makes BP pay the cost of keeping track of where the money's going.

- The "Stop Foreigners From

Hitting Grandma Act," aka the "Elder Abuse Victims Act." This doesn't really have anything to do with foreigners, but our fellow Americans seem to automatically dislike people from other countries, so this should help just in case the Republicans think an "elders abuse victims act" doesn't sound patriotic enough.

- The "Let's Try Not to Destroy Planet Earth Act" (aka Cap and Trade, a lousy half-way measure to begin with, but about the best you can expect from you Democrats these days).

- The "National Bombing Prevention Act" (it's actually already called that, which is hard to improve on).

Then there are also things that neither the House or Senate has dealt with. These would take more work during the next two months, but that's what highly-caffeinated "energy" drinks are for.

Need more? Among the "to do" items on the list:

- Extend emergency unemployment benefits

- Repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell

- Pass the DREAM Act (to provide young immigrants with a path to citizenship)

- Pass the Disclose Act to force corporations to say what politicians they're giving money to

- Pass the Employee Free Choice Act, so we can have unions again in the U.S.

- Pass Rep. Donna Edwards' constitutional amendment that—in the wake of the Citizens United decision—would give Congress the power to regulate corporate spending on elections

So what do you say, Democrats? What's the worst that could happen—you'd lose an election? You already did that! C'mon, here's your one last gutsy chance to show us that you're made of something other than wish and wash.

Yours,
Michael Moore

Source: MichaelMoore.com 11/12/10

Upcoming Miracle Mile Events



Nov 15–Dec 15

Miracle on the Mile

The Mile is partnering with the Stockton Shelter for the Homeless. Mile stores interested in participating will have a collection barrel at their location to accept donations of items desperately needed by families at the shelter (unwrapped gifts, personal hygiene, twin sheets & blanket, pillows, diapers/baby wipes, cotton towels, canned food, new socks). The Shelter will provide the barrel and will arrange all collection pick ups.

We'll be advertising what locations have the barrels so please let us know ASAP of your interest in participating. Also, if you care to offer customers who bring in donations some discount or special offer, let us know that, too. We'll cap off the event with a special Holiday event on December 15 at participating stores.

Sat, Dec 4

Starlight Night Holiday Stroll

3pm–5pm—Enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, cider, marsh mellow roast, live music, Santa and Tree Lighting along with snow (yes, we truck it in!) at Tuxedo and Pacific

7 pm—Enjoy 3D & HD Xtreme ski film "Light the Wick" at the Empire Theatre. It's a benefit for the Stagg and Edison snow sports clubs. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$17.50 at the door, 7pm & 9pm showings.

It's a city-wide celebration! For Starlight Night, the city has collaborated with shopping districts in Stockton to make Stockton a valley destination on December 4.

- Lincoln Center, 10am-3pm—Santa and Carriage Rides

- Stone Creek Center, 12pm-4pm—Santa's Reindeer and Kat Country 103.3 FM

- Sherwood Mall, 4pm-5:30pm—Radio Disney on site

- Miracle Mile—3pm-5pm—Cookies, hot chocolate Santa, tree lighting and SNOW!

- Downtown Stockton—5 pm–8pm—Claus Crawl, Mayor's tree lighting and West Marina Yacht Delta Reflections lighted boat parade.

The RTD trolley and express buses will run for FREE from Lincoln Center to downtown with stops on the Mile from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm on December 4.

Info: Emily Ballus—Emily@stocktonmiraclemile.com or 209.948.6453

Dec/Jan Calendar

Editor's note: if your event isn't listed, let us know. Send all copy to: bgudici@caltel.com by the 7th of every month.

Thur, Nov 25

6th annual Run and Walk Against Hunger benefitting the Emergency Food Bank. Ports Ballpark, 404 W Fremont St, Stockton. \$10-\$20 entry fee. 464-7369.

Thru Dec 3

Steve Pereira presents Beyond the Obvious. Reception Nov 19, 5-8 pm. M-F 10-5. Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber Ave, Stockton. 463-4033

Thru Feb 6

Necessity's Children: 150 years of local inventions at the Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. Wed-Sun 1:30-5 pm. 1st and 3rd Thurs 1:30-9 pm. \$5 adult 18 & older, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10/first Saturday free. 940-6316 info@hagginmuseum.org

Thru Dec 16

2010 Photography — Altered Landscapes, 18 photographers/34 images. Tu 11am-4pm, W-Th 11am-6:30pm, F 11am-1pm. Reception: 10/7, 5-7 pm. SJ Delta College, LH Horton Jr Gallery, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 954-5507.

Nov 19-Dec 12

Oklahoma! Thu 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat 8 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton \$15-\$25. 473-2424.

Fri, Nov 19

SJ Delta College Vocal Jazz concert, 7:30 pm. Tillie Lweis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Pacific Jazz Ensemble, 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, \$8 general, \$5 seniors, students free

Sun, Nov 21

Symphonic Wind Ensemble & University Concert Band, 2:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, \$8 general, \$5 seniors, students free

Mon, Nov 22

SJ Delta College Jazz Band concert, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Tue, Nov 23

22nd annual Tree of Lights lighting ceremony, 6 pm. To dedicate a light in honor or memory of a loved one, call 922-0242 or visit www.hospicesj.org. Info: 922-0242.

Thu, Nov 25

6th annual Run and Walk Against Hunger benefitting the Emergency Food Bank. Ports Ballpark, 404 W Fremont St, Stockton. \$35 entry fee. 464-7369.

Mon, Nov 29

Delta Sierra Club meeting, 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

Thu, Dec 2

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Fri, Dec 3

24rd annual Peaceful Holiday Gift Fair, featuring peace gifts (see p 1). 4-9pm. Entertainment, refreshments and a good cause. Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free admission. 462-3489.

Christmas at the Cathedral, 7:30 pm. Cathedral of the Annunciation, 425 Magnolia St, Stockton. \$8 general, \$5 seniors, free students with ID.

Sat, Dec 4

24rd annual Peaceful Holiday Gift Fair, featuring peace gifts (see p 1). 10am-2pm. Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free admission. 462-3489.

Kurt Elling Jazz Concert, 8 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25-\$30.

Sat-Sun, Dec 4-5, 11-12, 18-19

ZooLights at Micke Grove Zoo. 6-8:30 pm. Wagon rides, games, crafts, music and free refreshments. Bring canned food or a coat, get one free kid admission/family. Micke Grove Park, 11793 N Micke Grove Rd, Lodi. \$6 general, \$4 kids 2-10, under 3 free. All funds raised benefit youth education. 331-2010.

Sat-Sun, Dec 4-5

19th annual Festival of Trees, with over 70 uniquely decorated trees, kids activities, entertainment and more. 10 am-4 pm. SJ County Historical Museum, 11793 N Micke Grove Rd, Lodi. \$8 general, \$1 kids 2-10, under 2 free. All funds raised benefit youth education. 331-2005.

Tue, Dec 7

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7-9 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

SJ Delta College Holiday Band concert, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Wed, Dec 8

SJ Delta College Christmas Choir concert, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Thu, Dec 9

Single Payer San Joaquin meeting, 6:30 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. bailey_hcasj@sbcglobal.net

Fri-Sun, Dec 10-12

Nutcracker Ballet, 7:30. 2:30 Sun. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, Stockton. \$18 general, \$10 seniors/kids 12 & under. http://go.pacific.edu/MusicTickets.

Sun, Dec 12

Stockton Symphony Holiday Pops concert with the Stockton Chorale & Eric Margiore. 3 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151

Anti-racism film series

Mon, Nov 29—Building the Beloved Community

Based on a 2009 conference on Beloved Community in Denver. The film features Unitarian Universalist voices plus speakers from Class Action, a national non-profit organization that inspires action to end classism; and Dr. Vincent Harding, scholar-activist and founder of the Veterans of Hope Project at Iliff School of Theology.

For more information, contact The Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig, Minister, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton (Sat-Wed): 209-466-7743.

Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$20-\$55. Students \$10. 951-0196.

Thur, Dec 16

Holiday Music at the Haggin Museum with singer Rodrigo Cortes, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. Wed-Sun 1:30-5 pm. 1st and 3rd Thurs 1:30-9 pm. \$5 adult 18 & older, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10/first Saturday free. 940-6315

Fri, Dec 17

Stockton Chorale Holiday Concert "Ringing in the Holidays," 7:30 pm. Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$20 adult/\$5 students. 951-6494.

Sat, Dec 18

89.5 Valley Community Radio networking meeting, 9-11 am, Blackwater Cafe, Yosemite Ave, Stockton. 467-4455.

The Nutcracker performed by the Capitol Ballet Company with guest dancers from the Stockton Ballet School. 2 pm Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$12-\$18. 954-5110.

Stockton Chorale Lodi Concert "Ringing in the Holidays," 3-5 pm. St John's Episcopal Church, 1055 S Lower Sacramento Rd, Lodi. \$20 adult/\$5 students. 951-6494.

Thu, Jan 6

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Tue, Jan 11

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7-9 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

Sat, Jan 15

89.5 Valley Community Radio networking meeting, 9-11 am, Blackwater Cafe, Yosemite Ave, Stockton. 467-4455.

First Mondays

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm, Towers Building, 509 W Weber Ave, Stockton. ccgmem@gmail.com

Fourth Mondays

Delta Sierra Club meeting, 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

Second Tuesdays

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7-9 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

Second Thursdays

Single Payer San Joaquin meeting, 6:30 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. bailey_hcasj@sbcglobal.net

Third Saturdays

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 9-11 am, Blackwater Cafe. 467-4455.

Fourth Saturdays

Greater Lodi Area Democrats (GLAD) breakfast meeting, 8:30 am, Dee Dee's Family Dining, 1170 S. Cherokee Ln, Lodi. (No meetings in Nov. and Dec.) 368-6493 or 712-8866.

Mondays

Jazz night at the Blackwater, 912 N Yosemite St, Stockton.

Thursdays

Stand up and speak out! Demonstrate for peace. Plenty of happy honks! Pacific Avenue north of Delta stoplight, every Thursday 5-6 PM. Signs provided, or bring your own. Free parking at Sherwood Mall. Info John 464-3326 or Ria 462-3340.

Saturdays

Crosstown Freeway Farmers Market, under the freeway between El Dorado & San Joaquin, Stockton. 7-11, or when sold out. 943-1830

Volunteers needed to distribute Connections to well-established routes. About two hours per month. Easy and fun! Call Dean or Marcia Savage, 209-339-1599.

Talking It Through

EDUCATION • ENVIRONMENT • POLITICS • CULTURE

Peace & Justice Network sponsors two half-hour shows:

"Let's Talk" hosted by Margee Ensign features speakers at University of the Pacific and elsewhere documentaries of important community meetings and events. Mondays 6 pm

"Talking It Through" hosted by Sammy Nunez features live discussions of important community issues, especially with young people. Mondays at 6:30 pm.

Both shows are produced by Peace and Justice volunteer Vince Kotecki on SJTV: Stockton, Lodi and Manteca cable channel 26.

For up to the minute listings of current shows, see our website: www.pjnsj.org, click on Talking It Through.

Earth Day Grant Applications 2009-10

Shannon Easter, Lathrop High School, 9-12 Grades

Create a five section compost bin to demonstrate the process of decomposition/composting and engage LHS students and teachers in the process. In the future provide information and support to other schools, tours and collaboration.

Donna Larsen, Taylor Leadership Academy, 2nd Grade

Purchase parent plants, then students will learn about plant propagation by doing it themselves. A field trip to a local greenhouse is also planned.

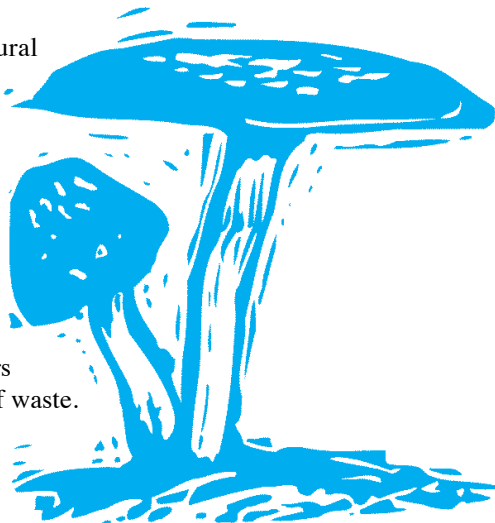
Carrie Sills, Field of Dreams, 4, 5, 6 Grades

Use geocaching to connect students with nature. Visit Yosemite

National Park and Natural Bridges State Park and hide a cache from other participants to find. Students will pick up trash along the way and will locate the cache will be near a sample of nonrecyclable waste and will use the cache description to make others aware of the problems of waste.

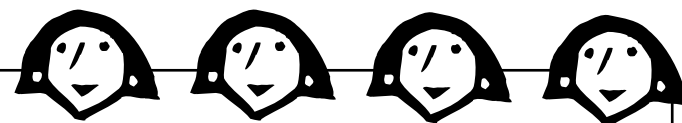
Elizabeth Coffey, Fremont Elementary School, 2nd Grade

Working together a class of 2nd graders and a class of students with learning and behavioral disabilities will restore existing plants and create new planters for the hallways of the school.



Kim Hutson, Vinewood Elementary School, 6th

Field trip to explore the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta, Walnut Grove cross channel gates, Locke, Hog Island, with science activities at each stop.



Time for nominations

The San Joaquin County Commission on the Status of Women created the Susan B. Anthony Women of Achievement Awards to honor women who have excelled in their chosen category, and have, through their dedication, talent and untiring efforts, raised the status of humankind in San Joaquin County. Nomination packets are now available for individuals, organizations, and businesses to place women's names in nomination. Award candidates must be current residents of San Joaquin County or be employed in the county. There are 18 categories in which a candidate may be nominated. Packets can be acquired from Barbara Jantzen, Delta Typing Services, 3232 North El Dorado Street, Stockton 95204 or by calling her at 948-2583. The nominations are due by noon Friday, January 7, and are to be mailed to SJCCSW, Post Office Box 4443, Stockton 95204. Late deliveries will not be accepted. The winners will be announced in mid January.

The 36th Banquet will be held on Tuesday, February 15 at the Stockton Golf and Country Club at 6 p.m. Reservations at \$45 per person or \$360 per table of eight are due by January 31 and February 7th respectively, and may be mailed to SJCCSW. Your canceled check is your receipt. Tickets will be held at the reservation desk the evening of the event. No tickets will be sold at the door. Tables for past recipients are available by request. For reservation information you may call Kay Ruhstaller at 461-2996 or Bonnie Mansfield at 369-7658.



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New START treaty fact sheet

START agreement history

The original START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) agreement between the United States and Russia expired on December 5, 2009. The treaty was originally negotiated in the 1980s and early 1990s under Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush's presidencies, and it was ratified in the U.S. Senate in 1992.

The treaty allowed for inspections and information sharing between the U.S. and Russia for verification purposes. It also allowed for no more than 6,000 deployed nuclear weapons and no more than 1,600 delivery systems for each country. With the expiration of the treaty in December, the verification procedures also expired, making it necessary that the New START treaty be ratified as soon as possible, if verification were to continue.

New START follow-on agreement details

As in the original START agreement, verification is a crucial

element of the New START treaty. Many of the verification methods in the original treaty will be continued. Improved verification methods will be added. Examples of improved verification methods are information sharing regarding missile tests and on the ground inspections. It does not limit missile shield systems in either country.

The New START treaty sets limits on the number of deployed strategic weapons in each country. Each country is limited to 1,550 deployed strategic weapons, a 30 percent reduction from the "Moscow Treaty" signed with Russia in May 2002—called SORT (Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty). SORT expires 2012.

START follow-on agreement benefits

The New START treaty has strong bipartisan support. Various foreign policy experts support the agreement, including former Secretary of State George Schultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, former Secretary

of State Henry Kissinger, former Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Sam Nunn, former national security advisor Brent Scowcroft, and former START negotiator Ambassador Linton Brooks.

The treaty enjoys this support because it will make the United States safer, as it ensures continued inspections and verification and because it takes another step to further reduce the number of strategic weapons in U.S. and Russian arsenals.

Also, the New START treaty will help maintain a stable strategic relationship with Russia. Improved verification procedures and increased data sharing will build confidence that the nuclear threat has been reduced, improving the relationship between the two countries.

ACTION: Contact your senators to encourage them to support the New START treaty.

Source: FCNL Friends Committee on National Legislation <http://www.fcnl.org> 7/29/2010 FCNL, 245 Second Street NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330