

Public Official and CEO Accountability Project 2012

Accountability Required. By Reasonable Means Necessary.

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE AND APPROACHES

- 1) We will engage the general public in order to hold those accountable who betray the common good by attempting to hijack the American Dream and impede sociopolitical progress, and who demonstrate disregard for basic human rights due to greed, unjust policies and unsustainable practices that result in extreme income disparities and related inequalities. *When justice is compromised, peace will be too!*
- 2) We seek to help educate the public about sociopaths (also called psychopaths and pathological narcissists) who often are the sources of unfair practices (systemic, group and individual abuses-of-power) used to oppress, manipulate and mislead the masses, often through efforts designed to divide and conquer -- for purposes of power and control. *When power corrupts, the corrupt require consequences!*

INTRODUCTION

Anyone can use these Powerpoint slides (free of charge) to engage in activism, help educate one's family, friends, co-workers or community. The Public Official and CEO Accountability Project (POCAP) focuses on raising awareness. This allows anyone who wants to address the issues and concerns we raise to take personal responsibility to facilitate a project like this rather than wait on leadership from someone else. We provide all the basics here – facts, perspectives and resource information to use as discussion points. You won't need to invest any money to do this, and you can engage with others based on your own comfort level. Some people do not like public speaking but would be willing to post this presentation on their blog, share info on Facebook or email copies of the presentation PDF to friends. Whether you are a student who wants to present this information to your class, a homemaker who wants to share this with your church, a professional who teaches, a grassroots activist or a community volunteer, we simply ask that you share information for the purpose of building bridges based on common human needs.

Simply share information. Be open to diverse perspectives. Respect the right of others to come to their own conclusions, and in their own time.

Disclaimer: Various individuals and organizations are listed, cited or quoted in different content areas included in this presentation package. Their information exists in the public domain and requires attribution and citation of them as sources. This does not in any way constitute their individual or organizational endorsement of **the Public Official and CEO Accountability Project (POCAP)**.

Individuals and organizations are cited strictly for the educational information they offer in various contexts relevant to goals and objectives of the POCAP. The comments of diverse sources also offer an opportunity for individuals to do additional research to learn more about the subject matter that various experts and organizations offer.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Fannie LeFlore, who is coordinating information for this project on a voluntary basis. She can be reached at fannie@leflorecommunications.com or 414-438-1534.

April 20, 2012

Letter to Concerned American Citizens and Diverse Activists

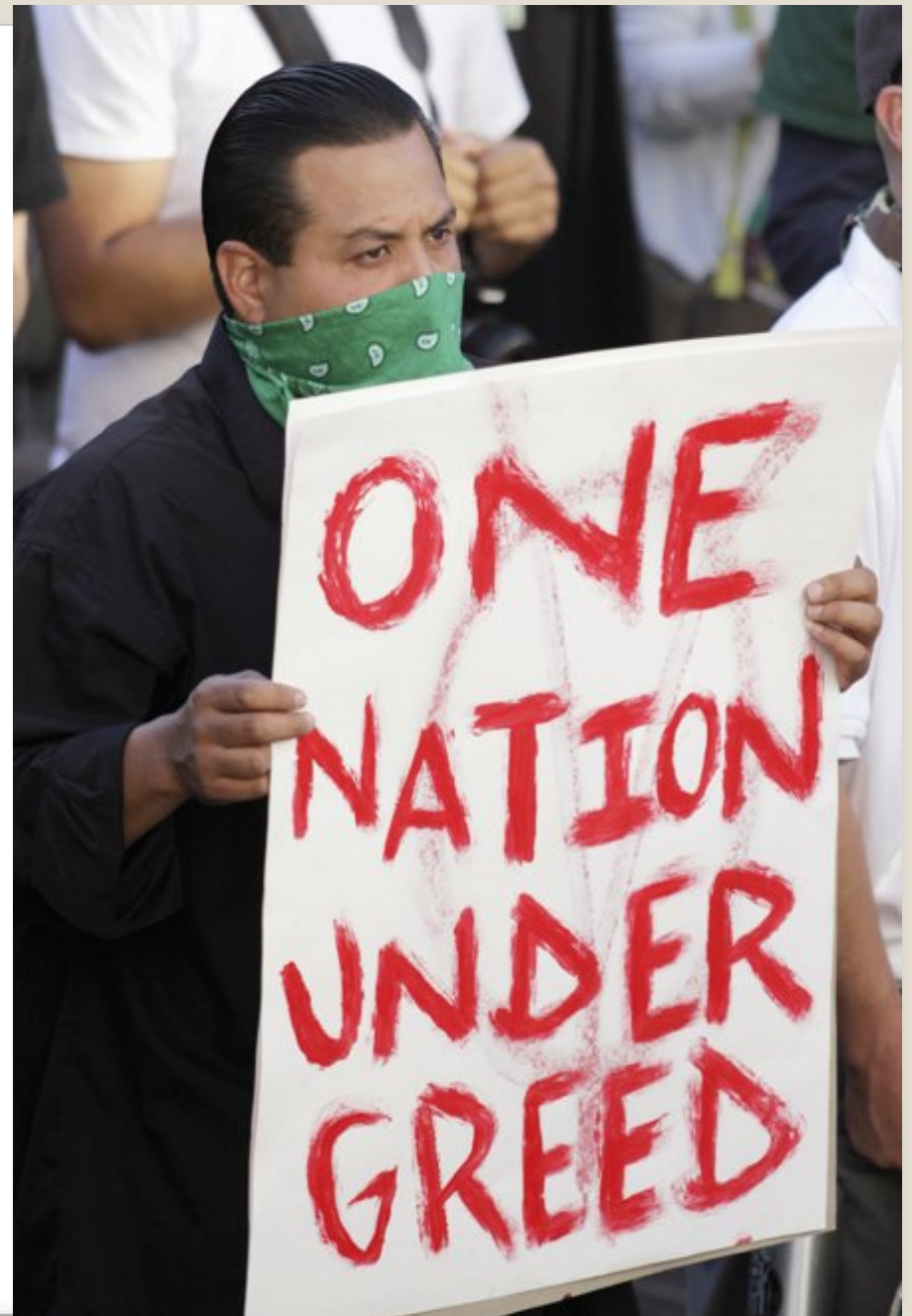
The purpose of the **Public Official and CEO Accountability Project** (outlined in this resource guide of 35 slides/pages, as an informational foundation for action) is to confront extreme inequalities in our society that severely impact the middle class and poor. We provide relevant information so concerned citizens won't have to start from scratch as they seek ways to make a difference, challenge the status quo and improve the communities where they live or work.

We are taking a firm stand to say that all of us matter, not just the wealthy! The idea for taking action was spurred by a series of articles at various progressive online news sites including OpEdNews.com, founded by Rob Kall, which publishes diverse writers who explore and debate a variety of issues affecting Americans and people across the world. Many OEN-OpEdNews.com contributors are deep thinkers, some activists and others actively-concerned citizens. It takes courage to confront tough issues. While diverse people won't agree on all things, that is OK. The key is focusing on our common needs in support of fundamental matters like fairness, ethics, freedom, democracy, social justice and human rights.

We also increasingly question the effectiveness of our country's current two-party political system, which often seems to provide a choice of voting for the "lesser evil." Whether you are Democrat, Republican or Independent, it is hoped that all of us keep questioning the status quo and challenging misinformation and lies promoted by politicians, corporations and mainstream media. The information presented here will help individuals and groups in their quest to develop strategies and take action. We all can move forward knowing that many organizations and individuals care about the same issues we do. We can boost each other up by remembering that we are not alone. We all seek to reclaim America's vision for a just society.

We envision more cooperation, joy and quality of life for those willing to do their fair share. This requires a societal foundation that allows and supports access to resources and opportunities for the diverse middle class and low-income people -- not just privileges for the few. We know that wealth itself is not the enemy per se. Betrayal of the common good, greed and abuses of power among those in positions of authority are what contribute to chaos in far too many lives. The time has come for change and progress. We can do it!

-- The Public Official and CEO Accountability Project, Founding Committee, April 20, 2012



Scenes from Occupy Wall Street, 2011 Protests (unknown sources for photos)

Severe Disparities in Income now Affecting U.S.A. Majority

Source of Information: AFL-CIO Report

<http://www.aflcio.org/Corporate-Watch/CEO-Pay-and-the-99/Trends-in-CEO-Pay>

CEO Pay Up Again: The average Chief Executive Officer (CEO) pay of companies in the S&P 500 Index rose to \$12.94 million in 2011.

Overall, the average level of CEO pay in the S&P 500 Index increased 13.9 percent in 2011, following a 22.8 percent increase in CEO pay in 2010.

- The ratio of CEO-to-worker pay between CEOs of the S&P 500 Index companies and U.S. workers widened to 380 times in 2011 from 343 times in 2010.
- In 1980, the average large company CEO received 42 times average worker's pay.
- In 2011, average wages increased just 2.8 percent and average worker pay totaled \$34,053.

According to an article from the Associated Press in Washington, D.C. (by Hope Yen, December 15, 2011): **"Squeezed by rising living costs, a record number of Americans - nearly 1 in 2 - have fallen into poverty or are scraping by on earnings that classify them as low-income. The latest census data depict a middle class that's shrinking as unemployment stays high and the government's safety net frays. The new numbers follow years of stagnating wages for the middle class that have hurt millions of workers and families."**

RELEVANCE OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT: Human beings are believed to be social creatures who are interdependent -- with no man (or woman) an island unto themselves. Relatively few if any people can thrive or succeed in life without help from others, in some shape or form, from the time we are babies through older adulthood. This is without dispute – children do not survive if they are not cared for due to their dependence on adults and others.

These realities serve as foundations for evolution of a social contract – an implicit agreement that concern for each person – the common good – matters. We can acknowledge the basis for promoting equality as a common good for all of humanity (diverse individuals and groups) while also recognizing that some individuals (of all races, genders and ages) are above average due in part to investing time in education and developing their talents, to achieve success and wealth to their highest aspirations. We also know other people who are intelligent, talented and motivated but often encounter barriers that prevent access to adequate support and resources. This occurs for various reasons, including historical conditions and systemic practices of discrimination.

Those who are in positions of authority can promote the common good or exploit and manipulate institutions and systems for their own advantage. Elected officials and Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of major corporations are in such leadership roles that provide them with access to information and influence that can affect the lives of the masses on different levels. When they abuse their power, the consequences can be far-reaching and result in extreme inequalities. As we see today, the traditional wisdom of human interdependence is being tested more than ever in the early 21st Century by the severe and widening gap in income disparities between rich and poor. One result for many Americans is a sense of impending doom or helplessness, marked by increased fear and anxiety about not only quality of life but basic survival.

-- Fannie LeFlore, MS,LPC, Licensed Psychotherapist and Writer/Editor, 2012

Public Official and CEO Accountability GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- We will confront situations involving Public Officials and CEOs (and others) who do not represent the best interests of the public, rob, cheat or steal from taxpayers and gain unfair advantages (whether they receive unearned millions or major privileges that compromise the common good) due to abuse of power in the positions they hold -- with the goal of seeking accountability and return of stolen funds and squandered resources for benefit of diverse constituents, citizens and communities in the U.S.A
- We want money returned that CEOs robbed from their companies (in the form of inflated salaries and unearned bonuses) to be reinvested toward their employees – adding, sustaining, retaining and retraining – and the communities served by these corporations
- We expect Public Officials to represent the people they serve and various Governing Boards (for Public Officials and CEOs, etc.) to take ownership for due diligence and related efforts to prevent abuses of power and misallocations among those in positions to receive unearned money at the expense of their constituents, community, companies and U.S. citizens and taxpayers
- Whether public (funded with tax-payer money) or private activities (and benefitting from consumers), institutions and corporations will be called out for supporting or contributing in any form to unjust policies and predatory practices that enrich “elite” segments through manipulative and deceptive strategies (abnormal and non-free-market approaches) that promote extreme income inequality.

POCAP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CONTINUED...

- We will point out predatory systems and people in authority whose behaviors seek to enrich only themselves (or benefit their cohorts/groups only) while victimizing the masses of citizens – many decent, reasonable, hardworking and compassionate people who do not deserve imposed oppressive conditions due to extreme inequalities.
- Actions must speak louder than words – we want clear and timely outcomes that benefit the middle class and working poor who do their fair share in paying taxes, contributing to the economy as workers and consumers, etc. They deserve equal pay for work, access to affordable health care, and supportive resources through public and private systems within reason
- We want workers of all income levels to have access to jobs with family-sustaining wages, opportunities for education and upward mobility, and basic human rights that contribute to dignity, health and living a quality life
- A CEO or Public Official may acknowledge “mistakes” due to greed or pressure from special interests. **But words are not enough. Actions matter in the final analysis.** Those who lack ethics, empathy and conscience may be sociopaths (also known as psychopaths and pathological narcissists). That’s why education about sociopaths is part of this project. Predators, Manipulators and Frauds need consequences, not simply a “forget and forgive” pass from the public. We will not allow appearances alone to determine who we support as legitimate leaders. Although not easy to recognize, we must face the fact the some people whose public persona comes across as intelligent, sincere and caring may in fact be cold-hearted sociopaths or pathological narcissists behind their façade of normalcy. Sociopaths are often referred to as morally insane.



2011 Occupy Wall Street event; photo source unknown

A TIME FOR OUTRAGE, A TIME FOR ACTION

"Back in the 1770's farmers and tradesmen, when they learned of a leader who betrayed them, would tar and feather them-- literally. We can't do that any more, literally.

But there ought to be ways to legally do something, with shaming and litigation and legal charges against them. I am NOT calling for any kind of violence, but I am calling for outrage. I am calling for we the people to take back the reins of justice so justice is imparted to the new royals-- some politicians and the heads of transnational corporations -- who have become above the law."

-- Excerpt from article, "Of Cannibals and CEOs and the 99.999%," April 15, 2012
by Rob Kall, OpEdNews.com.

"The CEO cannibals you describe actually are committing crimes against humanity on some level -- they are inflating their own salaries (and getting bonuses) without working for or earning this money. Unless someone is a Gates or Oprah-type entrepreneur, who in God's name can work enough hours to be able to earn the extreme millions some of these HIRED-CORPORATE-STAFF-CEOs are making?

THE MAJORITY OF THESE CEOs DO NOT EARN THEIR INFLATED SALARIES -- they stack the decks in their favor through insider-influence strategies. They are given blank checks to write for themselves even as they downsize staff and cut salaries and benefits for employees. THEY ARE ENGAGING IN ROBBERY BY DEFAULT -- even if what they're doing may not be illegal per se.

Yet, if a secretary added more hours than she worked in order to get overtime pay or embezzled money from her employer, she would have some consequences and likely lose her job. The ROBBER CEOs need to be held accountable. Same applies to political officials who pocket money from special interests and fail to represent the people who elect them and do not promote the best interests for the common good."

-- Comment posted on OpEdNews, April 15, 2012.

TRENDS OF EXTREME INEQUALITY AS SHOWN BY UNETHICAL ABUSES OF RESOURCES BY THOSE IN POSITIONS OF POWER

The information below introduces income disparities in the Public and Private Sectors, accompanied by lists of CEO salaries (posted on OpEdNews.com by Lance Ciepiela on Tuesday, Apr 10, 2012 at 9:34:48 PM):

- There's the top 1% of wealthy Americans (bankers, oil tycoons, hedge fund managers) and there's the top 0.01% of wealthy Americans: the military contractor CEOs.
- The top 0.01% of earners make at least \$9.14 million per year, a rarefied strata of income that includes defense company CEOs and Wall Street bank chieftains alike.
- But a deeper divide demonstrates how defense companies outpace the big banks' knack for enriching themselves at the expense of everyone else.

OUTRAGEOUS CEO SALARIES

Military Contractor CEO Pay in 2010

- **Northrop Grumman CEO Wes Bush: \$22.84 million**
- **Lockheed Martin CEO Robert Stevens: \$21.89 million.**
- **Boeing CEO James McNerney: \$19.4 million .**

Just to put that in context, consider how these annual payoffs compare to the people we're used to thinking of as poster children for the top 1 percent:

Financial Sector CEO Pay in 2010

- **JP Morgan Chase CEO James Dimon: \$20.81 million**
- **Wells Fargo CEO John Stumpf: \$18.97 million**
- **Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan: \$1.94 million.**

Lobbying Domination

Disgusted by the overwhelming corporate influence in Congress? Look no further than the big military contractor companies, whose flagship companies spend enough on lobbying to dwarf even financial sector titans.

War Industry Lobbying Expenditures for 2010

● **Lockheed Martin: \$12.7 million.**

● **Northrop Grumman: \$15.7 million.**

● **Boeing: \$17.89 million.**

Financial Sector Lobbying 2010

- **JP Morgan Chase: \$7.41 million.**
- **Wells Fargo: \$5.43 million.**
- **Bank of America: \$3.98 million.**

As posted on OpEdNews.com by Lance Ciepiela (Apr. 10, 2012): The war industry gets away with blowing our money on job-killing spending because it can bend Congress to its whim. In the process, the industry is like a vacuum sucking up brain power and engineering resources that could and would establish and grow entirely new wholesome industries. It's no surprise that Americans confront a 9.1% unemployment rate and an under-employment rate flirting with 20 percent this year - read more here: <http://www.opednews.com/populum/linkframe.php?linkid=140893>

Five Reasons Why The Very Rich Have NOT Earned Their Money

by Paul Buchheit, April 16, 2012

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2012/04/16>

The wealthiest Americans believe they've earned their money through hard work and innovation, and that they're the most productive members of society. For the most part they're wrong. As the facts will show, they're not nearly as productive as middle-class workers. Yet they've taken almost all the new income over the past 30 years.

1. They've Taken All the Middle Class Wage Increases
2. They've Mismanaged Key American Industries
3. They've Benefited from 50 Years of Public Research
4. They've Increased Their Incomes By Not Paying Taxes
5. They've Contributed Little to Society.

For more information: UsAgainstGreed.org and PayUpNow.org

Nobody Pays That? A Look at Loopholes for the Wealthy

Source of Information:

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/features/timestopics/series/but_nobody_pays_that/index.html

David Kocieniewski, a business reporter for The New York Times, devoted a year to digging out and exposing the obscure provisions that businesses and the wealthiest Americans exploit to drive their tax bills down to rock bottom.

In a series called “But Nobody Pays That,” Kocieniewski showed how federal tax law takes with one hand but gives — generously — with the other.

At 35 percent, the corporate tax rate is nominally among the world’s highest. Yet because of “a bounty of subsidies, shelters and special breaks,” most companies actually pay less than competitors abroad — often far less.

Kocieniewski’s investigation required sifting through regulatory filings and court cases to decode the taxes for dozens of American and foreign corporations. It also drew on federal lobbying records.

The resulting articles exposed many of Corporate America’s tax secrets.

In April 2012, the series was **awarded a Pulitzer Prize for explanatory journalism**. The Pulitzer jury said Kocieniewski’s work “penetrated a legal thicket to explain how the nation’s wealthiest citizens and corporations often exploited loopholes and avoided taxes.”

We need an economy built on everyone doing their fair share (based on resources and capabilities) and everyone playing by the same set of rules.

President Barack Obama has proposed the Buffett Rule, which says that if you make more than \$1 million a year, you should pay at least the same percentage of your income in taxes as middle class families do. On the other hand, if you make under \$250,000 a year — like 98 percent of American families do — your taxes shouldn't go up.

But the Ryan-Republican budget, passed by the House of Representatives last month, fails the test of balance, fairness, and shared responsibility. Rather than ensuring that millionaires pay their fair share in taxes, it would provide an average tax cut of \$150,000 for those earning more than \$1 million per year.

We need the nation's priorities to reflect the American values of hard work and shared sacrifice, with investments in areas that have always been essential to America's businesses and to creating good middle class jobs.

(Source: Coalition on Human Needs info@chn.org; April 17, 2012).

Some will Argue that Morality and Human Values do not matter -- and will say that Life is Simply Not Fair.

Call it what it is: Non-sense!

Life doesn't have to be fair. A basic truth is that all human beings have limitations and share the ultimate common reality of mortality. No one can prevent their own death. Random accidents, poor choices and unpredictable misfortunes happen.

People make mistakes. As we age, some become more dependent on others.

Ethical and Reasonable Principles can guide Fair Practices in the promotion of Human Rights, Cooperation and the Common Good. Not everyone requires or wants major wealth, five cars and two houses to live a quality of life. But basic human needs and health should not be severely compromised for most people due to the insatiable greed of others and those who abuse their power.

**Human beings, interdependent as social creatures, have long depended to some extent on the goodwill, moral values, knowledge and practical help of other people in order to survive and thrive
– no man or woman is an island unto self.**

This Public Official and CEO Accountability Project (POCAP) resource guide reflects a need for coordinated and shared information so that all progressive organizations, their leaders and staff can engage support and be responsive to the general public as they address common concerns and mutual goals.

As the quote below suggests, significant change can evolve from collaboration among the many who are engaged in activism -- making a major impact to change the status quo is too great a task for any single individual or organization to do entirely alone.

"We have tremendous opportunity to grow a real movement that is not based on any personality or politician or political party but is grounded in the needs of the vast majority of working class people."

-- Quote from Van Jones, Founder of Rebuild the Dream and author of a new book by that name, in an interview with Rinku Sen, published Thursday, April 5, 2012 on Colorlines.com.

AN INVITATION FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION NATIONWIDE

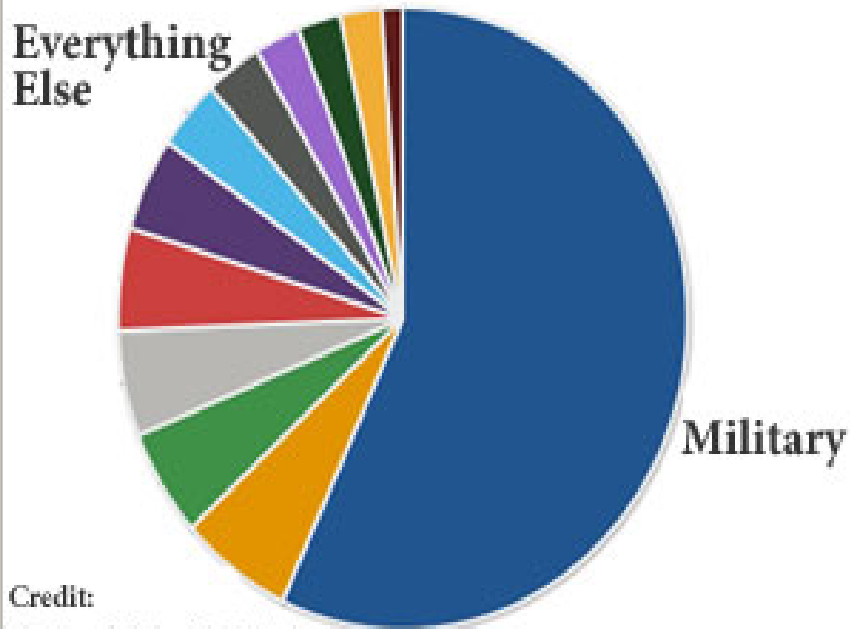
Americans have lost ground due to growing gaps in income between the rich and poor. Much is at stake for the middle class to become revived and survive. Without hope, people cannot strive for upward mobility, and few would invest in getting a college education if they cannot count on this option preventing them from becoming or remaining poor.

Are you ready to lead or join a citizen's action committee? You may prefer not to be in a leadership or spokesperson role. You may prefer behind-the-scenes activism, like many of us do. But there indeed comes a time for action. **If the assaults on the middle class and poor have riled you enough to take action, you should consider working with others in your community on a "Public Official and CEO Accountability Project."**

The tasks that will be involved can overwhelm anyone, so it is best not to take on a project of this scope alone. Get in touch with at least a few other people in your community to put your heads together on strategies. A plan of action will help your team stay focused on the real issues and not allow distractions to get in the way.

In mid-April 2012, MoveOn.org announced a new option for allowing people to start their own petitions. Diverse existing organizations have established activist resources you can obtain from their websites. We share a list of some of these progressive organizations and new media that you can contact for research articles, background information and various resources to become familiar with income inequality and related issues in greater depth. No need for any of us to keep re-creating the wheel because it slows us all down and wears out the most dedicated individuals. We need those with the drive and passion for activism to continue making a difference in communities across this nation. Full-steam ahead! Collaboration with others is key. Feel free to share the information contained in this POCAP presentation with existing organizations and programs, and pass it on to anyone else.

2013 Federal Discretionary Spending



Credit:
National Priorities Project

**57 Percent of Taxes Funds
Homicidal Activity.**

**Ask Congress and the President
to cut military spending!**

(Source: rootsaction.org)

Our Taxes Pay for What?

**SIGN A PETITION
at RootsAction.org**

<http://act.rootsaction.org/p/dia/action/public>

There's a reason the United States has a hard time funding green energy, healthcare, education, infrastructure, or transportation. We have 5% of the world's people and over 50% of the world's military spending -- and through that spending we enrich the richest 1%, at the expense of all of us.

In Obama's proposed 2013 budget, military spending will become 57% of discretionary spending. This drains our economy, endangers our country, strips our civil liberties, demolishes our natural environment, and kills many people, including innocent civilians. Tell the war makers to move the money to more legal and moral activities.

Make Note of Activism Already Underway by Progressive Organizations across America and Find Out How You Can Help in Whatever Area of Concern You Share. Feel free to Suggest **The Public Official and CEO Accountability Project (POCAP)** – it can be implemented anywhere!

April 18, 2012 Excerpt of Email from MoveOn.org to its Members:

"The 99% Spring has arrived! Over the past week, hundreds of organizations ran more than 1,000 nonviolent direct action trainings nationwide for more than 45,000 people—all aimed at building a huge wave of progressive action this spring to confront the 1%.

MoveOn members joined allies from labor unions, community organizations, the Occupy movement, environmental groups, and more. We prepared ourselves to take action in the spirit of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. because we all agree that our system is fundamentally broken and we need to create great change."

- **Common Cause**, a national non-partisan organization with chapters in 35 states, is focused on activities to hold those in power accountable.
- **Common Cause and other progressive organizations have identified more than a dozen of the most influential ALEC-supporting corporations in order to target them with widespread public pressure.**
- **As of April 17, 2012, more than 400,000 people joined in calling on corporations to ditch ALEC -- the *American Legislative Exchange Council* that co-opts thousands of our state lawmakers to secure corporate-friendly laws at the expense of the American public.**

Activism Making Difference!

As of the morning of April 17, ALEC announced the elimination of its Public Safety and Elections Task Force, which it had used to advance unneeded voter identification laws, "Stand Your Ground" gun laws and other noxious legislation. The move followed the departure of 10 major corporations from ALEC's orbit last week. One target, Pfizer, literally shut down their public phone line amid a flood of calls from supporters of Common Cause.

The Public Official and CEO Accountability Project recognizes that economic and social issues are linked. For consideration:

All systems of economic exploitation and extreme inequalities evolve when some people seek to dominate and control most others. Issues like racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of oppression seek to control people by defining "differences" in exploitive ways

The personal and political areas of our lives are more connected than many think – due to potential for manipulation and exploitation of policies, laws and systems that can affect our access to resources, options and opportunities

The diversity that is a normal aspect of the human family is often used to divide, conquer and make people fearful of each other – to take their focus off of the real issues and the real enemies who seek to exploit the majority of people

Among the human population is a small segment of individuals known as sociopaths (also referred to as psychopaths and pathological narcissists). They can be found among all racial, gender and adult age groups. It would be worth exploring websites dedicated to teaching people about sociopaths and how their lack of conscience allows them to destroy individuals, communities and societies.

Quality of life does matter for health in general – and our psychological/mental health can be adversely affected by systems of unreasonable oppression and extreme inequalities.

-- Submitted by Fannie LeFlore, Volunteer Coordinator of Information for Public Official and CEO Accountability Project, April 17, 2012. I am a small business owner, licensed psychotherapist and former newspaper reporter.

What Is Classism?

SOURCE -- <http://www.classism.org/about-class/what-is-classism>

Classism is differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class. Classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. It's the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class. That includes:

- individual attitudes and behaviors;
- systems of policies and practices that are set up to benefit the upper classes at the expense of the lower classes, resulting in drastic income and wealth inequality;
- the rationale that supports these systems and this unequal valuing; and
- the culture that perpetuates them.

**Check out this Worthy Resource
on the United Nations Website**

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
(UDHR)**

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

A Reality Check to Promote Peace?

Link below shows sad and shocking images -- the severe impact of war; nuclear weapons; deformed people and "depleted uranium babies."

<http://tinyurl.com/74uu6dx>

Diverse, Progressive Organizations for Change & Activism

These organizations have existing information and resources to help all of us make a difference.

- **Rebuild the Dream** -- <http://CONTRACT.REBUILDTHEM.DREAM.COM>
- **Change.org** allows anyone to develop a campaign to make a positive change, or build support for an issue by starting your own petition.

- **Coalition on Human Needs**

Washington, DC / email: info@chn.org / <http://civilrights.org/resources/civilrights101/glossary.html>

- **Public Education and Empowerment Resource Service (PEERS)**

Cultivating Community and Transformation <http://www.peerservice.org/>

- **Human Rights Campaign** | <http://www.hrc.org/>

- **People for the American Way** -- pfaw@pfaw.org; PFAW at 1101 15th Street, NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20005-5002, 202-467-4999

- **CREDO Action** act@credoaction.com

- **Public Citizen's Online Action Team** action@citizen.org

- **The Progressive Change Campaign Committee**

- **ColorOfChange.org**

- **United for a Fair Economy (UFE)**

- **SumOfUs**

- **NAACP**

- **Presente.org**

- **Progressives United**

- **MoveOn.org**

- **The Center for Media & Democracy**

- **Progress Now**

The Campaign for America's Future

and Institute for America's Future

Washington, DC | www.ourfuture.org

Take Back the American Dream 2012

June 18-20, 2012 Conference

<http://www.ourfuture.org/conference/2012/main>

Too Much is dedicated to the notion that our world would be considerably more caring, prosperous, and democratic if we narrowed the vast gap that divides our wealthy from everyone else. Too Much is a project of the Program on Inequality and the Common Good at the Institute for Policy Studies. 1112 16th St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036 | 202-234-9382


The Too Much website

<http://toomuchonline.org/> provides links to the following organizations addressing issues related to Inequality:

- Inequality.Org
- Inequality and the Common Good

The Program on Inequality and the Common Good (<http://www.ips-dc.org/inequality>) focuses on the dangers that growing inequality pose for U.S. democracy, economic health and civic life. The program runs the following projects: Inequality.org, Too Much, Resilience Circles, Class Action, The Other98%, Wealth for the Common Good, Jamaica Plain Forum, and the Jamaica Plain New Economy Transition.

- Common Security Clubs
- United for a Fair Economy
- The Equality Trust
- US Uncut
- Wealth for the Common Good
- New Economy Working Group
- Class Action <http://www.classism.org/>
- The Gini Project
- USAgainstGreed
- Mind the Gap
- The Other 98%
- Population Health Forum
- Center for Equitable Growth
- Make Wall Street Pay
- Patriotic Millionaires for Fiscal Strength
- Occupy Together
- Occupy Wall Street



"The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses"

~ Malcolm X

IS THERE A CAMPAIGN TO DECEIVE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC?

"IN THE OLD SOVIET UNION, THEY HAD WHAT WERE CALLED DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGNS. OTHERWISE KNOWN AS RUMORS, DISINFORMATION IS A CLEVER LIE THAT PEOPLE ARE TOLD THAT IS INTENDED TO REPLACE ACTUAL TRUTH.

IT IS DESIGNED TO GET PEOPLE TO ACT THE WAY YOU WANT THEM TO BASED ON WELL-TOLD LIES. FEAR MONGERING CAN BE SPREAD NOW BY ANY LEGITIMATE NEWS ORGANIZATION, OR ONE THAT APPEARS TO BE LEGITIMATE, GIVING IT NEWS COVERAGE. JUST THE FACT OF A REPORT ON TELEVISION OR IN A NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE CAN MAKE IT APPEAR REAL TO THE PUBLIC.

THE KEY RE-ENFORCING FACTOR ABOUT ANY PUBLIC LIE IS REPETITION: IF ENOUGH PEOPLE HEAR IT OR READ IT FROM ENOUGH DIFFERENT SOURCES, THEN THE LIE GETS WRAPPED UP IN TRUTH. WHY WOULD SO MANY OUTLETS REPEAT IT, PEOPLE ASK, IF THERE WERE NO TRUTH IN IT? A COMMON PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUE OF THE AMERICAN RIGHT WING THESE DAYS IS TO SPREAD HALF-TRUTHS AND UNTRUTHS SO WIDELY THAT, EVENTUALLY, THEY BUBBLE UP INTO GENERAL CONSCIOUSNESS."

-- DOUG TERRY, 2.9.12

http://ttr4.com/html/agenda_21.html -- theterryreport.com

Politics, War and Peace: How can Humanity seek Truth?

See article by Carl Herman, April 28, 2012

<http://dailycensored.com/2012/04/28/humanity-will-never-get-truth-until-criminal-1-arrested-will-you-demand-it/>. ***Carl Herman is a National Board-Certified Teacher in economics, government, and history with interests in research, education and lobbying for improved public policy.***

Questioning the Status Quo & Challenging Lies Promoted by Officials, Corporations and Mainstream Media

Some non-traditional media are conducting independent journalistic investigations to expose systemic threats to our democracy – to educate the public before it's too late.

April 17, 2012 excerpt from report by Truthout: While Wall Street and corporate profits recover and reach new heights, the vast majority of Americans have experienced something of an apocalypse: a disclosure of something hidden from the majority of humankind in an era dominated by falsehood and misconception. The "middle class," supposedly the group encompassing the majority of Americans, has been eviscerated by economic crises in health care, predatory lending and austerity. Instead of being "middle class," these people now find themselves squarely among the "99%." How did this happen? Truthout explains important trends from nontraditional perspectives. Truthout's ongoing radio collaboration on revolutionary economics recently explored how capitalism's crisis deeply affects our mental health. Exclusive coverage of a civil liberties issue which is all but invisible revealed its implications - the aggressive and exponential growth of the security state - for all Americans.

Truthout is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit; Sacramento, CA; 213-489-1971.

A Few Progressive and Media Organizations Involved in Questioning the Status Quo & Challenging Misinformation

Occupy Wall Street <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/18/what-are-occupiers-really-fighting-for/> **OWS Newsletter** -- newsletter@occupywallstreet.net

OEN -- OpEdNews.com

Applied Research Center (ARC) and Colorlines.com

DailyCensored.com

Truthout.org P.O. Box 276414, Sacramento, CA 95827; 213.489.1971

YourBlackWorld.com (info@boycewatkins.com)

The Daily Good (hello@goodinc.com)

Time's Up Blog

TheGrio.com

<http://www.wanttoknow.info>

Common Dreams www.commondreams.org

Independent, non-profit newscenter. To inform. To inspire. To ignite change for the common good.

Reader Supported News (RSN)

Some will Argue that Morality and Human Values do not matter -- and will say that Life is Simply Not Fair.

But if you attempt to oppress them or trample on their freedom and rights, all of a sudden those who have no problem stealing from the public or violating ethical business practices WILL COME UP WITH MANY POINTS OF VIEW for why they should not be violated in any way.

Consider this: The rich corporate executive may seem a self-made man. But despite much wealth, he relies on doctors to practice ethical medicine and not deliberately harm him, withhold life-saving information or hasten his demise due to their learned knowledge of matters pertaining to life and death. If he has home-based staff serving him and his family, he has to trust his cook not to poison his food or drink.

He depends on the chauffeur not who drives him daily not to facilitate a hit on his life, since it requires inside knowledge with precise details of whereabouts for a planned attack against someone. He must be willing to believe that the pilot commandeering his private jet won't deliberately cause a crash that could kill him. He needs to be relatively confident that his employees – the ones he might have no qualms exploiting by requiring them to earn poverty-level instead of family-supporting wages while he justifies raking in multi-million dollar paychecks -- won't one day team up and turn against him in blind rage at the office.

Yet, how easy it is for some to take for granted just how much we all are, to some extent, at the mercy of others and dependent on human cooperation in many basic areas of daily life.

A Few Thoughts for Deeper Reflection and Consideration

Many people can talk well about the importance of basic human rights and support for equality in important areas like voting and access to opportunities, but do their actions when in positions of authority reflect the values they claim to espouse? If, as research suggests, the sociopathic (psychopathic/pathological narcissist) brain has no conscience or guilt, their lack of empathy for others makes it impossible to reason with them for compromise on solutions for mutual benefit. Therein lies a great danger. We as social creatures are interdependent. Many normal people can't fathom the reality that sociopaths do not care about consequences or their impact on human lives. Sociopaths feel entitled to more than their fair share, often greedily taking far more than they give or reasonably need. And it is all a game, more or less, because major moral depravity is a characteristic of sociopaths.

Decent people often do not want to seem too judgmental. The point should be why we need to judge some things. We must remember Burke's assertion that "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men (and women) do nothing."

What are some things that represent the epitome of evil? Many recognize that murder can be justified when true self-defense is required, or in times of justifiable war. But not all situations in life are clear-cut regarding what may be rooted in good or evil intent. Do we otherwise decent people fail to call evil what it is because we know we too are not perfect? Psychiatrist M. Scott Peck, MD, author of *The Road Less Traveled*, wrote that most human beings are sinners or capable of being so in that we "fall short of the mark." But it will be to our detriment if we continue to let fears based on things used by sociopathic manipulators to divide us (race, gender, age, income, sexual orientation) become a reason to stay isolated while the cannibals continue their destruction because good people do nothing. Yes, we all have limitations and flaws to some extent. But normal, average persons with conscience don't seek to dominate, destroy or control all others to extreme degrees, regardless of cost.

-- Fannie LeFlore, Volunteer Coordinator of Information for Public Official and CEO Accountability Project

Need for Education on Sociopathy/Psychopathy

Sandra Brown, MA, an expert on personality disorders and pathological relationships, wrote that we all encounter sociopaths/psychopaths and pathological narcissists when one considers the people who have a Personality Disorder – 1 in 25 people lack empathy for others and have no conscience -- so it's a matter of whether we can recognize them.

“When pathologicals are at the head guiding the system, they are making deep psychological imprints of their own pathological worldviews projected like a cult-reality on the screen of others’ psyches. It's not just an individual that can be sick, it's entire systems that are guided by pathological and psychopathic belief systems that are sick. (Anyone ever read *Snakes in Suits* by the world's leading expert in white-color psychopathic behavior, Dr. Robert Hare?)

Excerpt from Sandra Brown's column:

“Systemic pathology has been seen through the years in the church, in the military, in the White House, in the FBI - in any large system. How did thousands come to believe that the holocaust was the right thing to do? It happened when one pathological in a system created a systemic belief and brought into that system, at high management levels, other persons whose own pathology shared the basic core belief systems. Those beliefs found their home and their spark with the pathological leader.”

Source: “Pathological Systems: A Look at Penn State,” by Sandra Brown, MA, author and Founder of The Institute for Relational Harm Reduction and Public Pathology Education; Newsletter, April 17, 2012; www.saferrelationships magazine.com

Empathy is an Important Ingredient in Societal Change, according to various sources...

A few years ago, Arianna Huffington wrote a book exploring what drives us to include the world around us in our individual caring...This week, she discussed in a Social Edge article the connection between empathy and social change, writing: "Empathy is the one quality we most need if we're going to survive and flourish in the twenty-first century."

Huffington refers to Jonas Salk, who was convinced we were transitioning from survival and competition to collaboration and meaning –a transition facilitated by this decade's spectacular advances in technology and social media. She agrees with Jeremy Rifkin that empathy lies at the very core of human existence –it's not just a quaint behavior to be trotted out during a post-earthquake or tsunami mobile-thon. The solutions to our problems will not come from the political, media, and financial institutions, but from each of us making a personal commitment and taking action. And for that, we will need "innovation nurtured by an entrepreneurial spirit, and empathy nurtured by a strong civil society," according to Huffington.

Source: April 17, 2012 Social Edge <socialedge@skollfoundation.org>

**"We are imperfect creatures,
but we should try reaching for
the better you, the better me."**

-- Sidney Poitier, Oscar-winning Actor's quote from Oprah's Master Class (OWN, 2012) and author of "The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography."

Worth Reading

***"The Power of Individual Voters to
Transform Their Government"***

by William John Cox

<http://truth-out.org/news/item/8705-the-power-of-individual-voters-to-transform-their-government>; April 24, 2012.

Cox, a retired prosecutor and public interest lawyer, is an author and political activist promoting a Voters' Rights Amendment. The Amendment and commentary is at USVRA.us, and his collection of writings can be found at WilliamJohnCox.com