

## **Some Information Your Neighbors would Like to Share with YOU**

Neighbors for Peace and Justice, San Fernando Valley

### **Bush Policies Slap American Workers in the Face**

- More than 2.7 million private-sector jobs have been lost since Bush took office in 2001.
- Bush's 2004 tax cut package primarily benefits millionaires, and will destroy 750,000 more jobs over the next 10 years, according to the Economic Policy Institute.
- The top 1% of Americans--those making \$337,000/year or more, will get, on average, tax breaks worth \$103,899, according to Citizens for Tax Justice.
- The bottom 20 percent--those making \$16,000/year--will get all of \$45 over the four year period. (About 2.5 tanks of gas for a fuel-efficient vehicle)
- Those between \$16,000 and \$28,000 will get a total of \$299 (1/3 of one month's mortgage payment?)
- More than 6 million families that make between \$10,500 and \$26,625 will be frozen out of the promised \$1,000 child credit, which means 12 million children lost out.

Senator Kent Conrad from North Dakota said " the tax cut is irresponsible as fiscal policy ... ineffective in stimulating the economy and is utterly unfair. It drives us deeper into debt that will not encourage economic growth, but will hurt it." These huge budget deficits, however, serve an ideological purpose for the government: to justify shrinking spending on social programs, even while lavishly increasing spending on military defense.

Bush's proposed changes to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) would destroy overtime pay protections. These changes would erode the 40-hour workweek, and could affect 80 million workers now protected by the FLSA.

#### **Need More information?**

Call your local AFL-CIO office or [www.aflcio.org/corporateamerica/paywatch](http://www.aflcio.org/corporateamerica/paywatch)

Find your local SEIU (Service Employees International Union) office

Citizens for Tax Justice: 202-626-3780

### **Concerned about our Environment, and What We'll Leave for our Kids?**

Even before his inauguration, Mr. Bush began filling critical administrative posts with people who had ties to polluting industries--people who regard the environment as a resource to be exploited, not to be preserved and protected. In 2001, we'd thought we'd seen the worst, but he's not finished yet...look at his record so far:

1999-2000--George W. Bush received \$1.4 million in contributions from Big Oil and Gas--more than any other candidate in a decade.

January 2001--Bush froze action on President Clinton's "roadless" policy which protected 58.5 million acres of National forests from the encroachments by cars, trucks and off-road vehicles

February 2001--Gale Norton, anti-environmentalist from the Mountain States Legal Foundation and protegee of James Watt, becomes Secretary of the Interior. She argues that the Endangered Species Act is unconstitutional.

April 2001--The Snowmobile industry attempts to persuade the Bush Administration to reverse the ban on snowmobiles in Yellowstone National Park. At the same time requirements are weakened to make air conditioners more energy efficient.

August 2001--Congress passes the Bush energy proposal, which includes plans to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Secretary Norton "mistakenly" asserts that local caribou herds breed primarily outside the refuge.

September 2001--Bush presses Congress for an enormous (\$15 billion) bailout for the airline industry, but ignores more modest proposals for energy efficient railroad projects.

December 2001--Bush and the Republicans in Congress fight for an "economic stimulus package" that gives \$2.4 billion worth of tax breaks, credits and loopholes for General Electric, Chevron, Texaco and Enron.

February 2002--The Administration's feeble answer to the Kyoto Protocol is to propose a deceptive "Clear Skies" plan

which abandons governing emissions of three major pollutants--mercury, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide.

April 2002--The Senate version of the Bush energy plan dismisses and increase in fuel efficiency standards and supports more production from coal and other polluting sources

May 2002--Mining and construction companies can now dump waste into streams and rivers, including that generated from coal mining, after mining companies laterally rip the tops off mountains.

July 2002--White House admits greenhouse gases will increase under its policies, but still refuses to force industries to cut emissions of those gases which lead to global warming.

September 2002--Bush Administration attempts to rewrite Clean Water Act, in order to remove many wetlands, streams and other "isolated" waters from protection under the law.

October 2002--EPA data shows that the agency has begun 50% fewer enforcement actions under Bush than it did under President Clinton

November 2002--Ban on snowmobile use at Yellowstone is overturned. Thousands of Americans supported the ban, scheduled to begin in 2003.

Bush "Environmentalism" Continues....

February 2003--Bush's 2004 budget slashes funding to the EPA by nearly 40 percent.

June 2003--Christine Whitman "resigns" as Head of EPA, in order to spend more time "with family"

**More information at:**

Friends of the Earth - [www.foe.org/](http://www.foe.org/)

Earthjustice - [www.earthjustice.org](http://www.earthjustice.org)

Natural Resources Defense Council - [www.nrdc.org/](http://www.nrdc.org/)

## **Our Civil Liberties Must NEVER be Taken for Granted!**

On October 26, 2001, President Bush signed into law the USA PATRIOT Act, which forfeits many rights guaranteed to citizens and noncitizens by our Constitution's Bill of Rights. The PATRIOT Act and its next stage (PATRIOT Act II) were imposed on us supposedly, to help fight terrorism within our country.

Together these Acts will:

- Give the FBI and CIA greater rights to wiretap phones, monitor our email.
- Survey medical, financial and student records and
- Break into homes and offices without our prior notification
- Allow noncitizens to be deported or detained indefinitely without judicial appeal, and without access to legal counsel
- Allow eavesdropping on conversations between lawyers and clients held in federal custody
- Allow targeting of domestic groups and individuals
- Allow the Administration to set up military tribunals for suspected terrorists

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Dozens of cities towns and counties in more than 20 states have begun passing resolutions declaring their communities "Civil Liberties Safe Zones". You can help! Organize!

- The more cities and towns that pass resolutions, the greater our voice will be at the national level.
- Join the Civil Liberties Coalition here in Los Angeles.
- Educate your community about the threats to our civil liberties that the PATRIOT Act(s) poses.

## **Education?**

### **Bush Policies Leave Millions of Children Behind!**

While Mr. Bush claims that education is one of his highest priorities, his 2004 budget fails to adequately fund No Child Left Behind Act reforms, disadvantaged and disabled students, after-school programs, and eliminates 46 different programs, including rural education, support for small schools and drop-out prevention.

Will there be significant funding to give schools a fighting chance to meet the high academic standards required by the law? Is the president really committed to making education reform a reality, or has he failed to recognize that adequate equitable funding is foundation upon which excellent public schools are built?

Here are some facts:

- The president's increases for the Title I program will not fully fund the program--it will receive \$6 billion less than the president promised--leaving at least 6 million disadvantaged children behind!
- At the president's rate of increase, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) would never be fully funded. That means, a 1st grader who was in school when IDEA was first passed in 1975, will be 69 years old by the time this programs rate of increase would even come close to fully funding special education.
- "Robbing Peter to pay Paul" means cutting \$400 million from the 21st Century After School Program, 563,000 children latch-key children from after-school programs, 22,000 Limited English Proficient (LEP) children from bilingual programs and training 15,000 fewer teachers than last year.
- Under the President's education budget, funding for Perkins loan programs would be eliminated, as would other state scholarship programs, TRIO, and Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). Pell grant maximums will remain at \$4,100. Without adjustment for inflation, fewer students will be served under these programs.

## **Promises?**

### **How HEALTHY is your Health Care These Days?**

In his state of the Union Address, Mr. Bush made a fiscal commitment to fulfill his promise of "quality, affordable health care for all." How well does his new budget plan ensure that?

A few facts:

- \$400 billion has been budgeted for both Medicare restructuring and prescription drug coverage over the next 10 years. Unfortunately, this amount only covers a very meager share of senior's prescription costs which are projected to total \$2 trillion over the same 10-year period.
- The same proposals are designed to coerce seniors into HMO's, create a block grant in lieu of Medicaid coverage for millions of low income families, causing seniors to lose their trusted doctors, pressuring them into choosing between drug coverage and the doctors they have come to depend on. These will also lead to many of the most vulnerable people joining the ranks of the uninsured. Bush's goal? Privatizing Medicare.
- "Loan sharking " to the states with modest upfront money will lead to much less fiscal flexibility in future years. Mr. Bush seems to want cash-strapped states (like California) to buy into a bad deal, in order to receive quick money now. This merely forces states to ration care by limiting the number of people enrolled in Medicaid, reducing services covered, and increasing the amount of money low income people must pay.
- The \$89 billion health tax credits budget in the form of block grants over 10 years is far too small to make health coverage affordable for low-wage workers it is supposed to target. It cannot be used to continue health coverage through COBRA, for those recently unemployed.

Does any of this sound like his promise to reduce the number of uninsured Americans?